
THE SENATE DEBATES

(OFFICIAL REPORT)

FIRST SESSION 1999 – 2004

THE SENATE

July 30, 2003

The Senate met in the Senate Chamber, Parliament Buildings, on Wednesday, July 30, 2003 at 11.12 a.m.

PRESENT

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

Her Honour Senator Dame Patricia SYMMONDS, D.B.E., G.C.M. (Deputy President)

Senator the Hon. E. R. GRIFFITH, G.C.M., J.P. (Minister of Agriculture) (Leader of the Senate)

Senator R. W. GRANT, B.A. (Econ.) (Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Tourism and International Transport)

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

Senator the Hon. J. E. D. WILLIAMS, B.Sc., M.B.A., J.P. (Minister of State Prime Minister's Office and Ministry of the Civil Service)

Senator G. P. B. NICHOLLS, B.Sc., LL.B.

Senator Miss S. C. HUSBANDS, B.A. (Hons.)

Senator Sir Roy TROTMAN, K.A., M.A.

Senator Sir John Stanley GODDARD, K.A.

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

Senator the Rev. H. E. CRICLOW, G.C.M.

Senator I. St. C. LINTON

Senator I. G. P. GOODING-EDGHILL

Senator Dr. D. S. LOWE, Dip. Theology, B.A., MED., ED. D.

Senator F. J. STUART, B.A., LL.M.

Prayers were led by Rev. H. E. Crichlow.

Mr. PRESIDENT: The Senate is in session.

ANNOUNCEMENTS BY HIS HONOUR THE PRESIDENT

Mr. PRESIDENT: I have received apologies for absence from the following Senators who are at present out of the island:

Senator Miss P. E. Parris, J.P.

Senator Miss Lynette V. Eastmond.

PRESENTATION OF PAPERS

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

1. Income Tax Order, 2003.
2. Value Added Tax (Refund) (Cousin Hill Farms Limited) Order, 2003.
3. Annual Report of the Child Care Board for the year April 1, 1999 to March 31, 2000.
4. Value Added Tax (Refund) (Caribbean Regional Negotiating Machinery) Order, 2003.
5. Value Added Tax (Refund) (Sunswept Inc.) Order, 2003.

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

SENATOR THE HON. E. R. GRIFFITH: Mr. President, I move that Standing Order No. 45(2) be suspended for the remainder of this Sitting.

The question was put to the Senate and agreed to.

FIRST READING OF BILLS

SENATOR THE HON. E. R. GRIFFITH: Mr. President, I beg to move that the following Bills be read a first time:

1. Urban Development Commission (Amendment and Validation) Bill, 2003.
2. Final Appropriation (2002-2003) Bill, 2003.

The question was put to the Senate and agreed to.

PUBLIC BUSINESS

ORDER NO. 1 – RESOLUTION TO AMEND STANDING ORDER NO. 60 OF THE STANDING ORDERS OF THE SENATE TO PROVIDE FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A JOINT COMMITTEE OF PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

Mr. PRESIDENT: Standing Order No. 73(3) provides that motions to amend the Standing Orders shall be referred to the Standing Orders Committee. I now direct that this Resolution be referred to that Committee for their consideration.

ORDER NO. 2 – RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE BORROWING UNDER THE SPECIAL LOANS ACT, CAP. 105 OF THE SUM OF \$4,167,000 FROM THE GOVERNMENT OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO FOR THE PURPOSE OF PROVIDING FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO LIAT (1974) LTD.

SENATOR THE HON. E. R. GRIFFITH: Mr. President, at our last sitting the Senate discussed at length the proposal to guarantee the interest on a loan to LIAT as part of the restructuring plan for that airline. In my view, we had a lengthy discussion on that occasion and it does not appear that there is a need on this occasion to spend a lot of time on this matter.

SENATOR F. J. STUART: Mr. President, on behalf of the Opposition I want to indicate that we are on all fours with the Government on this issue. On the last occasion, a very comprehensive debate took place in the Senate, the views of all Senators are known, we support the Resolution and will not debate the matter as such.

SENATOR THE HON. E. R. GRIFFITH: I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

The question was put and agreed to.

ORDER NO. 3 – RESOLUTION TO APPROVE IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 28 OF THE LAND ACQUISITION ACT, CAP. 228 THE SALE TO MR. VICTOR REID OF A PARCEL OF LAND SITUATE AT TOP ROCK IN THE PARISH OF CHRIST CHURCH

SENATOR THE HON. E. R. GRIFFITH: Mr. President, this Resolution deals with a parcel of land on Highway 7. It is a parcel of land to which Mr. Reid had access over a number of years although there was no formal agreement between himself and the Government.

