
THE SENATE DEBATES

(UNOFFICIAL REPORT)

PARLIAMENT 1999 – 2003

THE SENATE

Wednesday, May 8, 2002

The Senate met in the Senate Chamber, Parliament Buildings, on Wednesday, May 08, 2002, at 11.20 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. J. X. WALCOTT, FRCS, (Edin.)
J.P. (Minister of Health) (Leader of the Senate)

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

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

Senator P. C. Goddard

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

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

Senator J. E. D. WILLIAMS, B.Sc., M.B.A., J.P.

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

Senator K. D. SYMMONDS, LL.B.

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

Senator LeR. H. McCLEAN, B.Sc. (Hons.)

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 Sir John Stanley GODDARD, K.A.,
B.Comm., C.A., Hons. LL.D. (U.W.I.)

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

Senator the Hon. 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.

Prayers were led by Rev. Father Errington Massiah.

ANNOUNCEMENTS BY HIS HONOUR THE PRESIDENT

Mr. PRESIDENT: The problem of the late delivery of Senate papers has been drawn to my attention. Before this Sitting, I met with the Clerk of Parliament and sought an explanation. It seems to me that some Senators received their papers, for example, in Senator Bolden's case, as late as yesterday. This is most unsatisfactory. I have instructed the Clerk that in future when papers are delivered late from the Government Printery that arrangements be made to have them delivered to the homes of those Senators who may not have received them late on Friday. I expect that this would be followed in future and if Senators have a problem in future they must draw it directly to my attention.

Thank you.

PRESENTATION OF PAPERS

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

1. Duties, Taxes and Other Payments (Exemption) (Coronation International Golf Club Limited) Order, 2002;
2. Customs Tariff (Amendment) Order, 2002;
3. Value Added Tax (Refund) (Tumari Ltd.) Order, 2002;
4. Value Added Tax (Refund) (F.A.C. Collymore Scholarship Fund) Order, 2002;
5. Duties, Taxes and Other Payments (Exemption) Barbados Agricultural Management Company Limited) Order, 2002;
6. Value Added Tax (Refund) (IDS Systems Limited) Order, 2002;

7. Duties, Taxes and Other Payments (Exemption) (P.E.P.E. Investments Limited) Order, 2002;
8. Annual Report of the Barbados Tourism Investment Incorporation for the year 2000;
9. Annual Report of the National Petroleum Corporation for the period April 1999 to March 2000;
- 10 Tenth Actuarial Report of the Operation of the Barbados National Insurance Scheme as at 31st December 1999;
11. Local Government (Pensions) (Amendment) Regulations, 2002;
12. Statutory Boards (Pensions) (Pensionable Offices) Order, 2002;
13. Fourth Report and Recommendations of the Electoral and Boundaries Commission;
14. Draft Electoral and Boundaries Commission (Review of Boundaries) Order, 2002;
15. Annual Report of the National Council on Substance Abuse for the period April 1999 to March 2000;
16. Report on the Activities of the Town and Country Development Planning Office for the period 1st April, 2001 to 30th September, 2001; and
17. Annual Report of the Transport Board for the year 1999-2000.

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDER

SENATOR the Hon. J. X. WALCOTT: I beg to move that Standing Order, 45(2) be suspended for the remainder of today's Sitting so that we can discuss a Bill which is on the Order Paper but which has not yet been read a first time.

The question was put to the Senate and agreed to.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

SENATOR the Hon. J. X. WALCOTT: I beg to move that the following Bills be read a first time:

1. International Financial Services Bill, 2002;
2. Education (Amendment) Bill, 2002.

NOTICE OF RESOLUTION

SENATOR the Hon. J. X. WALCOTT: I beg to give notice of a Resolution to approve in accordance with Section 5 of the Crown Lands (Vesting and Disposal) Act,

Cap. 225, the vesting in the National Cultural Foundation of land situate at Probyn Street in the city of Bridgetown.

The question was put to the Senate and agreed to.

PUBLIC BUSINESS

ORDER NO. 1 – INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL – SERVICES BILL, 2002

SENATOR THE HON. J. X. WALCOTT: Mr. President, this new International Financial Services Bill is designed to strengthen the regulatory framework on which offshore banks which are presently licensed in Barbados will be able to operate.

It will, inter alia, repeal and replace the present Offshore Banking Act and permit entities which are not presently incorporated under the Companies Act to obtain licences. In addition, it would strengthen the prudential regulatory framework under which these entities operate; it will mandate that offshore banks would have a physical presence in Barbados and it would increase the penalties in respect of offences under the Act.

Sir, this new legislation will be complementary to the present Financial Institutions Act which is the regulatory framework for the domestic banking system. You will appreciate, Mr. President, that in financial systems and in their regulatory frameworks, it is a very flux and dynamic situation and changes have been necessary in the relative legislation from time to time. This is often required to enable the sector to adapt and allow it to maintain international standards.

Sir, work began on this Bill in 1998 and over the course of that time there have been several discussions and collusions with relevant interest groups who came up with a Bill to make international financial services more well-regulated and on a strong prudential footing and to bring it on stream with international standards.

Sir, the Offshore Banking Act was introduced in Barbados in 1979 under the Tom Adams Government, and we all well remember the varying opinions at that point in time. At that time, it was felt that Barbados would develop into a financial centre with well-regulated financial standards, that it would provide employment for Barbados' increasingly skilled workforce and would assist in diversifying our economy and be a source of foreign exchange. At that time, there was a lot of hue and cry and a lot of distension to this. It was felt that Barbados would become a land of money launderers and banditry and all the concomitant sacrilege associated with these international business corporations.

Of course, the Bahamas and the Cayman Islands were miles ahead of us. We started slowly because we wanted to be careful and to have a well-regulated system in place in our country. As I speak, we have 57 licensed offshore banks operating in Barbados employing a total of 297 persons and there have been increased foreign exchange earnings through taxes, wages, rents and increased tourism arrivals and ancillary services related to this whole environment.

Sir, our success in attracting these offshore banks is built on a number of things; the fact that Barbados has a network of treaties and the fact that our Central Bank has a very strict and capable process for issuing licences and that there is very careful monitoring of these entities. Barbados has a number of tax treaties with a number of countries. These include the United States of America, Canada, the United Kingdom, the Scandinavian countries of Finland, Norway and Sweden, China and Malta and in the region Venezuela and Cuba.

In the area of licensing, the Central Bank has usually been very strict and there is usually strict due diligence both at home and overseas in regard to these entities. In addition, potential licensees are not allowed to be incorporated until their licence has been issued.

In the area of monitoring, it requires that banks have to seek permission from the Central Bank if there is going to be any change in ownership or reduction in capital. In addition, the Central Bank requires that these entities submit quarterly reports of their returns and audited financial statements at the end of the financial year and that there should be meetings of the directors and managers with the Central Bank staff annually.

Sir, this new framework seeks to enhance and improve the whole system of monitoring of these institutions. Section 4 of the Act which deals with the definition of international financial services incurred much discussion and debate. It was felt that it should have a definition which would be broad and transparent, taking into consideration the fact that a number of our traditional finance institutions have moved away from deposit taking to other areas such as intra-group treasury, financing, investment banking, portfolio management, investment and advisory services, trustees services, estates and tax administration.

With this new Bill, the Central Bank would have the authority to examine any company where there is reasonable cause to believe that the company is engaging in international financial services without a licence and they can be fined \$100 000 under this new Bill. The Societies with Restricted Liability whose activities are restricted to carry on international financial services will now be able to become licensed.

Under the proposed Bill, the Minister of Finance would retain responsibility for the licensing of new entities and for specifying the conditions under which they will carry out their services. The Minister of Finance will also have power of revocation of licences as mentioned under Section 15. Under Section 13, the Minister of Finance would have power to approve articles, amendments and reorganisations.

The Central Bank of Barbados will be responsible for the administration of the Act and will have powers to approve the establishment of subsidiary branches and representative offices. In addition and of importance, on-site inspection of licensees which previously the bank could only do after appealing a court order will be allowed under the Bill and this is highlighted at section 53.

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SENATOR the Hon. J. X. WALCOTT: Mr. President, in addition, the Central Bank will determine the extent of a physical presence that a licensee needs in Barbados. The new Act will remove the distinction between resident and non-resident control company and raise the minimum cap to \$4 million for those entities that receive a deposit and for those that do not will be \$1 million. In addition, it will make provision for fair and reasonable capital adequacy ratio to be implemented.

Section 48 will allow the Central Bank to share information with any supervisory or regulatory authority or financial institution in Barbados. In addition, there will be the ability to share information with appropriate supervisory or regulatory authority in another country. I should say, Sir, that the international business sector is a very important area for Barbados at this stage of our economic development and certainly, bearing in mind the events of September 11th, we certainly have to ensure that we can benefit and take off in this direction.

With this in mind, the Government of Barbados is very mindful of this fact and has outlined a number of areas which need to be addressed in the present stage so that we can get the international business sector on a firm footing and get it going. These will include: marketing and promotion of Barbados as a financial services centre; the expansion of our tax treaty network; improvement in the administration of the sector; reduction in the cost of doing business, especially in the area of telecommunications; modification and introduction of new legislation as it becomes necessary. In addition, we will have to accept and implement international best practices in the area of marketing and promotion.

Already since September 11th, the Government has launched a very aggressive campaign and a number of conferences have been attended. It has also been networking with a number of businesses through the assistance of Mr. Geoffrey Belle. In addition, Government has to look seriously at engaging high-quality public relations media consultants to ensure the preservation of Barbados' reputation. We have to look at having increased coverage in major journals such as the Financial Times, Forbes Magazine or Euro Money. We have to look at having editorial comments done on our behalf, all aimed at pushing Barbados as an area where companies can feel free to bring their business.

Sir, with Barbados having been removed from the OECD List of countries, we should move on in our area of negotiating tax treaties with the various countries. There are a number of countries which are of priority this year. These countries are: Italy, Denmark, France, Germany, Ireland, Japan, Spain and South Africa. In the area of reducing cost of doing business, we are all aware that recently we debated the Telecommunications Bill and it is felt that will lead to open competition and reduction in rates and will definitely assist in reducing the cost of doing business in Barbados, especially to some of these entities in which telecommunication is an integral part of their operation. Then, there is the area of improvement of administration, which we need to address.

There is also the complaint that some public officers are tardy in responding to enquiries from these persons who are interested in investing in Barbados. Sometimes they do not even respond at all. There is the issue of inflexibility in adjusting to some things, therefore, the areas of Immigration and Customs, Corporate Affairs and Intellectual Property will be addressed. We have to find ways of doing things efficiently, accurately but in a specific time.

Sir, obviously this Bill forms part of the legislative changes that will become necessary. This will be one of them and as I said earlier, it is a very dynamic Bill where, of course, changes will be made from time to time.

The Mutual Funds Regulations Act will have to be amended and we will have to look at introducing pieces of legislation to deal with e-commerce, et cetera. We, obviously, will have to pay attention to international best practices and try to maintain certain standards.

This international business area has served us well over the years. To those who are interested this year, we have registered 85 business companies, 4 Exempt Insurance Companies, 2 Exempt Insurance Management Companies, 3 Societies with Restricted Liabilities (SRLs), 1 Offshore Bank. Therefore, I think it is necessary that we move in this direction. It is obvious to all that this is an

area that will be vitally important to our economic development.

Mr. President, with these few words, I beg that this Bill be read a second time.

SENATOR LeR. H. McCLEAN: Mr. President, the Minister spoke of the matter of offshore banks in a manner that would give one the impression that the sector has the potential to make a significant contribution to the economy of this country.

