
THE SENATE DEBATES

(OFFICIAL REPORT)

FIRST SESSION 1999 – 2003

THE SENATE

Wednesday, June 5, 2002

The Senate met in the Senate Chamber, Parliament Buildings, on Wednesday, June 5, 2002, at 11.00 a.m.

PRESENT

His Honour Senator Sir Fred GOLLOP, K.A. (President)

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

Senator the Hon. G. S. H. MURRAY, B.A. (Econ.), J.P., (Minister of State, Prime Minister's Office)

Senator the Hon. J. X. WALCOTT, FRCS (Edin.), J.P., (Minister of Health) (Leader of the Senate)

Senator T. E. BARKER, B.A. (Hons.), M.A. (Econ.) (Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Economic Development)

Senator P.C. GODDARD

Senator the Hon. Dame Patricia SYMMONDS, D.B.E., G.C.M., B.A. (Hons.), P.G.C.E., J.P.

Senator Mrs. P. E. RICKINSON, B.A. (Hons.), M.P.H. (Harvard), S.R.N.

Senator C. K. LAURIE, D.I.C.T.A. (S.T.), FBSTA.

Senator Miss J. C. ODLE, J.P.

Senator C. A. MASCOLL, B.Sc. (Econ.) (Hons.), M.A. (Public Finance)

Senator LeR. H. McCLEAN, B.Sc.

Senator Mrs. V. E. NEWTON, S.C.M., B.A., (Spec. Hons.), M.A., LL.B. (Hons.) (U.W.I.), F.L.A. (Gt. Brit.), L.E.C.

Senator D. D. MARSHALL, LL.B (Hons.) L.E.C.

Senator Sir John Stanley GODDARD, K.A., B.Com., F.C.A., Hon. LL.D. (U.W.I.)

Senator the Rev. L. W. B. ROCK, M.Div.

Senator B. R. COLLYMORE, C.M.G.

Senator J. E. D. WILLIAMS, B.Sc., MBA, J.P.

Senator K. D. SYMMONDS, LL.B.

Senator D. L. HAYNES, S.C.M.

Prayers were led by Senator the Rev. Leonard W. B. Rock.

Mr. PRESIDENT: The Senate is in session.

PRESENTATION OF PAPERS

SENATOR THE HON. J. X. WALCOTT: Mr. President, I am commanded to lay the following documents before the Honourable Senate.

1. The Value Added Tax (Refund) (Towner Realty Inc.) Order, 2002.
2. The Annual Report of the Central Bank of Barbados for the year 2001.
3. The Annual Report on the operations of the Barbados Drug Service for the fiscal year April 1, 1999 to March 31, 2000.

FIRST READING OF BILLS

SENATOR THE HON. J. X. WALCOTT: Mr. President, I beg to move that the Final Appropriation Bill, 2002 be now read a first time.

The question was put to the Senate and agreed to.

PUBLIC BUSINESS

Mr. PRESIDENT: Public Business is the order of the day.

ORDER NO. 7 – RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE
DRAFT ELECTORAL AND BOUNDARIES
COMMISSION (REVIEW OF
BOUNDARIES) ORDER, 2002

SENATOR THE HON. J. X. WALCOTT: Mr. President, the Electoral and Boundaries Commission of Barbados came into effect on the 1st of April 1985.

SENATOR Mrs. P. E. RICKINSON: Mr. President, on a point of order. This Electoral and Boundaries Commission Bill is not on the Order Paper for today.

Mr. PRESIDENT: I believe there is a Supplemental Order on which this matter appears.

SENATOR Mrs. P. E. RICKINSON: I have not seen it. Mr. President, it has not been circulated.

Mr. PRESIDENT: It is my understanding that all Honourable Senators were provided with this Supplemental Order Paper. Are there any Honourable Senators who have not received the supplemental to the Order Paper.

Asides.

Mr. PRESIDENT: In the circumstances, I am going to ask that this debate on this matter be deferred until later in the day, since it seems to me that a number of Honourable Senators have not received the Supplemental Order Paper.

Will the Clerk please call Order No. 6.

ORDER NO. 6 – THE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT
BILL, 2002

SENATOR THE HON. J. X. WALCOTT: Mr. President, I think we all appreciate that travel and tourism is now recognised as the world's largest industry. Certainly, the World Tourism Organisation has estimated that worldwide receipts from international tourism totalled approximately US\$455 billion in the year 1999.

Sir, for several countries, tourism is the largest sector of the economy and in this regard, Barbados is no exception. Europe and the Americas, are the main tourist receiving regions for several years. Certainly, Europe is responsible for 59 per cent of the world tourism and the Americas, 19 per cent. In recent years, Asia and the Pacific are growing and they now count for 15 per cent.

The increased performance of these regions is a challenge for us in the Caribbean and also Barbados. New types of tourism have emerged, including, eco-tourism, adventure tourism, sports tourism, conference and incentive tourism and we have to adapt as these changes occur.

Sir, you would appreciate that Barbados, is one of the more mature tourism destinations in the Caribbean. Indeed, the Barbados Board of Tourism which is the forerunner to the Barbados Tourism Authority, was established in 1958. I think we will remember that at that time it was chaired by Mr. Livingstone Burrowes, who was then a taxi driver and in charge of the Taxi Cooperative, so we have certainly come a long way.

The first tourism incentive legislation was passed in 1956. It was the Hotel Aids Act and this encouraged investment in hotels by providing investors at that time with tax holidays and a waiver of duties on building materials, furniture, fittings and equipment to build hotels. The current Hotel Aids Act, Cap. 72, was passed in 1967 and it is similar in origin and intent to the original Act, which was passed in 1956.

Sir, over the years a lot has happened in tourism. In 1956 Barbados recorded some 17 800 tourists and 12 300 cruise ship passengers. Tourism has grown rapidly over the years and as people have more leisure time, higher disposable incomes, higher educational standards, improved technology to facilitate easy travel, the numbers of tourists worldwide are rapidly increasing. Certainly, in the year 2000, it peaked in Barbados where we have recorded a total of 7 077 974 arrivals, after eight consecutive years of growth. The total arrivals then were 544 696 and the cruise ship passengers arrivals were 533 278.

Sir, last year, 2001, there was a slight decline in tourist arrivals, especially after the September 11 events when our tourist arrivals declined by 6.9 per cent to 507 696, and our cruise ship passengers declined by 1.1 per cent, to 527 000.

Sir, you would appreciate that global tourism has now become very competitive and in order for us to maintain our status in the world, we must ensure that the quality of our product and the service we give remain excellent. We must ensure, at all times, that the visitor is satisfied that he or she is receiving value for money.

Therefore, we need a new and continuing investment in the tourism product in our countries. This must not only provide for new facilities but also to upgrade the existing facilities. Sir, in line with the Government's commitment, a Green Paper on the sustainable development of tourism in Barbados, has been prepared. In this, we had the input of various stakeholders, the public and private sectors, the NGOs and the public, at a number of Town Hall meetings that were held throughout this country.

In addition, a study was commissioned to look at the existing legal and regulatory frameworks for tourism to suggest improvements and to modernise our legislation, so as

to provide a more comprehensive tourism incentive legislation to meet the growing trends and the competitiveness in the market.

The present Act was found to be inadequate for attracting the level of investment that is now required in our country. We now need to cater, not only for sun, sea and sand but for the new desires of tourists. Tourists are now interested in history, art, crafts, social customs of the destinations that they visit, and among some of the others that I mentioned earlier.

Sir, this new Bill represents a new paradigm in tourism incentive legislation. It provides incentives for both the hotel sector and also the ancillary services which comprise of course the restaurants and other tourist attractions. The Bill extends provisions not only at the construction, but also at the operating stage of these hotel ventures. Amongst other things, it provides for duty-free importation of building materials and equipment during construction and renovation. It incorporates duty-free importation of equipment and supplies for the refurbishment of hotels, restaurants, villas, sports and recreational facilities. It provides extended tax holidays and writes off of capital expenditure and accelerated write off of interest.

Sir, the incentives are not only to developers of hotels, but also for villas, time sharing properties, as well as sports and recreational facilities. This Bill also seeks to promote specific types of development. For example, investment in convention hotels, in inland hotels and large tourism ventures, exceeding BDS\$208 in capital expenditure.

It is expected that with the implementation of this Bill, the developer will apply for approval of a specific tourism project and if successful, will not pay customs duty, VAT or environmental levies on building materials and supplies. Under the new legislation the following will also benefit from the construction of a new hotel: the alteration or renovation of a hotel, the conversion of an existing building to a hotel, the furnishing of a building to be a hotel, tourists recreational facilities and also the construction and equipping of new restaurants and alteration of existing restaurants.
11.25 a.m.

The establishment, restoration, preservation and conservation of monuments, museums and other historical structures and sites and the construction of villas. All of these would now benefit under this new proposed Bill. So you can see that we are looking at developing an all-encompassing piece of legislation which will encourage investment in our vital tourism sector.

There is a need to support ongoing operations and this is addressed. Under the new legislation, with the approval of

the Minister, the following can be accorded 150 per cent tax deduction as expenditure incurred in areas like:

- (a) tourism product development;
- (b) tourism research;
- (c) provision of an apprenticeship scheme, organisation and hosting of tourism exhibitions and trade fairs;
- (d) the development and operation of nature trails in rural areas;
- (e) the acquisition of Green Globe or with similar benefits; and
- (f) the development of community tourism products.

In addition to that, this Bill pays special attention to community involvement by way of these community projects and the investment in trails in the rural areas.

Sir, it is expected that the Barbados Tourism Investment Incorporated will mandate and market this new Act to potential investors. The Bill offers encouragement to tourism investors in Barbados. Sir, we all appreciate the fact that tourism is very important to Barbados. It provides more than 70 per cent of our foreign exchange earnings and it is very important for the continued economic prosperity of this country. Therefore, it is very important that we do everything to enhance our tourism product.

Tourism is also a very important service industry. It provides jobs in the areas of transportation, accommodation, food and beverage and other activities and services. In 1999, 12 300 persons were directly employed in tourism and 12 000 indirectly employed. So we are speaking about the employment of 24 000 persons in this vital sector of our economy.

Sir, as I mentioned earlier, there is much competition regionally. In the regional market in 1999, the Dominican Republic commanded 13 per cent of the market, Jamaica 6.1 per cent, Barbados 2.5 per cent and St. Lucia 1.3 per cent. So with all this, we must try to remain competitive and seek to ensure that our market share does not decline with all of the problems that are occurring all over the world. In addition, we have to be aware of the challenges posed by new and developing tourism countries especially Cuba which is very competitive in our region.

This legislation is expected to simplify the whole process of granting incentives and creating a very transparent process. The Bill will modernise our tourism incentive legislation and will lead to greater increase in tourism

investment in our country and certainly make it a more modern sort of legislation which sets us, as regard tourism incentive legislation, ahead of countries like Jamaica, The Bahamas and Puerto Rico.

As I said, we need to be more competitive especially since September 11 where we have seen a decline in our visitors from the United Kingdom and Europe. Other countries, such as Jamaica, Antigua and St. Lucia who prior to September 11 depended primarily on the North American market are becoming more aggressive and are now going after the United Kingdom and the European markets. In this regard, Sir, we need to be proactive and we need to adapt to the changes that are necessary. We must also be mindful at all times that tourism is a very important sector of our economy. Having said all that, I am not saying that this Bill will be a panacea for all the problems in tourism but it certainly shows the Government's intention of addressing the various problems in the sector. This is the first step toward setting the popular legislation in place and dealing with the marketing and the other issues later on.

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

SENATOR C. A. MASCOLL: Mr. President, there is so much to criticise in the tourism sector that I am wondering whether or not we have really taken the pain out of tourism but I suspect that we have not.

This Bill seeks to put a framework in place that St. Lucia has put in place since 1996. In fact, this Bill does not add anything significant to the future prospects of tourism. The current Minister of Tourism when he was Executive Vice President of the Barbados Hotel and Tourism Association (BHTA) was exceedingly vocal and critical of the sector. In his famous speech which was delivered in December of 1999 at the Hilton Hotel, he outlined 13 different woes confronting the industry at the time. He was particularly severe on the then Minister of Tourism. Over the last two years, given his ascension, there has been no evidence of a turnaround in the management of tourism in Barbados. Indeed, the Barbados Tourism Authority which is the major player in the execution of policy is in a sad state of affairs as I speak. The only thing that is required now is for a vote of no-confidence against that institution.

Mr. President, there is no doubt that tourism is vital to Barbados. We know of its importance to earning foreign exchange. We know about its potential to generate employment. We know about the provisions that it makes for the linkages between tourism and the other sectors in the Barbados economy. We understand its contribution to the Growth Domestic Product (GDP) but there are several other areas that can be discussed in tourism.

The most important thing though is that, as the then Executive Vice President of the Barbados Tourism Authority (BTA) and now Minister of Tourism said, you cannot evaluate the performance of the sector purely on the basis of tourist arrivals. In fact, while that decision was taken from as far back as 1999 there have been no attempts whatsoever to put other measures in place to truly assess the performance of the sector in Barbados. A simple example of the folly of looking at tourism along those lines would be to look at the level of tourist arrivals in Barbados over the last five years and then to look at the level of employment creation within this sector to see that while there might have been a fairly significant increase in the numbers over the years, the employment numbers in tourism did not move from the 12 300 as estimated by the Barbados Statistical Service. So there is no real link between the performance of tourism and the creation of employment in the sector.

The intention of this legislation is to try to attract higher levels of investment in tourism but given the sad performance of the sector since 1996 on the basis of indicators other than tourist arrivals and more particularly given the performance of the sector over the last year it is going to take more than this piece of legislation to attract additional investment to Barbados in a meaningful way.

Indeed, the sector's revenue earnings declined by as much as 30 per cent last year when compared to the previous year. The sector's profitability has always been under pressure over the last several years but if you did an assessment of the sector on the basis of average expenditure between 1996 and the year 2000, you will see that the average spending per tourist declined by 15 per cent in nominal terms in Barbados. I will not confuse this Senate with the numbers, the figures are there in the Central Bank of Barbados documents to show that while there has been increasing tourism arrivals, the actual level of expenditure has not increased over that four to five-year period.
11.35 a.m.

Mr. President, when you look at the average spending per tourist in Barbados, it declined up to the year 2002 from 1996 by 18 per cent and given what happened in the year 2001, we can anticipate that the overall decline in spending by tourists has dropped. Now perhaps that can be explained, or some may try to explain it as the shift in the market towards the lower end and not the upper end, the actual increase in UK tourist as compared to the USA tourist, and the fact that the USA tourist has moved higher than that of the UK tourist, which might not be true when looking at the average years ago when looking at tourist staying in Barbados for a period of 14 days. The average stay now is seven or 14 days.

When you look at the shift in the market where the evidence does show that between 1992 and the 2001 the

UK market represented a mere 23 per cent of our total market, it now represents 42.9 per cent of the total market between 1992 and 2001.

Sir, some say that the Opposition Members, especially the spokesman on economic affairs had, in fact, been gloating in looking at the performance of the Barbadian economy. There is no evidence of any gloating on the part of the Opposition Members. In fact, what there is, is an abundance of analysis on the performance of the economy since 1994 and the poor state of the economy as identified in that analysis. Now, what we are being fooled by for a long time was the excessive borrowing of the Government.

In relation to the tourism itself, there is no doubt that this sector has been badly managed over the last seven years. We had Minister Cheltenham replaced by Billie Miller, replaced by a Mr. Payne, replaced by Minister Lynch. Therefore, within the last six years of this Administration there has been four different Ministers and this would be an indication of the lack of direction in the tourism sector.

Sir, there is no doubt that this piece of legislation that is coming before us is an attempt to formulate a policy for the sector some five years later and as is typical of this administration it cannot do anything to advance the cause in the tourism sector. In fact a lot of the measures being contemplated in the Bill are already in place and have not, in any way, attracted the level of investment because there is a Bill called a Special Development Bill that was put in Barbados years ago in order to attract investment in Barbados in restricting business. We all know that the South Coast, West Coast and the other areas in the southern district were supposed to be part of the development areas. In addition to Bridgetown, there was supposed to be a major project costing in excess of \$300 million, waiting in the Senate about one and a half years ago. We were promised that because of the present state of affairs in Barbados and the return of confidence resulting from this new Administration, the investment level in Barbados would rise considerably as identified primarily in the Bridgetown Development Project.

Sir, it is surprising that no one in Barbados has heard of any development in contribution to the Bridgetown Development Project. In fact, it is fair to say that project is on the back burner and which should have been promoted as a major indicator of the current status of health of the Barbados economy and the investment that was supposed to have been returned has, and to this day some three to four years later, not one block has been laid on the Bridgetown Development Project that could be attributed to any foreign investment. There is no indication anywhere that could indicate that Project has come to any reality. Therefore, this new legislation would have already been addressed in that piece of legislation that came to this Honourable Chamber.

We well recall the generous concessions that were granted and the number of concessions that were given in the Westmoreland Project. In fact, there were even more encouraging as they were supposed to encourage investment of all kinds, all across Barbados for the good of the economy.

I suspect that this Bill is an example of the failure of that project as it is now being used to widen and to embrace other projects in that tourism project. It was specifically designed as an investment in the Bridgetown Development Project. There was no Bridgetown Development Project therefore the concessions are now being spread all across the length and breadth of Barbados in the tourism project. That is where it gets its genesis.

This has not come out of any major consultation by any minister of tourism. This is an example of not being able to score in one area, then seeking to score in another area, while having failed to deliver in the initial proposal to the development of Bridgetown.

Sir, I understand the basis of this legislation. It is rooted in failure and will in fact, only reveal failure. Unless you can encourage businesses to turn profit there will be no incentives for any businessman to invest money. You can establish all the incentives that one wishes but at the end of the day, unless you can encourage an environment that creates profit, there will be no investment in Barbados of any major kind. This is what the Barbadian economy is suffering from. Over the last two years, we have not seen any major investments. There has been the continuation of large projects but there has been no continuation of new investments in any projects.

The cosmetic changes to a few hotels and restaurants born out of the incentives that they have been provided with, this change would happen from time to time. Any business that cannot renovate and innovate its business to become competitive will fail even more. Therefore, at some point in time it has to refurbish its physical plant and also restructure its managerial aspect and introduce initiatives that can cope with the new world.

I must confess that what we have seen over the last five years would be a failure to understand the new private sector environment, the new global environment; that you can only effectively deliver policy since the fact you appreciate in this new business. The private sector in Barbados is crying out in every sector of activity. There has been a substantial fall in the revenue. There has been increases in cost delivered in the capacity to earn a profit.

11.45 a.m.

As I speak to you, the private sector of Barbados is crying out in every area of activity. There have been

substantial falls in sales revenue. There have been increases in cost causing a reduced capacity to earnings and profits and that when you check the real heavy rollers in the business community in Barbados, you will know the truth about the present state of affairs in Barbados. Sir, the recession has deepened and widened over the last six months. This is a special recession because you need to understand that we have borrowed so well and effectively to store and stock foreign reserves that we are not going to see the ultimate effects of the recession in an open economy like Barbados because we are cushioning the effect by cosmetic performances in the foreign reserves of Barbados. Therefore, you are not going to get a hue and cry because this recession is a micro-level recession. It is affecting the worker, the businesses and the players in the micro economy. It is not being revealed at the macro level and this makes it more dangerous.

This means that in many respects the Bill before us would not do anything to cure the existing problems in Barbados or the problems that we presently see within tourism. Sir, I will be more specific. We are talking about looking for higher level of investment in a sector that has put workers on a three-day-work week for the last year.

Many workers in the tourism sector cannot get a week's work. This is so in the hotel sector, the ancillary sectors such as the restaurants and other areas of business activity in tourism in general. When you ask the workers in the tourism sector what is happening, they will tell you that over the last year they have been unable to get a five-day work week even in the winter season. This is the major problem being experienced within the Barbados tourism sector.

Sir, we all know the under performance of the sector before September 11, 2002. Less than one month ago at the Central Bank of Barbados 30th Anniversary lecture, the Prime Minister admitted that the Barbados economy was in recession long before September 11. While other Caribbean territories have experienced increased tourist arrivals, the Barbados situation has been going steadily downhill. In fact, only two weeks ago it was revealed in the *Barbados Advocate* that the Barbados economy performed poorly when compared with other Caribbean economies in the year 2002 and it was identified as the worst performance of any Caribbean economy in the year 2001.

Sir, I will explain more specifically why there is confusion in the tourism sector. When September 11 occurred, it was said that we could anticipate that US tourist arrivals would decline substantially in the next six months. It was then suggested that we should put greater emphasis on the United Kingdom and European markets in light of the fact that the tragedy occurred in the United States of America but over the following three months the actual performance

out of the US market was better than in the UK- market or in the European market. This completely confused all the big heads in the tourism sector to the extent that it is, in fact, the UK- market that has declined dramatically since January this year. Sir, there is confusion in tourism as to exactly what is happening.

Why did we experience the kind of fall off in the US market that we anticipated immediately following September 11 when the economic recovery document was predicated on the recovery of the tourism sector and of the \$32 million that was spent to put the economy back on track? \$30 million was spent in tourism alone but since January 1st we have seen a decline of the magnitude of 25 per cent in January, 30 per cent in February and 32 per cent in March.

Sir, this cannot be explained by the activity of September 11 because the other Caribbean destinations have not seen any major significant fall off of that magnitude in that market. What could explain what happened in Barbados? The major problem in Barbados is the incident of taxation on the cost of the tourism product as I speak today.

This Government embarked on the highest level of taxation ever imposed on any living being in Barbados and they also imposed substantial taxes on the dead as well. This has resulted in a substantial increase in the cost of the tourism product in Barbados to the extent where Barbados has lost its competitive edge within the region. There is little or no hope because there is no real Minister of Tourism, contrary to what he said recently, that he is in charge of the most important Ministry in Barbados. He is not in charge because to be in charge you need to understand, direct and decide where you are going in order to take charge. He needs to be like me.

Sir, we have a Minister who has not been able to identify the future strategy for tourism in Barbados. Sir, this legislation is of no real merit because it cannot excite anyone to invest in the tourism sector. You do not need to speak to Clyde Mascoll on this issue, you only need to go to the players in the tourism sector like the hoteliers and you will be told that tourism in Barbados in the year 2002 is as bad as it ever was. In fact, there is no other period, even during the period of the war in the Gulf, when the tourism sector has been in the state which it is currently.

11.55 a.m.

Sir, we need to understand that you have managed an economy for it to reveal what you want it to reveal. Putting money in the economy does not make a major difference to it. It is not just money. What an economy has to do is to create wealth because there is a difference between money and wealth creation. Unless you can create wealth, you are not going to make your people better off.

Mr. President, the problem that has happened in Barbados is, while over the last four to five years, people might have identified some level of money in the economy, that money has not been directed in such a way as to generate wealth. As a consequence, we are seeing the mismanagement of that money. That makes it important for us to understand where we are going.

For example, if you have a tourism property that, all of a sudden, becomes double the value because of trends in land and property values and not because of any increased worth in the assets, you are fooling yourself about whether you have created wealth or not. I have said it before in this Chamber that is what explains the failure of the Paradise Hotel property to be put into tourism.

Sir, it makes no real business sense for the owner of that property, having accumulated such increases in value, only because of land and property values in Barbados, to think in terms of Paradise Hotel being a tourism entity. It does not make any sense to even consider it because the owner of the hotel has been put in a position where almost overnight, the value of the asset quadrupled, Sir, not as a consequence of what has been happening in tourism but what was happening to property and land value across Barbados.

Sir, we believe that because you can sell a piece of land for ten times the amount that you bought it for, that you have in fact engaged in the creation of wealth for the good of the country, when, in fact, all that has happened are those market forces, primarily because of the desire of foreigners to temporarily make contact without lands would have been the reason for the increased value of the lands and properties. Sir, not because of any skillful engineering on the business side; not because of any major initiative on the part of Government but because of the apparent stability of a country that has been well managed over the years, relatively so, and would be attracted to a foreign investor at a given point in time.

Sir, remember that point and time does not remain constant, some other country may come and offer some similar opportunity. As I speak to you, Barbados is no better off than it was five years ago. I use five years because I do not want to politicise it. I am saying that years ago Barbados would have been in a better position than it currently is under this same administration and this is primarily the result of mismanagement of the resources of Barbados.

Mr. President, to explain that mismanagement took me about four years to convince people of the nature of the mismanagement. It is very difficult when you have a pear tree that has ripe pears and the tree has a rotten trunk. We see pear trees where the wood-ants would have eaten almost the entire tree to death but it is still in a position where on some

branches there are several ripe pears. The problem in Barbados is that we are trapped into believing that the appearance of good health is what is significant, not that you are really in good health but you appear to be in good health.

Sir, this society has become purely a society of appearances, not a society about proof, conviction, inner feeling or well-being, it is about appearances. Sir, you camouflage everything, package and present it as the greatest thing since sliced bread.

Mr. President, even as it relates to projects in this society, whether there are of a tourism nature or a non tourism nature, the greatest factor in any small project around this country has to do with the signage. They are remarkable in presentation. If the Urban Development Commission is involved in a tourism project that is going to assist the economy, you can expect that the actual signage is going to be so attractive that you would believe that they are creating about 5 000 new jobs, putting about \$100 million into a small community, given the attractiveness of the signage of the Urban Development or Rural Development Commissions. Sir, this Government has truly succeeded in camouflaging the reality to the people of Barbados. It is proper public relations.

Mr. President, I have great difficulty in understanding the intent of this Bill. It says here that the Bill will encourage the sustainable development of the tourism industry by providing duty-free concessions: duty-free concessions already exist. According to the legislation of Barbados, duty-free concessions already exist within tourism. Sir, the Government of St. Lucia put such a Bill in place five or six years ago by providing income tax concessions for proven tourism project and certain tourism entities and other related matters.

This Bill is saying that all of a sudden we are going to transform the tourism landscape of Barbados by providing duty-free concessions. We have had so many duty-free concessions in Barbados over the last seven years, one wonders what has really happened to the so-called investments.

I do not understand why this constitutes a major piece of legislation all of a sudden. I cannot see the connection between the provisions in this Bill of what currently exists nor can I see what this Bill will do to attract new investment. In any case, I am suggesting that this Bill cannot attract new investment because in the absence of putting an environment in place that allows businesses to earn a rate of return on the investment, no piece of legislation will contribute to increasing investment among the business community in Barbados. Sir, that is precisely why this Bill will fail and it has to fail.

It has to fail because the prevailing economic environment within tourism is so poor that investors in Barbados are not going to get involved in any major investments across the tourism sector. Some people have even tried to raise birds as a means of attracting tourists but have not seen any major concessions being granted to them because it is not perceived as an area of investment opportunity.

Asides.

SENATOR C. A. MASCOLL: I can imagine that their capacity to earn and to profit will be limited unless they are given some form of concession within the industry that can give enough business to them to allow economies of scale to prevail. In the absence of that, we may soon have birds with no feathers in some parts of this country.
12.05 p.m.

Then there are people in tourism in the restaurant business who for a long time have been looking forward to some kind of concession but if you look at the restaurant business you would recognise that in Barbados there are very few restaurants which remain in business for an extended period of time and it is because of the very difficult nature of that business. That business is about managing costs, that business is about being able to compete with hotels which have in place restaurants as well.

In fact, the legislation for small hotels required all small hotels in excess of seven rooms to have a restaurant on its premises. Therefore, that prevented other restaurants which are strictly in the business of food and providing such services from being able to compete effectively and it also put substantial pressure on small hotels which had to provide such services for their clientele knowing fully well that it would not be a profit-making part of their business and, in fact, it would be a loss-making part of the entity because there would not be sufficient clients or customers to sustain a small restaurant in a small hotel.

The legislation required that small hotels had at least a kitchen to be able to serve their clientele which was a major problem for small hotels and is still a major problem. If you look at it, the high end of the market in the restaurant business might have survived and then the more skillful businessmen like Mustor and some fellows in the Bridgetown areas who have been able to survive because they make sure that whatever they earn on a daily basis they can use to purchase their merchandise for the following day and never put themselves in a position where they have to borrow to sustain their business. What they have effectively done is to manage on the basis of the goodness of the restaurant.

There are several restaurants, Austin, Mustor and others in the Bridgetown area which have survived well, but they have survived well because they have been effectively managed by those small operators. If you look around Barbados you would see that there are several other areas in which the restaurant comes up today as Calabash, comes back tomorrow as Bamboo or something else the next time and then it becomes another. Almost on a monthly basis it changes its name.

What also happens is that some of those in The Gap have recognised now it may be better to rent their properties to foreign investors to invest in the restaurant business and they get a piece of the pie from the rental of the facility. It has not been the case, to my mind, that the Government of Barbados has truly studied the tourism sector for what it is worth. It has not looked at the micro components of the sector to understand effectively how to put measures in place that can in fact take care of the business environment that allows for profit to be made. In the absence of profit, there will be no business.