The parcel of land was left open when the roundabout was constructed and it is of no use to anyone except to Mr. Reid as his land is adjacent to that parcel of land. He has approached the Government to enter a formal relationship on this matter because he has in mind to expand his existing business which is adjacent to the land. Government has no difficulty with the proposal, in view of the fact that the land is of no use to anyone else except to Mr. Reid.

I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

The question was put and agreed to.
11.20 a.m.

ORDER NO. 4 – RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE COMPULSORY ACQUISITION OF LAND SITUATED AT REDMANS VILLAGE, IN THE PARISH OF SAINT THOMAS IN THIS ISLAND MORE PARTICULARLY DESCRIBED IN THE SCHEDULE HERETO FOR THE PUBLIC PURPOSE OF PROVIDING VENDING FACILITIES AND OR PARKING AREA FOR PUBLIC SERVICE VEHICLES

SENATOR THE HON. E. R. GRIFFITH: Mr. President, this Resolution is seeking permission for Government to acquire 1 228.7 square metres of land at the junction of Redmans Village Road with the Ronald Mapp Highway, St. Thomas for the public purpose of providing vending facility and parking area for public service vehicles.

Sir, at the moment the public service vehicles which use that area to make U-turns, create difficulty for other users of the road. The Government thinks that it is a wise thing to have an appropriate area where vehicles can make U-turns and which will help to improve the safety of other users of the road.

In addition to that, it is felt that appropriate facilities should be provided for vending so that persons living in the

area and who want to make a livelihood from that operation can make use of those facilities. It is with that in mind, the Government is acquiring this land I am obliged to you, Sir.

SENATOR F. J. STUART: Mr. President, the Opposition is not objecting to this Resolution. Sir, the Honourable Minister explained in his presentation that those public service vehicles using the area have to inconvenience themselves, while making U-turns and, perhaps, inconveniencing the public as well as they ply their trade in that area. It is always a wise thing to reduce inconveniences of that kind to a minimum for the benefit of the public and the safety of all concerned.

Sir, so far as the vendors are concerned, it is not clear from the Minister's introduction whether any vending takes place on that site at the present time, whether Government is trying to regularise an existing situation, if the site is being acquired in the hope that vendors could be attracted to that area. If the former is the case, then we would support the Government in trying to regularise an already existing practice. If the latter is the case, we do not know whether the acquisition of this land for this purpose would have the results which the Government contemplates. We do not know whether the vendors will find this location as attractive as the Government imagines. Perhaps, when the Minister winds up the debate, he may want to explain whether vendors use that site now and want their status there regularised or whether this is an act of faith and the Government hopes that once the land is acquired, it can attract vendors to that locus.

Sir, we accept that it is the right of the Crown to acquire land for public purposes under the Land Acquisition Act. In fact, the policy of this Government over the last nine years has been to acquire land under this legislation ostensibly for public purpose but that public purpose as of now has been to put this land in what the Government deemed to call a land bank, a bank where massive deposits have been made but from which it has been very difficult to make withdrawals. The difficulty in making withdrawals from this land bank has occasioned the public severe inconvenience, particularly a public in search of house spots to make themselves more comfortable.

Mr. President, a land bank from which you cannot make any withdrawals is of no use to anybody. One of the most crushing problems facing people at the lower end of the economic and social ladder in Barbados today, is that of house spots. This is a problem that has plagued Barbados and this Government over the last nine years.

Sir, I thought that after the introduction of a Green Paper on Housing, in 1995/1996, to be followed by a White Paper and with the creation of this large land bank, that by now most of the problems relating to houses and house spots in Barbados would have been brought under some kind of control.

Sir, regrettably, we are as far away today from a solution as we were when deposits to the bank were being made. This has led to problems of a nature, quality and kind that have occasioned, justifiably, a lot of discussion in Barbados and it has to do with the problem of squatting.

Mr. President, once people cannot access lands acquired by the Government for the purpose of providing house spots, the problem of squatting is bound to occur. This problem has a recent history with which I believe all Senators are familiar.

Sir, the Tenancies Freehold Purchase Act was passed in Barbados in the year 1981 and it made possible the purchase of plantation lands by plantation tenants at ten cents per square foot. That was a laudable programme, and the Government got justified praise for that part of the programme.

Mr. President, the Act also made it possible for tenants in private tenancies to buy their land at the market value and private landlords found themselves having to give up their lands if they had two tenants only on the lands. The landlords had to sell land that they never contemplated selling to tenants because two house spots on a parcel of land at that time, constituted a tenancy. Sir, a significant number of landlords were forced to sell lands that they did not really want to sell.