I believe that to some extent this is true, given the level of corporation taxes which the offshore sector contributes to the Barbados economy. We would agree that the offshore sector is very important to our economy and does have the potential to make an even greater contribution. Sir, my concern is when I hear Members of Government speaking as though we have been doing so well in this area. Sir, when we look at Barbados' share of the offshore business, particularly IBCs, it is minuscule in terms of what is happening in the rest of the world. I heard the Minister mention the Cayman Islands and the Bahamas but I was a bit surprised that, for some reason, he did not mention the place that has approximately 60 per cent of the world's IBCs registered there. We are speaking of 85 IBCs registered and we seem to think that is a great accomplishment, with a total of 95 offshore businesses registered.

Sir, I think in the British Virgin Islands, they registered last year some 51,000 IBCs with an income of \$US92 million. They have accumulative registration of IBCs last year of over 470,000. I have been assured that figure has already surpassed 500,000 this year. Sir, in fact, they now corner some 60 per cent of the IBCS registrations in the world, so much so that people have been referring to IBCs as BVI companies. They have not been sitting on their laurels, they are very aggressive in terms of going out there and getting business.

Recently, Belgium has changed their legislation and has been attracting some of this business. The persons responsible for this business in the BVIs have gone out there to find out what is happening, to ensure that they do not lose any business. Sir, obviously, any sector that can earn \$US92 million registrations alone must be very significant and I am wondering if we are doing enough to be able to attract this kind of business. Mr. President, they have been able to attract this business while the whole furore with the OECD was going on. We have never heard of the BVI involved or mentioned in any way as being connected with any activities which are not in keeping with the best practices.

Mr. President, in addition, the September 11th events which we keep harping on and which we want to blame for

everything that is happening in our economy now, did not have any impact on their registration of these companies. The Minister made the point that we want to strengthen the regulatory framework with respect to the registration of these offshore banks and I think in the global scheme of things we want to ensure that Barbados continues to remain above any suspicion in terms of what we are doing in this country. We have heard of the association of certain things in these countries with money laundering and I am sure that the Barbados Government and the people of Barbados would, indeed, want to ensure that we do not become caught up in such activities.

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Senator L. H. McCLEAN: Sir, there are 57 offshore banks employing 297 people. We know that offshore banks do not employ a large number of people and some of them only occupy a small space in the office of a lawyer or an accountant and that there is a name on the door to identify where the company is located. Therefore, I suspect that most of these banks only have one or two people associated with them locally.

We cannot therefore, in my view, achieve the objective which was stated in 1979 of creating employment when the Act was first put in place. I do not think that we can pin too much hope on off-shore banks providing too much employment even though they would provide the opportunity to many of our professional people, particularly the accountants and lawyers, but even those figures we would have to examine closely. If an off-shore bank has an attorney-at-law who already has an active practice listed as an employee, could you really say that is one more person employed by that bank? Therefore, many of the persons employed by these banks would be duplicated because most of these persons are professional people who might be working for several of these banks. Sir, you might get a single lawyer or accountant representing ten off-shore banks, each bank may say they employ this particular person so your statistics will show ten persons employed by off-shore banks when, in actual fact, it is only one person who is working for these banks.

Sir, I think the number of employees represented will have to be examined to see if we really do employ that number of people. Perhaps the aim of the legislation is to make sure that off-shore banks have a physical presence and that Barbados would contribute to that situation. I am wondering to what extent we can force a company or enterprise that wishes to register as an off-shore enterprise to have a physical presence in your country as these are technicalities for the persons who are involved in this sector and we would have to look at that.

Certainly, these enterprises when they want to establish themselves as off-shore entities, must have some valid reasons for doing so. Therefore, I do not know to what extent the legislation would saddle them with the cost of a physical presence which means that they would have to set up an office, employ a receptionist, secretary, manager, maid and so on.

Sir, we need to make sure that sector contributes to the economy of this country. I do not think that it is good enough for the Minister or the Government simply to say that civil servants are not working with the haste that they should and, therefore, are delaying the registration process. We need to look at what infrastructure is in place to facilitate the easy registration of these enterprises.

How is it that a place which has a population of 21, 000 with a bureaucracy smaller than ours, can register thousands of companies in a year but yet we are struggling to register fifty? Sir, there must be something wrong with the actual system. It cannot be a case merely of persons not doing it with the speed with which they ought to.

Sir, we need to examine what other people have been doing in this area and learn something from them because it cannot be a case of tardy civil servants. There must be something structurally wrong with the system. Therefore, we need to examine what is happening and get the system working more efficiently so that we can get more benefits from it.

Sir, it makes no sense in having a system for speedy registration if we cannot attract more business. We have the proverbial "chicken and egg" situation. Are we doing enough to attract this business? If we do enough to attract businesses and then we cannot register them, there will be frustration and they will leave. On the other hand, if we put the system in place for rapid registration, it will make no sense unless we can attract business.

Sir, in my view, I do not think that the people of this country have been sensitised to the extent that they ought to be. I think there are still professional persons who could have an input in the off-shore business who only have a vague understanding of how the system works and, therefore, may not have the awareness of the importance of this sector to our economy.

In addition to the Government employing these public relation persons to ensure that the name of Barbados remains good, I think that we also need to do a public relations exercise for our people so that they can better understand the importance of this sector to the economy of this country. We need to have the necessary training in place to equip persons in Barbados to ensure that they have the specialised skills that are required to manage these off-shore businesses which we are trying to attract.

Sir, it seems to me that we have a long way to go if we are going to get the benefits which can be derived from the off-shore sector. We have heard in recent times of the difficulties with respect to the OECD which, in my view, is simply a case of one set of people believing that they should control whatever is happening in the world and they do not seem to be satisfied with what they have and get angry when small countries have a small piece of the pie. We must remember that in many cases it is not the governments of these countries that initiate these things. Very often, it is private companies or individuals who are behind the actions of the governments to push their case. For example, if you look at the Caribbean countries that grow bananas, it was not a government that was putting pressure on them. It was a private company that was forcing their government to take action against these small countries.

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SENATOR LeR. H. McCLEAN: Sir, whereas we might see in this globalized system that this small piece of the cake is of vital importance to us, in the global scheme of things they might be minuscule but it might be important enough to cause them to put pressure on us to give up what little we have.

While pressure is being put on small countries to deprive them of the opportunity to attract business, within the United States of America there are states that are now putting systems in place to attract the same offshore companies to operate within the United States of America and are providing all kinds of incentives for them to do so. Whereas they do not believe that we as small countries should benefit from these things, they are making every effort to ensure that they can get any benefits that are there to be derived.

Mr. President, I think that the Government of Barbados has a lot of work to do in this area. We want to see a greater sense of urgency with respect of measures which we have taken. It is not enough just to put legislation in place. Whereas it is important to have legislation like this in place, it is even more important that we follow up and aggressively sell this country as a place where people can come and do business.

I thank you, Sir.

SENATOR SIR JOHN STANLEY GODDARD: Mr. President, in preparing for the debate on this Bill, which is a comprehensive and technical Bill, I involved myself in a wide range of consultations with specialists in the field of international financial services. That meant going to lawyers, accountants and others working in the sector.

They were pleased about the extent to which they were involved in the consultations and in the drafting of the Bill. The Leader of Government said that this Bill has been in the process of drafting for three years.

Sir, they are also satisfied with the Bill as it stands. I ask them what are the conditions that should prevail in an ideal world that would be conducive to the promotion and the sustainability of an international financial services sector and I will summarise some of what they said, Sir.

They said that in this ideal world these conditions should exist in the environment: political and social stability; a feeling of welcome and friendliness to persons coming into the home country; the minimisation of crime and violence; respect for the rule of law; zero tolerance for money laundering; quick response time from the regulatory and other authorities; good support services from local professionals and other staff; an efficient and reliable telecommunication service and rates that are internationally competitive. These are the essential points in order to promote the international financial services sector. Sir, fortunately, Barbados rates high in most but not all of the conditions that I have described.

I submit that improvements are needed for a reduction in crime and violence; a reduction of response time from regulatory and other authorities and a reduction in telecommunication rates. Sir, complaints were focussed in those three areas.

As we all know, and it has been stated here today, the international financial services sector is very important to the Barbados economy in terms of foreign exchange and it is also an adjunct to the tourism sector. We must always remember that we have to compete regionally and internationally. There seems to me that there is a missing link to improve our competitive position. I am not relating this to the Bill that is under review. If we are to do better, I am referring to some private partnership, a mechanism properly funded and staffed to research conditions in the international marketplace and to monitor the rapid changes - I stress the word "rapid" - in order to speed up the local response time.

Sir, this is not an original idea of mine. I was told that research and discussion have gone into this but somehow nothing has been established. While all these entities are operating in the international financial services sector, there seem to be a lack of research capability, a co-ordinating function so that Members here can be advised of what is going on in the international arena because this is a rapidly changing type of business.

I would like to think that there would be a follow-up to this Bill in an effort that the public and private sectors would establish a mechanism, a public/private partnership,

to monitor the rapid changes. Again, I stress the word rapid. The changes in this sector are more rapid than in any other economic sector that is taking place and we need to have feedback into the system so that we can respond quickly.

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Senator the Hon. P. C. GODDARD: Mr. President, I rise to support this Bill and would like to join in this debate to respond to some of the issues that have been raised and perhaps to raise some new issues.

First of all, this is about international business and not offshore business. Anyone who talks about offshore business is talking in terms of the last century and anyone talking about international business talks about the vision that this Government has for the development of international business for foreigners and local people alike so that we can see that the drive is to update, modernise and bring our business activities into the 21st century and give local business people the opportunity to take advantage of the mechanisms that have been put in place to do international business, to reduce bureaucracy, to give tax benefits and to encourage the development of our export of services to the region, the hemisphere and the wider global community.

In this regard, I think that we have to see how this piece of legislation fits into the overall framework of international business in Barbados. We have heard how the BVI registers phenomenal numbers of IBCs. This is nothing new. This has been going on since the time I started working in this area in 1994 when I joined the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as a Minister of State in that Ministry.

At that time as now, we differentiated the type of IBCs that we registered in Barbados versus the BVI. BVI is known as a boiler plate country. A mere fraction of the IBCs that exist in the BVI employ anyone at all. The majority employ no one whereas in Barbados the IBCs have to have clear physical presence and clear activity. Some of them employ or have employed over a period of time hundreds of people. These are dynamic businesses that are used to do real business in Barbados. In the same way you will note that our formation of international banks has progressed at a rate of about two or three. I think I can recall a high figure of four in one year. The majority of those banks are banks of substance that do business in Barbados and practically all of them employ people in Barbados. All of them have a physical presence here.

The legislation does not address that issue, but that issue is determined by the Central Bank and the conditions under which the Central Bank may approve or recommend

the approval of that bank to operate in this country. I have been passed some documents that indicate that there has been higher registration actually of offshore banks which shows a high of nine in 1995 and in that regard my memory might be a bit faulty, but I do remember tracking these things on a month by month basis and seeing the low level at which the offshore banks had been approved.

This does not mean that is the number of applicants. Believe you me, the number of applicants are tremendously higher than those that are approved because Barbados is seen as a very attractive domicile because of its high reputation and there are a lot of individuals who have made applications and not achieved permission to operate here for one reason or another. We are very careful about who and how we allow people to operate in Barbados and in this particular area.

There is no doubt that international business is something that will grow steadily and significantly over the years to come. This legislation has to be constantly monitored and updated and this is what we are doing with this particular International Financial Services Bill, 2002.

We talked about the need for instituting international best practices and I could not agree more. We have to look at the whole aspect of the development of modernising our governmental business processes. The current jargon for that is e-government. I believe that perhaps a better phrase could be developed because e-government tends to put the weight and focus on technology to deliver the new efficiencies whereas technology is but one small part. The bigger change comes through the change in mindset and attitudes and the change of structures and how we deal with information, how we share information and how we store and transmit information. Ultimately, it is people that do that. It is not computers and it is not telecommunications.