Then you have a tourism sector that allows a major component like transport to go to a few players and what you do is then put in place a system of allowing the small players to be so numerous that they compete among themselves for a very limited part of the market. In the meantime, you shut off certain areas like the Port for the special privilege of a few in Barbados. What measures would this Tourism Bill put in place to allow for the increased profitability of a small taxi operator? What measures would this Bill put in place to allow for increased profitability or opportunity to survive for craftsmen around the Bridgetown area? What measures have been put in place to do that?

Even when you put measures in place such as the several different funds we hear about, the Enterprise Growth Fund, micro business this, entrepreneurial that, they are running on political largesse not investment opportunities. What is happening is that you have small businesses that cannot show a profit on any of their income statements or they do not have proper balance sheets. Even if there is an abundance of finance or money in the system these small businesses cannot access because they cannot demonstrate to a banker that they are sufficiently well managed to access the funds that are available. In fact, that explains the present state of financial affairs in Barbados because of the excess borrowing, money comes into the Barbados economy that is borrowed from overseas, it goes into the banking system, it makes it look as though there is a lot of money in Barbados and there is high liquidity in Barbados but when small people go to get loans they cannot get them in spite of the presence of so-called excess liquidity in the system.

The major problem is that this Government has not yet worked out the most appropriate plan and strategy to encourage small businesses not only to survive but to prosper

in Barbados. Now I cannot tell this administration what to do in relation to that. That is not my job. This administration has been found wanting in relation to initiatives for small people and has not been able to put together a comprehensive policy framework within which small businesses can be allowed to operate and it therefore explains the increase in the demise of small business in Barbados over the last three to four years, a substantial fall out of small businesses in Barbados. Since you are talking about linkages, it means that you cannot isolate or treat the tourism sector as this special entity in itself and then tell me that it is still important to Barbados because it encourages inter-sectoral linkages so that it has to be far more comprehensive.

I heard the Leader on the Other Side trying to suggest that tourism employs directly 12 300 people and then indirectly a further 12 000 people and therefore as a whole is responsible for 24 000 people. If that is so, it means that the other sectors linked to the tourism sector are equally important. Therefore a Bill which is seeking to understand fully the tourism sector must go beyond just looking at providing duty free concessions and income tax concessions for the tourism sector.

In the absence of appreciating the linkages in tourism, this piece of legislation is useless. This economy really needs to be effectively managed and it is not being well managed. This administration has gone about the management of manufacturing in a wrong way to the extent where if you accept that there can be linkages between tourism and manufacturing then you cannot do what you did to the bound rates over the last two to three years.

If you accept that there are linkages between agriculture and tourism, then you cannot introduce a policy of the type that we have attempted to introduce in relation to bound rates of the last three to four years. If you accept that there are linkages, you cannot unnecessarily impose those kinds of burdensome taxes on the same items that the tourists and locals alike have to consume in Barbados. That, perhaps, is the greatest example of the folly of Government policy as it relates to tourism. On the one hand you are seeking to protect the agricultural sector by the so-called introduction of quotas but then you still, having identified your quota, impose a bound rate on top of the items which were supposed to have been coming on a quota.
12.15 p.m.

Sir, a quota is supposed to do the exact job that the bound rate is supposed to do. If you are going to have a quota and still have a bound rate, you are imposing an unnecessary burden on the local consumer. In addition, you cannot be talking about agriculture being linked to tourism and then, incentives for agriculture not being distributed, or accessed. You cannot be boasting about having \$1.7 million available to farmers, and farmers cannot access them and

then be able to deliver produce to the tourism sector because the discussion about linkages has failed in Barbados.

The understanding of what really happens within the food sector has gone way beyond this administration. This administration does not understand the real linkages in tourism. This administration does not understand the linkages between craft and art and the tourism sector, if not, the concessions in here would not be limited to the tourism sector.

There are several concessions, including income tax, that can be granted to craftsmen and artists that can allow them to supply the hoteliers with the kinds of arts and crafts that would make Barbadians proud. What you have in Barbados is that most of the decorations in the rooms and foyers within the hotels are, in fact, imported. There is no real encouragement to small craftsmen in Barbados as it relates to the tourism sector.

I cannot tell this administration what to do. This administration does not want to be criticised, critiqued, or for another opinion to be proffered by anyone. This administration believes that as soon as you put an alternative view or you make a comment that you are in some way, nonpartisan, unpatriotic and that you are not a Barbadian. Therefore the thing about the Barbados Labour Party administration of the day is that it has all the answers. It has ministers who understand everything about everything and yet still when you look at the tourism sector, and the linkages between tourism and manufacturing and tourism and agriculture, this administration has failed miserably.

I therefore see this piece of legislation as cosmetic. It does not address the real problems in Barbados. And what are the real problems in business in Barbados? The cost of utilities...

Asides.

SENATOR C. A. MASCOLL: I can speak to that but it might help you.

The cost of utilities is a major problem. I see connections here with information technology but when you talk about the use of information technology in tourism but still we have a monopolist, who not only writes reports for Governments but then they take policies from behind the scenes. Sir, you are not sure what is happening in Barbados. The monopolist who is supposed to be in control of the entire sector, in the area of cost and the provision of the services required to deliver the information technology, is in the business then of controlling not only the direction, but the intent of the policy.

Sir, I am concerned as to where we are in relation to even that, then you have the discussion now about culture

and the development of culture and tourism. Now this country fools itself on many levels. There is something called a Jazz Festival in Barbados that is designed to bring tourists to Barbados. It has now become a local show, not of jazz artists but of all other kinds of artists. You do not get anything special from them, because the same songs you heard last for the last several years you were hearing. They cannot really be classified as jazz artists.

Now, instead of taking that money and promoting local artists effectively, we spend an inordinate amount of money bringing old artists to Barbados. Sir, most of them that come to the Jazz Festival in Barbados are 'has beens' and cannot attract anybody. In fact, it would make more sense to have something like a Gospel Fest, which we have, but not promoted to any North American, but to other Caribbean people and allow them to come here. I can see it particularly happening in gospel.

Sir, you have a situation in which you cannot get anybody to leave North America to come to hear the 'has beens' that we bring down here for a Jazz Festival. They will not come. St. Lucia, now has been able, cleverly, to get many Barbadians to go down to their Jazz Festival, but the reverse does not happen. St. Lucians do not come to Barbados for our Jazz Festival but Barbadians go down to St. Lucia because the quality is much better and it is a fact.

Sir, we hear about culture and the promotion of culture and when we first conceptualised the semifinals being held at the East Coast, we were told that the NCF made a lot of money. The NCF was able, during the course of that year, to be self-sustaining. We have never seen a report on the performance of that cultural event, for that year. We heard that several profits were made, and some people have already gone on to the beyond, who were intimately involved. We have never seen a report on really what has been the financial benefit of moving the semifinals and finals to the East Coast, even though it is a wonderful concept, but financially, we do not know whether we are in a position of deficit or surplus. We see a lot of cars but there are a lot of loop holes and apparently, several people have been able to benefit from the loop holes, especially in the first year. The cultural links that you are hearing about in tourism, you are not going to get because, again, when you check the statistics, around July, August in Barbados, you will see that some Barbadians come back. We do not see any major benefits.

I recall years ago, as a Central Bank economist, a young man, who is now a big man at the NCF, called me at the Central Bank, said to me, so Clyde, what do you really feel is the economic benefit of Crop Over to Barbados? Mr. President, I did a little rough calculation and I assessed with the average tourists arrivals what it would be over the course of the year. Then, I tried to look at the increase that

might occur in July and August and then I assumed that some of it might be due to Crop Over, and then I made a rough estimate, based on the average expenditure of the tourists and then I provided a figure. Would you believe that to this day, that figure is banded about? I did believe in the figure when I produced it and I still do not believe it.

Asides.

SENATOR C. A. MASCOLL: I was giving a man an estimate that was supposed to be in-house but the man took it and made it a public thing and then you heard that Crop Over makes \$30 million. The other thing about the estimate, is that we had not taken out any inflows, we had only looked at the expenditure side. We never even tried to factor out what it would cost, in terms of out flows, so therefore this man has gone and made this thing public. He is now a very big player on that Side, even during bye elections, he was all about St. Thomas canvassing...

Mr. PRESIDENT: This is not relevant, Senator.

SENATOR C. A. MASCOLL: Mr. President, you will remember that when US Air was to come to Barbados, we were told that this would now give us increased opportunity out of the traditional parts of the United States (US) market, such as Philadelphia, and that in a very short time, we would see substantial increases in the tourists out of the United States.

12.25 p.m.

Would you believe that US Air has now gone into bankruptcy, Chapter 11? We all know that US Air was destined to go there. Anyone who was checking what was happening in the airline industry in the United States of America market would know that US Air could not survive around Barbados for too long. So US Air no longer provides any air at all for Barbados, it has gone deflated. US Air that was supposed to be the saviour for the Barbados market out of the United States of America has now died a natural death and all of a sudden we do not have any major airlifts out of Philadelphia or out of the non-traditional parts of the market. US Air was in a state of financial difficulty for the last two to three years and that is well-known.

SENATOR P. C. GODDARD: On a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the Senate. He is indicating that US Air has stopped flying to Barbados. US Air continues to fly to Barbados and it is continuing to bring passengers to Barbados.

SENATOR C. A. MASCOLL: Mr. President, a sick man does not have to die to become useless. His prospects for being healthy have simply been reduced. US Air was not supposed to bring one or two flights a week to Barbados, that was supposed to be a start and then we were supposed to

grow on top of that. It was supposed to be the saviour for Barbados. I am not speaking about whether or not US Air is still coming, it is still coming but it may be like some other people I know. Mr. President, yes, US Air planned to do something major in Barbados but it cannot deliver on the plan. Because it comes here once or twice a week, that is not what it was supposed to do. It was supposed to be a start, and then there was supposed to be growth because this Bill talks about sustainable development.

Sustainable development is supposed to be growth plus desirable change. You have to grow and then that growth must lead to desirable change. As I speak, we are not so sure that Barbados is really developing. An economy can grow but if all the social indicators are not desirable, we are in for trouble. We well appreciate here that there is a lot of concern about where Barbados is really going and whether or not Barbados is developing because Barbados can grow but whether or not the change is desirable is a different thing.

We are all very concerned of the state of crime in Barbados. It is not an area I dwell on because it is very hard to point a finger at who is responsible for it but I can tell you that any government should be able to put a framework in place to deal with crime. I cannot blame the Government for crime but this present Government when it was desirable for them to link unemployment to crime in the 1990s they did that. Members on the Other Side said that you had a situation in which tourism was being affected because of the high level of crime and that crime was a direct consequence of high unemployment. We have now in this country, according to the Other Side, a substantial reduction in unemployment but crime has still grown, so the correlation now is not between crime and unemployment. Unemployment is supposed to be down but crime is going up whereas the thesis from that Side in the early 1990s was that there was a direct correlation between ...

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Mascoll, you have one minute in which to conclude your speech.

SENATOR C. A. MASCOLL: The Deputy Prime Minister on the Other Side made a distinct correlation between crime and unemployment. What we have now in Barbados is that there is an increasing level of crime which could be detrimental to investment opportunities within tourism. There is increasing reduction of profitability in tourism which is detrimental to tourism. There is increasing high cost in tourism which is detrimental to tourism. There is little capacity to get a proper rate of return on your investment in tourism and, therefore, it is detrimental to investment in tourism.

I am saying that this Bill, I am not exhausting the list, will go nowhere because it is an attempt to revisit a failed project called the Bridgetown Redevelopment Project. It is

now hoped that the issues in that project would be contained in this legislation such that we have a wider consideration now for tourism and the other associated ancillary services. I have little expectation of this Bill because it has been premised on a very improper foundation.

I thank you, Mr. President.

SENATOR THE HON. Dame PATRICIA SYMMONDS: Mr. President, this Bill is innovative, imaginative and I will even go so far as to say exciting.

The present Bill is archaic having been tabled in 1956 and revamped in 1967. Everyone will agree that Barbados is a high-cost destination but in spite of that, we can still be competitive because of the quality of the services which we offer. The old Act does not have an overall approach but there is emphasis now on a holistic approach to tourism development.

The kinds of concessions and benefits which will accrue will bring all kinds of businesses under the legislative umbrella and it will allow small entrepreneurs at any level to gain benefits. Small entrepreneurs now will have greater opportunities and advantages.

In addition, Barbados has to offer more non-traditional activities. The incentives will lead to increased tourism development in training, marketing and energy saving. What is more, the new legislation proposes a new concept in terms of registration. It provides for a registrar of tourism services and there will also be a tourism facilitator desk. When it comes to inland tourism, this would open areas for people who formerly would not have been involved in tourism and more Barbadians must be given the opportunity to participate. It has been rightly said that the tourists are no longer content with just sun, sea and sand, they are interested in the cultural life of the island, in its history, arts, craft and customs. I wish specifically here to mention Washington House which promises, when completed, to be one of our greatest tourist attractions.
12.35 p.m.

Mr. President, even now in its unfinished state, tours are still being conducted. People are dropping in and are showing a great deal of interest. That is an example of some of the additional attractions which we can offer.

Mr. President, this legislation, excellent as it is and with all that it promises, in order to fully succeed, will depend on the cooperation of every Barbadian. We keep hearing that tourism is everybody's business and it has to be since it is our major foreign earning activity but will need a certain emphasis in the schools. It is going to need more public education.

Tourism has always been a part of Social Studies in the Primary Schools. It is on the required revised curriculum, not only in the primary schools but also at the secondary level. Although the Ministry of Education and teachers have always tried to do their best and should always try to do their best to encourage the children to have an attitude, if adults do not cooperate to the same extent, the effort will be less successful, even with the best legislation.

Parents need to be reminded that they are partners in the business of educating their children and that courtesy and a pleasing environment are important for ourselves as Barbadians and for each other, and not only for the visitors within our gates. If these things are impressed on children, they will become automatic. However stressed adults may be, from time to time, they must set an example.

Generally speaking, tourists still regard Barbadians as being civil, genteel and sophisticated, owing to our high standard of education, a high degree of literacy and our political and economic stability but we have to try to maintain that excellent quality. Surliness displayed by even a few – and that does happen – and the less than overall attractive environment can sully or mar our reputation.

I think I am right in saying today is Environment Day and we should consider this and its importance to tourism. We must look to our laws.

I have been dismayed and confounded to hear some parents have even chided their children for saying 'thanks' for simple and harmless acts of kindness. These are things at which we have to look.

Mr. President, regarding the issue of nature trails, one must be careful that litter is not being dumped in our gullies. There are also occasions when certain supply services need to be more polite. On a whole too, we have to be more psychologically secured as a people. Persons come to Barbados for different reasons: educational, health, financial and services, therefore, tourism has to be driven by consumer wants.

Mr. President, with those few words, I totally support the legislation. I am sure these incentives will help small potential business entrepreneurs and, on the whole, redound to the success of greater development and investor development in tourism for Barbados. I thank you, Mr. President.

SENATOR Sir JOHN STANLEY GODDARD: Thank you, Mr. President. As we all know, within the productive sectors, tourism earns more foreign exchange than any other. We also know it provides a considerable amount of

employment. It has been estimated there is approximately 12,000 persons directly employed, while another 12,000 are indirectly employed. That is a significant amount of the workforce. This Tourism Development Bill, 2002, attempts to expand the existing definition of the tourist sector. Section 43 repeals the Hotel Aids Act, although the benefits of that Act continues in section 40 of this Bill.

I have discussed this with the various persons connected with the tourist industry and have found broad support for this Bill. Everyone including operators of hotels, operators in the tourist industry and potential investors, are all saying the same thing about this Bill – that while it is nice to see the incentives are improved, focus has to be on the bottom line, that whatever they become involved in, will it yield an acceptable rate of return on the investment?

Part 2 of the Bill deals with approved tourism products and approved tourism projects. To me, this is the essence of the Bill.

- 3.(1) A person who wishes to own or operate a tourism product may apply to the Minister to have the tourism product necessary to develop such product approved for the purpose of this Act.
- (2) For the purpose of this Act, tourism project includes
 7. the construction of a new hotel,
 - (h) the alteration or renovation of an existing hotel,
 - (i) the conversion of an existing building or buildings into an hotel by construction, extension, alteration, renovation or remodelling,
 - (j) the furnishing or equipping of a building to be utilised as an hotel,
 - (e) the provision of tourist recreational facilities and tourism related services,
 - (f) the construction and equipping of a new restaurant,
 - (g) the alteration and renovation of an existing restaurant,
 - (viii) the construction of a new attraction or the alteration or renovation of an existing attraction,

- (i) the restoration, conservation or preservation of natural sites,
- (j) the establishment, restoration, preservation, conservation of monuments, museums, other historical structures and sites,
- (k) the construction and furnishing of villas.

In the past we did not think of villas as being inclusive of the tourist product.

- (l) the construction and furnishing of timeshare properties,
- (m) the addition to tourism product of any facilities or services intended to increase and improve the amenities that the tourism product provides.

Mr. President, in other words, it is saying tourism is not just a hotel, which the old Act seemed to emphasise. This is broadening the definition of what are the vital components within the tourism sector.

Part 3 deals with Customs Duty Concession. It lists the type of expenditure for which the operator can claim 150 per cent of that expenditure in arriving at an accessible, taxable income.

Part 4 deals with Income Tax Concessions and investments credits; all incentives to attract investors.

Mr. President, I consider this incentive legislation as being important but in order to maximise its effectiveness and benefits, it must be accompanied with public education and awareness of the importance of tourism to all.
12.45 p.m.

This point has already been stressed by previous speakers but I would like to emphasise it again.

There can be no substitute for friendly and helpful attitudes towards visitors and other Barbadians. Courtesy and respect should have no restrictions. The current advertisements by the Ministry of Tourism are positive initiatives highlighting the importance of tourism to everyone in this society.

Sir, I could not help but notice that there is no reference in the Bill to casinos, lotteries or gaming machines but some people may say that they need no concession. The introduction of casino gambling has become very topical recently as a means of attracting more tourists. I suppose this follows from the fact that tourist arrivals have declined

by 12 per cent in the first four months of this year as compared with the corresponding four months of last year.

Sir, the positive effects of gambling are often highlighted to include the financial assistance that is given to a wide variety of sporting activities, the creation of employment and additional tax revenue for Government. These are undeniable benefits but whenever we look at benefits, we must look at the attendant cost.

Sir, casino gambling is so topical now within the tourism sector and the promotion of tourism but before casino gambling is ever considered again, I recommend that an independent and thorough assessment of the effects of the rapid expansion of lotteries and gaming machines on the Barbadian society in recent times be undertaken. It is a serious matter that requires what is called 'the classic cost benefit analysis'.

Mr. President, it is being put forward that we already have gaming machines and lotteries so what is wrong with having casinos. I do not understand the logic of that argument. Some of the possible effects of lotteries and gaming machines need to be investigated to determine if there is any correlation with the increases of the following:

- The increase in the use of illegal drugs like marijuana, cocaine, *et cetera*.
- The increase in the related medical and rehabilitation cost for drug users.
- The increase in the number of dysfunctional matters.
- The growing indiscipline in schools and public places.
- The increase in arrears of land tax.
- The increase in violence and crime.
- The increase of addiction to gambling.

Sir, the intentions of this Bill are good as they expand tourism by creating additional incentives. However, they will not have the desired effects if good intentions are contaminated. Hence, my call for independent and thorough assessment of the effects of lotteries and gaming machines on the Barbadian society as a matter of urgency. This should be undertaken before any consideration is given to casino gambling.

Mr. President, the citizens of Barbados and the youths in particular deserve nothing less.

With those few remarks, I lend my support to this Bill.

SENATOR C. K. LAURIE: Mr. President, I note that in the Second Schedule which deals with items to be imported duty free that towelling comes into the island duty free. Head No. 73 says that towels which are locally manufactured are also duty free. I cannot understand if the towelling is duty free how then can the towels made from that duty free towelling be also duty free?

I also want to talk about the linkages between tourism and agriculture, in particular black belly sheep. Farmers get \$10 for a kilogram of lamb and there are about five servings from a kilogram of meat in a typical restaurant. This means it cost \$2 per serving but if I go to one of the better restaurants, it is \$40 a serving on average which is 20 times the cost to the farmer. This is a strange linkage and other farmers tell me the same about fruits, vegetables, fish and chicken where the markup between the farmer and the tourist is horrendous.

Recently I accompanied my brother while he was doing research into the rum shops of Barbados and it was amazing to find that I could get a perfectly satisfactory meal for less than \$10. It seems to me that the tourists need to learn something about the rum shops in Barbados and find out that they can get a better deal. We must get together with the hotel and the restaurant sector and let them know that the pie should be shared.

Thank you.

SUSPENSION

SENATOR THE HON. J. X. WALCOTT: Mr. President, I beg to move that this Sitting be suspended until 2.05 p.m. today.

The question was put and agreed to and Mr. PRESIDENT suspended the Sitting accordingly.
12.55 p.m.

RESUMPTION

Mr. PRESIDENT: This Sitting is resumed.

HIS HONOUR SENATOR C. L. BOLDEN: Mr. President, I rise to join in this debate but I am not going to follow the same line of Senator Mascoll, who seems to be a perfect theorist in a world that has moved from theory to practical ideas. When he seeks to compare a Tourism Bill with the Bridgetown Development Project Bill, it shows me clearly that Senator Mascoll is not with us at the moment. Sir, I can understand that he had numerous problems, especially with the person who is sitting next to him.

Asides.

HIS HONOUR SENATOR C. L. BOLDEN: Therefore, he would not be able to concentrate on the Tourism Bill.

Sir, I am going to take a part of a slogan and I do note that I have enough time to develop the issue which I want to develop.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Order, please.

HIS HONOUR SENATOR C. L. BOLDEN: Sir, the first thing that I would like to say is that there is a slogan "Tourism is our business..."

Sir, for a long time I have been asking about the 'Our', because our business does not relate to the Barbados population, generally. I have always conceived and believed that this was developed by people who had specific interest in the industry for themselves. Today I say, despite many people disagreeing with me, that our downturn in tourists arrivals is not on account of September 11 to such an extent as is connected with the bad publicity of tourists, hotels *et cetera* and how they malign Barbadians and certain coloured people in tourism in this country.

Last year there was a slight reduction in tourists arrivals before September 11 that is why I said September 11 might have had its problem but not the total problem as we are experiencing. I would like to say that I welcome the Bill but I am a bit disappointed that Section 10 (4) of the Bill which deals with the appointment of a Registrar of Tourism Services does not spell out some of the functions which that Registrar must perform. I think that it should say that he shall perform certain functions and those functions should have been listed in the Bill.

Sir, one of the functions that I want him to perform is to keep a register of tour guides in this country, because 90 per cent of the tour guides in this country are non-Barbadians and non-black. They are the ones who are doing discredit to this country and I have an example, Sir.

A friend of mine who went to England with me in 1956, came back to Barbados and stayed at Southern Palms Hotel. He took a tour with his English wife and he came to my house the night in a rage. He said that the tour guide pointed to the Government Headquarters on Bay Street and said "There is the Prime Minister's Office but he is seldom there. I do not know how he is running the country."

Asides.

HIS HONOUR SENATOR C. L. BOLDEN: Sir, I have another example and there are two Members in here who can vouch for what I am going to say.

A friend of mine, who has a Puerto Rican wife and two children, visited a hotel in St. James, was told by that hotel that he had to go outside and the Manager of that hotel had the gumption to write his name on the back of a card and gave it to him. At this same hotel the workers tell the guests at that hotel not to go outside of the hotel because Barbadians are violent. They also tell them not to eat outside of the hotel because the food is not good. Sir, at the sister hotel in Christ Church, when my daughter was getting married in Barbados, two years ago, she called that hotel to book the honeymoon suite and the first question she was asked was ‘Are you black or white?’

Asides.

HIS HONOUR SENATOR C. L. BOLDEN: Sir, that is what is ruining tourism in this country. I have a client who has a shop in St. Lawrence Gap and he told me less than two weeks ago that a group of people came into his establishment one night and they wanted something to eat and drink and the fellow told him in the hotel not to walk around with more than \$20 in his pocket. Sir, I can produce all of these people to vouch for everything that I am saying in here.

Sir, the avariciousness of the hoteliers in this country is what is detracting visitors from coming to Barbados. If you tell a visitor something bad about Barbados and Barbadians, what do you expect him to tell his neighbour when he returns to his country? There is not one of the hoteliers who can deny this. I dare anybody in this institution to get up and deny what I am saying today.

Sir, the Bill provides for reduction in interest rates for expenditure in the tourism facilities *et cetera*. I think that the Bill should have looked at grants for the development of tourism entities in Barbados, particularly by Barbadians. As the Bill is framed, only the financial magnates in this country will benefit under the Bill because they are the ones who can invest the money and claim back the 150 per cent interest for what they have expended. It gives very little leeway to the small Barbadian who wants to get into tourism but he is not going to have the money nor can he borrow the money. Then I ask, tourism is whose business?

I was very disappointed in Senator Laurie today. He spoke a lot about agriculture but I have not heard him, at a very crucial point, when we should be looking at the linkages between agriculture and tourism. I am going to take you back to 1976, when I was Minister of Agriculture. I wrote the BAS and said that under my regime, I will not be granting licences to import things that you can grow in Barbados because you must be the mainstay of the food to the tourism industry. I told them that they would have to tell me what they are planting, when they are going to plant, how much they are going to plant, the expected time of reaping and the

expected quantity. Sir, they wrote me and said that they cannot do that.

Mr. President, I am asking permission to say something. There was a woman called Glinnora Slimmon, a Canadian and advisor at the BAS at the time, who told them that they must not cooperate with the Ministry of Agriculture because farmers all over the world rule governments.

Sir, one year they invited me to address them and the second year they invited the Minister of Tourism, who is now Sir Harold St. John, but they decided not to work with the Government. Sir, that woman had the gumption to go back to Canada and while at a cocktail party bragged that every day the Government had to call her at the BAS to ask them what next to do.

Mr. President, a Minister of the Canadian Government called me at my house and asked me what sort of Government are we running down here, that an institution that is getting Government funds can call a woman in Canada to tell them what to do.

Asides.

SENATOR C. K. LAURIE: Mr. President, on a point of order. I deny categorically that I was a member of the BAS at the time.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Laurie, I do not think that there is anything on the record to indicate that statement was made.

Asides.

HIS HONOUR SENATOR C. L. BOLDEN: Mr. President, the best advertising any entity can have is by word of mouth. I said that we have too many experts in tourism in this country and they are not producing for the money that they are getting. I would advise the Government to go to the airport any day and stand among the redcaps at the airport and listen to their complaints and what people say that they want as visitors coming to Barbados.

I would also advise them to send an officer to the airport on a Sunday evening when the German Airline, Condor, is leaving Barbados and hear the guests complaining that they are being brought to Barbados, taken to a hotel, literally locked in a hotel for a week or more, and they see nothing in Barbados. The Condor representative called me at home and told me that is what is happening. They said that the tourists are complaining that they are not enjoying Barbados.

When you go on a vacation, you go to enjoy the culture and the people of that country. One of the things that

Barbados has always stood upon is the civility of its people and the friendly nature of Barbadians and that is being destroyed daily by hotels in this country because of their avaricious nature.

Mr. President, until Government puts a stop to this, it is going to continue. I have asked several times in this institution that Government should devise a tax on the all-inclusive hotels because soon, if we are not careful, we will slip into the same position as exists in Jamaica where the natives meet the tourists as they get off the plane and as they come out of the hotels and strip them, but we have not reached that stage yet.

Sir, how can you expect to have a hotel in a society of Barbadians and the hotelier is telling the guests that they cannot go outside of the hotel to buy a pack of cigarettes from a shop on the corner? Whose business is tourism then? Then you are saying that the Barbadian public must be civil to the visitors. We all have to be in this together otherwise there is going to be a breakdown. It is time that we do something about this, Mr. President.

Senator Mascoll complains that workers in the tourism sector say that they cannot get a full week's work. I am now going to talk about a certain gentleman in tourism who applied to the Immigration Department for permission to bring in a Chef. This is not only happening now, we have had this fight in the 1970s where the hoteliers in this country would not employ a Bajan Chef no matter how qualified he was. They always have ways and means of saying that nobody in Barbados can fill the position.
2.15 p.m.

I would like the Immigration Department to read the newspapers every day and when they see an ad saying "it is our intention to apply to the Immigration Department for a worker. There are no suitable workers in Barbados" and they see P.O. Box and no name of the institution, that is a practice because they put qualifications out and I will tell you, Mr. President, from my experience, most of the people they bring from abroad on a pretext salary is only part of the salary which is paid to those persons. I am speaking my mind today.

I represented a chef who worked at Sandy Lane some years ago and when he was dismissed for cooking two fish that he caught for one of the visitors he came to me and said, "Mr. Bolden, they say my salary was \$4 000 a month, but that is not true. That is what I got here. I had free access to the restaurant in the hotel. I used to go to a certain supermarket in Bridgetown and take whatever I wanted. I had a free car and they were paying \$6 000 a month into my account in England as part of my salary."