11.30 a.m.

Sir, a number of court cases resulted from this and, I speak of what I know, because I fought a case up to the Court of Appeal. A lot of personal and private bitterness resulted from the fact that people were forced to dispose of lands that they rented to tenants, when it was never their intention to dispose of the land in that way. They had hoped to pass on that land to members of their families.

Quite sensibly, Parliament later ameliorated the rigors of the legislation by increasing the number of lots that could be considered, in law, as a tenancy. They increased the number from two to, I believe, five or more than five. I think in 1989 amendments to the legislation brought about that and more recently, there were other amendments to the legislation, Sir, which I believe, made it possible for the tenants to buy lands in private tenancies, with the assistance of a subsidy from the Government.

Sir, the social impact of this legislation, well-meaning though it was, is that private landowners have become deeply suspicious about renting their lands, for fear that they might not get them back. The Tenancy Freehold Purchase Act had not a certain amount of shock value for private owners of land who, because of their good nature and concern for their neighbours, rented their lands and then found that they had to dispose of those lands, under the Act.

Sir, private landowners then became deeply suspicious, and were hesitant to rent out their lands, and the pressure on the National Housing Corporation (NHC) increased, as members of the public who could no longer get private house spots to rent, took recourse to the NHC. Therefore, the burden on the NHC increased disproportionately to its capability to meet those demands.

As a result, there has been unhappily in Barbados, people squatting. I am not saying that squatting started with this. Squatting predated all of this, because there was squatting since the period of which I just spoke, which led to some of the problems that we have been hearing about recently.

Mr. President, I want to make this clear. The public discussion on this subject has tended to carve squatters out as antisocial people, who do not like the society, do not like law and think that laws are there to be broken, and that they delight in practising some kind of social deviance.

Mr. President, I want respectfully, to disassociate myself from those sentiments. I do not believe that squatting, as it exists in Barbados or in any other part of the world, results from any of those perceptions. When a man squats, it is because he wants a house spot and cannot find one. He cannot afford to buy one at the going prices, he cannot go on private land because he could end up in the law courts, and the lands to which he usually has resort, are owned by the Government.

This has happened in Rock Hall, St. Philip, where desperate people, with just a few sheets of galvanise and a few pieces of wood, set up dwellings on what used to be a dump at Rock Hall in St. Philip. Now, unless people do not like themselves, one has to ask, why would a man of a sound mind, memory and understanding, of all the places in Barbados, choose to put a house on the site of what used to be a noisome dump heap, where his health and that of his family is exposed to impairment.

Aside.

SENATOR F. J. STUART: Mr. President, they only went to Rock Hall because they were desperate and could not get any Government agencies to alleviate their distress. Therefore, in my view, to discuss them in terms of breaking the law, and in need of bulldozing, is not the solution to the problems which these people face.

One of the most acute problems, and I believe, it was acknowledged when the new Headquarters of the NHC on Country Road was opened sometime last year, is that the NHC is not able to meet the demands of the public. I believe

that published reports have suggested that the NHC was meeting about 11 per cent of those demands.

Sir, all of this, in the context of a Government that has a land bank, one wonders why the deposits to this bank are proving so difficult to withdraw. Sir, in this debate, I want to call on the Government to show a little more humanity to these people who are not criminals, deviant or antisocial, but who are just desperate and have nowhere to turn.

There are people in Barbados who have been waiting on the NHC for a house spot, since 1979. They trek up and down the NHC, only to be met with institutional indifference, sometimes even institutional hostility, and institutional betrayal at other times.

The problem of squatting is one that we have to confront, humanely. We can only do this by getting the idea out of our heads that the primary issue in squatting is, who is, or is not breaking the law.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Stuart, I am reluctant to interrupt you, but does any of this relate to Redmans Village, vending facilities, parking areas or, indeed, the NHC.

SENATOR F. J. STUART: Mr. President, it relates in the sense that we are dealing with a compulsory acquisition, and the purpose for which compulsory acquisitions are made.

I made the point that since the Leader of the Government Business did not indicate whether or not the vendors at Redmans Village were already there, and were just being regularised, it leaves the door open for one to wonder, whether the vendors are there now, where they are squatting, or if they are not there now, if the land that is now being acquired now, is going into the land bank.

Mr. PRESIDENT: We do not wish to open the door of relevance, too wide.

SENATOR F. J. STUART: I am obliged by your ruling, Sir.

Asides.