Having said that, we do need the infrastructure to allow people to get on with business in a much more modern way. By changing mindsets, I think that we also have to change the attitude of people. It is very much easier for someone to tell you that it cannot be done and put an end to that potential bit of work than to say this is how it can be done and this is how I can help you do it and now I have a whole day's work to do to help you to do it.

This is nothing new in Barbados. How many times have you gone into a shop and you ask somebody if they have something in stock and they tell you no and you happen to glance up at the shelf and see it right behind them and say and say, "What is that up there?" You get the reply, "That must be just come in here."

You have to understand our national culture, our work ethic in this regard to be able to change it. I keep on saying, Mr. President, that there is but one Barbados. The

public sector and the private sector are faced with the same problems. We live in the same culture and deal with the same problems. So when we talk about improving the ways in which we process information, grant permissions and process the paperwork and the information flow of Government - I would rather say "information flow" because I would like to see that as paperless as possible. We have to do a lot more work in the area of changing mindsets and attitudes than we have to do with the implementation of technology. Having said that, the implementation of technology is also extremely important.

Senator Sir John Goddard mentioned the issues of society and the framework within which we do business as being very important and not just to focus on the technical aspects of international business - and I would agree with him. While we might have some shortcomings in Barbados, I think we can improve. We are well ahead of most domiciles in this world. Just this morning, I met with an investor group which is looking to do long-term business in Barbados and they cited the reasons why they chose Barbados and they talked about a nation which respects the rule of law. They talked about a nation where there was predictability and transparency. They talked about a nation where corruption was relatively low. We can always find exceptions to a rule but there is no doubt in my mind, Mr. President, that Barbados is continually held in very high esteem and regard around the world as an attractive place to do business. Having said that, I do not think we can rest on those laurels and we have to move aggressively to see where we can track various bits of information as they flow throughout the government service.

12.10 p.m.

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SENATOR PHILLIP C. GODDARD: I find it appalling when Government employees resist or resent anyone asking them where something is in the data flow process. Business takes place at a very fast rate today. Investment decisions are made with tight time frames and money becomes available in very short time frames. We cannot ask a businessman to develop plans over a period of six months, a year or two years.

Sir, you put in for a permission and the permission goes from one desk to another desk to a third desk and it stalls and it sits there for eight months. Lost files are a problem and there needs to be better regiment for the high value processes that are taking place in the Government. We need to track how this information is flowing and how you permit them, even how they are turned them down or granted a finite answer in a finite time frame. That needs to be done.

Mr. President, there is no doubt in my mind that given the current structure of the Government and the current methodology of working, we cannot deliver the international best practices referred to by the Leader of Senate.

Mr. President, the international business regime that we have developed is another way of saying that Barbados is doing business in the 21st Century. Barbados' businesses can no longer be satisfied with doing business just in Barbados. They will have a finite growth period and lifetime, if that is where they focus on and ultimately, business has to be trans-regional and trans-hemispheric, if not global.

In this regard, Mr. President, you will be aware that the Government of Barbados is involved in a series of negotiations at three distinct levels. First is the single market and economy in the Caribbean in which the greatest amount of liberalisation will take place, in which we are trying to build a strong region and in which we are trying to build and mould a Caribbean identity that will have a stronger voice in the global community.

Then the centre ring around that is the free trade of the Americas and the FTAA is concerned with developing a less liberal liberalisation of trade and the rule by which international business may be conducted across the hemisphere, allowing for predictability in our congenial markets in South America, Latin America, Mexico, Canada and the United States and that is an important aspect of our negotiation and development.

The outer ring is the WTO, the World Trade Organisation in which we address issues of global trade and how Barbados' businesses will do business outside of the western hemisphere, in Europe, Asia, Japan and Australia and that is another dimension of trade which establishes where we can be doing business, under what rules and with what predictability.

Sir, all of these things have to be harmonised and no one thing has any greater importance on another thing and we have to take all these things together and develop a cohesive framework and provide the framework that will define an economy of this country to the next half century. Sir, that is what is being done and parallel with that, Mr. President, is keeping our legislation updated with the financial services and legislation that we are bringing to Parliament from time to time. It is in this context that this International Financial Services Bill, 2002, must be seen. We cannot see it in isolation. We have to look at it in totality and how we are developing our international business.

Sir, to pick at how many IBCs we register versus another location, is really not dealing with the meat of the

situation. The IBCs in Barbados do real volumes of business, employ thousands of people and earn foreign exchange for this country. There are IBCs that are locally owned that are doing business regionally and extra-regionally that are earning foreign exchange for Barbados and employing many Barbadians, so we have to understand those mechanisms and understand the dynamics of this industry.

Yes, larger countries are going to become protectionists. There are going to be new business models and methods developing and as Senator Sir John said, this is a rapidly changing and dynamic business. It is changing faster and faster than technology changes and we have to be aware and kept up to date on how this is happening.

Our Electronic Commerce Bill, Mr. President, was passed sometime ago in this House. It is little known amongst the practitioners in Barbados. They do not understand today that a digital document is a legal document in the courts of this country. Mr. President, we have to see the whole range of legislation in the context of the development of our international business.

Mr. President, finally, in regard to the issue of promotion, we have increased funds allocated for promotion this financial year, and the Minister of Economic Affairs just had a most successful promotional visit in New Orleans at the Risk Insurance Managers Conference of the Americas which was attended by thousands of people. The interest in Barbados was tremendous.

We had identified at the economic conference that the Prime Minister summoned shortly after the 9/11 incident which demonstrated to the world that Barbados was serious about taking action and about focussing on the issues of the day, that re-insurance and captive insurance business will blossom, subsequent to that period of time. The work done by economic affairs has been laudatory in marketing Barbados to the insurance community and I have been informed that there has been a significant number of applications for new business in this particular area.

Sir, you can see that the Government does respond rapidly to changing norms and changing opportunities. Things will blossom and things will die and we have seen the foreign sales corporations come under threat, through the WTO action by the European Union against the United States and we still do not know quite where the Foreign Sales Corporation issue would end up; but that particular type of business has been invaluable in highlighting to the international community the opportunities of a wider international business in Barbados, for many a foreign sales corporation has set up an IBCS in Barbados as well.

Sir, you can say that the Foreign Sales Corporations were all lost leaders. They brought customers in and customers have seen the environment, they have been on the ground and see the potential of our people to work and do good work in the international services field and they have set up IBCs, capitalised on that so within that context, Mr. President, they see a great future for international business for Barbadians and for foreigners alike, not just for one group of people.

12.20 p.m.

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SENATOR THE HON. P. C. GODDARD: So I totally support this International Financial Services Bill which updates our legislation and bring it into a more modern context and which will help us to develop international financial services business for the benefit of all the people in Barbados.

I thank you, Mr. President.

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

The question was put to the Senate and agreed to.

On the motion of SENATOR the Hon. 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.

Clauses 1 - 3 inclusive were called and passed.

Parts 1 - 5 inclusive were called and passed.

The First Schedule was called and passed.

On the motion of Senator the Hon. J. X. WALCOTT, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported to His Honour the PRESIDENT, the passing of one Bill in Committee and Mr. PRESIDENT resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

On the separate motions of Senator the Hon. J. X. WALCOTT, the Bill was read a third time and passed and cited as the International Financial Services Act, 2002.

ORDER NO. 3 – RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE
VESTING – IN THE NATIONAL CULTURAL
FOUNDATION – OF LAND SITUATE AT PROBYN
STREET – IN THE CITY OF BRIDGETOWN

SENATOR the Hon. G. S. H. MURRAY: Sir, this Resolution deals with the vesting in the National Cultural Foundation of a portion of land at Probyn Street, Bridgetown which was the site of the old Empire Theatre.

Sir, this Resolution represents much more than the mere vesting of a quantity of land and the building thereon in the National Cultural Foundation because the Empire Theatre is much more than an old, dilapidated, abandoned building situated in the heart of Bridgetown. This Resolution represents a plan for the restoration of the old Empire Theatre building which would see it being transformed and restored to its former glory days. This in itself, is but part of a larger national plan in the scheme of things for cultural affairs.

Sir, this action of vesting the land in the National Cultural Foundation must be seen in the context of a national policy with a number of programmes which would, in my view, when everything is taken into consideration, see Barbados experiencing a cultural renaissance, a rejuvenation and expansion which have not been seen or equalled since the days of CARIFESTA in 1981 when there was a veritable explosion of cultural expressions and manifestations in all forms across Barbados. With this Act, we will be adding another string to the bow of the cultural situation in Barbados.

As it stands now, Barbados is still very much running culturally on the momentum which was generated in 1981 by CARIFESTA which was spurred on by the setting up of the National Cultural Foundation. Therefore, we are getting ready for a further extension of a whole set of cultural activities in Barbados.

The mere fact that we are having this debate and that we are speaking about it in the context of culture and not just as a restoration of a building represents a certain maturity in the psyche of Barbadians where a generation or so ago it was still widely held, said and believed that Barbados had no culture.

12.30 p.m.

Wednesday, May 08, 2002

SENATOR THE HON. G. S. H. MURRAY: Mr. President, we know that is an impossibility; human affairs in any group, whether it is animal or human, also has a culture existing within it. Sir, this false charge that Barbados had no culture stemmed from the fact that it was felt by some that, because Barbados was not producing

persons like Shakespeare, Mozart or Chopin, that these persons were supposed to represent the epitome of culture.

I am happy to say that those days have long gone and we have matured to the point where we are determined we will define ourselves for ourselves and how the world sees us. Another point is that we have gone from the point of no culture to a multi-cultural society, not only in song, dance, painting, arts, religion, values, foods, et cetera. Sir, we had to cure the psychological phenomenon where even though the dominant euro-centric culture represented a minority of the population in terms of cultural background and the African culture was the subordinate culture even though it had superiority in that position.

Therefore, Barbados has gone through a transformation in how it sees the world and itself. It is fair to say that we now have a greater sense of responsibility about how we see ourselves or how the world sees us. We are no longer judging ourselves in a position which was obtained in the past. In the same way that we now have cultural heroes, there was a time when it was felt that Barbados could have no heroes. There were no Caesars, no Churchills or no McArthurs. We have now defined ourselves as having heroes in every sense of the word. Therefore, as a society, we have come together, have matured and have become much more of a unit of what represents Barbados and Barbadiana than we were before.

Sir, the restoration of the Empire Theatre will go a long way towards widening, deepening and enhancing the cultural situation in Barbados. Sir, to give some background about the Empire Theatre; those who have an appreciation for architecture would be appreciative of the Empire Theatre and what it represents. The Theatre is regarded as a neoclassical building in architecture. Sir, my experience only goes as far as when it was a cinema and not as a theatre in the real sense of the word. I hear of some persons in this Senate speaking with such nostalgia and who would have known the Empire Theatre as a theatre, where there were performances done by such persons as Madam Ifill, Joyce Stuart and persons of that era. Sir, what I gather from such persons was that there was a hive of cultural activity in Barbados at that time.

Sir, the building was completed in 1922 and, at one time, was used as a theatre, then a cinema. Sir, there is only one other theatre in the English-speaking Caribbean and that is the Waltz Theatre in Jamaica which is famous in theatrical circles for its contribution to the cultural well-being of Jamaica.

Sir, Government's wish for the Empire Theatre, when restored, will become a state-of-the-art facility, as a theatre, as well as a cinema, where dramatic performances and productions of various types can take place. It, by its very nature, will not be competing with the National

Stadium, the Sherbourne Conference Centre, or the Sir Garfield Sobers Gymnasium. It will have a seating capacity of 850 persons; will have such features as that of an orchestral theme, something which young Barbadians will not be familiar with unless they have seen it on video or television; moving stages; portable projection screen; state-of-the-art acoustics; air conditioning and basic operational apparatus production. It is, therefore, felt that when restored, the Empire Theatre would be the resting place and operational place for a number of cultural organisations which will include a national youth orchestra, a national school of dance, a national symphony orchestra and a company for the performing arts.