This is where the investigation needs to come. Tourism is our business if it belongs to Barbados, if the bulk of the

money in tourism remains in Barbados but not if it remains outside. This is the thing that we have to investigate. It is not only me. When I walk the street people are quarrelling all day and night and complaining about these things happening.

As I was saying, this particular gentleman who went to the Immigration Department asking for a chef went back and threatened the workers in his hotel that if they did not sign a form saying there is need for this chef he would fire all of them. The man came to me and I said, "let him fire you and I will deal with that."

Another hotel in St. Peter sent a message to the front desk staff that they must only hire vehicles from one man and if they did not do that they would lose their jobs. I told them, "Let them fire you. If they want to see something, let them fire you."

These are the things that are going on in tourism that the Government of Barbados has to look at. You must spread the tourist dollar all around the country. Everybody must feel that they are part and parcel of tourism if you want it to thrive. You cannot compartmentalize it into a few people and expect it to thrive.

I come to the Bridgetown Port, my friends at the Port, including those at Port Authority. Down there was one of the biggest culprits against Bajans in tourism. You had a security officer at the Port who used to look at the taxi drivers and tell them not to come back in while at the same time other people could drive in and drive down to the ships and come back out. He would tell them not to come back here.

I reported him three times to the Minister responsible for Tourism and eventually he left. I do not know whether he was fired or not but he did not live there so he had to leave. Can you imagine that visitors walked off a ship, went to a taxi driver and said, "Carry me to the mahogany works." They heard about it and he told the taxi driver not to come back in here that he is not allowed to pick up those visitors. Somebody else outside he would have called a car for.

We have to investigate whether or not this is how we want tourism to run because, as I said, your greatest means of advertising is word of mouth and if a visitor comes to Barbados and can go back to his workplace, to his village, among his friends and say, "I went to Barbados and it is such a lovely place. I have seen it." They cannot say that. There was an Italian ship in here last year that went to the Bridgetown Taxi Association and said to them, "We want you to organise tours for us because we are only taken two places in Barbados and my people want to see the whole of Barbados."

I will admit there is great conflict among the taxi drivers in the Port. I do not deny that, but it must be so. If

you are going to encourage 180 taxis belonging to the Cooperative, some 60 private taxis and then you line them up outside the gate where they have to go and sleep from the night before and some of them sleep there two and three days before they get a job, that is the beginning of conflict. They must fight among themselves while others can drive in every morning after a good night's sleep in their beds and drive down to the ships and take passengers off and by four o'clock they go home while those fellows are still sitting down outside the Port, lining up there for two and three days. Some fellows tell me that they cannot risk going home to get a shower because "we may miss our turn". This is what we call tourism. These are our people that we are dealing with so we really have to look at it.

Senator Mascoll spoke about restaurants. This is why I say Senator Mascoll is not with us. Restaurants open and close within six to eight months but then the visitors complain that they would like to get local food but say, "they tell us not to go outside and eat". If you tell the tourists not to go outside and eat, what happens? I went to China and the first thing the people told me was to try the local cuisine, and I enjoyed eating local food. I would like somebody to carry out a survey at the Airport when people are leaving and ask them how many hoteliers have told them that they can try food outside.

I had an experience which I spoke of in here already of a man who went to a big exquisite hotel on the West Coast, told a taxi driver, "Carry me from in here. I brought my wife, family and friends here and told them how nice Barbados is. From the time I got in the hotel they told me not to go outside other than where we send you and do not eat outside."

He ended up at my place at 11.30 that night.

Aside.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Please, proceed.

HIS HONOUR SENATOR C. L. BOLDEN: The question of the survival of restaurants. I once represented a certain restaurant and the proprietor told the part owner who was of my colour that he does not want her down in the restaurant anymore because the hotels are telling the guests only go to those restaurants where people of their colour are serving. I can produce all this evidence and in writing if anybody asks for it. That is what is killing tourism in this country because people do not leave New York or the United Kingdom or Europe to come to a hotel to get the same steak and the same lamb that they eat at home and lay on a beach.

If we admit that the days of sea and sand are over then the visitor must be looking for something else if they keep coming. Then what are we offering them?

Mr. President, I do hope that we look at tourism and this talk about taking tourism into schools, what are we going to tell the school children, I would like to find out. What are we going to take into schools to tell the school children, that you can be a butler or you can be a maid? Is that what we are going to tell them? Are we not going to tell them that you can rise to the top of the tourism industry like anybody else? That is what we have to tell them. We have to tell them how they are going to get there.

Look around Bridgetown and tell me how many souvenirs in Bridgetown were made in Barbados. St. Lucy Secondary School every year wins top prize at the Industrial Exhibition for what they can produce. Are we going to tell those boys and girls you can produce something and it will be sold in Barbados as a tourist object?

What is the Bill providing for? As I said, the Bill is providing for the magnates who have the money to gain even higher. I have said before that I advise the Government to reflect on Sunset Crest. Sunset Crest is a living example of what happens when you place your confidence in overseas personnel to develop your tourist industry for you.

When they are ready, they pick up and leave. Then, you know what has happened to Sunset Crest. I do not believe that Sunset Crest has caught itself up to today, and that is what we should look at. We come back now, Mr. President, to the calypso tent, the Jazz Festival, *et cetera*.
2.25 p.m.

There is no doubt about that in the industrialised world, people try to get away to what we called the lesser developed countries, where the culture is so much different, to participate in that culture.

When West Indians went to Britain in the 1950s and 1960s, they carried their culture with them. At first it was not accepted, but now you have the same calypso culture in Britain every year which attracts thousands of people from all over Europe. But what are we doing with it? It was developed here in the Caribbean, what are we doing to encourage that and what signals are we sending to those people outside that you can come to Barbados, you can do a Caribbean trip and enjoy our festivals and mix with the people of the region? What signals are we sending and it is about time the Government understands what is happening in the tourism industry and do not allow those big players in the market to dictate what is happening in tourism in Barbados. If it is a Government entity, if the Government is depending on it for its greatest revenue earning, then Government must take a more positive hand in the industry, and make sure that the industry is a Barbadian industry, not an industry in Barbados, ruled and governed by others. I think that is what we need to do.

Mr. President, that is my contribution to the debate. It might not be favourable to other people but I think I live with it every day. People call my telephone every day and every night and if I am supposed to be a messenger to the people, I believe I have done my job today.

I thank you.

SENATOR LeR. H. McCLEAN: Mr. Speaker, I want to continue from where Senator Bolden left off on this theme of tourism being our business. But if you say to the people that tourism is our business, certainly, you would expect that the people would ask, what is in it for me? I believe that there are too many Barbadians, who concluded that it is not much in tourism for them, and all of the public relations exercises that we undertake, unless people can see directly how they are affected, or how they benefit from tourism, it would become more and more difficult for us to convince them that tourism is indeed, the business of all of us.

Sir, what we have encountered in recent years, is a Minister who has described himself, as a Minister in a hurry and to a large extent, some of the measures in this legislation reflect that the Minister is indeed, in a hurry, but we know that in his athletic days he used to be a sprinter, and we know that distance travelled in a sprint is usually very short. Sir, perhaps that reflects the attitude of the Minister in the approach to his work.

Sir, before I go on, in his introduction the Honourable Leader of the Senate made reference to the gentleman called, Mr. Burrowes and his involvement with the Tourist Board. When we contrast Mr. Burrowes' involvement with the Tourist Board with what is happening now, the point was made that Mr. Burrowes was a taxi driver. Yet we have heard the Minister of Tourism making it clear that he did not want any taxi drivers on the Board of the Tourism Authority, because he did not think that was the place for them. Apparently they were not capable of making any significant contribution to the development of tourism at this time, but yet, I am glad that the Honourable Senator and Leader of the Senate could remember the days when tourism was led by a taxi driver. But certainly, it seems that even though we have improved our education, the quality of taxi drivers in Barbados, apparently has not improved where the Minister of Tourism is concerned. You would expect that today, you would have persons as taxi drivers who should be better qualified than Mr. Burrowes was, but they cannot even see a 'look in' on the Board of Tourism with this present Minister of Tourism.

Sir, when we look at the composition of the Tribunal in the Fourth Schedule to the Bill, we notice that the Minister continues with this view. I recall when the matter of the composition of the detail was raised, he said that there are

other places where persons like taxi drivers would be able to serve. Is not this an opportunity to include some of the smaller players, as described by Senator Bolden, in the involvement in these matters?

The Tribunal comprises the following persons:

- Two representatives from the Ministry of Tourism.
- One representative from the Ministry of Finance.
- One representative from the Barbados Hotel and Tourism Association.
- An independent person with qualifications and experience in physical planning.

I think, Sir, that this Tribunal is somewhat limited, when we consider that this Bill is intended to encourage the sustainable development of the Tourism Industry. If we are going to have sustainable development, then I would think that we need to have as wide a cross section as possible for persons involved in the industry. Certainly, we would want each and every Barbadian to believe that they do have a stake in tourism and that tourism is indeed their business. When we limit the involvement to a few persons and the Tribunal does not seem to be representative of the persons who are involved in the industry, then certainly we have a problem.

Sir, again we see the concessions which are being offered and what is described as the tourism product. Again, I think one could see where there is some difficulty with the Minister. The tourism product referred to in the section, Part IV under Income Tax Concessions:

"The tourism product referred to in subsection 1, shall not have a value that is less than \$1.75 million and a portion of the loan on which the concession of subsection 1 is granted, shall be no more than \$7.5 million in respect of each hotel or restaurant to be refurbished or upgraded."

Certainly, Sir, that as again, Senator Bolden pointed out, this legislation is not intended for those persons who want to establish a restaurant to provide indigenous foods. A 'Grannys' in Oistins, for example, would not be able to benefit from these concessions, or one of the persons where we have several tourists. We have thousands of tourists frequenting Oistins on weekends to visit the Bay Garden and the other facilities in Oistins. Those persons cannot benefit from any of these concessions which are offered in this Bill, because they do not have establishments worth \$1.75 million, nor would they be providing a business that has a value that is not less than \$1.75 million. I would think that is a minimum.

Sir, section 28(1) also says that the cost of the plant and equipment, we are talking about investment tax credits, again the equipment must exceed \$100 000. Obviously, these are measures which are not intended for the small operators.
2.35 p.m.

SENATOR T. E. BARKER: On a point of order. The Honourable Senator is misleading the Senate by a sign of omission. Small projects benefit tremendously from the Small Business Development Act. The Honourable Senator is trying to mislead the Chamber when he says that there is nothing in this Bill for the small man and when he conveniently forgot that there are other vehicles. He should bear that in mind.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Barker, you can say that the Senator forgot but you cannot say that he conveniently forgot because that is casting an aspersion.

SENATOR T. E. BARKER: I unreservedly take it back, Sir.

SENATOR LeR. H. McCLEAN: Mr. President, I am dealing with the Bill before us and I am also dealing with the provisions of this Bill. If the Honourable Senator knows of other provisions, he is free to speak of those provisions but I am dealing with the provisions in this Bill which is supposed to encourage sustainable development in tourism.

I am making the point that a significant number of the players in tourism have been excluded from the provisions under this Bill. If you are going to talk about sustainable development in tourism, obviously, you would want to include all of those persons who are involved in the process. Then again, we have a situation where concessions are being made where villas are concerned which brings me to the question as to what is a villa. A villa in this Bill means a house that has at least three bedrooms and is valued at not less than \$525 000. So if someone has a traditional Barbadian chattel house on the west coast that has four or five bedrooms and it is worth \$350 000 and could employ six people, that would not qualify as a villa because the property must be worth \$525 000. Furthermore, Sir, it goes on to say that it must be managed by a company or a real estate agent.

The point I want to make is what has happened to the good old-fashioned Barbadian guest houses we used to have. What is the difference between a villa and a guest house where a person is managing their own property and providing occupancy for tourists? Under this legislation, these persons would not qualify for concessions because they are managing the guest houses themselves.

This brings out the point that has been made earlier that this Bill is intended only for a certain category of people

because the people who will have a management company or a real estate agent managing their property would be persons who lived outside of Barbados and have properties here in this country. These are the people who are targeted by this Bill. We have several persons who have returned to this country after spending many years particularly in Great Britain, we call them returning nationals, some of whom have built properties which include provisions for accommodation because those persons contribute a significant amount to this economy particularly in tourism because they have friends or relatives who would send persons to Barbados on an annual basis to spend vacation in Barbados and they provide accommodation for them. They might own an apartment building with five or six apartments but nothing in this Bill can help those persons who are making, in my view, a greater contribution to tourism than many of the people who will benefit from this piece of legislation.

Sir, we have too many measures in here which does not gel with what should really be happening with respect to sustainable development of tourism. We have section 24 (1) which deals with loans for the construction of new hotels, which says:

“Where an investor in a tourism project or a tourism product secures a loan from a private sector lending institution for the purpose of constructing a new hotel which is designed to have:

- (a) not less than 250 rooms for the accommodation of guests for reward; and
- (b) conference facilities that can seat 500 persons.

This is saying that you are creating an environment where you are saying that you only want to provide opportunities for big investors when, in fact, what you do in that regard is that you will have one large establishment and when that fails or when the investor decides to pull up stakes then you have a big loss. I would think that if you want to have something sustainable it would be better to have several smaller operators benefiting so that you know that you can have a more sustained development rather than these large investments which you have serious doubts about.

We have the situation where I will refer to the guest houses again under section 31, development of nature trails and community tourism. You want to develop community tourism programmes under 31 (d) and you want to develop visitors exchange programmes between Barbados and other Caribbean countries but you have made no provisions for the facilities which would accommodate persons that you would want to attract under this kind of tourism. If you want to encourage community tourism, you are talking about people living in the community and if you are going to have people

living in the community, how are you going to have a situation where you are not providing incentives for the persons who can accommodate those persons who would be living in communities, that would be the persons who own apartments or operates small guest houses. These would be the people who you would be talking about who would be involved in community tourism. If you are going to be attracting persons from other Caribbean countries, chances are these are going to be people who would not want to come here and stay in a hotel but would want to stay in private residences or apartments or things of that nature.

Mr. President, I wonder if this Bill is intended to solve a significant problem which Government now faces, that is, of being unable to replace part of the hotel plant that has been destroyed without being able to replace it even after such a long time. I am speaking of the Hilton Hotel and Dover Convention Centre where Government has decided to destroy those properties without knowing how or having the resources to replace them.

As a result, we are now in a situation where we do not have any of the big names in the hotel industry here in Barbados. We also know that there are several tourists who, when they are travelling to a particular country, the first thing they look for is a brand name hotel. When the tour operators look at Barbados they do not see any brand name hotels. But why have we not been able to attract any of these brand name hotels when this Bill is intended to attract those types of persons.
2.45 p.m.

Mr. President, I have not heard this point being addressed and, therefore, I am wondering if this Bill is intended to address that problem which Government now faces; that is the inability to attract any of the large tourism players to invest in Barbados.

Mr. President, we have another situation which I find rather curious where in section 4(e) there is supposed to be an environmental impact assessment study, which has been approved by the Chief Town Planner. When I consider what an environmental impact assessment study is supposed to be, I find that curious and whether the Chief Town Planner is the qualified person to determine whether an environmental impact assessment study has been properly done or whether it is sufficient.

I am not sure that a matter like this should fall under the guidance of the Chief Town Planner. I am sure there are other agencies in Government that are involved in environmental matters that should have some input into this area.

Again, Sir, there is the concession for waste water disposal systems. My question with section 27 would be,

why should this concession be provided only for the tourism product, particularly when we consider what the tourism product is supposed to be? Why should concessions be given only to those kinds of properties identified - the \$500 villas, the large hotels and restaurants? Could we not integrate our tourism product more by offering these incentives for the smaller properties? It would then have a greater impact on the overall development of the country but where one has identified a project solely for tourism... It is like the proposal the Minister had while he was in the private sector when he was encouraging the creation of tourist police because we needed them to fight crime against tourists. We were not particularly concerned about fighting crime as crime and as to how it was affecting every Barbadian.

SENATOR Miss J. C. ODLE: Mr. President, on a point of order. I believe the statement which the Honourable Senator is making, imputing that the Minister of Tourism when in the private sector, encouraged crime by making the point that only crime against tourist should be policed. I believe that linking the words together, he is imputing improper motives on the Minister when in his private capacity.

Mr. PRESIDENT: That was not my interpretation but Senator, to the extent that you might have given that impression, you might wish to clarify the point.

SENATOR LeR. H. McCLEAN: Mr. President, I certainly am not imputing any such motives to the Minister. I would not accuse the Minister at all. I know him to be an honourable man and would not say that, in any way, he would encourage crime. I might say that he is not as knowledgeable as he ought to be on matters which he has to deal with as Minister and, therefore, does not make the kinds of decisions that are in the best interest to this country. That statement might not be out of malice but of ignorance.

SENATOR Miss J. C. ODLE: Mr. President, I believe again, that in linking the word 'ignorant' to the Minister of the Crown is again, not in keeping with the language of this Chamber and I, therefore, ask that he removes it.

Mr. PRESIDENT: I think to say that the Honourable Minister is 'ignorant' in the context in which you used it, is in breach of the Rules which said it should be out of order to use insulting or offensive language about Members of either House.

I, therefore, ask that it be withdrawn.

SENATOR LeR. H. McCLEAN: Mr. President, the Honourable Senator interrupted me before I finished the statement. I was about to say that I am using the term 'ignorant', not in the Barbadian sense but in the English sense, where 'ignorance' means a lack of knowledge.

I am, therefore, saying that the Minister does not demonstrate that while being a Minister, that being in such a hurry he, obviously, bypasses so many things that are vital and important in the running of his Ministry and is not doing the kind of job that we would expect him to do. Therefore, he has not gathered the kind of knowledge and information that he ought to have. I am simply using the word 'ignorant' in the English sense, meaning that he does not seem to possess that knowledge which is required to...

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator, I am sure you will improve the quality of your presentation if you leave out the *ad hominen* references. Please proceed.

SENATOR LeR. H. McCLEAN: Mr. President, I will withdraw the word 'ignorant' and say that the Minister seems not to be well informed on matters with which he is supposed to deal. I hope no one believes that I am, in any way, trying to be insulting to the Minister.

Sir, we have heard a lot about the decline in tourism. We were told that, having removed the pains from tourism, we were going to see this industry booming. Having not experienced that boom, we are now hearing it was because of September 11, 2001, we are not getting the tourists. They were saying that September 11 has caused Americans not to come when, in fact, before that they were not coming at all. Now we are hearing that because this area seems to be dangerous, the Europeans are not coming. Apparently the explanation comes depending on what is in the world news the day before.

Sir, if one looks at page 25 of the 2001 Annual Report of the Central Bank of Barbados, one would see tourist arrivals for January to September, the percentages on the previous year.

Five destinations show a fall in arrivals up to September, 2001. The second decline was Barbados, following the Dominican Republic which is 7.7 per cent, Barbados, 4.9 per cent; Aruba, 2.3 per cent; OECS, 2.7 per cent and St. Marten, 1.7 per cent.

Sir, we have Bermuda showing 11.9 per cent; Turks and Caicos showing 12.5 per cent; Jamaica showing an increase of 0.3 per cent. Barbados has declined by 4.9 per cent.

Up to September, 2001, Barbados has already been showing a significant decline in tourist arrivals. What explains that decline in tourist arrivals prior to September 2001? I suggest part of the reason is the fact that we have been spending a lot of money on an institution called the Barbados Tourism Authority (BTA) where that money has been going into administrative costs and the paying of high salaries rather than going into advertising Barbados in the tourism market.

It is strange that on the international cable televisions one can see Jamaica, St. Marten, St. Lucia, and all other Caribbean countries being advertised and not Barbados. How often do we see Barbados being advertised? Sir, do you know where we see Barbados being advertised? Only on Barbadian television. We are advertising Barbados on Barbadian television for tourists to come. It shows the folly of the whole exercise. It shows that someone in tourism does not know what they are doing. We have this continuous spending of large sums of money. Every time one looks around there are changes either at the top or at some critical position in the Barbados Tourism Authority, yet these changes seem not to be having any significant impact in terms of the numbers of tourists that are being brought into the island.

Yet, in other destinations in the Caribbean where a fraction of the money that is spent in the Government institutions, we are seeing those countries having more visitors than us.

We have a situation where we have, in my view, too few hotel rooms. How can we be talking about attracting tourists and have no place to put them? The fact of the matter is that persons in the tourism industry have been complaining for a long time that there is a scarcity of hotel rooms in Barbados and we believe the only way in which this could be solved is to build a big hotel so that everybody can come to this one place.
2.55 p.m.

Mr. President, I will continue to say that we need to have smaller establishments which can market themselves and do not have to rely on Government to market them. Several persons have been able to establish their own clientele through word of mouth advertising and these establishments are always occupied.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator McClean, please wind up as you have one minute left.

SENATOR LeR. H. McCLEAN: Sir, several of these establishments are always occupied because of the fact that they usually have repeat guests. We have a situation where the Minister of Tourism has lost his way because of his hurried approach to the industry.

We believe that this Bill will not result in any significant development of tourism far less any chance of it being sustainable. This is another shot in the dark and we will see other measures come before us very soon to correct this matter.

SENATOR THE REV. L. W. B. ROCK: Mr. President, no one can underestimate the importance of the tourism industry to this country. We have observed over the

years a growing dependence on this industry and it is important that every effort be made to enhance its development to ensure that it produces at the level that it is capable of producing.

I have said in this Chamber before that an important part of the development of the industry must arise out of an appreciation of the place of the ordinary man and woman in this industry.

Sir, sometimes I get the impression that the value of the ordinary man is not fully appreciated and rather than efforts being made to forge closer relationship between the visitors to our country and local people, attempts are being made to keep them apart.

This concerns me because if tourism is about the people then Government and those involved in the industry must foster closer relationship and ties between visitors and the people. Sir, Bajans really get 'fired up' about access to beaches and this is important to the extent that Bajans should be able to come into contact with visitors without fear of harassment. Visitors should feel comfortable with our people and every effort should be made to promote interaction of visitors to the country and the local people.

Sir, I sometimes get the impression and it is a perception that should not be ignored that many people in our country feel that tourism is for the rich and famous. This is a dangerous perception and one that should be addressed through educational programmes not only for children and young people but for the whole nation in helping us to understand its importance and the role that we play because we have a stake in tourism.

As Senator Bolden said, there are some hotels where black people are not welcomed but simply tolerated. I feel very strongly about the need for the tourist authorities to look at this particular aspect of enhancing relationships between visitors and Barbadians as being a vital part of the tourist industry and making our people feel that the industry truly belongs to them.

I was glad to hear Senator Symmonds make reference to the development of eco-tourism and historical sites which would attract people. It seems that sometimes we think that the only way we can increase the number of visitors to our country is to pander not to the highest and noblest qualities in people but to their lowest quality. In this respect I refer to casino gambling. In spite of the decision made that casino gambling was not acceptable references are being made by persons in Government that maybe the decision should be revisited in order that tourism can be competitive. It is a strange argument to me, Sir.

SENATOR THE HON. G. S. H. MURRAY: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. The Honourable Member is unintentionally misleading the Chamber. Any advocacy for casino gambling has not come from the Cabinet or a Minister of Government but from a member of the Government's Back Bench.

SENATOR THE REV. L. W. B. ROCK: Mr. President, I meant that a Member of Parliament was advocating that if casino gambling was allowed in Barbados it would possibly make tourism in this country more competitive.

Sir, it seems to be a very strange argument when on the one hand there is concern by some Ministers of the Government to the extent of gambling in Barbados instead of focussing on ways where it can be possibly controlled. The suggestion is being made that we should increase gambling. 3.05 p.m.

I have a very firm conviction that gambling is not right. That is my conviction and it has always been my conviction. I believe that is one of the negative impacts on this country. On the one hand gambling fosters a mentality of getting a lot for a little that is the whole basis of it. It is believed that if you put a little money on gambling you will get a lot in return.

It seems to me in developing such a mentality, it cannot help but affect the level of productivity of a country. On the one hand we are talking about how we must become more productive and people must give more in terms of work and time and on the other hand we are promoting something which says that you put in as little as possible but you will get a lot in return. Sir, that is one of the concerns that I have about gambling.

Sir, I also want to make reference to what I think is a most unfortunate statement which was recently made in connection with enhancing the tourist industry. There is a comment which was made by a former Minister of Tourism, a leading citizen in this country, that consideration should be given to or lending his endorsement to sex tourism.

Mr. President, at a time when the morals of our country are in decline, it is totally unacceptable for someone with some influence in the country to lend support to the promotion of sex tourism, even at a time, when according to some research which was conducted indicated that boys are leaving school at the age of fourteen years old and becoming involved in this particular industry. Sir, that statement must be condemned.

I am a realist and I know that prostitution is a part of life and that it happens here in Barbados. Sir, because it happens in our community we do not have to lend our approval to it. Indeed, we need to link economy with morals. Sometimes I get the impression that we promote morality on one hand and economy on the other. We cannot have an economic system which separates itself from morality. The more we do this, the more damage we do to our country and the more we create conditions to bring our country down.

Mr. President, with respect to the Bill, I would say that if this Bill enhances the industry, gives to black business people in Barbados the confidence that they can invest in the industry, enables conditions to develop so that we have more black people in the management of the tourist industry, then it is worthy of support. Sir, if we are not careful we would perpetuate a system where unless there are more black people in the management in the tourism industry, it will be seen that the black people will continue in positions of serving the white people and that they do not have the opportunity to reach levels of management.

Sir, I am not sure that is what exists but I think that we should make sure people of colour are placed in positions of management so that it can encourage young people to achieve and not to believe that they are relegated to positions where they have to serve other people.

With that contribution, Sir, I accept the Bill.

SENATOR Miss J. C. ODLE: Mr. President, I rise to give my fullest support to this Bill. Sir, much has been said by several Members in terms of the specifics of the Bill in ways that it will enhance the different sectors.

This Bill advances an approach for a global view to the development of the tourism sector. The approach has been stagnant for over the last forty years and this is the first Administration that has made any effort to reconfigure the operations of the industry. The Administration recognises the vital role and importance of all participants in this industry and the need to pay careful attention to all players in the industry, not only at the point of the initial investment but throughout the economic life of the enterprise.

Sir, I want to speak to the areas of environment and to niche markets. I am glad that Senator McClean has rejoined us because I do not believe that he is on the cutting-edge of information. This morning the ground breaking ceremony was held at Needham's Point for the new Hilton Hotel. On that occasion, the Chairman of the entity with responsibility for the development of the site spoke at great length and in great detail about the reasons why the project was not started before. Sir, the delay of the project was directly linked to certain environment issues. The previous occupiers near the Needham's Point peninsula, Mobil and the Barbados Light

and Power, have given a firm commitment to assist with the cleanup of the oil residue in the area.

Mr. President, anybody who is going to do construction knows that if you do not have a sound foundation, the project is not going to stand. In the same way that a house would not stand if the foundation is not good it is the same way that political parties cannot stand if the Head is not good.

Sir, the Honourable Member on the Other Side talked about the lack of brand name hotels. Hilton is a brand recognised worldwide and from the time that the project was first identified for renewal, there was a commitment on the part of the Hilton chain of hotels to continue to do business in Barbados.
3.15 p.m.

This morning, Sir, that agency said they would be proud once again to raise the Hilton flag at Needham's Point because they recognise that Barbados as a destination is the jewel in the crown of the Hilton brand in the world. So, Sir, for the Member to suggest that no brand name would be interested in doing business in Barbados is woefully inadequate and I believe that while we may want to play politics we do not want to hold Barbados to a ransom in this regard for mere narrow partisan benefit and suggest that the Hilton had never had any intention of continuing to do business here.

Sir, specifically, as we talk about niche markets, this hotel will have in excess of 300 bedrooms. Sir, anybody knows that in a hotel if you have a bedroom you can have two or four beds or a suite. So we are talking about the capacity to hold in excess of 700 people on this Needham's peninsula. Sir, the facility will have two restaurants and it will have a ballroom seating 500. That speaks volumes in terms of Barbados' ability to attract meetings and conventions of a certain size and have your delegates residing in one or more areas in close proximity to the principal conference facility in Barbados and I am going to speak in more detail to that in a short while.

Sir, this brand Hilton, this redevelopment at Needham's Point is the gem in the Caribbean because, remember, Sir, this particular piece of land is one that is seen nowhere else in close proximity in this Caribbean, water on three sides. It is indeed the jewel in the crown of this Caribbean. I laud this administration for taking the time to ensure that every "t" was crossed and every "i" dotted.

I know we may not reference members in the Other Place, but there is a member in the Other Place who chairs the particular entity under whose responsibility this project falls that must absolutely receive kudos for detail. He was commended this morning and you can read or hear on the airwaves later this evening the great detail and the pleasure

that all interested parties had in dealing with the work so far carried on to bring this project to realization.

Mr. President, also on the occasion of the turning of the soil for this new project, suffice it to say that the Leader of this nation made reference to the benefit of tourism to our general economy. Sir, he had comments to make regarding the provision of in excess of \$50 million for two funds that would assist the agricultural component and the industrial component of development in Barbados. He was very firm on the point, Sir, that while protectionist measures had been employed and needed to be employed to keep these sectors afloat, protectionist measures cannot continue always and urged that the fund that was created for those two entities be used because the money was still there.