SENATOR F. J. STUART: Mr. President, if the lands being acquired at Redmans Village, St. Thomas, particularly for the purpose of vending are being acquired to regularise an existing irregularity, in the sense that there are vendors there already who should not be there, then that is a laudable gesture on the part of the Government. What it would mean is that these vendors have already developed their custom and the Government is moving to ensure that their custom is not interfered with.

11.40 a.m.

If there are no vendors there at the moment and the Government just hopes that by acquiring this land it could attract vendors to that site, one should be able to hear from the Minister whether there are vendors in the area who have expressed an interest in having that site made available to them for that purpose, in which case the Government could say to us that this decision to acquire this land results from consultations with the people in the area who feel that this area would be a good area to use for the purposes of vending, and therefore the Government is just responding to their request.

In all the circumstances, the Opposition do not find any fundamental fault with the Resolution and it will get the support of the Opposition subject to any minor strictures which may come from us on this Side.

I am obliged to you.

Her HONOUR SENATOR Dame PATRICIA SYMMONDS: Mr. President, I wish to begin by saying that there is a vendor who sells pork chops and fish on that site on weekends and there is also a vendor who sells ackees and coconuts there. I suppose to that extent one could say there would be a certain amount of regularizing, but there is much more to it than that. Already Government is starting to fulfil its manifesto pledges. Part of the pledge and its agenda is to stimulate individual enterprise – we would find that in the manifesto – so that no group would be left out and no one would be left behind.

As the Leader of the Senate just pointed out, it is an excellent site for the vendors' market. It is located near the traffic lights at a busy intersection, Bagatelle Gardens, Welches Terrace and Redmans Village, and where three constituencies merge, St. James Central, St. Thomas and St. James South. So it will bring a measure of comfort to the unemployed. I understand too, and this is heartening to learn, that some of the youth have expressed a desire to move from 'the block' and to seek purposeful employment there. So this market will accommodate entrepreneurship, small businesses and craftsmen. I am sure Senator Husbands is longing to speak on that and would elaborate. There are also people like cooks, vegetable vendors and fruit vendors who have expressed an interest in the area.

Interestingly too, there is a lady who I understand makes beautiful lingerie who is interested in the general area and its development. There is also a cosmetologist who has expressed an interest in the area as well. There are also people who have garden beds who may be able to avail themselves of the opportunities being offered there. There is

also a fellow who wants to set up a barber shop there and the site will include others.

Mention has already been made about the parking bay, so I will not go into that except to re-emphasize that not having its own terminal has been an inconvenience for passengers and motorists. Vehicles turn around in the Shell Gas Station and that can be hazardous. There have been accidents fairly frequently there and this will help to alleviate that and give greater safety to customers, motorists and pedestrians.

This speaks to a trend started by a previous Barbados Labour Party Government with the building of the Fairchild Street bus stand. Since 1994 this Government has attempted to improve conditions for the travelling public and to ensure that the people who work in transport have the best possible conditions. There is the new bus stand on the Princess Alice Highway for government-owned buses. The ZR vans, as Honourable Senators are aware, have been given a new stand to operate from at Cheapside, now we have here in St. Thomas improvements being made as well.

This is a very important location given its strategic placement on the ABC Highway and the point where people from the north and the south access Bridgetown. It is therefore a critical linked function in the traffic system. So I think this new market is an exciting project which will offer great possibilities for micro-businesses and greater comfort for commuters. I think the improvement of the aesthetics is extremely important as well, so I wholeheartedly support this Resolution.

Thank you, Mr. President.

SENATOR I. St. C. LINTON: Mr. President, permit me to speak on something Senator Griffith, the Minister and Leader of this august body said in introducing the Resolution. He said that one of the things of this project is to ameliorate the U-turns of public service vehicles in that particular area.

Without broadening the point too much, I want to relate this to the fact that even though I am not a seeing person I still travel around, walk around and is driven around and I can intelligently observe the mayhem on the streets of Barbados. Just last Sunday morning I was journeying out of – Senator Trotman would know what I am talking about – Sealey Land, Bank Hall after making a visit and going towards Sobers Corner, and I can tell you that it is almost fearful to walk on those sidewalks, from the Eagle Hall end along Bank Hall Main Road, because of the speed vehicles are travelling at on that road. I live in one of the royal

avenues in Bank Hall, and I believe it is time that Government looks at turning some of these roads into one-way traffic.
11.50 a.m.

It is about 400 yards from Barracks Road down to Bank Hall Cross Road and the speed at which vehicles travel that distance is unbelievable. Indeed, I think that Government should make it difficult for these fast driving motorists by putting 'silent policemen' in some of those avenues.