Sir, the restoration of this theatre is a matter of undertaking. It is not just a question of cleaning out, restoring windows and doors, painting windows and walls. It has to go through a number of technical expertise to bring it to the calibre of what we want it to be and, in that regard, work has already begun.

Sir, two years ago, in February, 2000, the then Minister of Culture had secured technical cooperation with the Government of Cuba and had brought to Barbados a very well known Cuban conservation architect, Mr. Nelson Melero Lazo, who has advised us on the restoration of the Empire Theatre. Mr. Melero Lazo is very well known for his association with Cuban conservation restoration in musicology.

The plan is that the restoration of the Theatre will take place over a period of time, in a number of phases. The first phase has already been conducted. That has occurred with the Government of Barbados and Mr. Melero Lazo. His task was a very necessary one because he had to carry out an inspection of the building. It was very necessary to ensure that the original features of that building would be retained. He prepared a report which, among other things, provided that the architectural features of the building be retained. He detailed each aspect of the building; conducted general management of the state of the building; examined and outlined areas of deterioration of the building and compiled an inventory of all openings, that is windows, doors, et cetera. It was a very detailed and necessary audit. It also included the recommendation for action to arrest the further deterioration of the building. It entailed the implementation of the recommendations of a structural survey which had been earlier carried out as part of a larger study by the engineering firm of CEP Limited, and Tony Brooks Architects Limited, in association with David Shorey and Company.

Phase 2 involves the actual implementation of steps to arrest the rapid deterioration of the building. Phase 3 entails the actual restoration work. Phase 4 entails the installation of special equipment that would facilitate the adaptation of the building to function as a centre for arts

and culture in Barbados. Phase No. 2 involves the actual implementation of steps to arrest the rapid deterioration of the building. Phase No. 3 entailed the actual restoration work. Phase No. 4. entailed the installation of special equipment that would facilitate the adaptation of the building to function as a centre for arts and culture in Barbados.

Mr. Melero also paid a second visit to Barbados in March, 2001 and undertook preliminary work leading to the architectural drawings.

12.40 p.m.

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SENATOR THE HON. G.S.H. MURRAY: During this visit it was determined that a team of technical experts would be made available to Barbados to provide services in conjunction with those of the architect. It was identified that this technical team would provide expertise which was not readily available in Barbados covering such areas as a service engineer, a theatre specialist, a sound specialist, a lighting specialist and a stage specialist, and the Government of Cuba has agreed to provide Barbados with these services. Therefore, we are clear as to the vision for the building. The total cost to make the Empire Theatre a state-of-the-art facility is estimated in the region of US\$20 million. This is a large sum of money and this is why this restoration work needs to be done in phases.

Mr. President, at least one private sector agency has expressed an interest in seeking to work with the Government in bringing about the restoration of the Empire Theatre but that proposal is very much still under examination and no specific decision has been taken on it so far.

Sir, we also see the restoration of the theatre in the context of the general area. We envisage that when the theatre is restored, it will fit into a rehabilitated Bridgetown in conjunction with places like the Boardwalk, Independence Square which is now wasted as a car park and will be redeveloped and the redevelopment of Golden Square on which work has already started but not yet finished. The Golden Square area will also be landscaped and the bust of Clement Payne placed there.

Sir, the theatre will also be seen in the context of what is being planned for Queen's Park as Queen's Park has a rich and colourful history in Barbados. The Queen's Park Theatre, the Steel Shed and the Art Gallery have seen a restoration as part of the provision for CARIFESTA 1981 and since then there was deterioration in the condition of the building and we are not happy about this. The Steel Shed badly need refurbishment and the Art Gallery downstairs, which is heavily used and booked a year in

advance at most times and the Daphne Joseph-Hackett Theatre are earmarked for redevelopment.

Sir, we see the Empire Theatre as a linkage between Queen's Park, Golden Square, Independence Square, National Heroes Stage and the Lower Green development. There is no doubt that the process of redeveloping Bridgetown is on the way and persons are beginning to fully appreciate the efforts that are being undertaken.

Sir, the restoration of the Empire Theatre is a major undertaking which we feel will inure to the benefit of Barbados and add to the cultural resurgence taking place. We envisage that international productions can come to Barbados knowing full well they can perform in surroundings of international standard.

Sir, Barbados already has a high reputation in production and managing stage events through expertise developed from Crop Over, Congaline and NIFCA and Barbados is regarded a mecca in this area in the Caribbean. Many of our technicians are able to export their services through the region to mount major events and earn foreign exchange for Barbados to make themselves a worthwhile living.

Sir, the cultural industry is an important area of development because it is the single biggest industry in the world when taken in a global context, and we feel that Barbados has a role to place in that. We are sure that Barbadians have the creative, artistic and technical skills to add to that development and we intend fully to play our part.

This is one of the reasons why we have transformed Congaline from being a music festival to a festival which gives people the opportunity to display their music and persons are exposed to all the latest developments in intellectual property and the techniques of how people can market themselves, their goods and services and, therefore, prepare themselves for the world of entertainment.

I believe that if there is one area in the world that is already internationalised and globalized, it is the entertainment area. The rapid transmission of performances through CDs, television and satellites makes it an everyday occurrences in places around the world to experience other peoples' lives and lifestyles.

We are part of that world and we intend to play our part and take full advantage of it. We have full intention of making Barbados a hospitable place for persons who want to create commercials, films, movies and documentaries and we have had a visit by an international expert to advise us in this regard because we feel that we have a Barbadian story to tell the world and we need to take every opportunity to put our stamp on the world in the same way

that we have done in sugar, rum, education and sports, particularly cricket.

We feel that in the cultural industry we have a great wealth of talent in the performing arts, drawing and writing and we are a natural breeding ground for persons so we need to provide them with the opportunity to do so to bring credit to themselves, earn foreign exchange for the country and also to bring credit to Barbados.

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

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

SENATOR THE HON. J. X. WALCOTT: Mr. President, I beg to move that this Sitting be suspended until 2.00 p.m. today.

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

1.00 p.m.

Wednesday, May 8, 2002

RESUMPTION

Mr. PRESIDENT: This Sitting is resumed.

SENATOR LeR. H. McCLEAN: Mr. President, the matter of culture which is being addressed in this Resolution, where we are looking at the vesting of the property in the National Cultural Foundation, brings into focus many of the issues with respect to culture and how we approach culture in Barbados. The Minister made a statement in which he said that Barbados is a mecca in the area for cultural activities. The question arises, why is there so little participation by the private sector or private individual in the development of the infrastructure for cultural activity?

Sir, all of the major venues for cultural activities are government-owned. If culture is as lucrative an activity, as we are being told, someone in the private sector would have seen the value in having some of these facilities being made available for business reasons. Sir, except for two cinemas and one drive-in, I cannot think of anything outside of the tourist-related industry which is owned by the private sector for cultural activities. Yet the Minister's emphasis seems to be on buildings as a means of promoting culture.

Sir, Anthony "Gabby" Carter probably summed up the situation in his calypso when he said that "All of this talk about culture is driving me mad." He went on to explain why things are not what they seem to be when we

are looking at culture in Barbados. First of all, we have to put into context what is culture.

I grew up hearing the debate as to whether there was a Barbadian culture. I do not remember how many people would recall when persons used to say, "Oh Barbados does not have a culture." Surprisingly, to this day there are people, even at the academic level, discussing whether there is a Caribbean culture. This should not be something that we have any doubts about.

One definition of culture is the concepts, habits, skills, arts, instruments and institutions of different people in a given period. Therefore, we need to look at every aspect of our being and our existence, not only the present but also the past. Culture can be seen as a prism and radiating from that point you have the impact on one's personal identity, collective identity and social identity. I am sure that the sociologists among us would be better able to identify with that. The culture of a society is going to shape the kind of people that will eventually emerge from that society. Culture would have its links with the present, past and future. Sir, not only will it determine the individual's identity, it would determine the identity of the society as a whole.

Therefore, we can say that there is a link between culture and our heritage. We must realise that culture is more than dance, drama and sound. We have to look at what is the link with our heritage. Much of our culture and cultural identity has been lost because of our belief in what culture was and we are not paying attention to our cultural heritage.

I would like to repeat a call that I made in a previous contribution when I made the point that we need to regain possession of many of our artefacts which would give us a clear indication of our history.

We have the artefacts relating to the settlement of the Amerindians on this island which, for some reason, have not reached the stage where we have taken any archaeological work in order properly to identify these sites and to trace the connection with our history.

I recall the situation at Port St. Charles where some artefacts were discovered. It seems as though many people saw this as an unnecessary inconvenience to allow any proper analysis to be done of the site. Recently, I heard Dr. Watson in a presentation lamenting the fact that there was an old burial site that was unearthed when some construction work was being done on Fontabelle. Sir, all that was done regarding this discovery was, the findings were shovelled onto a truck and dumped somewhere. Sir, he made the comparison with what happened in New York where an old slave burial site was discovered and the work

on that site stopped so that the archaeologists could properly assess what was there.

We have the artefacts relating to the settlement of the Amerindians on this island and we have the artefacts relating to the early European settlement. In fact, there has been very little study of what this island was like in the early years of settlement. There was a writer, I do not remember his name, who documented the plant life that was on the island.

Asides.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Order, please.

SENATOR LeR. H. McCLEAN: The plant life that was here on the island in the early days, for example, the mastic tree which was thought to be totally eradicated from Barbados. Recently, somebody discovered that there was one located in the gully at The Whim, St. Peter and they are making efforts to propagate that. I think that the Prime Minister planted one of those trees recently.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator McClean, I hate to interrupt you. This Resolution deals with the vesting of property in the National Cultural Foundation and some reference to the terms in the Resolution might establish relevance and keep us within the Standing Orders here.

Asides.

SENATOR LeR. H. McCLEAN: Sir, I take your point. The point that I am making is that culture goes beyond the provision of facilities for drama and performances. We must pay attention to every aspect of the culture of the people of this country. Therefore, we need to recognise the stages that we have gone through as a people; how we got where we are; what was the process so that we can build on that and go forward. If we lose sight of where we came from, certainly, it would be more difficult for us to determine where we are going. This country has a very proud heritage. The vast majority of the people in this country still do not know or appreciate the legacies that we have inherited.

2.10 p.m.

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Senator LeR. H. McCLEAN: It is unfortunate that whenever we think of culture in Barbados we think in one direction or we take one position or another. Either there is a group of people who take a euro-centric view of culture and say that anything that is not of that type is not culture or you will get another group who will say that it is Afro-centric and if it is not of that type then it is not culture. We are now in a multicultural society and we need to give

recognition because even those of us who are obviously of African descent have a trace of European in us and many who appear to be of pure European descent have a trace of African in them. So it is merely a case of which genetic factors are dominant and which therefore are expressed in the phenotype.

Obviously, if we understand these linkages and the mixture and the sort of potpourri of culture and the history that has brought us to this point, I think we might be better able to understand where we are to be better able to understand the differences that arise and how we can cope with them. Very often, what we see as differences may not be differences if we can establish the linkages with each other.

The building which is being vested in the National Cultural Foundation I would hope that it is not merely seen as some place for performances and I would hope that there would be some provision whereby persons can have presentations, probably of an historical nature, and they can show us the development of this country. If a Dr. Watson or whoever can give a multi media presentation in a facility that is properly equipped and people can understand this is what we have developed through the years, then I think there would be better appreciation for the culture of this country.

Sir, the fact that there is this link between culture and economic development: music, drama, arts, all of these have a significant role to play in our economic development if we handle them correctly. I think that Caribbean culture is in great demand across the world. One person said that they believe that Caribbean culture is one of the most highly sought after commodities in the world today. To what extent Sir, will we capitalise on this potential market? We also have to be mindful that if we are going to be very concerned about the rights of our artistes and we want to make sure that our artistes are not exploited that we have to ensure that we treat other persons' rights in a similar manner. We cannot continue to infringe copyright and intellectual property laws in this country when it comes to somebody else's and use the flimsy excuse that what we are taking is only a minuscule part of their total thing. We cannot continue to use that excuse and expect that people will take us seriously when we raise concerns. When we raise concerns for us it is a big thing and they will also say that for them it is so minuscule and it makes no sense paying any attention to it.