He said not to let this happen at the expense of our tourism product and he stands ready to make provision for a further injection into the tourism product if there could be sound guarantees by the sector under whose responsibility the marketing of Barbados comes that it can generate some guarantees towards that four per cent increase that they are indicating.

Sir, the Minister of Tourism is able to say to us today that in the strategy towards the development planned for this four per cent – the interested parties, the main players in the sector, will meet this week behind closed doors, after which time, the Cabinet and the people of Barbados will have an opportunity to hear and see exactly what the plans are for the increase by four per cent to our tourism sector.

Sir, the member on the Other Side wants to say that this Administration is blaming our position today in tourism on September 11. Sir, everybody knows that September 11 caused havoc such as nobody could have imagined in the tourism sector. Sir, really and truly, I would suggest that he stop playing politics in that regard and really deal with serious issues. If we put our tourism product as a bouncing ball, we can all suffer from it.

Sir, this Administration is not interested in playing games with our tourism product. This Bill gives opportunity to wide participation by a number of agencies and individuals. There is a belief that crafts people will not benefit from this Bill. I beg to disagree because the incentives created by this Bill will make provision for crafts people to have duty free access to the different types of equipment that could assist them in creating the type of craft work that is exemplary. We are talking about duty free concessions to registered tourism products. I know there are crafts people in this Barbados who make what I would refer to as heritage items.

SENATOR LeR. H. McCLEAN: On a point of order, Mr. President, unless the Honourable Member can show me where in the Bill there is evidence to support what she has just said, I can only suggest that she is misleading this Chamber.

SENATOR Miss J. C. ODLE: Mr. President, the Bill speaks to duty free concessions to registered tourism agencies, to individuals who can show their product can benefit directly in some way the tourism product. I would suggest that the Honourable Member read the Bill – with my glasses if he would like to, Sir.

Mr. PRESIDENT: That is not necessary, Senator.

SENATOR Miss J. C. ODLE: Crafts people in this country have benefitted in a small way and now they can benefit in larger measure. We heard Senator Bolden speak to mahogany works. We are talking about indigenous material to Barbados formed in forms reminiscent of old Barbados which many a visitor to this island would want to take home, which many persons living in Barbados, young people in particular, would want to have some memento of what Barbados of old used to be like. So there is provision, Sir, for that as well.

Sir, attention must be paid as well, and I believe it is in this Bill that speaks to issues that could cause the environment not to be affected by this tourism development. Sir, I would want to make reference, and will make this document a document of the House if necessary, to some comments created by a young environmental officer of the Barbados Hotel and Tourism Association. It really speaks to the tremendous amount of value that we have in our human resources in Barbados. We have all kinds of individuals, young ones in particular, who do not seem to make it to the front page of some newspapers. We can only see the negative side there which is no help for our tourism but, at the same time, there are young people who can make significant contributions to our development. She states in her document entitled “Sustainable Development Tourism in Barbados”.

“Development based on patterns of production and consumption that can be pursued into the distant future without degrading the human or natural environment is truly a by-product of the clause of the 1987 Rutland Commission Report defining sustainable development which specifically said, development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet our own needs.”

Sir, Barbados has been at the centre of sustainable development and sustainable development in tourism going back as far as 1994 with the Small Island Development Conference right here in Barbados. On that occasion, there

was an identification and one of the programmes outlined the need for sustainable tourism development in order to protect vulnerable natural resource areas that are used by tourism. It also recognises the need to prevent over-development of tourism in particular areas.

Sir, on this note, I want to speak specifically to some of Barbados' natural resources and I want to refer specifically to Harrison's Cave. Sir, Harrison Cave is one of the real money earners for the tourism industry in Barbados. This Administration in recognising the impact of activities surrounding a natural resource such as Harrison's Cave, such as could be damaged by infiltration of effluent and other materials that could damage the interior of the Cave, made provision for use around the area of the Cave that would not affect the productivity of the Cave, the environmental element of the Cave and the success of the Cave as an income generator for our tourism product. Most visitors that come to Barbados whether land-based or cruise-based, go to Harrison's Cave. I cannot quote figures today but I have on another occasion spoken in the past on the revenue generated by Harrison's Cave.

Sir, the Graeme Hall Swamp which is currently under development is being developed in terms of another one of the eco-figures on our tourism landscape. Tourists who come to this country are no longer the surf and sand type of tourist. While, hopefully, we will always have that type if we employ proper strategies for maintaining our near shore waters, as is evidenced by the South Coast Sewerage Project and other projects under development and by the road works that are currently ongoing in Barbados. We recognise that our surf and sand will always be with us for the benefit of all, our tourists included.

We also want to ensure that other elements of eco-tourism continue to reach the level to satisfy the different types of tourists that will visit Barbados. Sir, I laud efforts such as this Administration is making in doing anything to make it possible for players in the industry to do better and better.

3.25 p.m.

Sir, at the end of the day, the better the tourism product does, the better every single one of us can do as an individual in this country, regardless of the area of expertise or work in which we are employed. Specifically, Sir, those persons who live in close proximity to some of the development projects, stand a better chance of enhancing their own environs and resources.

The whole south coast area is being redeveloped now in such a manner, that the people all along the southern part of Barbados in the areas of Rockley, Worthing and beyond, can benefit directly from this particular Bill, as they can, through cottage and craft industry, through catering, cooking,

tour guiding, the list is long, can benefit directly from the provisions made within this Bill, so that they can ready themselves for this work.

Sir, I want to speak specifically to another tourism niche because I do not think we need to keep harping the point. I think we can all agree in here that this Bill is on the right track, it is advanced and we are perhaps the only country in the region which is making this particular type of broad-based legislation to benefit this particular sector.

I want to speak, Sir, specifically to the conference element, or the meetings and incentives element of our tourism product. Sir, Barbados has just concluded what has been described by the Organisation of American States as the best General Assembly that they have ever had. Sir, we were privileged to have hosted this large conference, accommodating some, I believe, 700 delegates to the Conference from across the OAS spectrum.

Sir, Barbados shone in all areas. The transportation happened smoothly, and several agencies, including taxi drivers would have been able to generate revenue during this conference. Crafts people benefited during this conference because provision was made that they could display their wares at the site of the conference at Sherbourne Conference Centre.

Speaking specifically to conference tourism, Sir, Sherbourne is a brand. We talked earlier about the need to have branding, Barbados is a brand, the symbol of our flying fish is recognised as part of the Barbados brand. Sherbourne is becoming part, and I say, becoming – Sir, it has taken some time in coming to this point – a brand with respect to the facility at which conventions and meetings are held, at which trade shows and exhibitions are held.

Sir, this Bill will continue, hopefully, to make provision, not only for Sherbourne Centre, but several others – as has been stated in the Bill – benefit from conventions and meeting facilities. Many business people in the world look for destinations away from mainland United States of America and come from as far away as Europe to hold meetings.

Sherbourne Conference Centre today, Sir, I am proud to say, although it has been long in coming, is poised and today boasts, and I have to say boasts because it has taken two years to come to this point, the first site in the region to offer, full IT telephony. That means you can move about Sherbourne Conference Centre utilising wireless telephones, permanent Internet connectivity, through your laptop computers, all under the control of the administration of Sherbourne Conference Centre. You can just come in here and use it up. It is all part of the product, Sir, that we are developing at Sherbourne Conference Centre.

Sir, to deviate a little, the point has been made that if we did not have Sherbourne Conference Centre, and on and on. Sir, the facility was there and this Administration had to make it work to our benefit. When it was first created, there was no clear identification and even now there are challenges that we would face in many kinds of ways to make it happen.

Sir, I am not knocking any particular political administration or organisation whose idea it may have been, and I hear an aside referring to it as a white elephant, which I am not going to acknowledge. Sir, the point remains that Sherbourne Conference Centre, now a brand name, continues to be developed, has the potential to offer services that nowhere else in the Caribbean can offer.

Sir, have you any idea the impact that this will have on a meeting and on a convention. In addition, there is the possibility for what they refer to as conference bridging. With conference bridging, one can have as many as 12 persons, all around the world, engaged in a conference call, the first of its kind in the region and this is called, a value-added. In the past with the IT provision, *et cetera*, it was a labourious exercise with wire pulling and trunking which was unsightly and costly. This transformation now will make it very low cost for the provider, Sherbourne Conference Centre, and high value added for the customers using the Centre. Therefore, it makes the Centre one of first choice. We have no fear that by this Bill affording other entities the opportunity to open conference facilities and so on, Sherbourne Centre will still have its place because it is the only place in Barbados that has a seating capacity of 1 400 suitable for a convention or meeting.

Sir, that is significant and I am pleased to say that in Barbados we have 100 percent Bajans who have the capacity and capability. Our human resource rests well, with young individuals who can create the sort of environment that I just spoke of, with respect to technology, and who can articulate and lobby for what is best needed for our customers. These sorts of initiatives can and will position Barbados as a state-of-the-art destination, well above and beyond surf and sand.

Sir, when an individual comes here for a meeting or convention or when other islands in the Caribbean choose Barbados as a preferred destination for exhibitions and for presentation of new products, regionally and internationally, we can understand why. This Administration is ensuring that through initiative such as this Bill and such is the use of our human resources to create opportunities and to create the correct and sound environment that we are well poised for our tourism product to continue to grow and grow.

Sir, it may seem to some that nothing is happening and you would hear attacks from all different angles but I think we need to put on our thinking caps and look around us and analyse what is going on around us, not comparing us to any

of the other islands in the region, because we still, and I am proud to say, stand head and shoulders above just about every other island in the Caribbean, although, I must recognise that we are stronger, if we are connected by way of the integration process in terms of sustainable tourism. This is not the day for any one country or island to stand alone in a park but they must always be leaders in this domain and Barbados is equipped with our human resources and our infrastructure to lead the way and continue to move tourism and draw the tourists in larger numbers to our region.

Sir, I have only good things to say about this Bill. I am happy to be associated with this particular Bill or with any development, whatsoever, that can have at its centre the upliftment of communities as is evidenced with the possibilities that will exist for these individuals and entities to continue to grow and generate revenue, to make the Barbados tourism product the gem of the Caribbean.

Sir, I continue to support this Bill and to urge all other Senators to support this Tourism Development Bill for the benefit of every single one of us in Barbados.

Sir, I thank you.
3.35 p.m.

Asides.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator McClean, are you on a point of order? I should not be hearing you then.

SENATOR P. C. GODDARD: Mr. President, I rise to support this Bill and I must congratulate Senator Odle for her excellent exposition and a very powerful speech in support of this Bill. She touched on several points which were very valid and has demonstrated the fact that Barbados is continuing to lead in the area of the hospitality industry. I refer to this as the hospitality industry because I believe hospitality should be at the centre of our tourism and hospitality is what Barbados is known for and it is the hospitality that the delegates of the Organisation of American States (OAS) and all those who attended this very large meeting over the past weekend praised and lauded Barbados for.

This means that many people in Barbados, the red caps at the airport, the taxi drivers, the bus drivers, waiters and waitresses, chefs and individuals walking along the street were part and parcel of delivering this service. They came into contact with Barbadians at all levels and they were very impressed. I am reminded, Mr. President, of the many scores of school children who greeted those delegates with such cheerful young faces one would not readily forget. It was truly a remarkable sight.

Mr. President, this Bill has been criticised on one hand for pandering to large establishments and on the other hand

because we do not have any brand name recognition in the island. With the re-establishment of the Hilton Hotel it has been demonstrated that brand name international hotels are returning to Barbados and part and parcel of that is this legislation which facilitates that investment. At the same time we seem to have a schizophrenic approach...

SENATOR LeR. H. McCLEAN: On a point of order. The Honourable Senator is suggesting that this piece of legislation which has not yet been passed is responsible for the operation of something which has already started.

SENATOR P. C. GODDARD: Mr. President, this legislation has been long in preparation. It has not been hurried and it has not been done overnight and people have known that this legislation was coming. Therefore, Mr. President, you would have to recognise that the business community is not asleep at the rail and that they know what is going on but I would come back to the schizophrenic approach to this thing.

We talked about the fact...

SENATOR LeR. H. McCLEAN: On a point of order. I really do not think that is the appropriate term to use in a debate in this Honourable Chamber.

Mr. PRESIDENT: I agree with you Senator McClean. I am not sure to what or to whom the Senator was going to be referring but I would have thought...

Asides.

Mr. PRESIDENT: I would ask you to rephrase that.

SENATOR P. C. GODDARD: Perhaps I should say it shows the confusion with which the criticism has been levied on this Bill. On the one hand, it is being criticised for not delivering the goods for large enterprises and on the other hand it is being criticised for not delivering for small entities when, in fact, it does both. He keeps talking about the small businessman and the fact that this Bill provides for entities where the value is not less than \$1.7 million and the cost of plant and equipment is \$100 000.

Mr. President, I would remind you that there is hardly any large business today that was not once a small business. I think of the Marriotts Corporation which today is an \$8 billion hotel chain which started out as A and W Root Beer Stand. One single fast food outlet before the term 'fast food' was coined and a small restaurant of today can also grow into a multimillion dollar restaurant chain.

Mr. President, I am reminded that Chefette Restaurants started out with one restaurant and now they have over a dozen here in Barbados which gives them the platform to

take the business into a regional or hemispheric environment. Pizza Man Doc started out as a single pizza outlet and has grown. We have to recognise that these small businesses can grow into significant enterprises over a period of time. They do so not because of the framework but because of discipline, hard work and application. Mr. President, this Bill alone will not sustain our hospitality industry.

I am concerned, Mr. President, about the growing indiscipline and excessive absenteeism in the workplace in Barbados, not just in the hospitality industry but across every spectrum of our economic endeavours. We have heard complaints within the Civil Service about people having poor attendance records. We have seen situations where people have been laid off from enterprises because of a decline in activity but when the activity returned and those people are recalled to work, not one single one of those individuals responded to that recall because of the settlement that has been given them on their severance.
3.45 p.m.

Mr. President, as Senator Symmonds, Sir John Stanley Goddard and Senator Rock have alluded to, we have a significant job of education to do. In this, we have to get across the fact that the criticisms levelled on advertising the hospitality industry on our local television, does not hold water. We need to advertise the importance of tourism on the local television. Each of us Senators gets a stipend which directly relates to the revenue derived by this country from tourism. We have to recognise that every visitor to this country contributes to VAT because of the transaction that takes place in the hotels, the retail sector, the many service sectors to which they contribute VAT. It also generates revenue for the 25,000 persons who are directly or indirectly involved in the industry, who also pay Income Tax to the Consolidated Fund. Therefore, either directly or indirectly, all of us benefit from tourism.

Mr. President, Senator Mascoll talked about tourism in a rather theoretical way. I am minded of a time when I was learning to fly, about being warned about meteorologists who give weather reports from rooms and who were buried in the bowels of the building. They looked at the charts, the direction of the winds, at the temperatures, all reported to them and come up with a report that it is fair and sunny and visibility is 20 miles, while you are flying, where there is a thunder storm right over the runway.

Mr. President, I come from a point of view in the hospitality industry where I have dealt with it managing hotels, restaurants and retail outlets that are directly related...

Asides.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator McClean, I do not wish to hear comments coming from you while you are seated. It is

against the rule. I am having difficulty hearing the Senator who is on his feet. Senator Goddard.

SENATOR P. C. GODDARD: Mr. President, I am speaking from a practical, hands-on, active way of dealing with the hospitality industry over several decades. I know what the hospitality industry is about. I know about the many ways and facets in which people can benefit from this industry. I know the pitfalls. I understand how people relate to visitors to this island. I understand the reluctance, quite often, of people to make eye contact or to smile, or to be civil, or to give common courtesy to individuals. Those are the things that can turn off visitors to this island.

By the same token, I know taxi drivers who have benefited and prospered remarkably because they have done outstanding jobs. These taxi drivers have repeat clients who call them from the United Kingdom and United States and ask to be met at the Airport to take them to their destinations and to work for them for the duration of their stay. These taxi drivers are ambassadors to Barbados and do us proud. They also benefit economically. Therefore, as far as I am concerned there is no such thing as just a taxi driver. I think one would find those people have a very valuable contribution to make.

Mr. President, we make no apologies for giving special concessions for very large investments in this country. They are absolutely necessary to provide very critical maps for the hospitality industry, particularly the convention industry that we hope to attract over the years.

Mr. President, in listening to the Members of the Opposition, one would have us believe that we would be better off just being a nation of cottage industries and just put us in that niche and leave us there forever.

The cottage industry has a very important role to play but hopefully some of them will grow into very large organisations, developing specialist skills, developing human resources, not only providing a superior large business experience in Barbados but to take that business and grow both in the region and the hemisphere.

Sir, this Bill is to provide the framework for Barbadian entrepreneurs to invest, to develop their skills and to facilitate the growth of the hospitality industry.

This Government has truly revolutionised the legislation relating to the hospitality industry. The hospitality industry is not just about hotels. It is about every piece of economic activity that supports this industry. This legislation widens the area where economic benefits can be derived by investments in tourism related products, including restaurants and specialist hospitality enterprises which support tourism.

Within the Bill it has been widely described where individuals will be able to come up with new products, new concepts and new ideas and to get them approved once it is demonstrated these things are in support for the hospitality industry. These things can only be limited to the entrepreneur's imagination.

Mr. President, this Bill carves out a new direction, provides a new incentive and provides for growing entrepreneurial activity and creativity within the private sector. It is now up to the business community to take advantage of this Bill, to grasp the metal and to step forward with their investments.

Mr. President, I have no hesitation in supporting this Bill. I thank you.

SENATOR J. E. D. WILLIAMS: Mr. President, I rise to give my fullest support to this Bill.

Mr. President, we need to put into context how Government has arrived at this draft Bill before us.

Mr. President, in an industry that employs 24,000 persons, both directly and indirectly and one that accounts for more than 70 per cent of our foreign exchange, if one is going to look at trying to reshape such an industry, clearly the operators involved would have to be persons who are driving these changes and do so within the context before us.

Sir, I had the pleasure last year to be part and parcel of the public/private sector consultation where operators within the industry were prepared to come to Government and indicate what they considered to be some of the challenges facing the industry and also what are some of the pluses that go for us at present.

I note on that occasion the Opposition sought to stay away and it may, in fact, be the reason why Senator Mascoll would speak hastily today, clearly from a lack of knowledge. Sir, in arriving at appropriate legislation, it is the persons who are involved in the industry who are best placed in positions to be able to give guidance in terms of what we ought to come up with.

In reviewing where we are, those operators suggested that, in terms of our strengths, we do continue to enjoy a loyal base of repeat visitors. Some months ago, I was at a Rotary meeting and there were a number of visitors at that meeting. It was interesting to see that as each one got up, that individual was saying this was their 10th or 15th consecutive year in coming to Barbados. Some persons were talking about in excess of 20 years. It was, indeed, remarkable to have been present where almost every single person had more than 10 years as a repeat visitor.

3.55 p.m.

It is a plus for us and something that should be taken into consideration as we seek to reshape and develop the industry. They were also happy to point out that we have had a very long history of political and economic stability. This is also a plus for us as we have a stable currency and sometimes because of the changing rate of the Pound Sterling where the cost to visitors may at some point in time become more costly so stability of our currency is definitely a plus.

I would like to see more social acceptance and integration between locals and visitors. I have to laud those persons responsible for the television advertisements that allow Barbadians to understand the importance of tourism.

I want to speak on an issue raised by Senator Mascoll where he suggested that the Barbados Tourism Authority has been underperforming and I want to look at the provisional figures within the industry and where we are today. Provisional figures for May show 8 per cent decline for that month when compared to the corresponding period last year. However, the overall decline was 12 per cent for the period between January and April and this suggests that we are moving in the right direction.

Mr. President, the USA market particularly between January and April show a 2.7 per cent increase over the same period last year and that can be attributed to the fact that we now have airlifts through US Airways. I will speak to some other initiatives that the Barbados Tourism Authority is working on.

With respect to the United Kingdom between January and April arrivals were down by 15 per cent when compared to the same period last year.

With respect to the Canadian market for that period it was down 19 per cent. Barbados did lose the Canadian 300 Charter which explains the reason for the decline in part but we were impacted by the Canadian economy itself which was going through some difficulty. There is also the added challenge from domiciles like Cancun, Mexico and Santo Domingo who are luring the Canadian visitor as well.

The Barbados Tourism Authority has been focussing its attention on airlift. The UK market accounts for 42.9 per cent in 2001 in terms of total arrivals as compared to 41.6 per cent in 2000.

We will see another charter, the Monarch, starting in July this year offering 374 seats weekly out of Gatwick and this will complement Air Tours.

British West Indian Airways will provide further airlift out of Manchester to start in July this year. We will see two

flights coming to Barbados per week with 500 extra seats being made available.

Condor which serves the Frankfurt area has been flying into Barbados for a while returned in November last year. LaudAir came back last year as well.

I spoke about the 2.7 per cent improvement in the US market between January and April and the daily flight of US Air has made a significant impact in that regard.

Discussions are advanced with Continental Airways who are desirous of providing a service out of New Jersey and are presently securing equipment to be able to fly the New Jersey/Barbados route. We are hopeful that this will start as quickly as practicable.

There is also discussion with the Barbados Tourism Authority and Pan Am to further bolster airlift out of the US gateways.

Mr. President, every effort is being made to ensure that we have the seating capacity so that when we do the promotions we can get people to Barbados.

American Airlines will be starting a second daily flight out of Miami and this will bolster airlift out of the United States of America.

We are mindful that within the United States of America there is emphasis on encouraging Americans to engage in their own domestic tourism and we have to be aggressive in our marketing and have the equipment to complement our marketing efforts.

One of the challenges that face us is the cost in Barbados as a destination. I will share some figures.

Payroll and operating costs between Barbados and Jamaica are significantly different. For example, in Barbados the minimum wage per week is US\$87.5 or BDS\$170.00. However, in Jamaica it is US\$30.00 per week or JAM\$1 500 weekly. However, a waiter in Jamaica is paid US\$40 per week while in Barbados he is paid US\$125 per week.

I am saying all of that to say that we are a high-cost destination and it is incumbent on us to give the best service that we can as a destination to encourage those people to return.
4.05 p.m.

Remember, if you look at the topography of Jamaica, you will see that the landscape of Jamaica is appealing. For example, if you are in the United States of America where the cost of an airline ticket to Jamaica is less than to

Barbados; three and half hours flight from Miami to Barbados and two and a half hours flight to Jamaica, in terms of wage and operating cost it is less. Then a person who is going to make a judgement call in terms of travelling to Jamaica or to Barbados is going to look at the quality of service he or she is going to get at the end of the day. Mr. President, I am glad to see in this proposed legislation, that emphasis is being placed on training, to make sure that training cost is treated no different from other capital costs.

We also talk about our marketing. There is no doubt in anybody's mind that the benefit of having an international brand name hotel will give you an added marketing leverage. When we look at Barbados *vis-a-vis*, some Caribbean destinations, you will find that in the Bahamas you can find a Madison Hotel, Radisson Hotel, Sandals Hotel and Sheraton Hotel. In Jamaica you can find Crown Plaza, Hilton, Holiday Inn Hotel, Renaissance, Four Seasons and Ritz Carlton. In St. Lucia there are Sandals, Wyndham and Hyatt. In St. Kitts there are the Four Seasons hotels. Sir, with the international chain of hotels, they too do their own marketing. It is incumbent on us to encourage that kind of investment and make it possible for an investor to come here to partner with us because I believe that at the end of the day that may be the only solution.

Sir, a lot of these international chain hotels prefer to come and manage a facility rather than to invest in constructing the facility. We have to refocus our approach, to my mind, in terms of how we encourage investors so we can have some of those brand name hotels in Barbados.

Sir, one of the issues was advanced by those in the industry, and I am not prepared to say to what degree it has impacted. I think that we have to address it. It has been addressed in part in this proposed legislation. It has to do with the administrative framework in processing applications and the granting of incentives.

Mr. President, up until today we do not have legislation which says, 'within 120 days we will process an application and we will let you know whether it is approved or denied.' I know that in this proposed legislation we are fixing it at ninety days and I am happy to see it moving in that direction and I hope that they have the capacity to achieve that within a ninety-day framework.

It is important for us to give the impression that we are slow and cumbersome in the way that we will respond to applications, thus inhibiting rather than facilitating investment. These are issues that have to be addressed and it has been partially addressed in this legislation.

They also spoke of best practices from other countries by international investors who do not rank Barbados among destinations perceived to offer good investment

opportunities. I think that if that is the perception out there in the international environment, we have to deal with it and it calls for education and some introspection.

Mr. President, I alluded to the 90-day period for the approving or denying of applications which is a very good provision within the Bill. Therefore, I am saying that our focus should be on encouraging new investment from international chain operators and it may be necessary for us to assist by joint venturing in creating the facilities, thus allowing the particular chain to manage the hotel.

Sir, other persons have already alluded that within the legislation there are other aspects of the tourism product which we are saying is not an accommodation experience but in truth and in fact the tourism experience consists of all those activities that are demanded and expected of a tourist when he or she gets to Barbados and we are saying that the legislation embraces all those activities and players in terms of being able to benefit by way of incentives.

I want to refer to the idea of promoting sex tourism in this country. To be honest with you, Mr. President, when I was reading the article attributed to the spokesperson, I read it in absolute horror. I must say that what he wrote impacted on me. I will assume and I want to assume, and I cannot be so bold as to do that, that he was speaking in his own right. I want to believe that at some point and time, the President of the Party, to which I think the individual belongs, will come out and simply disassociate himself with it because, right now, as far as John Public is concerned, people see no difference between what was said by the individual and what is held by the Party.

4.15 p.m.

If anyone within the Party of which I belong had made such a comment I am certain that my political leader would have with great despatch disassociated himself with it but, again, the act that I am talking about, Mr. President, is one that requires leadership. I will never ever support the idea of sex tourism in this country and I think we all should treat it with the contempt that it deserves.

With respect to the question of casino gambling, let it be known clearly where I stand in the matter. I do not support it. I believe that as a country we have to exploit every possible avenue and we have quite a lot of gambling in Barbados already but as far as casino gambling is concerned my position is quite clear that I personally do not support it. I hope that we are able to exploit the benefits of things like heritage tourism, sports tourism and all the other activities. I know the Senator to my right will be able to speak lucidly on those matters but all those activities should engage our attention to ensure that this country never has to move in a direction of things like casino gambling as the salvation of the industry itself. It is not supported by me.

There is one other point that I want to make and it has to do with the fact that Barbados is a small country with limited opportunities for large tourism projects. Properties that have been operating as hotels cannot be seen only as instruments for capital gains. I speak specifically about Paradise Beach Hotel. I believe that we have at some stage to have legislation in this country which says that people purchasing such facilities should be required to commence the redevelopment of those properties within two years and the redevelopment itself should be completed in no longer than three years' time.

I think that what is happening with respect to Paradise Beach Hotel is nothing short of an absolute disgrace. You cannot have a piece of prime property, the topography of the hotel at Paradise is one of the finest in Barbados and it has been languishing for years because people see that as an instrument for capital gains not that it is a case where anybody wants to develop it for the interest of Barbados. All I am saying is that the same legislation to which I have referred should go one step further and say if you do not start development in two years and if you do not complete in three and the only way you can go beyond the three is if there is a justifiable reason. Where it is sitting doing nothing, Government should be allowed to buy it back at the purchase price, taking inflation into account for the two or three years that the person had it and then seek to develop it.

Barbados is too small. We are not the United States or other places that have a large landmass. What is happening is fundamentally wrong and I would hope that there could be some way at some point in time that we can amend this legislation to include that kind of provision.

The other point that I want to speak to relates to the fact that training forms an integral part of this legislation. Tourism itself is really a hands-on and people-centred industry. People make the difference in tourism. When people leave a country one of the first things that people say is that they had a wonderful time, the hospitality is excellent. I think it was Senator Odle who alluded to the fact that the people who came here for the OAS Conference when they were leaving spoke about the excellent level of hospitality in Barbados. That is something that we have to keep foremost in our minds. We have, therefore, to develop our human resources in tourism because it is the key to the excellence that we seek.

We need also to encourage some of the finest brains in this country to get involved in tourism. Young bright people must see tourism as an excellent opportunity like any other discipline. The industry itself should seek to encourage the very best in tourism because that is where excellency will develop and be created. We need to improve the standard of service and I hope that the mere fact that people can benefit

in terms of the training that more money will be targeted for developing training within the sector.

The last point that I want to speak to has to do with the whole question of productivity within the industry. I personally want to congratulate the Barbados Workers' Union for the efforts they have made in terms of linking productivity and increases in pay as well as incentive payments. I believe that the mere fact that Barbados is a high cost destination then, to my mind, the difference going forward would be making sure that we link any increases and any payments and incentives to that of productivity. The Union has to be congratulated because it is part and parcel of the thinking of the Barbados Workers' Union to make sure that that is the way how we move forward in terms of collective bargaining.