Sir, I think the time has come when Government should introduce traffic patrol officers on bikes in order to curb some of this behaviour on our streets. It should also be possible by law for these patrol officers to be able to give tickets to those persons who violate traffic laws. Persons might want to ask where is the money going to come from but as long as there is such a patrol in Barbados, the money will come.

Sir, people are violating the traffic laws and Members of the Senate know what I am talking about because at all times during the days and nights, one can hear and see this happening and, therefore, order must be put to vehicular traffic, whether it be motorbikes, public service vehicles, Transport Board vehicles and heavy trucks drawing those big trailers. One would be surprised to know the speed at which these vehicles travel and if one of them were ever to run off the road onto a sidewalk, then any pedestrian who is traveling along that road would be in serious trouble.

Sir, it is time that Government looks at introducing such a system in Barbados. If this is not done then the behaviour of drivers is going to become worse.

I, therefore, support this Resolution on that particular point and on the point of vending. I can also say that as one goes into that area, one sometimes wonders if this is a street on which to travel because of the way in which some drivers drive their vehicles.

Sir, I remember standing at a four-cross in New York waiting for a family friend and wondering if I were to try crossing, would I have ever made it across alive. But it is now happening all across Barbados, at street corners and at roundabouts. Wherever one goes, it can be seen, even to the extent where drivers now drive through the red lights. Therefore, I am calling on Government to introduce traffic patrol officers and to introduce the law where those persons who violate the traffic act, could receive tickets. This would prevent a lot of those cases from having to go to court to be done. It is a simple matter and would solve a grave problem. I thank you, Mr. President.

SENATOR G. P. B. NICHOLLS: Mr. President, the Resolution before this Chamber is, indeed, one worthy of some commendation. I was taken aback a bit by the Honourable Senator Stuart's intentional diversion away from the main purpose of this Resolution, to speak on issues which were not necessarily relevant to the Resolution which is before this Senate.

Sir, as a young Parliamentarian, while I may applaud his tactic to divert from the real issue to speak to what is on his mind, I do not think this is the opportune time to deal with such matters. This is a Resolution that is designed, as part and parcel of Government's overall commitment, to the Rural Development Enterprise aspect of our policies.

Sir, Redmans Village is strategically located alongside Highway 2A and this Government has recognised that not only should big businesses have the opportunity to exploit these strategic locations when they merge with other roads but all persons who demonstrate some kind of entrepreneurial skill and foresight. Government has indicated that it would step in and take up the project that these persons have started, so that it could benefit a wider cross section of the public.

Sir, Redmans Village is one of the first areas that is earmarked by this Government to bring together the small business market opportunities. We have recognised the need for maximising the capacities of our highways so that Barbadians could create businesses, so that they could bring the services and goods that they produce to a wider cross section of people. Sir, that is why Redmans Village has been chosen as the first pilot project of this enterprising development.

As the Honourable Senator Symmonds has said, it touches a number of constituencies and parishes and is the turning point of the Route 3 ZR taxis coming from Bridgetown, through Black Rock, into St. Thomas. Sir, we recognise that with the developments going on in the Warrens area, that this area could play an important and strategic transit role. We too have recognised that if we are going to develop a site for ZR vehicles to turn around and if we are going to put a proper parking bay in place alongside the existing vendors, why should the Government not go a step further and develop the entire area so that persons transiting from the north of the island in trying to get to the west coast, could use Highway 2A as a possible link and also the Barbados Transport Board could now think of having routes along that area. That is what the Government is trying to do in Barbados, to take some of the pressure off Bridgetown and some off of the emerging city at Warrens.

These are the kinds of issues on which I would hope the opposition shed some light because the Government does not have the monopoly on all of the ideas. The

Government would need help on how we could develop and foster these programmes, especially as they relate to rural Barbados. Therefore, the Honourable Senator, having lived in rural Barbados, having represented rural constituencies and having seen the development at Six Roads, St. Philip, I would have thought that in a Resolution like this, the Honourable Senator would have brought his experience to speak to how Government could maximise the opportunities at Redmans Village. Instead the Honourable Senator spoke about squatting and the burden of the National Housing Corporation, interestingly enough, a corporation which had little to do between 1986 and 1994.

Mr. President, the Government wants to send the signal that where there are initiatives being demonstrated in Barbados, we would pick up the slack. Sir, I can say that there are presently a few existing vendors at Redmans Village who make a comfortable living by selling foods, coconuts, *et cetera*. Therefore, Government want to create strategic enterprise areas in rural Barbados, starting with Redmans Village, where persons who are barbers, dressmakers, hairdressers, tailors, *et cetera*, could set up their small businesses in that location and Government is going to provide them with the opportunity to take advantage of persons who transit the Redmans Village area.