If we are going to say that we are a society that observes the rule of law, in the same way that we want to stop people in New York from pirating the music of our artistes we also have to stop pirating the people's movies. For some reason, it seems as though people believe that this is something you cannot touch and should not touch. If we want to develop as a nation I have heard people talking

about having computer software that can demonstrate some of our cultural activities but how are we going to stop people from pirating that if we continue to pirate other people's software?

If we are going to look at this thing in the way it ought to be looked at, I believe that we also have to ensure that we do not only have the laws in place but these laws are policed and the law enforced. There is no reason why people should be allowed to be around Bridgetown selling CDs whether they be of local or foreign artistes. They should not be allowed openly and publicly. I have seen people approach and sell CDs in the car park from the back of their cars. They boldly tell you, "I can provide you with anything that you want." We cannot hope to capitalise with all the money Government will spend on buildings with a hope of developing our artistes.

To what end would we be developing them? Merely to say that we are able to put on a show? I think that the objectives should be to ensure that these artistes are able to make a living and can develop as professionals and not merely be weekend or part-time entertainers who seem to be doing something for the fun of it. There must be a clearly established link between the development of culture and the economic development of the people of this country.

There are many people who, the only thing they have to sell is their skill, whether it be a singer, a performer or a whatever, but that skill must be seen as a commodity and they should not be deprived of the benefits that can be derived from the sale of that commodity. I hope that we pay close attention to the intellectual property rights of artistes, both local and foreign, to ensure that people can benefit from their talents and their skills.

Mr. President, I believe that as Barbadians we must support the Resolution with respect to the vesting of this property in the National Cultural Foundation and we can only hope that it will not be merely another gesture but that what is necessary to follow through, if you are talking about spending in excess of \$20 million on a project, certainly we would hope that at the end of the process that we can see something tangible coming out of that investment.

It is okay to reminisce about the days of old when we used to have this performance and that performance but we do not only want to reminisce. We want to make sure that we can use that as a foundation and say if we are able to get to that point with so limited resources surely there is much further we can go after making such significant investments.

Mr. President, with those few words, I support the Resolution and I can only hope that the people of this

country will benefit in some significant way from it. Thank you.

HIS HONOUR SENATOR C.L. BOLDEN: Mr. President, I rise to support the Resolution but I have to make some comments which I believe and I am firm on, need to be taken into account in this country. First of all, I think we missed the boat as far as the Empire Theatre is concerned. I see Senator Collymore in the Chamber now. I remember when we were making preparations for the celebration of the 300th anniversary of Parliament, I was then a Minister of Government and I made recommendations that we take over the Empire Theatre and have it renovated for the opening of the conference in Barbados. I have gone around the world to many openings of many CPA conferences and they were always held in very dignified places and it was something that you would always remember throughout your lifetime.

I believe Senator Collymore will agree with me that it was when I was a Minister of Government I drew to the attention of Government that there were a lot of buildings around Bridgetown that were owned by the Government that the Government itself did not know about and the Empire Theatre was one. It happened to fall into my office as an attorney when the Soodeen family were fighting over who should inherit that and the Globe that I discovered that it belonged to Government and therefore they had it on a lease.

I remember their telling me through a paper from the Ministry of Housing that it had five or six more years to run before the lease would have come to an end. I thought at that time that we should have rescued it and use it for culture et cetera but unfortunately, that was not accepted.

I am glad to see that it is now going to be used by Government but I want to issue some warnings. The Honourable Minister spoke about culture in Barbados. Culture in Barbados has been “classified” not classified and I would like that this classification be not brought to the Empire Theatre.

I remember as a little boy we used to go to the Queen’s Park to the Annual Agricultural Exhibition and hundreds of people used to go there. It was regarded as one of the social events of the year. It used to be on the 4th, 5th and 6th or 7th of December. We then decided to renovate the hall in the park, not the Steel Shed. We started with Queen’s Park House and we created a little cinema in Queen’s Park House and that is why I say culture in this country is “classified”.

2.20 p.m.

Wednesday, May 08, 2002

HIS HONOUR SENATOR C. L. BOLDEN: I remember going to a calypso tent in Queens Park Theatre. I well remember because that was the year when Gabby sung, “Boots” and he sung “Jack”. Immediately after that, we were told that there would be nothing so for Queen’s Park House anymore. The Exhibition was thrown out of Queen’s Park because somebody wanted the gardens of Queen’s Park to be there and they must not be trampled on. So, we went out of Queens Park and calypso was relegated down to the Steel Shed.

Sir, we talk about culture and ask where our calypsonians are going. It is one of the most lucrative cultural acts in Barbados yearly, but I know that the calypsonians get the worse of it because of the class system. I ran a calypso tent for three years and tried to book the Harrison College Hall and they told me, “Not in here”. You cannot go to any of the Government buildings of a certain class standard.

Asides.

HIS HONOUR SENATOR C. L. BOLDEN: You cannot get in there because they say that calypso does not belong to this sort of place. Sir, I hope they do not bring the class structure into the renovation of the Empire Cinema. It should be for everybody in Barbados, if they are calypsonians or whatever.

Sir, I will tell you what I call “classified”. You will hear from the NCF about the Jazz Festival and you see how the Jazz Festival has taken, but when you hear about the calypsos, they want to put in a hole down yonder.

SENATOR THE HON. G. S. H. MURRAY: Mr. President, on a point of order. The Honourable Senator is misleading the Chamber because it is not the NCF that stages the Jazz Festival. The Jazz Festival is staged by a private entrepreneur, so the NCF has nothing to do with the selection of the venue.

HIS HONOUR SENATOR C. L. BOLDEN: Thank you. I accept that, but I still say that between the Jazz groups and the calypsos, you have it on two tiers.

Sir, let us get back to the Empire Cinema. More than three years ago, the Licensing Authority sent out notices to the mini-buses that used to be parked by the Bethel compound, saying that the Empire Cinema was to be developed, and Bethel wanted their area and the mini buses had to move.

One Monday morning, there were approximately 20 policemen there to move the mini-buses, and I was called. I explained to the people of the Ministry that they cannot move them because their permit said they started and they ended at the Probyn Street Bus Stand. I told them if they

moved them into the River Bus Stand, the policemen will report them for travelling off route.

The Licensing Authority are agents for acrobatics. During the night, they served new permit licences on the mini bus operators so then the fellows had two licences. They were not satisfied with that and they went the following Sunday and bulldozed the facilities that they were in the Probyn Street Bus Stand. The Prime Minister was called in and we visited the River Bus Stand and the Prime Minister said, you have to make it fit for human beings before you can move people in here. On the site he gave instructions to renovate the old Queen's College building to make a reception centre, a hall, et cetera, for the mini buses.

Sir, I am not afraid to say this now, but I had a meeting at MTW with the Licensing Authority officials and one senior officer told me that the Prime Minister can say what he feels like, I have money to spend and I spend it how I feel like and up to this day, three years later and more, the mini-bus operators are still operating from Probyn Street by the Fire Station and they are using all around the corner for their nature facilities and nothing has been done.

I think it is absolutely clear that they used the excuse of developing the Empire Cinema and Bethel developing their area, and up to now, nothing has been done. Those poor people are paying a penalty through the lapsed administration of the Licensing Authority. It is the stubbornness - for one particular man told me he does not care what the Prime Minister says, he is doing what he wants to do. I think that if you are going to do anything with the Empire Cinema, the first thing you have to do is accommodate the buses that are legally there.

Sir, the next thing I want to say, I would like to see any development of the Empire Cinema go along with adequate parking in an area sufficiently close to the cinema. I have noticed that the grown up people in Barbados do not go out after 5.00 p.m. or 6.00 p.m. Because as you get older, you do not want to be out until 11.00 p.m., 12:00 or 2.00 a.m. in the morning.

Asides.

HIS HONOUR SENATOR C. L. BOLDEN: I must say, some of us.

Therefore, if we are going to develop the Empire Theatre, and it should be developed and I think Barbados is sadly lacking of a theatre and what goes with a theatre. I have gone to Jamaica several times. You can go to a production at least three evenings a week in Jamaica, but where can you go to a theatre production in Barbados?

Sometimes St. Winifred's puts on one, which is very well produced, but other than that, where else can you go?

Asides.

HIS HONOUR SENATOR C. L. BOLDEN: The Daphne Joseph-Hackett Theatre is only kept for classified people. There is "Laff it Off" and "Bajan Bus Stop", which operate for about six or eight weeks. After that, what else goes on in there? We are not talking about downstairs which carries art shows, we are talking about a theatre where you can go and sit comfortably, watch a play and enjoy yourself. Until we look at culture as an entity, embracing all people in this country, then we are not going any place.

I heard Senator McClean talk about the discovery that we are all one linkage. You should have watched Discovery Channel last week. They carried a beautiful programme that said all the people in the world developed from two strains, one a black woman out of Africa and the only difference between the DNA of that group is Aborigines in Australia. The Aborigines have a distinct DNA which is different from anybody else's but they have been able to trace the DNA linkage from one black woman in Africa right through the world.

2.30 p.m.

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His Honour SENATOR C. L. BOLDEN: The change in skin colour came from certain acids in the food, where the grain was grown and the temperature and you change colour to suit the environment.

Mr. President, Senator McClean spoke about artefacts and I want to speak on that point as well. Again, this is where I say we are not doing enough in Barbados to create our heritage. About a year and a half ago I was digging a well at my place at Ayshford in St. Thomas and we came across a skeleton. We called the Museum, they came out, they saw the full skeleton and said that it was more than 200 years old, that it was a Christian burial and all sorts of things and they told us to leave everything intact. This meant that I lost two days work. They took away all of the bits and pieces and were to get back to us within a week to tell us what was happening but up to now we have not heard a word from them. So we do not know whether the land was a burial ground or what happened in that area. So, how are we to go forward?

I do not want to carry this debate into this aspect of it because I believe, now that we are showing some interest in cultural activities, that we should have a full-fledged debate into what is happening in the country. I would like very much to touch on intellectual property with

calypsonians and intellectual property with other things I have seen. Those of us who read the newspapers would have noticed that the Americans have gone and patented the steel pan so I think we need to look carefully at our heritage.

SENATOR THE HON. P. C. GODDARD: On a point of order. Mr. President, the Americans patented a method of production of the steel pan which is quite different from patenting the steel pan. I understand that the Honourable Senator read what was printed in the Press, however, the patent process relates to the method of production which was a new production method for making the steel pan.

HIS HONOUR SENATOR C. L. BOLDEN: Well, I can only tell you what I read in the Press because I read subsequently that Trinidad and Tobago intends to object to the patent. Therefore, I do not know who is right or who is wrong, but I think we have to look at our heritage.

Senator McClean talked about plant life which is all part of our heritage. Robert Schomburgk wrote a book entitled "History of Barbados" which listed all the plants that existed in Barbados during the period when that history was written. There is a copy of it in the library. I have been doing a lot on plant life and there is only one Jack-in-the-Box tree in Barbados and I have it, but I always wonder why it is called the Jack-in-the-Box tree.

Asides.

HIS HONOUR SENATOR C. L. BOLDEN: All I am saying is that I am happy to see that we have taken the Empire Theatre but what worries me is the point that it will also be a cinema. I really do not believe that we should accommodate a cinema in the Empire Theatre. It was a cinema before and I think we should look at what is happening in Barbados. We had several cinemas in Barbados sometime ago. I counted about seven to nine of them and they have all dwindled down to about two now. Sheraton Centre has now created five so I do not see why we should have a cinema. The video and the DVD have ruined the profitability of cinemas because I have read quite recently that the operators of the Olympus Cinema at Sheraton Centre were complaining that new films were being rented on DVD in Barbados before they were released to the Caribbean.