All in all, Mr. President, this is an excellent document before us and I think it is going to make a decisive difference and I will end just as I started. It was not hashed and put together in a vacuum. The people who are the operators within the industry are the ones who guided the formulation of this Bill and, therefore, all I can say is that I commend it to each and everyone of us. I am obliged to you.

SENATOR THE HON. G. S. H. MURRAY: Mr. President, the merits of this Bill are so obvious that I had not anticipated it would have undergone such heavy weather from the Opposition. When I listened to the Opposition, especially Senator Mascoll, it was easily the worst speech I have heard on tourism since the 1999 election and it was akin to when one of their P.R. personnel from the United States, a Jennifer Laszlo, sought to portray Barbados as a nation of toilet scrubbers.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Murray, I think that is unparliamentary.

SENATOR THE HON. G. S. H. MURRAY: If you say so, Sir.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Yes, I say so. I so rule.

SENATOR THE HON. G. S. H. MURRAY: Senator Mascoll himself admitted that he did not see much to criticise. He said there was so much to criticise in the tourism sector and that is why he never criticised the Tourism Bill. For one who likes to claim that his strength is in economics or research statistics he never once made reference to any section of the Bill to give any specifics. He was just wide and fancy and rambling all over the place. Therefore, I thought, Sir, it was instructive that he criticised tourism in Barbados over the years but never once criticised the Tourism Development Bill.

Sir, Senator Mascoll got worse by saying that the tourism had been badly managed in Barbados over the past seven years because we had some four Ministers of Tourism in seven years. I also remember, Sir, that just prior to the election of 1994 Barbados had the sorry spectacle of having some three Ministers and three Boards in a matter of weeks and months, certainly in less than a year. In fact, Senator Mascoll was a member of one of those short-lived, overnight Boards.

Aside.

SENATOR THE HON. G. S. H. MURRAY: ... All of them? Oh, you were the continuity of the short-lived Boards? Congratulations!

So to say that because Barbados had four Ministers in seven years that means that the tourism industry was badly managed, I wonder how he would describe three Ministers in less than one year. I will leave that to Senator Mascoll's imagination to deal with. He said there has been no development in Bridgetown under the re-development project that is going on.
4.25 p.m.

Sir, work has just started on the new Town Hall. The Cheapside Market is underway. The new Bus Stand is being built. There has been the erection of the Boardwalk, the Bayshore Complex, all in Bridgetown. The old schooner pool building on the Wharf, which was a derelict building with trees growing out through the roof is now a sight to behold, a beautiful spectacle and I must commend the builders for revealing that gold mine of brick work which was hidden under cement plaster for many years. I think it is going to be an exquisite addition to that area of Bridgetown. Look at the new Royal Bank Building and the Pelican Complex, the whole of Bridgetown has come alive and still, Sir, Senator Mascoll had the temerity to say there has been no development in Bridgetown over that time.

Sir, Senator Mascoll also tried to make heavy weather of the taxation burden, saying that the major problem in Barbados with tourism was taxation. This is a party that has always sought to make taxation as least burdensome as possible. I recall in 1976 when we came to office, Barbadians paid income tax on \$96 a month and upwards, that is \$24 a week and we took it to \$12 000 and up between 1976 and 1986. We have taken steps to continue that trend. We have given people reverse tax credits, made concessions, *et cetera* and the Prime Minister himself has made it clear that in a few weeks time, we are going to have a major national consultation on taxation and pension reform. Sir, to make it seem as though we are insensitive or unaware of the role of taxation in the economy or the disposable income or the life blood of a country, is not really dealing with the

facts. Senator Mascoll also said that the Barbados Labour Party Government was camouflaging its activities. He said you can have a pear tree with ripe pears on it, but it could be all rotting away, camouflaging to give a certain appearance and that all we are doing is PR.

Sir, the difference between the Barbados Labour Party and the Democratic Labour Party is that we have good things to PR Sir, all that they had to PR for the last three or four years, was fighting, cut throats, back stabbing, *et cetera*. We cannot blame ourselves if we have good things to tell the country. I communicate with you and sympathise with you that even under your leadership, the trend continues. The presidency is nothing new. It is more of the same. We have to be responsible for our activities and actions and that is what we will PR and we make no apologies for that.

Sir, Senator Mascoll also sought to inflict some blows on the Barbados Jazz Festival. He accused the Jazz Festival of becoming a local show which is basically attracting only a bunch of 'has beens' that nobody knows about and that most artistes who come here cannot attract anybody. Also that St. Lucia has been able to attract Barbadians to the Jazz Festival and no St. Lucians come to Barbados.

Sir, it cannot be true. I am sure that Senator Mascoll knows better than that. If this Jazz Festival is so poor, how come that for three consecutive years, the Barbados Jazz Festival has been nominated by a magazine to be the best festival of its kind in the Caribbean. It was better than all, whether it was Crop Over, Jazz Festival, Carnival, it has for three consecutive years been nominated by a Magazine, I think it was *Solo Caribe*, as the best musical event in the Caribbean and this has included all of the festivals. If Senator Mascoll knew about jazz, he would know that jazz is not about hit parades, about top 40s, Cassey Kason, *et cetera*. Jazz is a niche market festival, a musical genre that does not cater to the mass market but it has its own particular following. You do not go by what is happening on Billboard. You would not see that with Jazz. Therefore to regard persons that have come to Barbados, people like Luther Vandross, Patti LaBelle, Kenny G, Ray Charles, Grover Washington, Regina Belle, Spira Gyro, Tito Fuente, Randy Crawford and Nancy Wilson, Sir, to say that they are 'has beens' is really to misunderstand what jazz is about and the kind of personnel you attract.

As a matter of fact, these very same persons that Barbados has been hiring to perform in Barbados, the other islands which have festivals, have been picking after us and recruiting them and hiring them to perform after us. Sir, to say what he said is to be unfair to the Jazz Festival, is not to give it its true credit and what the Barbados Jazz Festival has achieved, in just short of 10 years, I think next year will be the tenth year, and I understand that the organisers are

planning the biggest and best of its kind, what it has been able to achieve, has taken some Jazz Festivals some 20 years to achieve.

Sir, I checked with the organisers and they tell me that they have facts and figures to prove that they get people from St. Lucia, Jamaica, Trinidad, St. Vincent, Scotland, Japan and all over the world, coming to Barbados for the Jazz Festival. So to say that we only attract a local crowd is to misunderstand and not to know what is going on.

Sir, one should expect that there would be difference between the reality and what Senator Mascoll said. I spoke earlier about the disunity in the Democratic Labour Party. Sir, even on this same issue of the Jazz Festival there is disunity. I have seen the Leader of the Opposition at the Jazz Festival faithfully and still, Senator Mascoll is saying that there is no pledge.

Asides.

SENATOR THE HON. G. S. H. MURRAY: Sir, we are talking about the quality of the Jazz Festival. Senator Mascoll gives his presence to the Festival, yet he says it is no good and it is a bunch of 'has beens' *et cetera*.

Sir, the Jazz Festival has gone from strength to strength and it has done Barbados a lot of good, and I am sure that with additional support it will get bigger and better, as we go along. I also want to make some observations about tourism in general. There is also much debate about tourism. Tourism is one of those subjects in Barbados which, most Barbadians feel they are experts on, just like cricket, religion, politics and education. Everybody has their feel, say and knowledge about tourism. I feel the time has come when people's comments on tourism should be based, not on guesses, hunches, feelings, perceptions, prejudices or anecdotes but based on good, sound research and investigation, with a serious analysis of the facts that are presented.

Sir, if that were so, I think that analysis on how the reading on tourism is done in Barbados will be different and better. The fact is that tourism is a dynamic activity. It is always changing. The marketing methods that would have worked for Barbados 10, 15 or 20 years ago, will not work today because the world has changed. The market has changed, the composition of the interest within that market has changed, so the people who are marketing always have to be adjusting. Just like any other product, we will not say that because it worked 10, 15 or 20 years ago, we must go back to this route and stick slavishly to that approach. You have to be testing the market. You have to do focus groups and have to be aware of all the trends, people's interests and seek to cater to those trends.

Sir, we cannot sit here in Barbados without any relation, knowledge or contact with the marketplace in the world and pronounce how we should be able to get large numbers of persons to come to Barbados. It has been said tourism is a people-based activity and people have their likes and dislikes. They travel at various times and motivate for different reasons. They have different interests and therefore, it is a highly subjective activity. Why people decide to visit another destination has a lot to do with feelings, instincts and wishes. So people cannot sit in cold isolation and pronounce on tourism and issue remedies without any relation to the fact.

Sir, there is a lot of talk in Barbados these days about eco-tourism, heritage tourism, community tourism. Again, not everybody who comes to Barbados wants to go into the community and hang out in the rum shops or in pubs. People come to Barbados for different reasons and that has been one of the strengths of Barbados.

Barbados has been consistently strong in tourism over the years because we have a diversity of products and attractions. We have the up market, middle market and the down scale market. We have the villas, the guest houses, *et cetera*. Also, we have a range of accommodation, activities and attractions. While community tourism would be one of those activities, it is not the only activity. Therefore, I think it is irrational and illogical to expect that every visitor who comes to Barbados would be interested in going into the community as we see it. Some people might want to lay on the beach. Some people might want to relax, others might want to visit art shows and still others might want to go on nature trails, *et cetera*. We have to cater to a diversity of interests by having a diversified product and refine that product as much as we can, to be in tune with the interests of the particular marketplace and the different people who make up the marketplace. It is not a monolithic market where everyone is interested in the same thing, it is diversified. People have a diversity of interests and we must cater to them.

4.35 p.m.

It has been said that Barbados is a high-cost destination relative to other destinations but it is also a high-quality destination. We must also seek to offer high-quality, excellent and the best possible service for what we charge persons.

Mr. President, I am not convinced that a brand name hotel would be the salvation to Barbados' difficulties in tourism. We have done quite well over the last couple of years without a brand name hotel because we have been offering a Barbadian experience that is not dependent on a brand name. I have never been to places like Monaco, San Moritz or any of those exotic places but from what I have seen on television and on video and from what I have read

there are no brand name hotels like the Regency or the Holiday Inn there to attract people. People go to Monaco for the Monaco experience. It is up-market, up-scale and of high-quality. This is the market that Barbados has been aiming at and should cater to.

There is no doubt that Barbados benefits tremendously, like Senator Goddard said, from the villa market which is much under-rated in Barbados and unrecognised for its value. I was down the west coast the other day and I was shown a house which persons like Stephen Segal stay at very often to relax and to get away from the maddening crowd. When you can attract that type of personality to Barbados, there must be something that Barbados is doing right. However, when one listens to Senator Mascoll and Senator McClean one would think that there is nothing good about Barbados or nothing right is happening in Barbados particularly as it relates to tourism and that everything about Barbados tourism is wrong and it is crumbling but I believe they are getting mixed up with Barbados' tourism and the affairs of the Democratic Labour Party.

That aside, we have been able to attract persons consistently to Barbados for 15 to 25 years, sometimes three and four times a year to stay in Barbados. Sir, there is no place in the world I would want to go to for 25 years twice or three times a year. I might go because of work but there is no place in the world which means so much to me that I would want to see it 25 times in my entire life. Therefore, there must be something special about Barbados. We must capture, recapture, hold on and reinforce that essence of 'Barbadianess' that makes Barbados so appealing and so attractive to visitors while at the same time ensuring that unique 'Barbadianess' is appreciated, catered to and enjoyed by Barbadians.

I am very optimistic that this Bill will achieve a lot of what it seeks to do. It is not a perfect piece of legislation. In fact, no legislation is ever perfect because human activity is dynamic and while this might be adequate for a particular point in time, the time will come when the market, the circumstances and the factors would have so changed that it would need to be amended and adjusted from time to time.

If the Senator had read the Bill, he would have seen that section 3 provides an exhaustive list of tourism products that will benefit from this new legislation. These include, I will only list 11 of them:

- (a) the construction of a new hotel;
- (b) the alteration or renovation of an existing hotel;
- (c) the conversion of an existing building or buildings into a hotel by reconstruction, extension, alteration, renovation or remodelling;

- (d) the furnishing and equipping of a building to be utilised as an hotel;
- 5. the provision of a tourist recreational facility and tourism related services;
- (f) the construction and equipping of a new restaurant;
- (g) the alteration or renovation of an existing restaurant;
- (j) the establishment, restoration, preservation and conservation of monuments, museums and other historical structures and sites;
- (k) the construction and furnishing of villas;
- (l) the construction and furnishing of timeshare properties; and
- (m) the addition to a tourism product of any facilities or services intended to improve the amenities that the tourism product provides.

Here is a clincher. This list might be considered exhaustive but it is not exclusive. It is recognised that things would change.

This Bill is broad-based in its thinking and provides for an expansion of the scope of the new legislation since the Bill stipulates, and this is very important, and I quote:

- "(3) The Minister may, with the approval of Cabinet, declare by Order any service or facility to be a tourism product for the purposes of this Act."

Therefore, if somebody comes up with a new idea and can satisfy certain criteria that this is a new tourism product that new idea can benefit from what is provided in this legislation. This is a far-reaching piece of legislation that seeks to shift our whole approach from the traditional approach where our approach to giving incentives has been focussed mainly around the Hotel Aids Act, a very old legislation, which goes back to 1967 and is not in keeping with today's need. I have no doubt that Barbadian entrepreneurs and Barbadians who are interested in playing a further part in the development of the industry will capitalise on this.

The Government is ready, willing and able and stand prepared, and in the same way that this Bill came out of a number of consultations from various sectors of the community, Government will be willing to listen to any further enquiries or any further adjustments that are proffered from time to time by the various interests and

would seek to enhance the legislation for the further development of the Barbados tourism product.

I thank you, Mr. President.

SENATOR T. E. BARKER: I rise to support this legislation and commend it to this Honourable Chamber. Tourism is one of the most important activities within our national economy. The latest figures indicate that over 15 per cent of the Growth Domestic Product (GDP) is directly derived from tourism activity. Of course, its spinoff to the other sectors such as manufacturing, agriculture and the other service sector on the whole would tend to even increase this figure.

Sir, persons might ask why do we need this piece of legislation. The answer simply is that the existing legislation, the Hotel Aids Act, does not cover all the various activities in tourism. The Hotel Aids Act is basically for hotels. We feel that the tourism industry is more than hotels because we are of the view that many people do not come here to go to hotels, they come here for the sea, sand and the sun. The attraction is not in a hotel *per se* but is about the things which the island has to offer so tourism is more than the hotel sector. The panel must fully understand that people staying in hotels is incidental upon them visiting Barbados for other reasons. This Bill broadens the scope by ensuring that other activities, and these are listed in the Bill itself some of which Senator Murray read, like restaurant facilities and recreational facilities are now being brought within the ambit of this legislation and that is very, very important. 4.45 p.m.

Mr. President, this Government must be commended for looking beyond the obvious and for getting to the meat of the matter. There are certain activities within the tourism sector which need Government support and which ought to be included in a comprehensive piece of legislation which governs the activities of the tourism sector. Therefore, the need for the Bill is indicated by the fact that tourism is more than a hotel. Tourism is about transport services, restaurant services, recreational services – all of which go to make the complete tourism package and for the first time we are getting a legislation which specifically deals with these things.

Sir, another reason is in the past, apart from the Hotel Aids Act, certain concessions were granted in an *ad hoc* approach where an investor, before investing in Barbados, would not know what concessions are available. With this legislation, these concessions are being spelt out so that persons wanting to invest can now know what is available to them. This is important because the whole question of transparency comes to the fore.

Mr. President, when permission was given to build the Royal Westmoreland plant, we were not in Government then. Senator Mascoll was very much on the tourism board at the time.

The concessions granted to Royal Westmoreland were given in an *ad hoc* manner and were given at the time when the Government, on its last legs, wanted investments at any cost in order to get them. Do not let us forget that by then, the unemployment rate was approximately 25 per cent and, therefore, they wanted to give the impression that they were doing something to put a dent in the high unemployment rate and gave concessions without even thinking.

The result that because those concessions were given to one operator lends itself to the setting of a very bad precedent. We do not feel that Government operations should be done in such a way and that is why the Government should be congratulated for bringing this piece of legislation so that we know before hand what is there for us.

Sir, I hope this Honourable Chamber passes this legislation today so that potential investors can make their investment known before hand to what they are entitled.

Sir, this legislation must not be seen in isolation. There has been talk about the Bill not having anything in it for the small man. This Bill must be taken in conjunction with other pieces of legislation. If we have a \$200 million project, can it be treated in the same way that one would treat a \$200,000 project? Each must be treated in different ways and that is a fact of life. The Government has complete legislation in place that deals with small businesses. If your business is small, there are generous provisions under the Small Business Act of which one can take advantage.

Mr. President, as we know, there are a myriad of laws in Barbados. Every law does not speak to every situation. There are certain laws for certain situations and other laws for other situations.

Persons should also remember this Chamber has passed Special Development legislation which govern activities in Bridgetown, St. Lawrence, Speightstown and in the Scotland District so that those areas mentioned can also be the subject of concessions.

Mr. President, only this morning I was part of the ground-breaking ceremony at the new Hilton Hotel where the construction cost is to be over \$50 million and which the DLP, in their wisdom, were saying would never start.

This Government has gone out of its way, as part of the mandate given to it by the people, to provide meaningful help

to small, medium and large businesses. We need them all working together to push forward this country.

Sir, when everything is taken into consideration, this Government, apart from any other Government in the history of Barbados, has made sure that in the development in this country, there is something for the small, medium and large investors in this country. They are all needed in a very fundamental way and for lots of reasons.

Mr. President, if one is going to criticise the Bill, then look for a good reason to criticise it and not just pick out foolish reasons which show a lack of understanding. It also shows that, in some cases, the first time persons seeing the Bill would be when the Minister was introducing it.

Mr. President, I have no problem in supporting this Bill. We need it. This country still needs to have massive investments in the tourism industry.

Sir, one thing about running a hotel is that there must be continuous refurbishment and redevelopment to that plant.

Mr. President, in the second schedule to the Bill, everything is listed there. It speaks to items which may be imported without payment of customs duty.

Sir, from my experience in the Ministry of Finance, sometimes the hotelier does not know and sometimes it is up to other person to make a valued judgement as to what is or is not included. In the second schedule, it lists every thing so that, with certainty and surety, persons can see what is or is not included and would make their investment decisions. This is what I call sensible legislation and Government must be commended.

Sir I commend this legislation to the Honourable Chamber. We need investment in the tourism industry. We need locals to invest and there is also a need for international investors.

Sir, when speaking about brand name hotels I have a bit of ambivalence there. We have prospered without any such brand name hotels. Brand name hotels, of themselves, are not the total answer to our tourism problems. Yes, they can help because, unlike what Senator McClean said about small hotels not doing their own marketing, that contrary to what happens, it is the bigger hotels that can do their marketing. Take for instance the GEMS of Barbados. When they market, they market not for a single hotel but as a group. The small hotels are not in a position to do their own marketing in the way that the bigger hotels can.

Sir, I want to commend this legislation to the Honourable Chamber. I thank you for your indulgence.
4.55 p.m.

SENATOR Mrs. P. E. RICKINSON: Mr. President, I rise to support the Bill but I have a few comments to make.

We know that tourism is the mainstay of our economy but, in my opinion, it is a very fragile industry and we only have to get a hurricane or the crime rate to rise and the tourists will disappear.

I hope that in addition to tourism we can find other ways and means to develop the country. We have been speaking of golf tourism but when people are frightened to fly on aircraft, how will we get people here to play golf?

Mr. President, it is a fact that tourism appears to be dying and I hope that this Bill will be able to reverse it. Previously, you could not get on the golf course at Rockley but now there are only a few people on that golf course. I live in a tourist belt and I see only a few tourists there and this is to our detriment. I sincerely hope that this Bill will be able to give the tourism industry the jump-start it really needs.

Mr. President, tourism cannot stand on its own because it is linked to other areas like sanitation, transportation, health, agriculture and sports. When I say health, I am not speaking of sex tourism because only a country that wants to will itself into self-destruction will start to promote sex tourism. I am aware that people come here to enjoy a life of sex with the black people but I do not think it should be promoted. It should be controlled as much as possible, given the high incidence of HIV/AIDS in Barbados and the Caribbean.

This is a serious matter because previously when we had sexually transmitted diseases, we were able to control them because when people went back to Canada or the United States of America the public health people would trace them, send their names back to Barbados so that we could follow-up their contacts and get them treated because there was treatment for those sexually transmitted diseases but now if you contract HIV/AIDS the treatment costs thousands of dollars that we can least afford.

Mr. President, regarding the composition of the tourism board, the time has long past when there should only be the executive-type person on a board. We need to have the people who live, eat and breathe tourism and who come into day-by-day contact with the tourists like the taxi drivers *et cetera* included on these boards because they will be able to paint a totally different picture of the tourists due to their experiences and it will be to the benefit of the island. I hope those responsible for tourism will rethink their attitude regarding this matter.

Mr. President, I want to speak about crime not only related to tourists but also to locals. If the incidence of crime

is high and we see in our newspapers that if you go to the bank you will be shot as if in the wild west, it will have a negative impact on both the citizens and visitors.

There are black wealthy tourists who come every year and they told me that they enjoy going for a walk without having to worry about being mugged and that I should voice my opinion and try and control the crime. People should be able to walk around this island without being molested, raped or robbed and if it takes 200 more policemen to do that, it should be done for both the tourists and the citizens.

Mr. President, I stress that they should be policemen and not the Defence Force because their roles are totally different from the roles and functions of policemen.
5.05 p.m.

If it is going to take an additional two hundred more policemen to make us more comfortable, I would like to see that happen. When I travel to Europe, armed policemen are stationed outside of the banks in order to keep crime down. I know that people would not want to see policemen carrying guns but if that is what it is going to take let us do it. There is no point telling us that crime is under control then suddenly we hear of an upsurge in crime where people are gunned down, then they go to the hospital putting a strain on the already strained nursing staff. The Accident and Emergency Department is like a battle ground at times and it makes the nurses in that department very highly stressed.

Mr. President, I want to speak about a tourism product. Senator Odle did an excellent job speaking about the tourism product that her team created to make Sherbourne marketable. We need to make other areas marketable, such as the Bayshore Complex. The Bayshore Complex is one of the most beautiful scenes in the evenings to sit and have dinner but there is no marketing product there. That place should be filled every night with people going there for dinner. It is so enchanting and wonderful. Westmoreland has created their product but that is a gated community. Everybody cannot afford to go to Westmoreland to have dinner.

There are a lot of people who come to Barbados who have saved for many months in order to come to Barbados which has been sold to them as a paradise and which I think is a paradise although we have the crime which is disturbing. A lot of them rely on our public transportation system. They are told that they do not need a car and that the transportation system is a good one and they can go anywhere.

Sir, I agree that the transportation system is good if you are willing to wait for the buses. When they ask me about the transportation system, I would tell them about the various places that they can visit. I would like us to make an effort to put up a schedule at the bus sheds indicating when you can

expect a government bus even if you can only supply information for the hourly scheduled buses. At least you would have an idea that you can take a bus at a certain time and go to Speightstown and then take another bus to Bathsheba. There are a lot of tourists who depend heavily on bus transportation. I think that would be an asset to our tourist industry.

Mr. President, we have the disgruntled taxi drivers. Senator Bolden spoke about the Port and the disgruntled taxi drivers and it is heartbreaking to think that a human being has to stay and sleep in his car night after night and then only makes \$10 or \$20. I think that the Government should get together with the taxi drivers and help them to organise themselves in order to benefit from the tourists arrivals.

I also feel that advance information has to be given to the people responsible for bringing these ships to Barbados because there is no point letting the ships come into Barbados and then the large tour buses are going into the harbour and taking all of the passengers and the local taxi drivers do not get any of the business. Something has to be arranged in order for the taxi drivers to benefit also.

Another area that we need to improve our tourism product is in the area of sanitation. I gave a presentation sometime ago at the Sanitation Department. Some parts of our country are sanitary and other parts leave very much to be desired. We have to work harder in order to make our country more pleasant and not looking like a slum. Some people in our country are in the habit of disposing of garbage by throwing it from the windows of the buses and we have to stop this habit.

Many years ago when plastic bottles were introduced into Barbados, the island was in a horrible state until Government brought in legislation that stated that the bottles had to be returned to the suppliers and that solved that problem but we still have a long way to go regarding policing of persons littering our country and making it unacceptable for residents and visitors.

Sir, we have reached a stage in tourism where we need to have toilet facilities put in place at the various places of attraction. If you are in a taxi, you either have to use the facilities of a restaurant or you have to go into the bush.
5.15 p.m.

If you are in a taxi or if you are in your car or mini moke, you have to go to a restaurant if you have enough money or you have to use the bush. This is not good enough. I think the time has come for us to have toilet facilities throughout the island available for the residents and tourists alike because some of our residents do catch the bus on weekends and bank holidays and go to see some of the sights

in Barbados. That would go a long way in order to help us adjust our tourism costs.

As far as casinos are concerned, and people have been talking about them, I am ambivalent about casinos. I have been to Monaco many times and I know one of the attractions there is casinos. I do not know if introducing casinos for our tourists and guests but not for the residents will work, but what I do know is that it is unacceptable to have so many arcades and lotteries around, especially in residential areas. I do not know if they are making money but there are so many lotteries in a small area and whenever you look, you go to Oistins and you see another one is going up and they are building another. It is time the Government steps in and controls these lotteries. I am not saying that we should not have lotteries. If the Government controls the lotteries now they are not doing a good job. They have to do a better job. It is unacceptable to have so many of them and they are open 24 hours not just during the day. Some countries regulate the hours when lotteries could open and they do not let them open for 24 hours and do as they like. They say they can only open so many hours a day or per night. This is the place where we have to do a lot of education of our young and senior citizens.

When I hear about the races on the radio I always freeze. They make it sound as though it is something wonderful – ‘Come on down and put something on this horse or that horse!’ People take that seriously and feel that when they go and put money on this or that horse that they are going to win. They do not realise that nine times out of ten they are not going to win. When people start telling you every few minutes about half a million dollars they are drawing, they think they will win but very few people win. People want to get rich quickly and they try.

In some countries they have Gamblers Anonymous and I sincerely hope that we will look into that in order to set it up because some people will gamble away every cent at pay day and then they do not have the money to give their wives or their spouses to feed their children, to pay their rent *et cetera*, and that is not good enough. We have to step in and regulate some of these practices. It was not like this before. I know things have to change but we have to regulate how things change. Do not tell me that these lotteries are for tourists because we do not have a lot of tourists at the moment. Tourists come in on the ships that go around the island but there are not a lot of long-staying tourists and I sincerely hope we can do something about those.

Another area is the roads. I know that we have to improve our sewerage system but any tourist coming to the South Coast and breathing in that stuff is not an incentive for them to want to come back in a hurry unless they have been coming here for many years. I know it is not permanent but it seems as though they are opening up so many places at one

time. I do not know how it goes but it seems to me as a lay person that they are not sure what they are doing. Mark you, I believe that most likely they do but it seems that nearly everywhere is being dug up. I sincerely hope that we will just get over that hurdle and make it more acceptable to our tourists.

One other area that I would like to speak about is the reason why some tourists come. There are a lot of repeat tourists and I meet them often. They love Barbados. They feel comfortable here. They feel that despite all the crime there are a lot of happy smiling people and they come from year to year. Some of them use the bus and they go into the country and they mix with the local people and they enjoy it. In fact, some of them can come and tell me about things that are going on in Barbados that I do not know about.

As soon as they pick up their documents at the Airport and they go through, they go to the police band concerts, all the various open houses, they attend nearly every open house. They go to Frank Collymore Hall and they tend to know more about Barbados than myself. These are the people who return and who enjoy it. I feel that we need to encourage this aspect of tourism.

We still have a lot of happy, smiling people in the country. In fact, most of the people in the country, 99.9 per cent are civil and are nice and will explain to the tourist where to go and where not to go. There are just a bunch of hooligans that we have to get hold of and teach a lesson. If you have to put them away for ten to fifteen years so be it.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Rickinson, you have about two minutes to speak to the Bill before the Senate.

SENATOR Mrs. P.E. RICKINSON: Mr. President, it seems as though I just began. However, one last thing regarding one of our best sites in Barbados, Paradise with an absentee landlord. The time has well come when like before and years ago when we had absentee landlords if they could not be present, one had to take over the property whatever it cost and develop it for the country's benefit.

Before I close, I would like to congratulate the Government of Barbados on the breaking of the ground of the Barbados Hilton Hotel, on starting the Barbados Hilton Hotel which is long overdue and which we look forward to help give the jump-start to tourism. I thank you.

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

The question was put and agreed to.

On the motion of SENATOR THE HON. J. X. WALCOTT, the Senate resolved itself into Committee on the Bill, HIS HONOUR SENATOR C. L. BOLDEN in the Chair.

COMMITTEE

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Senate is in Committee.

Parts I to IV were called and passed.
5.25 p.m.