Mr. President, I wholeheartedly support this Resolution. I want to encourage the Government to use most of those areas, traveling Warrens going north of Barbados on Highway 2A, as an opportunity for persons who live in the rural parts of the country and for them to not only set up their businesses in Bridgetown but also along the highways that Government has spent thousands of dollars of taxpayers money to develop. Sir, Barbados is about the development of everybody and not only about developing Bridgetown and making it the most beautiful city in the Caribbean. We cannot develop Bridgetown and not the highway which passes through people's homes because the road at Redmans Village was previously the site of a number of small rum shops and because the highway came through the village they have lost business, many of them were closed.

12.00 noon

The Government cannot go into people's community, take the traffic away from them and hamper their businesses in such a manner that people will not pass through that area because the road previously going to Welches Primary School is now closed. Government must decide that there will not be a situation where the development of a road or highway cuts through a community which blocks off the people of the community from the life they previously enjoyed.

We are going to make sure that persons living in rural Barbados have the opportunity to set up their businesses in

strategic locations so as to take the maximum advantage of all the economic potential that these developments can bring.

Mr. President, I must express my surprise at the Honourable Senator's contribution because the Government gets the best ideas coming from across Barbados but we seek to politicise all the issues that come to this Honourable Chamber.

Mr. President, I am obliged to you.

SENATOR Miss S. C. HUSBANDS: Mr. President, I rise to speak on the subject of compulsory acquisition of land at Redmans Village. I listened with intent to the contributions made by Honourable Senators. I must admit that I was confused by Senator Stuart's contribution as I was not sure where he was going with the land bank, and squatting because my understanding is that Government is not only acquiring land but building low income housing on land which was previously held in the land bank at Holders Hill, Market Hill and other places in Christ Church. I want to recommend to the Honourable Senator to drive around the country to see these developments so that he can recognise that land is not only coming into the bank but also being used for the benefit of Barbadians.

On the matter of the acquisition of land at Redmans Village, I must commend the Government's foresight and commitment in looking at providing for the entire vending community. This recognises the fact that Government is not leaving anyone behind and that it is seeking to reposition the economy and businesses to deal with the globalised environment and that it has to take care of both large and small businesses. This move by Government to aid the vending community is part of the overall strategy to repositioning the entire economy.

Sir, in Barbados there are 6 000 registered small businesses, 5 900 unregistered businesses and thousands of persons within the community are involved in vending at many different levels. Through this activity many Barbadians are able to provide their own homes and also help the rest of the community in terms of putting food on the table and buying other items. The vendors are able to employ themselves in honest and meaningful labour and they must be commended for this activity. Therefore, a Government which is concerned, caring and visionary would take this community into consideration and seek to provide for it to ensure that it is able to survive in the new globalised environment.

The vending community also forms a vital link with other economic sectors such as agriculture because they are able to purchase and use supplies from the agricultural groupings. It is necessary at this time that a holistic programme be developed for the vending community because it is facing its greatest challenge because the whole

economic landscape and rules of the world have changed. This means we have to engage at a completely different level and if we are unable to make that significant transition to the new rules and find a way to survive in that new environment many small and large businesses would falter in the economy.

As these businesses falter, it will effect other economic players within the landscape and people will become unemployed. When people become employed and businesses are affected at the level of their profits Government's income is significantly reduced and it will not be able to maintain its level of employment or provide services, housing, health care, roads or the education that we have come to expect as Barbadians.

Therefore, developing a holistic approach to the vending community at this time is a recognition of importance of its contribution to keeping the fabric of the society together. In truth and in fact, the survival of all businesses in Barbados is critical to everyone whether we own a business, large or small, work in Government or private enterprise, it is the responsibility and the concern of all Barbadians to be involved in making sure that our businesses are profitable.

Sir, hitherto, the vending community often found itself at 'loggerheads' with the police and Government is seeking not to criminalise the activity of vending but to bring a change in order to create a cooperative and productive environment between Government and the vending community.

Government feels it is not enough simply to provide facilities for vending or simply change the legislation. Government feels that it is importance that as well as providing the facilities that we look at training to empower small vendors with the knowledge they need to run their businesses effectively so that they may grow. Government also wants to help in the development of standards and the Small Business Association is playing an active role in working with the vending community to help them establish standards and provide secretariat support to the community. The Small Business Association is now holding discussion to see how we can help that group of small entrepreneurs make a living and grow into strong businesses.