Asides.

HIS HONOUR SENATOR C. L. BOLDEN: All I am saying is that we should take a careful look as to whether we are going to expend that amount of money to incorporate a cinema in a building which can be more profitably used and be more useful to us in terms of our

heritage. How many people would the cinema attract and what would it attract?

Mr. President, I am happy to support this Resolution and hope that one would take into account the multifaceted use of this building and not have it restricted to a certain category of culture that now exists in certain places in Barbados.

I thank you.

SENATOR Dame Patricia SYMMONDS: Mr. President, a number of years ago, Dr. Richard Allsop who was at the University of the West Indies, Cave Hill wrote a series of essays about culture and defined national culture as nothing less than the core of national identity.

Sir, I submit that drama is one aspect of our culture. Culture has also been defined as that intelligence and sensibility which distinguishes civility from barbarism and that is the definition which I endorse.

I have said before in this Honourable Chamber repeating Matthew Arnold's famous quotation that he regarded culture as the best that has been taught and said in the world. Senator Murray in his enlightening presentation reminded us that in its broad sense the modern concept refers to the whole way of life of a community and the way of life of the people such as its speech, its customs, its sayings, its folklore, its festivals, its religion and I can go on ad infinitum.

Mr. President, culture in its narrow sense indicates activities characterised by distinction or excellence, for instance, William Shakespeare. I hope that we will never leave out William Shakespeare, Derek Walcott or Kamau Brathwaite in our studies or in our drama. Dance, poetry, art and drama, as an educator aptly remarked, can be regarded as manifestations of the same phenomenon.

When we think of culture, we obviously think of drama and that leads us on to think of the theatre. John Ruskin said that the theatre is irresistible and those of us who love drama and going to the theatre, especially on our visits abroad, would agree with him.

Mr. President, the proposed restoration of the Empire Theatre will see a return to performances in a wider and grander setting and Government is to be congratulated on seeing that this is going to be done. We need a space for culture that is smaller than the Sir Garfield Sobers Gymnasium but larger than the Daphne Joseph-Hackett Theatre. To make shows commercially viable, producers have to have a large number of productions, for example, the producers of "Laff it off" usually have to have about 50 shows.

If the Empire Theatre is restored to its original design, it can be an attraction to tourists. If we have a theatre that lends itself to a more universal type of production it will be of benefit to both locals and visitors. I hope that the National Cultural Foundation will see that this is done through its architecture so that it can accommodate a variety of styles ranging from the classical Greek drama to the 21st century futuristic or modernistic type of drama.

Moreover, the Caribbean Examination Council (CXC) is developing the theatre art syllabus and there will be a need for students to view performances. In the new curriculum of the Ministry of Education, the performing arts, music, dance and drama are among the foundation courses. All this will be part not only of our school development but of the school population in general.

2.40 p.m.

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SENATOR the Hon. Dame P. SYMMONDS: Mr. President, if it is well equipped and from what Senator Murray has told us, it promises to be, it can reduce cost in terms of the importation of special lighting that has now to be done when some performances are taking place at the National Stadium. I also think there is a need for a national theatre company, not only for the performing arts, but a national theatre company. I also think there is a need for a youth theatre company, and there can be a graduation from one to the other. I hope too that in the long run this will lead to theatre festivals. First, we must start with the revival of schools drama festivals; they used to evoke a great deal of interest. I think too it will help to awaken the interest in drama clubs at the schools. I think there has been an abeyance of that in recent time. It will help our children to be more appreciative of drama in its widest sense, not only confined to Caribbean or African drama but to the best that can be found anywhere in the world.

I have said before and I will say it at the risk of tedium, that there is no merit in an inbred mono-culture. I would also like to see music festivals revived.

Children took pride in singing, which did much for the culture of the school and was a refining influence, where primary and secondary schools took part. They used to flourish in the 1950's and 1960's and Lester Vaughn, one of our illustrious educators after whom the school is named, where nowadays there are many performances taking place including calypso, was at the forefront of these music festivals.

The music festival would be a good revival - not to compete with NIFCA - but the best presentations could be incorporated with NIFCA. Sir, I think it will encourage

more people to write and this is very important. We have already seen how it has encouraged more persons to write and recently we have seen that excellent play *The Final Truth*. It will give our aspiring playwrights more incentive to write. Sir, the restoration of the Empire Theatre will provide the opportunity for international drama festivals. There is also a need for more drama workshops for teachers. The PEACE Programme with Cicely Spencer-Cross and Jennifer Sealy is doing a wonderful job in encouraging teachers to use drama and dance in the teaching of their subjects.

Sir, I am going to reminisce in the time that is left. I recall when the Empire Theatre was one of our main sources of entertainment, not only as a cinema but as a theatre. There I saw performances such as *The Man Who Came To Dinner*, *Arsenic And Old Lace*, so excellently performed by Frank Collymore, Rita Bancroft and others. I saw *High Times*, a musical show put on that could compete with anything seen in the more developed countries. I saw Joyce Stuart's Dance Group. I remember distinctly a song recital performed by a Russian singer, Hector Serreno, accompanied by Bruce Wendell, a Guyanese. So many persons were enthused because this was the first time that persons had seen a black Caribbean person perform on piano. As you know, Guyanese are noted for their musical talents.

Sir, I can see great awakening of interest in drama such as we saw in CARIFESTA, such as there used to be years ago when I was a child. Sir, it can only redound to the good of all Barbadians who are interested, because we need to cater to all tastes. We are not going to presume that suddenly everyone is going to be interested in drama. There are others who are more interested in sports, others in music, but it will certainly enhance the quality of the cultural life of Barbados.

Mr. President, it is with the greatest pleasure that I support this Resolution. I thank you.

SENATOR MRS. P. E. RICKINSON: Mr. President, I rise to support this Resolution. I agree with what has been said so far. Sir, the Leader of Government Business who presented this Resolution spoke of symbols. There is one symbol which I think we have forgotten and that is the symbol of a national costume. I think the time has come for us where there can be a national costume for both men and women that we can rally around. Sir, several patterns have been rallied about but no firm decision has been agreed upon on what we would say is our national costume.

Sir, a national costume is one which brings people together. When one goes overseas to conferences, we see counterparts from St. Lucia, Dominica, Irish, Welsh and other parts of the world, parading in their national costumes. It makes one feels somewhat strange that we

have come so far and cannot get together and have one national symbol known as a national costume. I think that some time should be taken out for us to get involved in that.

Sir, I do support the renovation and restoration of the Empire Theatre and wonder why it has taken so long. In addition, three architects have met me and asked why is it that persons have to be brought from outside in order to design the Empire Theatre. I cannot answer that question.

SENATOR THE HON. G. S. H. MURRAY: Mr. President, I am sorry to interrupt the Honourable Senator but the architect who was brought in is a conservation architect and not a designing architect, therefore, there was a different area, a whole different area of specialty.

SENATOR MRS. P. E. RICKINSON: Mr. President, I do not know what type of architect has so far been brought in. I can only repeat what has been asked of me. Do we mean of all the architects in Barbados, we cannot find anyone to work on the Empire Theatre? Why must persons be brought in from abroad? I do not know if they intend to involve any local architects to work on the Empire Theatre at a later stage or not.

Sir, culture is another area which I feel we need to be very sure about. Barbados is a Christian society, therefore, we should let everyone know that it is, although we accept other religions. When we go elsewhere to other societies, we have to respect what they are. When persons come to Barbados, they must respect that they are in a Christian society. Therefore, we should try and hold onto that and do not let it go. We must make sure we send our children to Sunday School and there are certain Christian principles that they need to know and to pass on to our children.

2.50 p.m.

Wednesday, May 8, 2002

SENATOR MRS. P.E. RICKINSON: These are ways and means of bringing people together not only through the Theatre but through many other areas that the National Cultural Foundation can look at to make this happen. Unfortunately, I was not here for every sitting of the Senate but since the debates are broadcast over the radio, I have been following the Senate in this way. This is another cultural innovation which is very good because very few people realise that the most intellectual debates take place in the Senate of Barbados.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator, I hope you are not reflecting on any other Chamber. If so, it would be against the Rules.

SENATOR MRS. P.E. RICKINSON: Sir, I would never reflect on any Chamber. I want to make sure that the people of Barbados know that intellectual debates take place within the Senate of Barbados.

Sir, we can also broadcast the plays and dramas from the theatres. We are trying our best and will get there eventually and I wish the National Cultural Foundation and those responsible all the best in their endeavours.

Sir, I think we need to look at parking for the Empire Theatre because in the evening it is very difficult to find a place to park in that area. You only have to pass by the Empire Theatre on a Friday evening to see that there is an obvious lack of parking facilities in the area so we need to find some form of parking and this could be high-rise parking for the Empire Theatre.

If we are renovating the theatre, I believe that Government must be prepared to subsidise the arts heavily until the theatre gets off the ground. Mr. President, I go to symphonies and classical music shows and there is only a small following in Barbados for the arts and one would have to start by inviting the fifth and sixth forms to some of these cultural shows to get them interested in classical music. When I was at the Alexandra School, we had a period known as musical appreciation where we were introduced to classical and different types of music so that we developed a taste and appreciation for different kinds of music.

Sir, we need to start practising two things in our schools, musical appreciation and mother craft. When I was at the Alexandra School, we also practised mother craft and we knew that we should not have babies until we had finished our education, that a baby was not a toy but that it was a great responsibility. These are areas that are part of our culture and the first place to start initiating people about culture is at school where there are people qualified in that area of education so that these things can be instilled from an early age.

Mr. President, I support the Resolution.

3.00 p.m.

Wednesday, May 8, 2002

SENATOR K.D. SYMMONDS: Mr. President, I rise hopefully to convey some sentiments to this particular Resolution. Sir, the idea is one whose time has come. The question of not only refurbishing the Empire Theatre but creating an atmosphere in its immediate environment whereby cultural activities can flourish in Barbados, is something which can only redound to the credit and the benefit of our society as a whole. I would not want to focus on the building itself. I think Senator McClean sought to

suggest that the Minister in his presentation had tried to place emphasis on that physical restoration.

This will be a critical aspect in light of the fact that there will be at long last a home for certain critical organisations in the performing arts of this country. I understand that there will soon be a national company for performing arts and it will also serve as a home for the Barbados Dance Theatre. When we speak to the question of a home, we are not only speaking of an institutional place whereon the physical accoutrements of the companies base themselves. I want to urge that if this is not the plan, that we should start thinking along the lines of a locale from which all the critical ancillary development practices are fine-tuned and honed to the very best of our ability.

Sir, let me explain what I mean. If we use, for example, the last Congaline Festival when the concept of the symposium was introduced into Congaline, I think the Honourable Chamber should be mindful of the fact that when Congaline began some nine years ago, it was a very loose arrangement and it was a Tee Shirt festival. It was a parade of music and was nothing more than a day's fun in what we have come to understand as part of our culture.

Sir, the intellectual concept of Congaline has not remained with Barbados. Today the concept of Congaline, as we knew it then, this long line of human dancers going down the street, finds its place in Ireland and Australia. The idea of Congaline per se was not patented. It has been borrowed in the same way as reference has been made earlier to the methodological process relating to the steel pan.

Sir, we in the Caribbean tend to be too comfortable and take for granted some of those things which are fundamental to our way of life. I associate myself wholeheartedly with Senator Murray's sociological definition of culture as part of our way of life. It realistically flows from the ontological needs of man, wherever he is. The way he feeds, clothes and shelters himself, enjoys recreation and practises his religion are things that are fundamental to him and to his existence.