Parts IV and V of the Bill were called and passed. The First, Second, Third, Fourth, and Fifth Schedules became the schedules to the Bill.

On the motion of SENATOR THE HON. J. X. WALCOTT, the Bill was read a third time and passed and cited as the Tourism Development Act, 2002.

SUSPENSION

SENATOR THE HON. J. X. WALCOTT: Mr. President, I beg to move that this Honourable Senate be suspended until 5.50 p.m. this afternoon.

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

RESUMPTION

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: This Sitting is resumed.

ORDER NO. 7 – RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE DRAFT ELECTORAL AND BOUNDARIES COM- MISSION (REVIEW OF BOUNDARIES) ORDER, 2002

SENATOR THE HON. J. X. WALCOTT: Mr. Deputy President, The Electoral and Boundaries Commission came into effect on 1st April, 1985. It comprises five members: the Chairman and two members who were appointed by the Governor-General on the advice of the Prime Minister, a Deputy Chairman and one other member also appointed by the Governor-General on the advice of the Leader of the Opposition.

This Commission has a constitutional responsibility for the conduct of elections in Barbados. It is also among their duties to ensure that the elections are free and fair and their election machinery is ready and efficient at all times and in addition, to ensure that the registers of electors are continuously updated.

Sir, Section 42D(1) of the Barbados Constitution states how this Commission should function and I quote:

“2.1 The Commission shall, in accordance with this section, review the number and boundaries of the constituencies into which Barbados is divided and submit to the Minister for presentation to each House in accordance with this section, reports either

- (a) showing the constituencies into which it recommends that Barbados should be divided in order to give effect to the rule set out in the Third Schedule; or
- (b) stating that, in the opinion of the Commission, no alteration required to the existing number or boundaries of constituencies in order to give effect to the rules referred to paragraph (a)”

“2.2 The rules referred to are set out in the Third Schedule to the Constitution which states as follows:

The electorate shall, so far as practicable, be equal in all constituencies: Provided that the electorate in any constituency shall, so far as practicable, not exceed 110% nor be less than 90% of the total electorate divided by the number of constituencies therein.

2.3 Natural boundaries such as highways and rivers shall be used wherever possible.”

Sir, there were three previous reports submitted by the Commission. The first of these was on the 6th December 1989. Another submitted on the 25th November 1994 and another was submitted on the 13th November 1998, and we are here discussing the form of such a report. The 1989 Report, the number of constituencies was increased from 27 to 28 and the 1994 Report, spoke to the need to have an enumeration of the electorate before any reviewed review of boundaries.

Sir, this enumeration was done in 1996 and in this report to 2002, there are a number of recommendations which are being made. The Commission has recommended that the number of constituencies be increased from 28 to 30, an addition of two new constituencies. One in the North of the island which will be called St. James Central and one in the South which is supposed to be called St. Philip West.

It also speaks to the need for the realignment of boundaries in 23 constituencies and for there to be no changes in five constituencies, these being, St. Lucy, St. John, St. Andrew, St. Michael North West and

St. Michael South Central. It also proposes that the rule in the schedule should be amended so that the number of electors should run in the region of not exceeding 110 per cent, should not exceed 115 per cent and would be less than 85 per cent of the total electorate as opposed to the former 90 per cent.

Sir, the register of electors published on the 31st January this year, contains the names of 214 870 persons. In 1981 the average number of electors per constituency was 6 100. Now in 2002 the average number is 7 674, an increase about 1 574 per constituency. In 1981 there were 164 676 electors. Again, this year, there are some 214 870 electors, that is an increase of 50 194 people, between 1981 and 2002. In that period there was only one new constituency which was added in 1991.

If I deal with the year 1991, in that year there were 191 000 electors and as I said, the total has now gone up to 214 870 and in fact, the total has increased by 23 870 since that additional seat. Sir, at January 2002, the Commission found that 50 per cent of the constituencies were in breach of the rules which I mentioned earlier. Fourteen were within their accepted range, eight were under their range and six were above their range. The six that are above were St. James South, St. Philip South, St. Philip North, Christ Church East, Christ Church East Central and St. Thomas. These six constituencies accounted for some 58 336 electors in an average of 9 389 electors per constituency.

Sir, with the suggestion of the creation of two additional seats, this was done so as to distribute electors more evenly throughout the island and lead to less disruptive movement of boundaries and to ensure the maintenance of communities with minimal dislocation. This was also the argument that was put forward in 1989. To continue with the 28 constituencies and to try to achieve the correct range as outlined in the Constitution, would have led to major reconfiguration of all 28 constituencies. Perhaps some might have been unrecognisable after this reconfiguration and surely, the Government would have been accused of playing with the boundaries and gerrymandering and what else.

Sir, with these new recommendations, the average number of electors for the 30 constituencies would be 7 162. According to the schedule, if the percentage were left at 110 per cent as the maximum allowed for a constituency that figure would now be 7 878. Already 21 of the 30 constituencies have in excess of 7 000 persons. So by increasing it to 115 per cent would allow some sort of leeway for population growth.
5.55 p.m.

Sir, this report received unanimous support from all of the Members of the Commission including those who were recommended by the Leader of the Opposition. Two of the

Commissioners, namely Mr. Owen Estwick and Miss Traece Codrington gave their support subject to the condition that a period of at least two years should elapse between the implementation of these recommendations and the date of the next general election.

Sir, this is very interesting because if we look at the 1991 situation which was the last time changes were made and the number of constituencies increased, you will realise that the report which was submitted on December 6, 1989 spoke to increasing the number of constituencies to 28 and recommending realignment of 26 constituency boundaries. The Other Place rejected the draft order on January 30, 1990 and the report was then amended by the then Prime Minister, Mr. Erskine Sandiford and was approved on March 6, 1990 and by this Honourable Chamber on March 7, 1990. The elections were held on January 22, 1991, which is 13 and a half months after the report was submitted and within ten months of it being approved in the House.

In 1971 when we started on the single member constituencies, St. Michael was divided into 9 constituencies and St. Philip and St. George into two. This was done under the Democratic Labour Party Government and elections were called within a year after deciding on the changes. So the concept of having to give two years is all very interesting and certainly new on the Barbadian political landscape.

There is now a claim by the Opposition that there was no consultation between the members who were recommended by the Leader of the Opposition but I find that difficult to believe. I certainly do not believe that the two members on this important Commission, who were appointed on the recommendation of the Leader of the Opposition, would have been having consultations and would not have consulted with the Leader of the Opposition at least one single time. The only reason for this could be that with all the confusion going on they were not certain who was the Leader of the Opposition or they were consulting with other members of the Opposition.

Sir, comparisons were made with other islands within the Caribbean. We heard that Trinidad and Tobago with a population of 1.3 million has 36 constituencies. We heard that Jamaica with a population of 2.4 million has 60 constituencies. Similar comparisons were also made with St. Lucia and Grenada. Sir, there is one thing that is being omitted in each and every one of those countries, that is, that there is some system of local government in place. This layer of government was abolished in Barbados in the 1960s. Those who are familiar with Jamaica will know that the country is divided into regional councils, parish councils and a central government.

In our Barbadian context, we do not have that situation and many of the things which the parish councillors deal

with in that island, individual parliamentarians have to deal with in Barbados, for example, problems of sewerage treatment, garbage disposal and transport. So Jamaica is looked after by the councillors. In Barbados we have parliamentarians who are responsible for homeless people, welfare problems and if there is a fire. In these other islands, councillors come into effect and play the role there. As a result of this, obviously the overall cost of government would have to be greater in these countries where you have two and three layers of government as opposed to one.

We heard charges that there is no need for an additional seat and that there is no representation but can we really say there is no representation in Barbados by parliamentarians when each and everyone of them has different requirements in their constituencies. There are no two people who would have the same desires and wishes and there is no way that any parliamentarian in this country would be able to please and satisfy each and every one of his constituents, it is not possible.

Charges were also made that we need to reduce the number of constituencies. This was said in relation to the problems in the St. Michael constituencies which I believe my colleague from that side will address later. It said that we should have collapsed and done away with the St. Michael Central constituency which incidentally was the smallest constituency in 1991 and is still the smallest one now. But what would happen to the representation of those people? You would hear cries that their representation was going to be neglected, they were going to be siphoned off into other constituencies and certainly because of the history of a constituency like this one which has a strong predisposition to the Democratic Labour Party, you would have heard that we were trying to weaken the Democratic Labour Party in St. Michael.

We also heard that we should ignore this whole concept because it is not necessary at this point in time and that there are a lot of other issues to deal with such as crime and violence and the decline in tourism but what would we be doing if we just ignore this? The Constitution speaks to certain things that should be done. A Commission is set up and it acted according to the Constitution of Barbados. It admits and acknowledges that we are in breach of the Constitution. So if we continue ignoring it as a Government, we would be breaking the law. So would we be any different from the other people in the country who break and flunk the law? I will just leave that as a question.

Sir, some of the debate you are hearing about these proposed changes is very interesting. Even within the Barbados Labour Party we are hearing of weakening government strongholds and creating seats for the Opposition to win. On the Other Side, we are being accused of gerrymandering and trying to play with the boundaries.

This is a very difficult situation but I think the Electoral and Boundaries Commission has done a very good job. I think they have been honest and they tried to be fair and this is the best way they see of resolving a situation which as far as they are concerned is untenable. I am therefore, suggesting that we accept the advice and the unanimous recommendations.

I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

SENATOR C. A. MASCOLL: Mr. Deputy President, I rise in this debate to make a couple of observations. As I read the report the first thing that struck me is that the Commission recorded its thanks and appreciation to the Deputy Chief Electoral Officer and the staff of the Electoral Department for the technical advice and assistance given during its deliberations. That is fascinating from the point of view that while such a major work has been done under the Deputy Chief Electoral Officer that would alter and change the boundaries and add two new constituencies, as I speak, a decision has been taken to allow someone else to act as chief electoral officer. Mr. President, that is where the fascination comes.
6.05 p.m.

Having done this good work, the Deputy Chief Electoral Officer was not even considered for the post of Chief Electoral Officer, which became available since November last year, where there is now an Acting Officer in that post. That is part of the journey of being a public servant, where we are boasting about public sector reform, the need to provide for people to become more advanced in their careers, the need for individuals to be rewarded for efforts, and yet, having recognised the faulty work in this Document, the major post in the Electoral Commission, has not been given to the person who has demonstrated that he is highly competent to conduct such an exercise.

Mr. President, having said that, let me get to the politics side of these changes. I have been thinking about the changes that have occurred. I have my view as to how we could have considered looking at the constituencies across Barbados. When it satisfies the Government to speak about the need for local government and the need as to why we have to justify the increase in the number of constituencies so as to reduce the average level of constituents and thus make the work of the representatives less difficult, we hear about there being no local Government in Barbados and that, therefore, is the basis of justification as far as I have gathered in relation to the Debates I have heard in the Other House as well as this House.

Mr. President, I would suggest that while a voter has only one vote, that the constituencies in St. Michael, per constituencies in rural Barbados, in terms of representation, if one accepts that as a premise for discussion, then it is safe to say there is no homogeneity across Barbados as it relates to voters.

I say that to suggest that rather than summing the entire amount of constituents and dividing by the number of constituencies, thus arriving at an average figure, then making a determination about the range being in the average of 10 to 15 per cent, I feel the time has come to look at the distinction between urban and rural Barbados. There is no need to have an average constituency in Barbados being 7,162 as identified in this Report. Perhaps the time has come to recognise that the major problem, according to the finding of the Report, is that the St. Michael constituencies for the most part, with the exception of three – St. Michael North, St. Michael South East and St. Michael East – all the other constituencies are below the established average. Therefore the major problem with the small size happens to be St. Michael. What can explain that? Why is it that rural Barbados is growing at the kind of rate that we see continued growth over the next 20 to 25 years.

Therefore, the problem that they are now trying to resolve by increasing the range from 10 to 15 per cent such that there is no need to make further adjustments within a five-year period will still become a problem within the next ten to fifteen years because there will be deurbanising.

Sir, it is fascinating again that that point is accepted by the Other Side but they are still harping on this issue of urban renewal and increasing economic activity within the city area, and the importance of it to develop the city as a major hub of activity, and a whole set of ridiculous discussion. In fact, there is no need for such emphasis to be placed on residential concentration within urban Barbados. Barbados is too small for that to be used as a consideration. That has been a major discussion point on debates in this House and the Other House as it relates to why we should redevelop Bridgetown. I am now saying that there is recognition that there is de-urbanisation in Barbados. In this Report, contrary to all the discussions that we have had as to why we should emphasise residential occupancy within the City, we are now here discussing a Report that suggests the complete opposite – that there has been de-urbanisation.

Perhaps what could have been done – because regardless of what I say today it would not make any difference to the outcome of the debate today; that is how the nature of this life is. In St. Michael, there are 73,655 voters under the eleven (11) existing constituencies, giving an average of 6,696 persons per constituency. That should now be used as an average for St. Michael, then a range at 10 or 15 per cent above or below can be then put in. As it stands and as we project into the future there is not going to be any significant population growth within St. Michael in the foreseeable future. In fact, there may be reductions of the population growth within the next ten to 15 years.

On the other hand in rural Barbados, every other constituency outside of St. Michael, we have voters of 141,215

persons, to be divided by 17, thus giving an average of 8,307 persons per constituency within rural Barbados. Of course, there is a difference in those two averages to the tune of 1,611 persons. Why do we have to sum both rural and urban Barbados together to get an average that we then use to assess the St. Michael situation as well as the rural situation. There is nothing sacrosanct about that approach. If you want to appreciate the population trends in Barbados, then you would have to accept that in some respects, there may be, on average, a lower level of voters across the eleven (11) constituencies in St. Michael which you have to accept as reality.

The rural/urban distinction then becomes important. While it is the case that in rural Barbados, according to the figures, the average might suggest that the rural constituencies are going to be larger, the actual kind of representation required in St. Michael is far different to that required in rural Barbados. We all know about the demographics, the closeness of the voters, the income levels, the attitudes; it is a different kind of constituent. It is a more difficult kind of constituent to represent because the demands are greater and that is accepted by all and sundry in politics.

Therefore, for that reason alone, it may very well be the case that we can accept a lower average per constituency across St. Michael.

Mr. President, I am therefore, suggesting what could have been a consideration in the entire exercise, that the St. Michael constituencies are more difficult to represent and we could accept a lower degree of average that would be far below the average in Barbados.

The other thing is that because of the characteristics of rural Barbados the land space is larger and in some respects people may view that as implying that it is different because the typography makes it difficult to access individuals but the rural constituency is far more accommodating and less difficult to represent. This is a view held by all in politics. 6.15 p.m.

No one is saying the workload is going to be reduced because whatever you do, it is about representation and at the end of the day it is about getting to each and every constituent within each and every constituency. There are certain inherent characteristics in the politics of Barbados and I recommend that we could perhaps move away from treating constituencies as homogenous which they not necessarily are when you look at the reality of politics in Barbados.

From that standpoint I suggest that in the foreseeable future it may become necessary to make changes to constituencies across Barbados on the basis of other factors rather than trying to find an average that satisfied the entire

island. We may have to demarcate into urban and rural as we have been doing already because we have the Urban Development Commission and the Rural Development Commission. When the Government realised that rural Barbados was neglected under previous administrations there was a deliberate strategy to identify the Rural Development Commission, the Urban Development Commission and urban Barbados which runs from lower Holders Hill up the highway to Rendezvous in which 101 000 persons reside.

If we are going to make the distinction in delivering goods and services to Barbados on the basis of rural and urban, perhaps we can also make a distinction in determining the size of constituencies along urban and rural considerations. Sir, no matter what I say now, it will make no difference to the outcome of this debate so this is simply food for thought.

Mr. President, the question of appointing Commissioners to the Electoral and Boundaries Commission has been looked at, to my mind, from a very illogical standpoint. Imagine having five Commissioners on a sitting, three representing the Government and two on the Opposition side. The Opposition decides to give its two Commissioners a mandate to achieve X position and then the Government side gives its three Commissioners a mandate to achieve Y position.

I have heard it said in the Lower House that once you have given a position to your Commissioners that you cannot go against them. This is absolutely absurd because if you give a mandate to your Commissioners and the other side gives a different mandate to their Commissioners then there will always be a stalemate and a consensus will never be reached on anything at the Electoral and Boundaries Commission. To suggest that what you demanded was not achieved and, therefore, it gives you reason to support or not support is absolutely ridiculous logic.

You can have a preferred position in that, as a Party, you may feel that it is to your benefit to want a particular set of circumstances to be achieved but the other side is equally as political and may want another set of circumstances. In the light of that, therefore, it means that the individuals put on the Commission must have the ability to reason and have independent input even of the political party. If not, the Commission simply becomes a rubber stamp without the ability to think of the larger picture, the country, and not just two political parties.

Therefore, the kind of logic that I heard being espoused by the Attorney General to support a position was absolutely out of character because it could not win an argument even in a high school debate where you are saying that once you give a mandate to your Commissioners that

they have to bring back the mandate. Sir, if this was so, the work of the Commission would never be achieved in such circumstances.

Sir, there was the question of whether changes had to be made. Of course changes had to be made given the laws of Barbados, so the question becomes, which option do you chose? Do you go for increasing constituencies or juggling them around?

In spite of the fact that it was said that you do not want to change boundaries all over the place because you are expected to follow certain roads, ravines and other natural features, we still have a situation in which 23 constituencies were changed. Sir, only five escaped and it is understandable why only five escaped because in St. Michael North West if you had to change the constituency, the only logical thing to do would be to drift to the north of the island.

It is recognised that the southern side of the island, St. Philip, Christ Church and the other parishes have very high levels of population growth and, therefore, to even it out you would have to push constituencies northwards and extend them eastwards in which case it would be possible that the constituency of St. Michael North West would have taken up some of the existing boxes of St. James South and perhaps it was perceived by those in authority that such a position would have enhanced the opportunity of the Democratic Labour Party candidate for St. Michael North West. It was considered that rather than provide him with any degree of light, only darkness should be shed on him in the coming months. It was a political move and it was decided that no advantage should appear to be given to the President of the Democratic Labour Party so we can understand why there was no effort to alter the boundaries of St. Michael North West.

The question becomes, what option should you look for? If you look at the changes made across constituencies, it is almost impossible to support any changes that would be made to any boundaries, by any Commission in any political period in Barbados because somebody is going to be disadvantaged. I have said that it is going to be almost impossible for there to be consensus in any changes made to Barbados constituency boundaries at any given time, by any political Party, for the next seven years.
6.25 p.m.

Sir, you have to understand that even if changes are made to conform with the constitutional requirements, an existing Member of Parliament may feel that he or she has been disadvantaged in spite of the fact that he or she sits as a Member for the ruling Party, because it then becomes a question of self-preservation. While you may have adjustments being made at the macro-level to conform with the Constitution, when you go to the constituency level an

individual is going to look at his or her own interest. Therefore, within a Party you are going to have people being disgruntled.

Sir, you will never be able to make changes to any boundaries over any period which will reach full consensus. It is impossible for it to happen. You can get a consensus at the macro-level because the macro level would involve only two political parties, Barbados Labour Party or Democratic Labour Party, as I can see it in the foreseeable future, but you cannot get the micro-level and you look at the individual level within the Democratic Labour Party or the Barbados Labour Party, somebody is going to feel as though they should have got that and that is where you are going to get the breakdown of the so-called consensus.

Sir, you cannot expect there to be a consensus, even within the Party, because somebody is going to feel that they should have been better. It is only because, at the end of the day, when we make adjustments to boxes, there is going to be consideration about the historical voter pattern which is going to be perceived to be in favour of one or the other.

Surprisingly, in order to make these changes, you are hearing the Other Side saying that traditionally the Democratic Labour Party's stronghold was St. Michael. Now, that therefore reduces the suspicion when somebody accuses the Government's side of altering in their favour, because they can say historically these constituencies supported the Democratic Labour Party. The historical evidence then is based on the most recent outcome and you cannot equally weigh all past elections in St. Michael.

Therefore, you have to consider what is the most recent outcome. The most recent outcome is, the people voted for the Democratic Labour Party heavily within the St. Michael constituencies. In fact, the Democratic Labour Party vote declined from 31 000 in 1986 to a mere 14 000 across St. Michael in the last election. Over a thirteen-year period, the Democratic Labour Party got less than half of the votes in St. Michael than it received in 1986 and in 1999.

It may be perceived historically that St. Michael is the stronghold but the reality of the situation is, when you look at the most recent outcome, it cannot be said that the Democratic Labour Party has a stronghold in St. Michael.

Mr. President, when we look at the two new constituencies, there is a pattern in the changes that have occurred. We noticed for sure that in St. James Central, where the goodly Senator is expected to run, when they got to the highway they skipped across the road to Redman's Village and then Welches Terrace. The goodly Senator happens to reside in Welches Terrace so he is included in his constituency. On the other side of the coin, in St. James South, by some stroke of adjustment, the present

representative for St. James South remains in her constituency. When you go to St. Philip south, the PF3 Box was so altered as to carve an area around the existing representative, Minister of Agriculture, so that he remains in St. Philip South. There seems to be a pattern existing in the changes to the constituency boundaries that we should, as far as possible, allow the representative to remain in his or her constituency and that pattern was used to include the prospective candidate for St. James Central to allow him to remain in St. James Central by crossing the road into Welches Terrace.

Sir, as we all know, to have altered St. Michael might have required us to adjust the two smallest constituencies, St. Michael Central and St. Michael South, that is to get rid of them, now, that cannot happen. The politics of asking an incumbent to be dismissed is not heard of. For sure, you cannot come into the City given the nature of the Member of Parliament for the City. It would be impossible to even consider removing the City constituency, as it is said that the capital needs a representative. Sir, it is beyond that. It is the power of the individual and the position of the individual within the Party that would have made it impossible to consider removing the City as a constituency in St. Michael, so we could not have that either.

The other thing is the whole question of timing. When you check the folklore of Barbados, it is repeatedly said that the Democratic Labour Party created a Seat for the eventual winner of Christ Church South in 1991.

Asides.

SENATOR C. A. MASCOLL: When you use 1991's position, to try to suggest that the then Prime Minister altered the boundaries in favour of the Democratic Labour Party, it must be recognised that the creation of that Seat in Christ Church made it easy for the person that represented the constituency after the changes in the boundaries in that constituency. That is a major discussion in political circles because of the decision.
6.35 p.m.

Sir, the social implications of the decision are very powerful when you assess the Christ Church South situation. I will go no further than to say that is one time when the politics and the social standing came together and ignored the political relationships. That is all I can say on that. When you speak of 1991, let it not be said that the changes were made to further any Democratic Labour Party individual. Indeed, the conclusion is that the changes favoured someone on the Other Side.

I have difficulty arguing this matter of the timing. We all recognise that, yes, there should be a two-year period before, but the reality of the situation is that that does not

bind the Prime Minister from calling an election immediately after receiving the report. Therefore, perhaps we need to look at something else. If it does not constrain his decision, it really is not important. That is it. It cannot constrain his decision beyond that and it then becomes a question of the morality of the decision because you cannot argue with the legal side of it. Should the Prime Minister give the Opposition Party an opportunity to become familiar with a new constituency or changes in a constituency? Is it true that he would know up front where he stands and would he, therefore, not be in a position to tell his side that this is where the outcome is and they can start the process working from much earlier than the Opposition Party?

In an environment where you have 26:2 in any case where there might be need to change the Constitution, you can almost guarantee the outcome up front. If you had a situation in which you had 15:13 or 16:12 you may not be in such a favourable position and, therefore, it is safe to say that given the nature of politics any advantage that you can get on the opponent you are going to take. If that is so, then you can expect that the goodly Senator on the Other Side would have known about St. James Central early and individuals in St. Philip West would also have known about the pending constituency in St. Philip quite early and they would have put the individual in place much earlier than the Democratic Labour Party would have been able to.

Therefore, the question is whether it is a moral or a legal issue. Really and truly it becomes one of morality. It is not a question of tying the decision of the Prime Minister to the law of the land but it is whether he has a conscience or heart to make a decision that would not be so disadvantageous to the opponent as to give him or her no chance of winning the seat. That is a different thing altogether.

I, therefore having promised not to speak too long on this Resolution wish to wind up by saying that I have reached the conclusion where I feel that given the nature of politics where there is an attempt to make a distinction between rural and urban Barbados that we should perhaps consider the need to look at the averages across St. Michael alone and then look at the averages across rural Barbados and not be concerned because rural Barbados has a slightly higher or even a much bigger average than that of St. Michael.

When you look at the over-riding characteristics of representation across the board in these two different areas of Barbados that perhaps there is some justification in having a lower level of voter representation within the St. Michael area because it is historically far more difficult to represent St. Michael constituencies than it is to represent rural Barbados and then on the basis of other considerations land, space and other factors, population growth, perhaps we need now to consider that there is going to be de-urbanisation, a

move out towards St. Thomas, St. George and it is already happening in St. Philip and certainly has happened in St. James. Those two areas, St. George, St. Thomas and even St. Peter may sooner rather than later become areas where Barbadians are going to drift and affect the voting patterns or the level of voting in rural Barbados.

I have no difficulty then in saying that perhaps we cannot treat the constituencies as homogenous and we need to look at the final details and distinction between rural and urban Barbados. On that score, as a President of a political party, I would certainly not expect that you can simply come and support increases to constituencies just willy-nilly. It would not be in your interest anyhow to do so because no one on the Other Side can be sufficiently persuasive to make me believe that this is the preferred way in making the changes to the boundaries in Barbados because there are other options.

I know on the Other Side that they can argue equally well that this position is the preferred option but somebody else can argue that you could have done else and from the point of view of pure politics I am saying that it would not be in the interest of the Democratic Labour Party as a party to support the increase in constituencies in Barbados because there could have been an alternative approach that could have achieved a more equitable distribution of votes across constituencies without causing the kind of political fall out that may result.

On that score, Mr. Deputy President, I am obliged to you.

SENATOR B. R. COLLYMORE: Mr. President, while I agree with the last speaker that there are alternatives and options that could be pursued in making these changes, I wish to address what I consider to be a more fundamental aspect of this matter.

First of all, I would question whether the document that was presented to us constitutes the exact document that was passed by the Lower House. I would wish this to be, and I would say why I say this. I think that the recommendations of the Commission which were two basic recommendations, one to extend the number of constituencies to 30 and to redraw the boundaries and the other one was to change Schedule 3 of the Constitution. Schedule 3 of the Constitution forms part of that body of law which can only be amended in a certain way. That way is that the law amending it must state so. Secondly, it must pass both Houses of Parliament by a two-thirds majority of the membership of those Houses.

What I have and what I asked for this morning does not have that specific provision and Schedule 3 of the Constitution forms part of the law that can only be amended

in a certain way. I am not persuaded that you can amend the boundaries to use an average and to use a change of 15 per cent above or below. Even if you use the current 10 per cent, it produces differences of as low as 10 electors in some constituencies. This could hardly be the intention that under the current 10 per cent there would still be some constituencies which would only have 10 voters above the average.

6.45 p.m.

Sir, the minimum will be at such a precarious level that within one week or one month this could change. I am saying that simultaneous with this, there should have been a provision to amend the Constitution. It is not a matter that can be treated lightly. It is part of what is the democratic way. It is stated in the Constitution that there is a specific way to make these changes, and we cannot come with a law to change some aspect of something that has a Constitutional connotation, and do not change the Constitution at the same time.

Aside.

SENATOR B. R. COLLYMORE: Well, the citizens of Barbados should be better advised. They have been wronged several times before. Sir, I have another fundamental point to make and it is that given the statistics used by the Commission, Barbados has an electoral roll, as at 1st January of 214 870 persons and that must be the highest percentage anywhere in the world of a national population. It constitutes 80 per cent of the national population and it therefore says that we have very few people in the under 18 age group, living in Barbados.

I have been actively involved in a Committee that has been looking, over the last two years, at a review of the pensions of the National Insurance Scheme and from time to time we have had statistics on these matters to help us to make an informed recommendation. I therefore wish to state that from all the statistics made available, including preliminary figures of the 2000 census...

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Senator Collymore, would you please hold for a minute.

Mr. Deputy President, left the Chair and Mr. President, resumed the Chair.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Collymore, please proceed.

SENATOR B. R. COLLYMORE: Sir, all the figures that have been made available to us, including the preliminary outcome of the 2000 census, says that the Barbados national population is slightly less than 270 000 people. Our school population is in excess of 50 000 people and the under fives which have to be taken into account, suggest to me that if you accept that our national electoral

roll is 214 000 out of a 270 000 population – and it is not exactly 270 000, 267 000 I think it is – that we have no young people at all.

It is true that there have been great shifts in the demographics of Barbados and that we now have an aging population where, nearly 13 per cent of the population is above the age of 65. The school roll, in terms of the new ones, has been steadily reducing over the last ten years, that says we are having fewer people. Indeed, the fertility rate is now estimated to be near 1.6, 1.7 where before, it was over 3.1, so that is true. Even though people are living longer, I am saying that the statistics that I have seen, suggest that the under 18s are far in excess of the number suggested by the electoral roll.