What is the rationale behind the land at Redmans Village as a part of the overall strategy for the vending community? Government is seeking to establish at critical nodes throughout the country areas where people can conduct their entrepreneurial activity and vending by following a methodology of decentralisation throughout the country.

This is important because for many years Bridgetown has been undergoing a number of changes and a number of businesses have moved out and established themselves all across the landscape. This has reduced significantly the number of people who worked within the Bridgetown area. It has reduced significantly the number of people who work within the Bridgetown area. Hence, it puts more pressure on the vendors who are seeking to make a living to try to catch as many people as they can within one centralised area.
12.10 p.m.

Therefore, taking a position of establishing vendor facilities in other critical high-traffic areas outside of the Bridgetown location will enable more vendors to be able to make a living as they are able to intercept the traffic that is traversing from St. Thomas to Christ Church or people who are going to other parts of St. Michael. Sir, the traffic is very heavy on mornings going towards St. Barnabas and decentralising the market space would allow vendors to be able to capture more of the Barbadian community as their customers. Sir, it also provides the opportunity for tourists who are traveling to various places of interest to stop and shop with our local vendors.

Mr. President, Government is seeking to regularise the vending at these various locations in communities by installing facilities for comfort, safety and hygiene. We would wish to see the vendors seeking to grasp this opportunity. If Government provides this opportunity, we would wish the vendors to take responsibility to maintain them, regularise how they operate within the environment, the behaviour that obtains within the environment, practice good waste disposal, seek to maintain the surroundings and to be competitive in their pricing so that they can keep attracting their customers and, therefore, keep earning a living. Mr. President, there is a role for the vendor to play.

Sir, the question was raised about the possibility of the success of the vendors and one is hoping that they would do well. Sir, for any business community to prosper, it requires not only the intervention of Government or the action of the business sector, it also involves the wider population and the consumer has a key to play.

Mr. President, trade liberalisation is going to see, within the CARICOM region, a large number of products and services coming into Barbados, the good, bad and the ugly. This is going to place enormous pressure on our local businesses.

What is the role of the Barbadian consumer in relation to this advent? Every Barbadian consumer must be made aware of the fact that every cent that we spend on foreign goods has an impact. Every time we spend our

money on goods and services from outside of the region, it reduces the profitability of businesses from within the region. Mr. President, as we continue to do this, more and more companies will come under pressure and they will fold up one by one. Sir, as that continues and unemployment grows, it means that there will be less spending for the businesses that remain. That means that we will begin to see the collapse of small shops, tradesmen, vending communities, retail stores and gradually the larger stores. This results in less earnings and less taxes for Government, resulting in job losses within the public sector.

Mr. President, it is important for consumers to understand that they are protecting their jobs and quality of life when they spend their money within your community, with large businesses in Barbados, large and small and the region. Every cent that is spent outside of Barbados would eventually jeopardise our livelihood.

Mr. President, I want to encourage all of our consumers to think about how they can support the vending community, how they can take a portion of what they have spent and ensure that they spread it around to the small entrepreneurs who are seeking to maintain a living because we do not want to put added pressure on their homes.

Sir, if they cannot earn a living, it puts their children at risk. When people are at risk and are in despair, it causes them to resort to activities that under normal circumstances they would not dream of getting involved in. Therefore, we do not want to create that pressure within our economy. We want to invite everyone, government, vendors and the consumer to get involved.

Mr. President, I want to end by stating that I truly welcome this initiative by Government and I look forward eagerly to the continued expansion of it and new ideas being added as we seek to ensure that every Barbadian is able to participate meaningfully in this economy and find a place in this new globalised world.

I am obliged to you, Sir.

SENATOR Dr. D. S. LOWE: Mr. President, I rise to lend my voice to this Resolution before us and would wish to endorse the presentation of my colleague, Senator Stuart, which he suggested with much clarification that we on this Side have no fundamental disagreement with the Resolution.

Mr. President, we believe that any effort advanced to support the efforts and ambitions of average citizens in this country is a worthy one. Once Government seeks to advance policies and programmes that seek to make a contribution to the lives of average Barbadians, it is our bounden duty on this Side to lend our voice of support.

Mr. President, it does not mean that we do not have a further charge, that is, to ensure that as we search through these Resolutions that would come before this Honourable Chamber, if there are things that must be queried, then there are queried. Sir, the vigorous querying of any matter does not mean that we have any fundamental disagreement with the core principle of the Resolution.