Sir, with reference to a home for certain aspects of our performing arts, I think that one of the things that we need to be mindful of is when we speak of culture and take it over the broad context and look at it in sub-sectors, each of which is a potential money-making industry in Barbados. If we speak of drama, we know that a dramatic production can make money for those persons who participate, whether it is the script writer, producer, actors or stage management. When we think of music, we have multiple journals of music and we often focus exclusively on calypso. Regardless to whatever type of music it is, reggae, gospel or dub, we are talking about a potential lucrative moneymaking industry.

Internationally, when we speak of these things we are talking about billion dollar industries around the world, again, we take it for granted down here. We have done the same thing with cricket. We have basked in historical delight about a natural flair and a natural ability for cricket. Very often, as we have heard here, we speak of young children putting on performances and they are excellent. Sir, there is a school located at Government Hill, St. Michael that puts on an annual Pantomime at Christmas time which is excellent.

For every artist and every form of art that we look at, we need to think about bringing it home to the minds of the participants, at whatever level, that what they are engaging in is something which can transport, not only themselves but their families and more importantly Barbados into the wider world and can reap large financial rewards.

Mr. President, when I speak of a home for the performing arts, I do not speak of it in a limited sense. I would want to believe that there will be a focal place for the arts. If it is not this restored Empire Theatre, then I believe that we need to find such a place whereby courses can be held frequently by skilled persons who can assist our various artists in marketing their products in areas which are technical but which are fundamental and stand as an ancillary part of that which they are hoping to achieve. Sir, for example, your cosmetology, lighting, sound et cetera.

The Symposium at Congaline Festival was a fantastic idea but it was only run for two days and you cannot hope, realistically, to meet, train and effectively bring home all the best of the technical supporting skills to your artists in a two-day period. The only festival that I know of in Barbados which carries that kind of supporting mechanism is the Congaline Festival. Therefore, a symposium which is an essential and crucial part of the exercise, in my respectful submission, Sir, coming as it does only for two days out of the entire year, is a brilliant idea but it has to be developed upon.

Therefore, I think that when we speak of a home for the performing arts, we have to speak about a policy, and I am not saying this in any apologetic way, led by Government because it is a visionary policy and it is nothing that Government should shy away from associating itself with. It is an idea whose time has long come but it has to be a policy which sees Government charting a course well into this new century and saying to the whole of Barbados that the old days have passed and they have gone quietly and what we are dealing with now is a situation where if you paint, you need to understand and to sit down and interface with those persons who have specialise in marketing the product, those persons who specialised in fine-tuning whatever ancillary issues related to artistry. If it is that you sing, then you have to meet and interface and

learn how best and how most effectively you can implement the best practices of those persons who have made the music industry their chosen career.

3.10 p.m.

Wednesday, May 08, 2002

SENATOR K. D. SYMMONDS: As I said, there are a number of ancillary issues which arise. I made mention of cosmetology but, again, we also have stage performance. We have to think in terms of the management of a stage, in terms of the lighting and in terms of making all of these different supporting aspects of it as superlative as we possibly can so that we have not just a singer but we have a supporting team of persons who have refined their skills which are marketable, not only in the Caribbean but abroad.

I do not think, Sir, that is a very difficult thing for us to achieve, but I think that what has to happen is that we have to get away from the piecemeal approach to these questions and look at it very holistically. It is such an innovation in the Caribbean that Government should proudly embrace it and seek to make sure that whenever we speak of a home that we are in fact speaking of some form of... In fact, I think we really need to talk about the academia associated with the performing and the visual arts. That is what it comes down to. It is not just skill anymore.

I used the cricketing analogy before. We had the greatest athletes on the cricketing field, the world renowned, the best. They say you shaped a tree and a fast bowler would drop down or an opening batsman but the fact of the matter is that while we were relying only on that natural talent the rest of the world was slowly plugging away on the science behind the game and we have to look at the science behind the performing arts, the science behind and associated with the visual arts and we have to understand that there is no Hollywood type business in the Caribbean.

As great as Trinidad's Carnival, for argument's sake is, there is nowhere in the Caribbean that we can find a private sector which has within its ranks specialists in marketing entertainers, specialists in packaging the performance of the entertainers, specialists in making sure that the lighting and the sound and everything else are correct. Because we do not have those kinds of mega giants like Columbia and the Artisans which, in an increasingly globalized world, will be coming here and interfacing with our people. We have therefore to make sure that we corner our market so that we can compete with them in theirs. That is my first concern.

Secondly, when I speak about the question of a home for the arts I would want to speak again to the question of the intellectual property aspect of much of these things. Simply put, I do not believe that it makes sense having artistes in the broad sense not being exposed to the fundamentals of what intellectual property rights mean for them, what copyrighting does for them, what a respect for those principles can bring to them financially.

It is my genuine belief, Sir, that there are too many persons in Barbados who are involved in these exercises purely as a pleasurable pursuit. In Trinidad, there is a call-in programme hosted by Dr. Morgan Job who used to make the point all the time that pan men by and large, as phenomenal as the concept of the pan man was, impacting all around the world, many of them were musically illiterate. They played by picking, by ear, and at the end of carnival they pitched the pan alongside the highway and that was the end of that. The understanding that the intellectual property behind the thing meant that you could go further, meant that you could protect what you have produced for carnival and market it to your benefit, meant that you could make yourself and your family that much better off financially, those things were lost. I believe that again one of the problems here is that we speak in glowing terms, and I respect the fact that many of these are very vulnerable industries - I see them as industries and I may be alone in that regard.

I think that they are vulnerable industries and need to have the benefit of the best possible guidance and the best possible direction and vision. I think that the right steps have been taken. My only fear, and I say this with great respect, is that perhaps Government has been too tentative in bringing home to the artistes the fact that they should now be taken under Government's wing, under the wing of a very caring and visionary leadership so as to ensure that the best possible direction is given in terms of intellectual property rights and related issues so that these persons can better understand and appreciate not only the role that they potentially can play but the role that can be played by their respective industries. As I said, I see them all as industries. Sir, I believe that if we are able to hone those two things, the actual pursuit of the highest possible standards in the international industry for our various artistes, whether in the visual or the performing arts, and if we are able to bring home to them that this is really a business and not just a hobby or form of recreation, then we can impress upon this society that there is an alternative path to development and that you need not get caught up in the blockade whereby, as Senator Bolden quite rightly said, there seems to be some class distinction between a man who makes \$5 000 a month as a professional engineer or a professional accountant and a man who makes the same \$5 000 as a professional musician or a visual artist of some sort.

Sir, I think that those are the issues that we need to bring home because once we bring those issues home and especially we get it into the minds and hearts of generations to come that we as a country can leave this region and be far more competitive in the international world.

Those, Sir, are my observations and I thank you.

SENATOR P. C. GODDARD: Mr. President, I rise to support this Resolution and I would like to bring this debate back to the concept of the development of Bridgetown, that the acquisition for the vesting of this property in the National Cultural Foundation is but part and parcel of an over-arching plan to revitalise our city centre and our capital city in Barbados.

For this, the vision of the Deputy Prime Minister and the vision of the present Attorney General regarding the Empire Theatre is much to be commended. The Empire Theatre is going to be renovated, as has been said by Senator Murray, and it will provide a world class theatre for Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean. It will be a unique edifice and it will be improved upon and quite considerably enhanced. It is not just the theatre we are looking at but at high rise parking areas. We are well cognisant of the fact of parking and traffic in this area.

You cannot forget that the Pierhead Development Project is still on the cards and that there is other physical development taking place within the area of Golden Square and beyond so that we are seeing a complete renovation of that area and, as Senator Murray said, we are also going to enhance Independence Square. It has always been a mystery to me as to why we should name an area Independence Square and then relegate it to the service of being a car park. That is really not doing justice to the image of the nation and this Government understands that and is doing something about it.

The renovation of the Empire Theatre must be seen in the context of the physical development of Bridgetown and the enhancement and the enrichment of the cultural life of our capital city. I think, too, that you will recognise that there has been enhanced housing development in the nearby area.

3.20 p.m.

Wednesday, May 08, 2002

SENATOR P. C. GODDARD: I see a time when housing will be available for all segments of the society within Bridgetown again.

When I was a young boy there were middle class, upper class and lower class people all living within the environs of Bridgetown. They have all dispersed and now I

hope to see a re-convergence to the city centre when we have more attractive activities taking place, the Boardwalk and the enhancement of the Careenage the restaurants flourishing. The Pierhead Development Project will add shopping and will add residential and other areas to it. We already got an enhancement of the Harbour Police Station with much tourist activity going on but I want Barbadian activity. I want Barbadians to participate in a richer life in the city centre of Barbados. The Empire Theatre will provide the venue for a wide range of cultural activities to take place.

Now, much has been said about the nature of culture in this country. For example, Senator Rickinson questioned why we do not have a national costume. Well, I am wearing mine, Mr. President, and I wore it for most of my life, so that is my national costume.

SENATOR MRS. P. E. RICKINSON: Mr. President, on a point of order, I want to clarify an issue. When I spoke about a national costume, I mean one dress and not everybody wearing different things.

Mr. PRESIDENT: That was a point of elucidation. Thank you, Senator.

SENATOR P. C. GODDARD: Mr. President, I thank the Honourable Senator for her comment.

I might also add that while I do see cultural products and the economic benefit of cultural products, I also believe that the arts are something that cannot be totally monetised. I also believe that intellectual property claims can be pushed too far. I believe that some things are well left in the public domain. For the life of me, I cannot envision a Haydn writing a symphony and worrying about the copyright. I cannot envision a Mozart doing the same.

I think that the true artist lives for the development of his art and that art is not necessarily of a national origin because we are living more and more in a global world. I think of the Beatles, Mr. President, who voyaged to India to understand Indian music and one of them learned to play the sitar and incorporated that musical knowledge into some of their compositions that were considered to be all Beatle music.

Yes, they got the copyright and so on but there are certain elements that if you do something just for money, you will never do it well. You have to do it for the love of the art that you are performing. Mr. President, I think that vesting of this property and renovating it, is something that will stand Barbadians for generations to come in very good stead. It will give them the opportunity to have a venue to express a wide range of their artistic and performing talents.

It has been said that it will then provide the environment for authors to develop their skills in playwriting and work in that particular area. While I do recognise the importance of developing the support skills for world class productions, I think that we must balance this and recognise that some very good productions came out of performances like the "Green Room" that existed here in the 1940's and 1950's.

There is a place for the amateur and the amateur must be encouraged and I say this, Mr. President, in light of a granddaughter that I have whose most outstanding comment on her report card is that she is theatrical, and I look forward to her performing at the Empire Theatre.

Thank you very much, Mr. President.

SENATOR THE HON. G. S. H. MURRAY: Sir, rise to wind up what has been a very enjoyable and enthralling debate. I think that the multiplicity of comments that have emerged certainly indicate that the area of culture which at one time would have been regarded as the exclusive province of a very narrow set of people, has now become like cricket, politics, religion or education, the stomping ground for everyone, which is as it should be, and it shows the broadening of the people's psyche and appreciation of what really constitutes culture.

Sir, there are a few comments which I need to respond to just to set the record straight on a number of issues. One has to do with the attempted thesis by Senator McClean that the Government seems to be emphasising the question of buildings above other aspects of culture. It has already been pointed out by Senator Kerrie Symmonds that was not true and I just want to amplify that by drawing on some detailed examples.

We have not only dwelled on buildings because the physical infrastructure is important, but we have also dealt with the question of symbols and certain intangible aspects of culture. The Prime Minister has taken steps, since last NIFCA, to restore NIFCA to be the premier festival in Barbados. For example, the awards ceremony was held at Ilaro Court and people received their awards at that time and we have taken positive steps to make sure that NIFCA, which is now I believe in its 28th year, to really symbolise the true excellence in Barbadian cultural manifestations, demonstrations and performances.