If the electoral roll is 214 000, then that is 80 per cent of the total population and that is a phenomenon. Within accepted information on this sort of thing, an electoral roll, depending on whether it is at the age of 18 or 21, hardly exceeds 70 per cent of the national population and it is more – between 62 per cent and 68 per cent. We, therefore have an 80 per cent electoral roll. My submission is that there is something flawed about that information and the Commission should have spent more time cleaning up the electoral roll, before making these serious changes.

Mr. President, we have not had an election for three years or more and at that time the Commission existed and I imagine that the Commission is continuously working. Therefore, there was time to clean up the electoral roll. The electoral roll cannot be 80 per cent of the national population and therefore the information on which this has been produced, in my view, is flawed. Sir, there are measures laid down in the Representation of the People Act which indicate who can vote and who cannot vote. Those who can vote, a citizen of Barbados, a citizen of a Commonwealth country who can be registered as a citizen of a Commonwealth country other than Barbados, who has been resident in Barbados for three years must be 18 years of age or over, and must have resided in the constituency for which you are seeking to be registered, at least three months prior to your application for registration.

Equally true, there is some information on people who cannot be registered and who cannot be accepted for voting. These include people who have been absent from Barbados for five years, people who have offended some law in Barbados, *et cetera*. I am saying that the Commission should put mechanisms in place to clean up the electoral roll with the help of other agencies, like immigration, the police, *et cetera*.

I think that it is possible, and I understand that sometime ago the Commission took about 20 000 names off the electoral roll.

Asides.

SENATOR B. R. COLLYMORE: The names have gone back on and I am saying that this logic escapes me. How can a national population that has been given as 262 000 ten years ago, and now 267 000 produce 214 000 on an electoral roll. Sir, because of this, an effort should have been made to clean up that electoral role.

Sir, Section 13 of The Representation of the People's Act, indicates eligibility for registration to include a person who has registered by virtue of any census, under the Statistics Act for the purpose of the registration of Barbadian citizens. Sir, that seems to suggest that there should be some correlation between the electoral roll and the information coming out of a census. I therefore find it difficult to lend my support to this Resolution, in the context in which it has been presented.

I wish to go on to other aspects of the matter. I said earlier that the differences between the constituencies as shown here suggest that there were eight below the range and six above the range. If the statistics of those 14 were taken together, the average would not suggest that we should have even one more seat. This may not follow, but just note that the number of electors in the six constituencies above the range, in relation to the number below the range in the other eight, when put together and compared, the difference is less than the average.
6.55 p.m.

The basis for this whole exercise is the division of the electoral roll by the number of constituencies to get the national average. This then makes provision that no constituency should be 10 per cent above or 10 per cent below the national average which is now recommended to be 15 per cent above. When I look at those constituencies that are 10 per cent above or below the range or 15 per cent above or below the range, the difference does not produce enough electors for one new constituency, so I am suggesting that there should be another way of determining how many constituencies we should have. We have eight constituencies that are below the range and six that are above the range. The other 14 are within the range and, therefore, we do not have any problem with them. .

The next point I want to make is that we are talking about representation and governance. In my view, the creation of two more constituencies on the present basis will not add one whit or tittle to good governance. We would have 30 people in the House of Assembly who, presumably, will be the Government, the Opposition and the Back Benchers but their contribution will not improve representation unless we pay greater attention to the working of committees so that each constituency representative will be representing on an equal basis with other representatives

and will have an opportunity to show that he or she is participating in the business of governance but, in my view, this will add more problems to the working of the system unless you work your committees. I understand, I speak subject to correction, that some committees cannot even get a quorum and some are not even summoned to meet.

Asides.

SENATOR B. R. COLLYMORE: Maybe if they reduce the numbers for the most important committee, they might get a quorum. I may sound a little different on this case but I am opposed to any increase in the membership of the House of Assembly based on the existing formula unless the electoral roll is cleaned up. There are other ways of dealing with this matter and they should be considered. Good governance is not enhanced by having more seats in the House of Assembly.

The publication of a register and its revision will add proper function to the Commission. The Commission has an obligation to clean up the register periodically which could be as much as every year to ensure that we do not have an inflated register such as the 214 800 as is now suggested.

I am obliged to you.

SENATOR T. E. BARKER: Mr. President, I rise to give my support to the recommendations made not by the Government but by an independently created constitutional body known as the Electoral and Boundaries Commission.

Sir, as a result of the constitutional changes in the early 1980s we have taken the creation of boundaries out of the hands of the politicians and put it into respectable and impartial hands, and this report shows the result of this impartiality.

When the last report was given in 1989, I am sure that the last senator who spoke may have been in the civil service then, it was rejected by the Democratic Labour Party which dominated in the sense that it had the majority of members and as a result of that it gave occasion for the Prime Minister to draw the boundaries, but we do not want that to be part of our political history at this point in time. An impartial body was given the mandate to look at the boundaries and according to the dictates of the Constitution, the Commission made the recommendations they saw which will maintain the tenets of the Constitution.

With that important proviso, when I examined the report on the Constitution, I found no fault with it. Of course, if I had to draw the boundaries, I might have done things a little different and if the last Senator who spoke had to draw them, he would have drawn them a little differently

and obviously if we had to draw them, we might have drawn them a little differently, but in the final analysis, the will of the people must be respected at all times.
7.05 p.m.

Mr. President, our political history has shown that 1971 was the worst case of gerrymandering I have ever seen in Barbados but by 1976, the Government who had changed the boundaries in 1971 was changed. The boundaries were first changed in 1990 and by 1994, the Government that had changed it was also changed. Therefore, changing boundaries do not guarantee anything. In the final analysis, it is the people who have the final say. What is also important is that the process must be seen to be fair. The people must have confidence in the system so that they know integrity is being maintained.

This stipulation that the boundaries must be within 10 per cent of the average is a good speculation and one that ought to be respected. It is only fair that constituencies should be approximately of the same size and that well defined boundaries be maintained.

Sir, I heard a nonsense suggestion - and I use the word nonsense advisedly - that we can have two averages for one set of numbers - an average for St. Michael and one for the rest of Barbados. That is a mathematical nonsense. There cannot be two averages coming out of one set of numbers. In any case, the argument that the urban constituencies should be smaller than the rural goes against logic. Take St. Joseph for example. The geographical land space of St. Joseph is three or four times as big as some of the constituencies in St. Michael. The Member of Parliament for St. Joseph would have a much larger geographical constituency and, therefore, he would have much more road repairs, street lights or services to worry about. Why then are we going to saddle him with additional constituents?

Sir, logically, the size of the rural population should be smaller than that of the urban.

Mr. President, in any case, if that point has to be made, then the Constitution allows that. As of the 28 constituencies now, the constituencies can range in size from 6 900 to 8 400 voters and, therefore, according to the Constitution, there is still a 15 000 leeway. Therefore, their argument does not make sense and it is a clear case of straight and crooked thinking.

Mr. PRESIDENT: I would ask you to withdraw that statement.

SENATOR T. E. BARKER: Sir, that refers to a book on statistics called Straight and Crooked Thinking.

Mr. PRESIDENT: In the context of a Parliamentary Debate, I am asking you to withdraw that statement.

SENATOR T. E. BARKER: Sir, I am withdrawing it. I have no problem taking it back. I was just referring to the title of a book.

Sir, the question of the population size of 214 000, out of 262 000 to which Senator Collymore alluded, had me worried about the facts. Normally, one would expect that with such a population, there would be approximately 190 000 persons that have reached the age of 1. I noted that the Provisions of the Representation of the People Act, does not allow us to take someone's name off the Electoral Roll. This can only be done after a period of five years. Therefore, within this 214 000 persons there are a large number of persons who might be overseas but whose names cannot be legally removed from the register.

Those Members who run for constituency office can tell that whenever letters are sent out, approximately 150 per cent of those letters return and for any number of reasons.

Senator Collymore made a statement about cleaning up the list. Sir, one only cleans something that is dirty. When he speaks of cleaning up the list, he is creating the impression that there is something wrong with it.

This law is important, Sir. Imagine what would happen if the Electoral Office can arbitrarily remove a name - they would be playing with a person's fundamental right; a right that the Barbados Labour Party (BLP) and others fought tooth and nail for in the 1940s to make sure that persons of my colour, status, background and income can vote. We do not want that taken away in any light manner. Therefore, the act of removing someone's name from the Register must be difficult because it must first be proved that an individual is not being disenfranchised.

SENATOR B. R. COLLYMORE: Mr. President, I made the point that for about four years the Electoral and Boundaries Commission ably reduced the Electoral Register to about 20 000. It was done four years ago, I suggest they could still continue to do it.

SENATOR T. E. BARKER: Mr. President, the discrepancy is there for a reason. Nobody has yet told me, after so many elections, there were persons who have voted twice. It is not known in Barbados, despite the fact there may be more people on the roll that can be physically accounted for, no one has said there has been any hanky-panky.

Sir, the Report is conditioned. All five members of the Commission have agreed to the Report but two members, as is their right, said the changes should only be implemented after a two year interval.
7.15 p.m.

Sir, I must admit that my mind at times looks beneath the surface and looks for the devious. If this two-year gap was to be maintained, given that elections are constitutionally due within two years, it means that the next elections could not be fought on the new boundaries because two years would come after the next elections. It is simply a clever ploy to confuse the public but, as I said, I look below the surface for these things.

SENATOR LeR. H. McCLEAN: Mr. President, on a point of order. The Honourable Senator made the point that the Commission is an independent one and I think it is improper for him to impute that any of the Commissioners would be trying any ploy for political reasons since he has established that it is an independent and honourable Commission, so how is he now imputing improper motives on the part of those Commissioners who suggested that it be two years?

Mr. . PRESIDENT: I would go a little further and say that the Commissioners were acting in an official capacity. It is a well-established rule of Parliamentary practice that references to persons in their official capacity in the sense that you are making a derogatory suggestion should first be cleared with the Presiding Officer. I ask you to be aware of that, Senator Barker.

SENATOR T. E. BARKER: Sir, I thank you for the sound advice. I am making the point that the two-year interval has me concerned and I hope I am not imputing improper motives given that elections must be held before two years have elapsed according to the Constitution.

The Prime Minister is on record saying that a fair amount of time should elapse before the boundaries are implemented. He has said this to the people of Barbados because this Government made sure that the proceeding of Parliament are not held in secret but that all people can hear it through the state owned radio station.

Sir, the people of Barbados have a keen sense of fair play and there are things they do not try to do because they can backfire. The Prime Minister said he agreed with the idea that a decent interval of time should elapse and the Prime Minister is a man of his words.

Sir, I note with interest that the Opposition in spite of questioning the two years and before the report became public were making moves in St. Philip because the candidate who ran in St. Philip North last time said he wanted to run in the new seat.

Sir, I have learnt that the behaviour of the Democratic Labour Party at times taxes the most intelligent of brains, and trying to fathom how they move is like trying to find where the wind comes from and where it is going.

Sir, I am going to go on record as saying that it is my view that our Parliament is far too small. Sir, I like the committee system but how could you have a committee system when the size of the Cabinet is very close to the size required for a majority in the House. If you have 28 seats, this means a Party can win with 15 seats and constitute the Government and all of those 15 Members would be Cabinet Ministers because it is difficult to see a Cabinet with less than 15 members given the complexity of Government's operations. Sir, all of those 15 Members would be Cabinet Ministers and if you are talking about the Committee system, it should not include Cabinet Ministers. It means that if there are 40 Members in Opposition and you want to operate a Committee system, then it will be dominated by the Opposition and there would be no ruling party representation on the Committees. Sir, I am not surprised that Senator McClean in his asides does not understand that logic.

Sir, if you have a situation where all the Members on the Government side are in the Cabinet, the Committee system cannot work. Whereas, if there was a larger Parliament and you take out the Cabinet Members then you can have Members on both sides to form the Committee system to make it work effectively because the Committee system is there to look at the actions of the Executives.

Sir, my own view is that Parliament should be at least 40 members. Good representation is going to be costly but in the final analysis the country is going to benefit from good representation.

Sir, in order for the Committee system to work properly we have to have a larger Parliament, one that is not dominated by the executives as is the case of larger Parliaments. It is a very important issue because if you want to get greater separation of powers between the Executive and the legislative then you must have a Parliament which is not dominated, in terms of numbers, by the Executive, as could be the case in a small Parliament and given the fact that we do not have local government representation.

Sir, the average person in America has about nine representatives. At one level he has the President, a Senator and a House Representative. In his state he has the Governor, a State Senator and a State Representative and at the local level he has the Mayor and Council. He has eight or nine persons to represent him but in our system we have one person who has to look after parochial issues, national issues and international issues. Sir, the demands on our representatives are far too great but our aim in life here in Barbados is to destroy politicians. We hear that on the call-in programmes and we read about it in the newspapers. People have great contempt for politicians. A contempt not born of common sense but one of jealousy. If you want to represent the people you can join a political party or you can be an Independent candidate because the Constitution allows you to do so.

7.25 p.m.

Sir, the point is, our politicians are overworked. They have too much responsibility and it is a drain on them as human beings. We are not elected representatives here but we are close to being elected representatives, some of us have been elected before and some of us will be elected representatives.

If you do an analysis of the life-span of a politician, it is less than the life-span of an ordinary person. The demands on them are great. They receive telephone calls at 3 o'clock in the morning and we expect one person to represent a constituency at different levels. We come into this Chamber glibly and quarrel about adding two Seats. The same way that we are quarrelling about two Seats, we want concessions, tax-free pensions and all sorts of things.

Asides.

SENATOR T. E. BARKER: Sir, if the politicians get a pay increase it is done grudgingly so. We must know that this country was built by dedicated men.

Sir, when something happens whom do we call? We call the politician. Sir, to spend \$200 000 more on him it is a big drain on the public purse.

Sir, I have no problem in supporting the extra two Seats. I have not heard anybody say if we leave the twenty-eight constituencies what would happen. The answer would be that we have some constituencies that would be unrecognisable because you will have to do a lot of cutting up and changing. This would cause a lot of confusion because you would have to cut all twenty-eight constituencies.

Sir, if the Honourable Senators would do their homework, they would realise that some of the changes were minor changes which would not significantly change some constituencies. To have cut the twenty-eight constituencies would have meant drastic changes and it would be a disfiguration so that the map would be almost unrecognisable.

Mr. President, the two extra Seats which cost a quarter million dollars is not too high a price to pay for keeping the boundaries within a range as stipulated under the Constitution. The matter is clear cut and there are no outstanding issues, the independent Commission has done a good job and I know that it would have been a difficult job because it is not an easy thing. It is not an easy job and this country should appreciate the work of the Commission. We know that the Other Side and their supporters are going to take potshots at the Commission, but in public life you have to do what you have to do. The point is, at the end of the day, this country is well served by Electoral and Boundaries Commission and I commend it to this Honourable Chamber.

SENATOR LeR. H. McCLEAN: I really did not want to get involved in this debate because I think that it is merely an academic exercise. The last time I heard some of the logic which could be closely associated with that of Senator Barker's was sometime around 10 o'clock at a rum shop at the point where the fellows are so intoxicated just before they started singing hymns, they moved into this logic where they start to espouse all kinds of things regardless of their knowledge.

I would not suggest that the Honourable Senator's is rum shop logic. He certainly strayed in arriving at some of his conclusions. I think that the most significant point that he made is when he went through a process by which he showed the pattern following boundary changes. By his logic, he is predicting that his Government would be out of power in the next election.

Sir, I find it strange that he went to such lengths to clarify that point for the people of Barbados. He went through a whole set of cases to show the pattern in terms of the voting. The reason why I feel the discussion is academic is because Barbados is becoming like one big constituency now and one day one Party will win all the seats. One day, one party will win all the seats because gone are the days when people had safe seats. In Barbados, everybody is aware of what is happening and, therefore, to believe a fellow in St. Lucy is unaware of what is happening in St. Philip or somebody in St. Joseph is unaware of what is happening in Christ Church, those days are long past. People across this country vote for the same reason and the issues are the same across the island. You do not have divisions where you have issues peculiar to one constituency and not affecting people in another.

7.35 p.m.

One day, you will probably have people voting for one party so that we would not spend a lot of time discussing an issue as Senator Barker said. In one breath, his logic was a little off because in one breath he was making the point that this Commission is independent, impartial and upright and holy and in the next breath he is going to accuse some of them as engaging in ploys but it is interesting. I have to respect the views of all the commissioners because I think they are all honourable Barbadians but to the best of my knowledge... I was going to talk about somebody who is going to be a candidate for a constituency, but I do not think I should go down that route.

It is interesting to note the point raised by Senator Collymore that if you do the arithmetic you should have fewer constituencies because if you take the constituencies

which are above and those that are below and you did the average that average works out to less than what is the average set out in the formula. If you take 14 constituencies that you have 8 under the range and 6 above the range and you took the average of those 14 constituencies it works out to 6 412 which is below the minimum number of electors set out by the formula so that you can reduce the number of seats if needed.

It is also interesting that the population of Barbados over the past 40 years has increased about 17 000 and we have moved in that time from 24 constituencies to 30, so an increase of 17 000. According to the figures mentioned, of those, 80 per cent would be voters, which we all accept is very high but we have an additional six constituencies to represent that additional 17 000 people so that however we look at this matter whenever there is any change in the electoral boundaries of this country you will have diverse views. It will always be a contentious issue except when Christ Church South was created, when the popularly held view was that it was created to benefit a particular gentleman.

If we are going to have these debates continuously, I think we should go in the direction suggested by the Right Honourable Prime Minister when he did an interview some time ago where he suggested that perhaps he would like to see the day when this Chamber no longer exists; he would have 30 persons elected in the House of Assembly by constituency and ten who would be elected according to proportional representation. That is the formula the Prime Minister had suggested.

What the Prime Minister is also suggesting is that you should also have reform of the electoral system and I think, therefore, that this whole exercise is just a red herring which detracts persons from the real issues in the country and the fact that the economy is going into disarray. You focus and spend time because people always get excited when you talk about electoral boundaries and so you spend a lot of time discussing electoral boundaries and the other things that are going wrong in the country will slip by and the Prime Minister would be able to run free because you would be distracted and the people of this country would not pay the attention that they need to pay to other more important issues.

What will happen, Sir, I believe, is that the Prime Minister will probably decide to bring all of his reforms one time and since I think he will not decide to go the republican route during the Queen's Jubilee celebrations, sometime next year we will probably get the Prime Minister coming to Parliament and suggesting that this is the time when we will become the republic and he will undertake all his reforms then and we will have the 30 constituencies.

It is interesting that the recommendations for the 30 constituencies are so readily embraced by the Government because it fits in nicely with the number that the Prime Minister has also suggested that he needs 30 constituencies and ten persons by proportional representation in a single Chamber of a Parliament with 40 representatives. I have no doubt from what I know of the Prime Minister that when he says these things publicly, generally that is what he intends to do. I believe that all of this is just the first phase in the larger scheme and I do not think that I have ever predicted him incorrectly. I believe that some time next year or probably later this year that the debate will start again about the republic and we will get into a new phase of parliamentary life in Barbados.

Mr. President, this will be probably my shortest intervention in this Chamber because I believe that the whole exercise is a waste of valuable time and time which could be better spent discussing more important issues which are in the interest of the people of this country. I thank you, Sir.
7.45 p.m.

SENATOR J. E. D. WILLIAMS: Mr. President, I recognise the hour but I feel persuaded to speak to this matter because, quite frankly, the matter of electoral boundaries, to my mind, goes to the very heart of representation in Barbados. When I listened to Senator Collymore, and Senator Mascoll in particular, and added that to the comments from the Leader of the Opposition, I recognise why there is a need for an independent body to deal with elections.

Senator Mascoll said in his presentation that once an MP is going to be effected by changes, he or she will feel a measure of discomfort. Sir, once you leave it within the political domain to be dealt with, it will never be to the satisfaction of everybody. Therefore, as I said earlier, we need an independent body to deal with it and this question of making it independent and remove the politics from it, is a position that the Barbados Labour Party took as far back as 1966.

At the Constitutional talks in London, the Barbados Labour Party wanted to have an electoral commission as the Constitution of the country and the Democratic Labour Party of the day fought the Barbados Labour Party tooth and nail on it. There was always a feeling that it ought to have been left within the purview of a few people to manipulate.

Sir, 1991 is a classic example where a report submitted by a commission which consisted people of the ilk and the integrity of Dr. Keith Hunte, was voted against by the Democratic Labour Party who was the Government of the day. Why? To make sure that it fell back in their hands to be manipulated as they saw fit.

The Barbados Labour Party had four seats between 1986 and 1991. The Representative for St. Peter had a majority of just over 300, which came from places like Boscobelle, Indian Ground, Diamond Corner, Black Bess and Oxford. The grand hand of the man who eventually did the cutting up of the constituency, saw it fit to put part of Diamond Corner and Indian Ground elsewhere. Oxford went out completely. Boscobelle got cut in half, but that was not the recommendation of the Committee that was the recommendation of a man. I am to understand that our political system must be one where a party in office, gerrymandered and cut up and whatever, and now we as a body cannot respect a report from a Commission of Honourable men with integrity. Sir, for ten months, this Committee went through the length and breadth of the country to understand what the landscape was and how any change would have impacted on the then electoral map of Barbados. I am told, first and foremost that the reason why I cannot support it, I am speaking now specifically to Senator Collymore, is because well when I take the 214 000 odd electors and 280 000 people, it comes to a percentage of 80 per cent and gives me something esoteric as to why it looks wrong.

Sir, if you look back at 1991, there were 191 000 electors, and a population of between 255 000 and 260 000 people. I could only speak in official language, so when I do the same arithmetic, I get 75 per cent and I have always been told, statistically, plus or minus 10, so it carried up to the 80 per cent to which the Honourable Senator alluded, or it could carry me down to 70, but what I think that is wrong and wicked, is to give the impression, not only to Barbados, but to the rest of the world that, here is a country and a country that has been held up to the rest of the world as an exemplar when it comes to elections, but, Sir, all of a sudden we are now going to be told, as we move towards elections whenever they are called, that we have to have some kind of doubt in our minds about the electoral list. I think that is wrong and I personally think it is wicked.

SENATOR THE REV. L. W. B. ROCK: Mr. President, on a point of order, the word, 'wicked' seems out of place.

Mr. PRESIDENT: You are absolutely right. I will ask that the word 'wicked' be withdrawn and struck from the record.

SENATOR J. E. D. WILLIAMS: I withdraw, Mr. President.

Sir, what I would say is that as far as I am concerned, we have held elections in this country and the results have always reflected the will of the people. Part of the problem is that since 1999 the Democratic Labour Party or its supporters accepted the fact that the result was what the people wanted. Sir, that is the reality of it and to be quite

honest, I will say that they should buckle up and take stock, because Barbadians are very discerning people and if they believe that this Report from the Electoral and Boundaries Commission is going to be used to cloud people's vision from the ineffectiveness of a party, they are going to be sadly mistaken. Barbadians know what they have done and what they have not done. As I said, our electoral process in this country is one that has never been held up to ridicule. I would hate to believe that we have reached the point, simply for political gains to want to move in that direction.

Sir, the Commission ended up by simply saying, look whatever result we arrive at, it must be one that shows equity and fairness and there must be some rationale in terms of the options. Senator Mascoll had an option but not the same as Senator Collymore or the Leader of the Opposition. I do not believe that when you look at it, in terms of combinations, that they are the last. You can have thousands of options but at the end of the day, you must arrive at one that is fair. It looks fair, it feels fair, it smells fair and it is fair in every respect.

I have to give credit to the Electoral and Boundaries Commission because they did their homework. I am satisfied in my mind, from reading the report that they looked at all the same options as the members who advanced the old options. If that Commission had said, we are going to eliminate St. Michael South Central or St. Michael North West I would have heard the Opposition from the halls of George Street – to tell the honest truth it seems to be disappearing because I do not even remember – saying that how could a Commission end up with something like this and that would have been an issue. Sir, what did the Commission do? The Commission looked at options and to my mind came up with a sensible and logical conclusion.

I believe quite honestly that they have done this country and this parliament a service. I hope that the idea about trying to cast some shadow on our electoral process, people would understand the danger of moving in that particular direction.

Mr. President, I am obliged to you.

SENATOR Mrs. P. E. RICKINSON: Mr. President, I am a very disturbed Senator today simply because, exactly at 11.20 a.m. I knew that this topic was to be debated and from that time, I have been participating in the debate, either silently or speaking to others.

I came here, Mr. President, having prepared myself to debate six topics on the Order Paper:

- The Education (Amendment) Bill
- The Family Law (Amendment) Bill

- The Crown Proceedings (Amendment) Bill
- The Green Paper on National Sports Policy
- Resolution of compulsory acquisition of land
- The Tourism Development Bill

Sir, this is a lot to prepare for, given the fact that I also have other responsibilities like everybody else in here. I am here to speak on a Bill that I have not had the opportunity to read. There is no point telling a Senator that you had a Bill since April and therefore you should know what is in it. We have so many Bills piled up...

7.55 p.m.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Just for the record Senator, it is a Resolution rather than a Bill.

SENATOR Mrs. P. E. RICKINSON: Thank you, Mr. President. It is unfair to tell Senators that they had the Resolution since April and expect the Senators to read everything that has been sent to them because there is a whole lot to read, to analyse and to digest, which means that they would not get any sleep at all.

I was not made an independent senator to come in here to rubber stamp anything. It is my business to discuss the work of the people and to speak on behalf of the people of Barbados but I have been denied that in that the Resolution was not on the Order Paper for discussion and I did not know that it was going to be debated today. I even suggested that we could debate it on Friday but nothing happened. What is the hurry? What is the difference between Wednesday and Friday when we know that this is a topic everyone is talking about and it is so important to this country and to everywhere else.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator, I do not know to whom the recommendation was made but it certainly was not made to the Chair. The second point is, there was a supplement to the Order Paper which, it was my understanding, had been circulated. It seems to be that some Senators did not get it and I think that is a tremendous oversight on the part of whoever was responsible.

SENATOR Mrs. P. E. RICKINSON: Mr. President, when the Resolution was introduced, I got up on a point of order and made it known that I did not know that this was going to be debated today neither did I get a copy of the supplementary Order Paper which I later got at 11:20 a.m.

In listening to the debate, I support the views of Senator Collymore and I am not going to support this

Resolution at this time. I do not feel that we should increase the constituencies from 28 to 30 at this point in time and at a price of \$200 000 that was mentioned by one of the contributors to the debate which means that \$400 000...

Asides.

SENATOR Mrs. P. E. RICKINSON: Even if it is \$100 000 each, it is still a lot of money when money cannot be found to pay for uniforms for health aides, the least paid workers in this country. They have to buy their own uniforms. Money cannot be found to pay the nurses working in the district hospitals, who sometimes work two shifts and they do not get paid for it. There is no money to grant a subvention to the Nurses Assistant Aides Association of Barbados (NAAB) to assist with educating nursing personnel and there is no money for health insurance for the nurses. Therefore, I strongly feel that we should not increase the constituencies from 28 to 30. That is the Resolution as far as I have heard other people saying about it because I have not been able to read the report. There is a lot that needs to be done rather than increasing the number of constituencies to add two more people to the Lower House. If we want to improve representation, Government could set up constituency offices and staff them fully in order to receive complaints. These constituency offices should be there permanently and the various people that come in will be able to move into those offices.

SENATOR THE HON. G. S. H. MURRAY: On a point of order. Mr. President, I just want to draw to the Honourable Senator's attention that there are already constituency offices in each constituency which is paid for by the public purse to deal with the very same matters the Senator is referring to.

SENATOR Mrs. P. E. RICKINSON: Mr. President, I am going to repeat what I said. I feel that the Government should set up constituency offices. I do not mean what exists today. These are recommendations I made to the Commission when I appeared before it, and I am making them again because I feel strongly about it. They could have a public relations officer, a secretary and other staff to deal with the business of the people to improve representation. It would not matter which party gets into power, they will be there to look after the people's business.

I also feel if we are going to think of increasing constituencies given what we are witnessing in Trinidad and Tobago that we should have an odd number of constituencies to reduce the likelihood of a hung Parliament which can cause no end of problems. It does not matter how many parties there are. If there is a hung Parliament there is a hung Parliament and it is going to cause problems.

8.05 p.m.

Mr. President, it is my view that politicians might feel they are overworked but I feel they dabble into things that should be the responsibility of other personnel. Mention was made about sewage treatment, *et cetera*. Government has personnel to deal with certain things and if the Government departments were working the way they were supposed to, it would relieve the politicians of some of the unnecessary work they have to do, then there would be no excuse of having to increase the constituencies from 28 to 30 because of the work load, *et cetera*.

Mr. President, it should not be the duty of politicians to get people appointed. We should have independent committees. People should not be given jobs because they furnish a letter from a politician. Politicians can recommend people for appointment but there must be an independent committee to screen them for their suitability, they should not be employed because a politician sent them and said that they are to be employed. For instance, some unsuitable persons are employed at the Q.E.H. because of politicians. These persons should be told they are not suitable for the jobs to which they were sent. When the time comes for them to be disciplined, it is very difficult to do so. That is why the Q.E.H. is as it is; for those persons have become ungovernable. I am looking forward for the Board. It is too long in coming.

Mr. President, if we are talking about equity and fair play, why do you bring a Resolution to debate and not give the Senators the opportunity to read and digest it so that they can make proper contributions to it? I did not receive the supplementary Resolution. I only received it here today. I did not come here prepared to debate this Resolution. It needs to be repeated so that it can be recorded.

I also support the use of committees. I have asked for committees. I have recommended that a Health Committee be set up to look at the myriad of problems that we have in Health, including euthanasia and other problems but it has been ignored. I do not think they are making full use of the Parliamentary system as it is. We need to make an attempt to make full use of it in order to involve people in committees and to have hearings. The system is there and can be used. A Senator once said it is being used in Jamaica. If we do not know how it is done, we can go to Jamaica and see and then come back and use it, rather than increasing the constituency from 28 to 30. Let us use what we have now. If we are going to make changes in the constituencies, why is there a hurry to do so? If a constitution is going to be changed, let us debate the change first.

Mr. President, anytime that a constitutional debate comes up, I will be prepared because I have been for a long time but I was not prepared for this. It is very unfair and I cannot vote for this.

HIS HONOUR SENATOR C. L. BOLDEN: Mr. President, I had no intention of becoming involved in this debate but since it is being broadcast, I think it is but right that I should enter this debate to put right several things which the Honourable Senator, who has just sat down, has said.

She said she is not going to support this Resolution because she is of the view that Government should set up constituency offices to deal with the people. The first question I ask, to whom would these persons be responsible? At the moment there are Government departments where Ministers get nothing done. Senator Collymore should not laugh, he was a Permanent Secretary and knows what I am talking about. When these constituency offices are set up, to whom does one report? To whom does one complain when the offices are not being opened on time? For example, the public baths that were around Barbados that Government was paying approximately \$60 000 to \$80 000. Baths that the late Errol Barrow said was a waste of money because only 3.1 persons per day used them. When I asked about how many women, he said about .2.

Mr. President, when persons speak about setting up these offices, let us think rationally what would be the end result and not just say to set up offices because one is not going to vote for the Resolution.

The next point is the quality of staff that the Honourable Senator wants to staff these offices. Staff cannot be employed for less than \$2 000 per month. If one multiplies the 28 constituencies by \$4 000 per month, what would be the end result, taking into consideration rent and other utilities for the office? Therefore, one would be paying more than if the present membership is increased by two. The increase of the numbers equalises the amount of load on each Member of Parliament in accordance with the Constitution. You are saying, break the Constitution because of fallacious arguments being put forwards by certain persons.

Another issue is that of a hung Parliament. I would have thought that, as politicians, we would have given reasonable thought to this statement about hung Parliament. Do not let those out of Trinidad and Tobago fool us as to what is happening there. We have to find out what really happens there. Let us look at the two Constitutions. In Barbados, we appoint a Speaker of the House from one of the elected members. If there is an equal number 15/15 and one is deducted, there is 14/15 to vote. We would not have a Parliament that cannot sit because we will have a Speaker.

In Trinidad and Tobago, the Speaker is taken from outside the elected members and therefore, that is the problem with Trinidad and Tobago. Let us not jump on a band wagon and use examples that have no basis.

Mr. President, in Barbados every Member of Parliament is Mr. Everything to the electorate. From calls at midnight that the buses are not running, to the water has just been turned off. Mr. President, the Democratic Labour Party had a strange way of doing things. When it comes to elections, they always end up in problems, then seek to cast their problems elsewhere.

Sir, I well remember when the late Errol Barrow stood in the House and said "if I can't get rid of Mottley from the City, I will take the city out of Mottley" and abolish local Government and never replaced it by anything. He just dumped the load on the elected Members. When persons begin to think they must first think about the history. It meant that the politician of the day ended up with twice the amount of work he had to do because, overnight, the Council was wiped from under him.

I well remember when they decided to have single member constituencies when the members of the Democratic Labour Party could not even agree among themselves and that is how Evelyn Greaves got into politics. I stood in that Chamber and heard the then Speaker of the House and the late Cameron Tudor, abuse each other at the back of the Speaker's Chambers. To solve it, they had to bring Evelyn Greaves from abroad to run in St. Lucy.

Mr. President, therefore, the same confusion reigns today among the Members of the Democratic Labour Party and its supporters. They cannot determine among themselves what would have been the best system to use. They used it up to 1991 and now they say that it should not be done.
8.15 p.m.

I must congratulate Senator Mascoll today. He realised that he had no argument, said that anything he said now would not make a difference but for the future he suggests that we look at a different method. He also said we should amend the Constitution for the future to take in a different method of dealing with constituencies in Barbados. Sir, it was the best argument I heard for the entire day.

Mr. President, I support the Resolution because none of the arguments have convinced me that the Commission is wrong. The Commission followed the Constitution and it behoves me that we talk about supporting the Constitution and then say that the Commission should say something other than what they are appointed to do.

SENATOR THE HON. G. S. H. MURRAY Mr. President, I listened intently to debate on this issue not only in this Chamber but elsewhere. I have listened to a variety of views, especially coming from the Democratic Labour Party, and no matter how hard I tried I could not follow the logic to

the objections to this Resolution. What it seeks to achieve is the first step to setting up an early excuse for what will happen at the next polls.

Sir, in 1999 when the Democratic Labour Party were defeated 26 to 2, they accused the Barbados Labour Party of having bought out the electorate. This was an insult to the integrity of the electorate, to the voting public of Barbados and a stain on the fine reputation that Barbados has always enjoyed for free and fair elections. Sir, they are setting up a straw man early so that they can always fall back on their excuses.

Sir, I have to console myself that the Democratic Labour Party was never too concerned about proper representation of the people. We are dealing with the increase in the number of constituencies from 28 to 30 but the substratum of this issue is giving people fair, proper, honest and quality representation.

Sir, when I say that the Democratic Labour Party has never been interesting in giving good representation to the people I go back to the 1961 Manifesto in which it says on page 1 that:

"Barbados General Elections 1961 – Vote the Democratic way.

The Party proposes that the next session of the legislature be limited to three years instead of the five years which the law now permits.

If it is elected to office it will at once prepare a three-year developmental programme based on the additional information which would be made available...."

Sir, the Party proposes that the next session of the legislature be limited to three years instead of the five years did not occur. They do not even refer to it among their promises anymore.

Asides.

SENATOR THE HON. G. S. H. MURRAY: If Albert Branford wants to write about promises on Sunday he should research and write about three years rather than five years because it is a real promise that was never ever addressed.

Sir, the Democratic Labour Party was never serious about the issue of representation going back to 1961. On the other hand, the quality of representation has always been a major preoccupation of the Barbados Labour Party from its earliest day. This is why we lead the fight, battled against tremendous odds of threats to life, limb and family for persons to be the beneficiaries of Universal Adult Suffrage going back to 1951. This is nothing new to the Barbados

Labour Party and what we are seeking to do here is just another step of that attitude and approach.

Sir, as Senator Bolden rightly said, the abolition of local government created a vacuum. If there is a vacuum something rushes in to fill and everything was transferred to the central government representative who was the Member of Parliament. This was a natural progression, they had to be represented and the only person they had recourse to was the Member of Parliament.

The Democratic Labour Party has never been serious about representation because they said they were going to take the City out of Mottley and this they did except that it extended to the whole of Barbados, the whole of Barbados suffered and we have been paying the penalty for those pressures to this day.

Sir, on the other hand, the Barbados Labour Party has consistently and clearly sought to provide the opportunity for fair and better representation for the public. We have provided constituency offices all over Barbados where rents and the utilities are paid for out of the public purse. Computers have been provided to give improved technology for persons to speed up the processing of letters and other documentation. The salaries of the Constituency Assistants are also paid out of the public purse.

On the other hand, the Barbados Labour Party by seeking to ensure the survival of multi-party democracy in Barbados and mass based political parties in Parliament has moved to provide a financial subvention to political parties. When this was proposed, the Democratic Labour Party scoffed at it, attacked it and one of their spokesmen castigated it in public but one of the officers responsible for financial affairs of the Party called and said to send him the cheque because he recognized that bills, rent and utilities had to be paid and that they needed the subvention despite the protestation of the leadership.

Sir, this policy by the Barbados Labour Party was taken because we felt that political parties are important in the maintenance of democracy in Barbados and should be entitled to subventions in the same way that other social institutions get subventions. Sir, despite my criticism of the Democratic Labour Party, they have made a good contribution to Barbados and the public has a responsibility to make sure that the Democratic Labour Party, the Barbados Labour Party and any other party that shows its viability survives because this subvention extends not only to the Democratic Labour Party or the Barbados Labour Party but to all parties represented in the House of Assembly.

Sir, this Government strengthened democracy which was never before contemplated in Barbados and it has worked to the benefit of all concerned. Parties can now boast of CEOs with a day-to-day responsibility of administering the affairs of the Party in keeping in top administrative shape so that they can carry on the public's business, whether in Government or in Opposition, in a proper manner.
8.25 p.m.

Mr. President, there was theorising that was given by Senator Mascoll that gave the lower average in the urban rather than in rural constituencies. While that is a good theory and while it is almost as attractive as the '543 Plan'....

Asides.

SENATOR THE HON. G. S. H. MURRAY: Senator Mascoll is very familiar with the '543 Plan'. This sounds like something that you can learn in school.

Sir, the point is, it is anti-democratic. If you believe in equality, fairness and parity and if all persons had the same inherent values of the other person, if all persons' votes had the same weight and the same value, how could you then say that you must accord more weight to one vote and less to the other. It would be anti-democratic.

Sir, it would, therefore, be destroying and undermining the whole fabric of what you are seeking to do. I have no doubt that this is a very viable approach in this Resolution when one considers the alternatives.

We heard what the impact would be if all twenty-eight constituencies had to be adjusted and what turmoil and trauma that it would have caused politically and sometimes personally. Sir, to say that \$200 000 is too much for the public purse to bear to provide better representation for constituents in Barbados, who would have paid taxes for that same representation is unworthy of a society...

SENATOR Mrs. P. E. RICKINSON: On a point of elucidation. I did not say \$200 000 was too much to pay for anything.

SENATOR THE HON. G. S. H. MURRAY: Mr. President, I was not referring to Senator Rickinson.

Asides.

Mr. PRESIDENT: She just wanted to make it clear.

Asides.

SENATOR THE HON. G. S. H. MURRAY: Mr. President, the Senator confessed that she has not read the Resolution and I, therefore, could not pay any attention to what she said, so I could not refer to anything that she said.

Sir, I am saying that this snipping at the idea of two more constituencies and, therefore, two more Members of Parliament, like Senator Williams so rightly said, all is related to this attitude in Barbados that two more persons are going to become rich overnight.

There is this idea that Members of Parliament, especially a Minister, get large salaries and fat and generous pensions. What the public does not yet seem to understand is that the pension that the Parliamentarians receive are the pensions that they would have contributed to and it is not paid out of the public purse, so you are really getting back what you put in.

Sir, it is not like public servants who get their pensions and one paid by the public purse. It is a contributory pension plan just as if you were working at BS&T or some other company where you would contribute to the pension plan and then draw out of it when you retire, which is only fair and equitable.

There is this idea that Parliamentarians and politicians as a specie, even though an endangered one, are too well off and that they are treated too well. Sir, the most cruel of all was when they are looking at a formula to increase salaries to Members of Parliament. It was recommended that Members of Parliament should only be paid for the days that they attend Parliament. Can you imagine something as ridiculous as that?

Sir, meanwhile, those persons who were making such recommendations were being well paid by regional and international institutions but they felt that once you were a Member of Parliament you should get paid by the day. Here you were representing the country at the highest level and dealing with other people's problems but you should only be paid by the day. That was only carrying us back to the days when the independently wealthy could have afforded to attend Parliament and could afford to offer themselves for representation. It would take us back to the days before Universal Adult Suffrage came into being in 1951. Thanks for the hard work of the Barbados Labour Party and others in that era.

Sir, I feel that this is a fair equitable approach to solving the issue of representation in this country. I feel that when the dust is settled and all is said and done, it can only inure to the benefit of Barbados. It can only add to our representation around the world for having free and fair elections, despite the internal bickering that we might have between ourselves and potshots that we take at each other during the campaign. Essentially, there has never been any

serious doubt cast in Barbados or abroad about the integrity of the electoral process. This does not in anyway endanger that process. It does not in anyway undermine the integrity of the process.

Therefore, I feel that we have to be very careful that a country that has been asked over the years for members to go to Africa and other places as observers to look at fairness of electoral processes in those countries that we ourselves do not by our own undoing, by our own words about each other and about this issue, thereby smirch the image of Barbados, a reputation that we have justifiably made over the years in a manner that we can ill afford to do and from which we will all suffer in the long run.

Sir, it is all right to say that when we were asking for two more Members of Parliament to provide better representation, comparison was made between the size of Barbados and the United States of America. The United States of America is bigger geographically and in population but it is not bigger in terms of complexity. The society of Barbados is no less sophisticated than that of the United States of America. The size of a country does not determine influence, intelligence or achievement. Size is not based on complexity. Barbados is a sophisticated society which is on the threshold of being a developed society and some people would say that we are already there.

Sir, some people say that they do not understand how a country with 260 000 people can afford the things that we afford, free secondary education, free medical health scheme and computers in schools. Some people in the United States feel that a country the size of Barbados should not be doing this, that we are too small. If they do not do it because of the different set of priorities in their country then we should not do it.

I am making the point that Barbados is a complex society and all of the dynamics of a developed society are at work in Barbados. The pressures and issues are here in Barbados and we have to have a society that is geared and equipped to provide the representation of persons who are affected by those issues and who contributed to the issues, otherwise we would be failing in our responsibilities to society.

Therefore, I feel that this is an important juncture in the history of Barbados and that this Bill comes at a time when Barbados can look at the political system and see what it has achieved over the last fifty-years; how it has transformed this society; how it is providing upward mobility for so many people; how it has developed the economy and how the society is changing. There is no doubt that through the sacrifices and contributions of all persons over the years that Barbados is a better place. Even though Ministers are elected to the House of Assembly, the mere fact that they were involved in the process and they have made a contribution I

think that Barbados is richer for it and I think that we owe them a debt of gratitude.

Mr. President, I, therefore, give this Resolution my fullest support.
8.35 p.m.

SENATOR D. L. HAYNES: Mr. President, I sat here and heard Senator Mascoll trying to imply that these great people from the Electoral and Boundaries Commission carved an area which could be called the St. James Central for Desmond Haynes. I rise to commend the Electoral and Boundaries Commission for a job which I believe is well done when one looks at the amount of work that has been put into this document. We should really give credit where credit is due. I think it is a fantastic document and I commend all the people involved.

Mr. President, I live in a country that has boasted and continues to boast of being a country with fair and free elections. I would not think about getting involved or, as one Senator said today, of cleaning up something that might appear to be dirty because we have always been people who would tell you that if we do not like what is happening we will vote you out. I do not believe that anything has changed with the people of my beloved country, Barbados.

When you look at Barbados as Senator Mascoll who probably would be more in a position to talk about the economy than I can, you have a \$6 billion economy and it has been reported that the two new seats would cost just under \$200 000. I personally think that that would be money well spent. Regarding the new constituency in St. James Central that is being proposed here from day one that I came into this Honourable House I was told by Senator Mascoll that I was the representative for St. James Central. Then again, Senator Mascoll also told me that my mother voted for him. So I really do not know what to believe.

I think that Senator Mascoll obviously is someone with vision and someone who recognises that I have represented Barbados in a capacity as a cricketer and by extension the West Indies. I believe that Senator Mascoll thinks that I would be a great representative for St. James Central. I would also mention that at the lunch table he kept referring to me as a "D". I said to Senator Mascoll, "You are right. I am a "D". My name is Desmond." That is as far as that goes.

Looking at this document, I must agree that it is a great document. I also have a lot of respect for the names I have seen of persons who have signed this document. Here you have Mr. Philip Serrao, President, Mr. Estwick, Mr. Codrington, Mr. Gollop and Miss Thompson. I believe that these people are people with integrity and they are people whom I personally respect. I do not feel, contrary to

what Senator Mascoll referred to, that these people would carve a constituency for anyone, not even for Desmond Haynes.

I think that we should really go back to section 41D which was read by the Leader of Government Business which says the Commission shall in accordance with this section:

"shall review the number and the boundaries of the constituencies into which Barbados is divided and submit to the Minister for presentation to each House a report in accordance with that section."

I think that this was done with a view of making sure that elections in Barbados remain free and fair and there was no way of gerrymandering or anything that was not clean.

Mr. President, I would not like to go back into the 1989 elections because enough has been said about that but what I would like to stress is that when you look at the St. James South area which was over 10 000 voters you still have over 7 000 voters and when you look at St. James North and St. Thomas... I believe that there is reason for this recommendation by the Commission for change so that the local people can get – I am not saying they are not getting good representation – but good and proper representation and I feel that with this new proposal alluded to in the House today that we do not have local government in Barbados and we need to be able to be in constant contact with the electorate and with the people that mean so much to this island.

Mr. President, it is getting a bit late and I would not like to go as long tonight but I would just like to add that listening to the Opposition pretending that they did not know anything about the proposed boundary changes and not agreeing with it, it so happened, as I said before, when Senator Mascoll was alluding that I would be the representative for St. James Central the Democratic Labour Party had already put in motion four candidates. They were Sylvia Turton, Donville Inniss, Mr. White and Franklin Stephenson. As Senator Mascoll said, the reason why Mr. Franklin Stephenson had gone on the other side, which is St. James South, was because he did not want two cricketers fighting among themselves. As you can see, the Democratic Labour Party did put their wheels in motion and now they are trying to say they did not know anything about this.
8.45 p.m.

Sir, as you can see, the Democratic Labour Party had put their wheels in motion and now they are trying to say to us that they did not know anything about this Report. Now, I promised Senator Mascoll that I would start putting my wheels in motion because I believe that he was right, in believing that I would be a good representative for St. James Central.

I am obliged to you.

SENATOR THE HON. Dame PATRICIA SYMMONDS: Thank you, Mr. President, I am going to be very brief. I wish to say that I support this Resolution totally and I think that the adjustments are fair and logical. They have been made to take care of growth from time to time. There were a lot of makeshift measures that have been carefully thought out.

Mr. President, I was exposed to local Government for quite a while, in a way vicariously because my mother was one of the first female alderman of the City Council and therefore I know about the demands that are made and that now politicians have to try and fulfill. It is not at all easy. It is a great burden on them. Perhaps, burden is not quite the right word, because they do it as part of their promise and interest in people, but it is important that we remember this, when we consider that there is a need to increase the number.

Sir, I also want to make a comparison. I know Shakespeare said comparisons are odorous which is the correct term, but there are times when they are useful. I looked at Bermuda, Mr. President, a country of 20.75 square miles and they have 40 members, a Senate with 11 members and 108 Boards in which there are 800 part time members and none of them full time civil servants, and they all report to a MP.

Their smallest constituency comprises 13 060 voters. Therefore, I think that it is quite clear that this Resolution should be supported by all who think clearly and realise the importance of good representation and of free and fair elections.

With those few words, Mr. President, I wish again to say that I do support this Resolution and I am much obliged to you.

SENATOR Miss J. C. ODLE: Mr. President, I too promise to be very brief but I could not let an occasion like this go by without making my contribution. I want to say from the outset that I support this item before us.

Sir, it is unfortunate that cynicism has become so ingrained in the public psyche that even without evidence of corruption, people are persuaded that politicians are more concerned with serving their own interests rather than those of the people. Sir, that statement is the findings of a collective group of politicians and parliamentarians throughout, and captured in a book called, "The Parliament and the People" in the concluding comments.

Sir, one cannot help but get the feeling that individuals who offer themselves for service, very often, noble and honourable men and women in this country, are somehow

castigated and put in the category of the words that I just expressed. This is unfortunate because if the truth be known, there are parliamentarians in Barbados, in this day, representative of all sectors of this community because of policies of democracy and fair play, established many years ago by our forefathers, without whom the voice of the people would not have been heard.

Sir, the principal role of the representative, the politician, the parliamentarian, you can call them what you will, is to enunciate the views of the constituent, and try as far as possible, to create a better opportunity and a better life for a community at large, which of course, comprises of individuals. Sir, on this day, there are still those people who cannot enunciate their needs for themselves and that is why the politician, the parliamentarian, is the orator for them. Maybe the legislator certainly is the counsellor and very often Godparent literally. I think almost every politician, the parliamentarian has in excess of five God-children. I have nine, which I acquired before I became a member of this Chamber. Heaven knows what comes in the future but, Sir, I stand ready for the charge and ready for the work. Sir, the role of the politician and the parliamentarian is still critical, if we are to believe that democracy must be maintained in a manner which is able to express the free will of the people.

Sir, in speaking of the free will of the people, I had the privilege – and a tremendous one it was – to witness elections in the African countries of Ghana and South Africa. I was invited a third time to the last election in Zimbabwe. Unfortunately, I could not go because of other pressing matters here at home. Sir, as I compare our democracy with that, we have had a tradition in Barbados of stable and good governance, regardless of the political organisation that managed the country at the particular time, some better than others.

I want to laud this administration because I see in this Barbados today, evidence of all sectors of Barbados, being gainfully employed in different realms in the country, in a meaningful manner. The quality of life is improving, regardless of the state of the economy. Mr. President, the point remains that the vast majority of the people in this country are getting involved and are being embraced in the functions and state of this country.

Sir, I want to laud the work of the Electoral and Boundaries Commission whose document is before us today. I want to use five words to describe the recommendation that is before us: integrity, diligence, sensitivity, fairness and practical. I also want to say that this document before us is available for public scrutiny, as well as the electoral list which, since the end of January 2002 and this is now June 2002, has been available for public scrutiny.

Sir, I could not help getting the feeling that there was an accusation that the electoral list might be somewhat dirty.

This bothered me, because it was there for public viewing for months now, and well in advance of any general election, because we do not know when it will be called. We know constitutionally it is 2004.

Sir, this cynicism and feeling of corruption, dirtiness and individuals wanting to be involved in this very positive job of representing people, I do not like the feeling I get that we must be pilloried. Sir, my mother would tell you that you are losing a lot by getting involved in the political process. Mr. President, I want to tell you that it takes nothing off me to do this job, simply because I have been able in my own life to make strides and to advance in a way without any crutch from any political organisation or from this Parliament. I am a passionate believer in contributing back to society, when you have been a beneficiary of the world, in which we have come from, and so, Sir, today I stand to commend this report of the Electoral and Boundaries Commission and to put in a plug to say that democracy is alive and well in Barbados and as long as we continue with the transparency that we have seen today, all goes well for the future.

I thank you, Sir.

SENATOR K. D. SYMMONDS: Sir, I rise very conscious of the time and the mood of the Chamber and I assure Honourable Senators, Sir, I have been travelling since five o'clock this morning and I have no inclination to go on for a long time. Sir, I honestly believe that it is necessary in supporting this Resolution to make two critical points.

Sir, the first one is that there has to be in my respectful opinion, a reassessment in Barbados and again I say this by extension, across the Caribbean, of the way in which we look at, treat and interact with persons who essentially are giving of their time, energies and whatever resources they have at their disposal, in the interest of advancing the cause of public well being and the development of democracy in this country and across the region.

8.55 p.m.

Sir, much has been said in recent times about the importance of democracy but the reality is that there is a very simple proposition known to all of us that we break our system down into an executive, a legislative and a judiciary and there is a fourth estate in the media. Somehow, Sir, a perverse interaction has taken place in which there seems to be bad blood thrown up between these practitioners who all have one common aim, direction and purpose which is the advancement of the best possible interest of public development and well-being.

Sir, in advancing the cause of democracy, we have to recognise that here in Barbados the burden of responsibility on the shoulders of those persons who act in the capacity as

parliamentary representatives is disproportionately high. The point has been made since I sat here, but I will not belabour it, that the representatives in Barbados act in the capacity of a local government official in other jurisdictions. In addition to that, if he or she takes ministerial office he or she has regional and international responsibility.

This system that we have is bereft of research facilities for those persons who are in the two chambers of Parliament. It is bereft of aids and it is bereft of resource persons and resource facilities. Sir, it is becoming increasingly common across the Commonwealth to have access to computers right there in the chambers themselves. We are an exceptionally talented group of people who come, as Senator Rickinson has said, at short notice and give of our best to make a contribution that is worthwhile more often than not to these debates and we do so against the reality that we are overcoming a tremendous obstacle.

In my respectful submission, we must recognise that electoral reform is but the first step to what I see as being a multi-dimensional process. There has to be a number of different approaches taken to the question of electoral reform, most specifically, when we are speaking about the numerical strength of the lower chamber.

Sir, we must provide leadership to our society. We must not allow ourselves to be portrayed as a collection of intellectually lamed persons or intellectual eunuchs, for want of a better way of putting it. I had an opportunity to look at an article written by Mr. Peter Wickham in today's *Nation* newspaper and I urge other Honourable Senators to associate themselves with the article at least by reading it. Sir, there has been in Barbados and across the Caribbean a long history of patron/client relationships in politics whereby a politician in the small societies we have in the Caribbean is treated as all-powerful. He is the 'be all' and the 'end all' so much so that it has been said that all roads lead or have led to certain politicians.

The necessity for increasing the numbers in Parliament will give life, purpose and meaning to the committee system and give purpose and meaning to the checks and balances which will be built into the system and expand the opportunity for broad participation. Once you do that, you are, therefore, tapping more widely into the society and giving life and meaning to what this democratic process and exercise should be about.

I find it difficult to understand how on one hand we can speak to the need for stopping politicians from being the persons who appoint everybody and everything stops at the politicians' doors and the politicians dictate this, that and the next, and at the same time we do not recognise that the way in which that has to be done must be from within the system which, therefore, has to be strengthened.

In my respectful view, part of strengthening the process must not only be seen as a numerical increase of two additional constituencies which would cost \$200 000 or whatever the estimated figure is but it must mean that you are giving people a better opportunity for representation. When you have a constituency with 10 000 going on to 11 000 or 12 000 people, both Senator Mascoll and I canvassed that constituency, the reality is that in some others, there are only about 5 000 going on to 6 000 people, so there is a terrible disproportion. This means, therefore, that try as you may to the best possible ability of whoever the representative is, there will always be limitations. We would never have a perfect situation with a level playing field but I honestly believe that we have to try to give as many people as possible equal access. As I said, this is but one step in the process and for those reasons I associate myself with this Resolution.

SENATOR THE HON. J. X. WALCOTT: Before I close discussion on this debate, I want to address two comments made by Senator Rickinson and Senator Collymore.

In relation to Senator Rickinson's comment, due to an unfortunate administrative problem which I know that you, Mr. President, is addressing, the supplementary Order Paper for today's sitting was not properly circulated to Honourable Senators. When I realised that this had occurred I spoke to the senators individually including Senator Rickinson regarding the unfortunate situation and all senators agreed to proceed with the debate on this Resolution. I must say again that no discourtesy was meant to Honourable Senators and I am certain that you, Sir, would seek to ensure that this regrettable state of affairs does not occur again. Again, I must offer my apologies to Honourable Senators.

As regards Senator Collymore's concern about the amendments to the Constitution, what this Senate has been asked to do today is to approve a draft order. I refer to section 41D 3 and I quote:

"Not later than two months after the Commission has submitted a report under subsection (1)(a), the Minister shall lay before each House for its approval the draft of an order...."

So this is not the actual order.

The question of an amendment to the Constitution is not in dispute. This is provided for in section 49(2)(d) of the Constitution. If this draft is approved, there would have to be a Bill which would require the support of two-thirds of all members of both Houses.

With those words I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

A division has been called for.

The question that the Resolution do now pass was put to the Senate and agreed to, the Senate dividing as follows:

Ayes: Senator the Hon. J. X. WALCOTT, Senator the Hon. G. S. H. MURRAY, Senator T. E. BARKER, Senator P. C. GODDARD, Senator the Hon. Dame Patricia SYMMONDS, Senator Miss J. C. ODLE, Senator J. E. D. WILLIAMS, Senator K. D. SYMMONDS, Senator D. L. HAYNES, Senator Sir John Stanley GODDARD, Senator the Rev. L. W. B. ROCK, His Honour Senator C. L. BOLDEN – 12

Noes: Senator C. A. MASCOLL, Senator LeR. H. McCLEAN, Senator B. R. COLLYMORE, Senator Mrs. P. E. RICKINSON – 4

Abstain: Senator C. K. LAURIE – 1
9.05 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

SENATOR THE HON. J. X. WALCOTT: Mr. President, I now beg to move that this Honourable Senate now adjourn until Wednesday, June 12, 2002, at 11.00 a.m.

The question was put to the Senate and agreed to and Mr. PRESIDENT adjourned the Senate accordingly.
9.10 pm

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