We have also created national heroes and a National Heroes Square. We have put in place a statue of Bussa, Sir Grantley Adams and Sir Gary Sobers. We have institutionalised National Heroes Day and Emancipation Day which is July 26th, a day of national significance. There are community Independence celebrations. A social history of Barbados has been commissioned. We are in the process of developing a national art collection and a

national art gallery. Therefore, to say that we have only been interested in buildings as such, really does not represent the true effort that has been made in this regard.

The question of the reclaiming of our artefacts. Those who have been viewing CBC television over the last year would have seen some programmes such as "The Way We Were". That is a repatriation of some of our heritage which has been stored in London with the BBC because we do not have the facilities in Barbados to store them. They have been there for nearly 50 years but we have brought them back now and through those same films, which were done largely by the then Government Information Service, young people are able to get a visual impression of what we are and where we came from. This is also part of the reclaiming of our national heritage.

I also want to deal with the question of intellectual property and piracy. I did not mention it earlier because I do not want to be seen as digressing or blowing my own trumpet but some weeks ago, an organisation called the Barbados Association of Music Retailers, the people who run the record shops and CD shops around Bridgetown wrote to the Prime Minister expressing the great concern about the proliferation of CD piracy that exists in and around Bridgetown and elsewhere, and the impact it is having not only on the businesses but on the motivation of Barbadian artists to record, because they would lose thousands of dollars every year on these CDs through piracy.

3.30 p.m.

Wednesday, May 08, 2002

SENATOR the Hon. G. S. H. MURRAY: The Prime Minister instructed me to call a meeting and I brought together a meeting of the Barbados Association of Music Retailers, the Police, Customs, the Intellectual Property Office and the Attorney General's Office and we sat down and discussed how we could deal with the issue.

I am glad to say that we set up a mechanism which has begun to bear fruit and there now is very little of the nonchalance with which people, like Senator McClean said, are selling CDs from the back of their cars. People also went down Bridgetown and set up trays in the street outside the doors of established, tax-paying music retailers and told them they are going to put them out of business. This was having an impact on them because one was able to get a collection of 30 or 40 songs for \$10 to \$15. This was really driving people to the wall and the Barbadian performers particularly those who produce for Crop Over were saying that they were not going to record this year. That, in itself, would have had an impact on the festival because if there is no music there is nothing to create the atmosphere to drive the psyche to have a good time for

Crop Over. However, I am happy to say that our efforts have borne fruit. The Royal Barbados Police Force (RBPF) is very effective. Persons have been arrested and taken before the court and the material seized. So we have begun that process where the CD pirates are concerned.

It has been mentioned that the market for Barbados might be minuscule to the international market but some of the major recording companies who record for major artistes have said that they are now prepared to send representatives down to Barbados. The problem before was that if you seize what you believe to be a pirated CD, say from In Sync or some other international group, you would have to have somebody to go before the court to say, yes, this is not the authentic thing. Before, when you seized the material, the person who has a connection had to come to Barbados but the difficulty was getting somebody to come this far to Barbados for something like that, but they are now prepared to come this far. So the thrust and the momentum in that regard is building up.

We have also had some complaints about the full question of video piracy which is the next phase we are going to be entering into. Very shortly I will be organising some meetings to confront this issue in a very positive and straightforward manner.

Sir, I also want to touch on the question of Congaline. Senator Kerrie Symmonds spoke on the question of the symposium. The symposium, like he said, is an excellent idea. One of the disappointments this year was that the National Cultural Foundation had written to Barbadian organisations like the Barbados Association of Tent Managers et cetera asking them to nominate persons to attend this symposium but very few people turned up. I think, like Senator Symmonds bemoaned, that they miss a golden opportunity to at least begin to understand and appreciate what are their rights and their entitlements and how they can seek to benefit from them.

Therefore, I think one of the undertakings that would have to be seriously embark upon next year where this symposium is concerned is that we will have to devise means to stimulate and encourage persons to come and expose themselves to something which can only benefit them considerably.

Sir, it is not just how the world impacts on Barbados but we have to be able to see how the contribution of Barbadian artistes will impact on the world. We are exposed to the cultural manifestations of the United States of America and Europe through their videos, their movies, their films, and through their CDs. The million or so people who come to Barbados every year are also exposed to our culture and we do have an impact on them. We do this when they come and drink our beer and our rum and eat our food which invariably is much tastier and spicier than

what they are accustomed to, when they are exposed to our music, when they see our art and when they are exposed to how we live.

It cannot be an accident, Sir, that the biggest selling point about Barbados is the Barbadian people. For generations visitors have always commented that the difference is the people's attitude, their way of life and their outlook on life which is something that cannot be replicated anywhere else in the world. That also impacts on them in terms of our orientation to life and how we approach life. So it is not a one-way street. We impact on the rest of the world also and we need to do so in a constructive, cohesive and coherent manner. That is why Government is paying greater attention to the whole question of cultural industries and is putting in place a variety of mechanisms, opportunities and methods by which people can benefit from them.

At this stage, I want to commend the efforts of one of our useful artistes Adisa Andwele who now goes by the name of Aja who practises what is known as rhythm poetry. Reference was made earlier to the classification of culture in Barbados, but I think that it was not a fair comment because I have seen calypso tents being held at the Combermere School. Last year I went to a calypso tent at Queen's College and I think there is a calypso tent being held at the Lester Vaughan School. So that is an outmoded concept and I am pleased to say that it does not obtain today.

Sir, I was able to see Aja just before he embarked on his wide-ranging tour being able to virtually fill the Frank Collymore Hall with his rhythm poetry which is a minor genre. A year or two ago no one would have believed that he would have been able to attract so many people to an international concert for rhythm poetry but he did so and did it very well. It was an incredible performance. He was able to merge rhythm poetry with a variety of rhythms such as spouge, calypso and jazz. He has been brave enough to embark on a journey which should take him across the globe into Latin America to explore opportunities as an international artiste and I wish him well. This is going to take him further than where any other Barbadian performer has gone and we can only hope that he gets the breakthrough because if he does, Barbados and Barbadians will benefit in several ways.

I am glad that Government has the support of all the Senators who spoke on this Bill. This shows that they appreciate what we are seeking to do. Senator Goddard spoke about the redevelopment of Bridgetown. Sir, in the immediate vicinity of Independence Square, there will be a dredging of the inner basin and a beautification and a landscaping programme that will go right up to Queen's Park. So there is going to be a holistic approach to the redevelopment of that whole area of Bridgetown. I am sure

that Bridgetown will then, like a true capital city should be, be at the pinnacle of attractiveness, with amenities and with a wider range of facilities being offered ranging from the Boatyard to the old Harbour Police Station, the Empire Theatre, the Waterfront area, the Bayshore Complex and the multiplicity of other activities in the immediate vicinity that will also attract people.

So we are approaching a point where we will see Bridgetown once more being the focal point of activity and being a place which we can be proud of not only during the day when commercial activity is taking place but also at nights and on weekends. So Bridgetown will be an allurements to people which they will be unable to resist.

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

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

ADJOURNMENT

SENATOR the Hon. J. X. WALCOTT: Mr. President, we do not propose to discuss any further item on today's Order Paper. As a result, that has brought us to the end of business for today and I, therefore, propose that the Senate do now adjourn sine die.

The question that the Senate do now adjourn sine die was put to the Senate and agreed to and Mr. PRESIDENT adjourned the Senate accordingly.

3.40 p.m.

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EDITORIAL NOTES — NOT PART OF THE REPORT

Prepared with the transcript; for checking against the recording and the Minutes.

EDITORIAL QUERIES

Points noted while preparing this report from the edited transcript. The text has not been altered except where stated.

Q1. Masthead. The session is not stated in the source, so no session line is printed.

Q2. Papers, item 5. The title ‘Duties, Taxes and Other Payments (Exemption) Barbados Agricultural Management Company Limited) Order, 2002’ has an unbalanced bracket. Printed as in the source.

Q3. Notice of Resolution. The source records ‘The question was put to the Senate and agreed to’ immediately after the notice of the Resolution on land at Probyn Street, although a notice is not normally put to the question. Printed as in the source.

Q4. Order No. 1, speech labels. Senator McClean is labelled ‘SENATOR LeR. H. McCLEAN’ and once ‘Senator L. H. McCLEAN’; Senator the Hon. P. C. Goddard is also labelled ‘SENATOR PHILLIP C. GODDARD’. Printed as in the source.

DEBATE SUMMARY

(Editorial summary — not part of the record.)

The Senate met in the Senate Chamber, Parliament Buildings, on Wednesday, 8th May, 2002 at 11.20 a.m., with the President, His Honour Senator Sir Fred Gollop, in the Chair; prayers were led by Rev. Father Errington Massiah. The President announced that he had met the Clerk of Parliament about the late delivery of Senate papers, which in Senator Bolden’s case had arrived only the day before, and described this as most unsatisfactory. The Leader of the Senate, Senator the Hon. J. X. Walcott, laid seventeen papers, among them the Customs Tariff (Amendment) Order, 2002, the Tenth Actuarial Report of the Barbados National Insurance Scheme, the Fourth Report and Recommendations of the Electoral and Boundaries Commission and the Draft Electoral and Boundaries Commission (Review of Boundaries) Order, 2002. Standing Order 45(2) was suspended, the International Financial Services Bill, 2002 and the Education (Amendment) Bill, 2002 were read a first time, and notice was given of a Resolution to vest land at Probyn Street, Bridgetown in the National Cultural Foundation.

Under Order No. 1, Senator Walcott moved the second reading of the International Financial Services Bill, 2002, which repeals and replaces the Offshore Banking

Act, strengthens the prudential framework, allows the Central Bank to determine the physical presence a licensee needs in Barbados, and removes the distinction between resident and non-resident control companies. Senator LeR. H. McClean questioned how significant the sector was, noting that there were 57 offshore banks employing 297 people, some occupying only a small space in a lawyer’s or accountant’s office. Senator Sir John Stanley Goddard reported consultations with lawyers, accountants and others in the sector who were satisfied with the Bill. Senator the Hon. P. C. Goddard supported it, insisting that it concerned international rather than offshore business, and criticised Government employees who resisted questions about the flow of data. The Bill passed through Committee without amendment and was read a third time as the International Financial Services Act, 2002.

Under Order No. 3, Senator the Hon. G. S. H. Murray moved the Resolution to approve the vesting in the National Cultural Foundation of land at Probyn Street, the site of the old Empire Theatre. He presented it as part of a national cultural policy and a plan to restore the theatre, described a technical team to work with the architect, and said that a private sector proposal to assist was still under examination. After the luncheon suspension, Senator McClean argued that culture went beyond facilities for drama and that all the major cultural venues were Government-owned; Mr. President reminded him that the Resolution dealt with the vesting of property.

His Honour Senator C. L. Bolden supported the Resolution but said the country had missed the boat on the Empire Theatre, which he had drawn to the Government’s attention as a Minister, spoke of calypso and jazz being treated on two tiers, and questioned spending to incorporate a cinema; Senators Murray and P. C. Goddard rose on points of order about the National Cultural Foundation and the patenting of the steel pan. Senator the Hon. Dame P. Symmonds cited Dr. Richard Allsop’s definition of national culture as the core of national identity. Senator Mrs. P. E. Rickinson called for a national costume, and Mr. President cautioned her against reflecting on another Chamber. Senator K. D. Symmonds spoke of a home for the performing arts and the Barbados Dance Theatre, and Senator P. C. Goddard placed the Resolution within the plan to revitalise Bridgetown.

In reply, Senator Murray described a meeting, called on the Prime Minister’s instructions, of the Barbados Association of Music Retailers, the Police, Customs, the Intellectual Property Office and the Attorney General’s Office to deal with pirated CDs. The Resolution was agreed to. Senator Walcott said that no further item on the Order

Paper would be taken, and the Senate was adjourned sine | die.

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