Sir, as I understand it, the acquisition of this land at Redmans Village, which by the way I have had occasion to pass there on a daily basis, there is a business there and there is a coconut vendor who plies his trade there on a frequent basis. We know that there is some activity in the domain. Mr. President, as I understand it, Government is suggesting that this effort is designed to enfranchise those persons who are seeking to ply their trade whether they currently exist in that particular space or whether it is Government's ambition to transport them to that space.

Sir, once the Leader of the Government's Business in this Chamber presents a Resolution then we have a responsibility to follow the leader carefully and to take our lead from what has been presented. What is not clear to me is whether or not the priority of this acquisition is to accommodate the public service vehicles or vendors.
12.20 p.m.

Mr. President, we want it to be made clear that the burden of this project is to create a space for vendors, while at the same time, seek to regulate the behaviour of public service vehicles.

Sir, we have not succeeded in this country to put any system in place that will bring significant structure and order to the behaviour of public service vehicle operators and, Mr. President, this goes back to the burden of my query, what is the priority. One of the Honourable Senators said this is a pilot project and, I believe, a pilot project suggests that it is the beginning of an exploration process to discover what are the values and virtues of putting a system in place.

I believe the record would suggest, Mr. President, that this would be the fourteenth of such projects, put in place, by the Government. I understand it to mean that there are 13 other vendors' spaces operating in the country.

I would like to know, Mr. President, what is it that informs the Government, in moving this project to Redmans Village. I would have liked, if the Leader of Government Business, Senator the Hon. E. R. Griffith, would have told us today, that the Government has carried out a series of research efforts to decide what are the advantages and disadvantages of these efforts, and indicate the ones that are working and the ones that are not working. Also, what are

the concerns of the vendors currently existing in these vendors' spaces, and what the Government has put in place to alleviate some of the concerns that now exist.

Sir, it is my view, that if we truly want to enfranchise people, we have to put them in an environment that is well-studied and where there is an end-to-end service, continually so that these individuals will be able, Mr. President, to ply their trade with minimal risks. We know that this is the age, now, of efficiency and productivity and because of the challenges of globalisation, we have to become more efficient. We have to manage our costs and watch our inputs, versus our outputs.

Sir, it is our position, on this Side, that a safe environment must be created. We applaud the Government in acquiring the land and making the space available for vendors but we want to see the Government taking the programme a step further and tell us that the input of taxpayers' dollars in these efforts would ensure, not only the sustainability of these vendors' activities, but some major profitability on their part.

Sir, I am a product of the country area, and I remember that for many years vending has always been a thing in the rural areas. At any given day, you could get potatoes, ackees, pork-chops and fish cakes. You could even get your attire from certain corners in the country, so this is nothing new.

Sir, it is important that we now advance the process of providing this assistance to these vendors, to a level where we can ensure that, not only the vendors are successful but those persons who utilise the services of these vendors also reap some level of benefit from their interaction and exchange of service and commodity.

Mr. President, central to the Democratic Labour Party's philosophy, is the empowerment of all Barbadians. Sir, central to that policy, is creating an environment where the dreams of every Barbadian can be realised, regardless of his or her efforts. Sir, when ambitions are persistently dashed because there is not sufficient planning, and because there is not the careful execution of these concepts and principles and the people who are trying, experience consistent failure, it sets another kind of social fallout in motion.

We, on this Side are saying that while the effort is honourable, on the part of the Government, we want to find out what advises or informs the Government in creating this space. Someone talked about the movement of traffic from Christ Church to the north and so on but, I would like to remind this Honourable Chamber that there is an emerging district in Warrens, there is a thriving supermarket called, Super Centre, and that no one is going to travel from Christ Church and pass Super Centre and come to Redmans Village to shop, neither will someone who is leaving St. Lucy and

heading towards the City for work or whatever, necessarily stop at the stop lights in Warrens, to pick up whatever they need, vegetables, for example.

The point I am making is that there has to be a more concrete reason, and it has to be clearly spelled out to the Honourable Members of this Chamber. It is our responsibility to ensure that whatever the Government seeks to do, as we seek to examine, that we give ourselves a fair opportunity to clearly understand what it is that the Government is asking us to insist upon supporting.

On this Side, we do not intend to be a rubber-stamping group. We want to make sure that at the end of the day, we have a clear understanding. Therefore, we want to know the level of success at the Glebe. We want to know what is happening in Deacons. I do not know how many of you drive through there often, and see the level of activity occurring at that vending space.

We also want to know whether or not, the Government has really studied the level of activity and the challenges that these vendors must face, whether the studies of such phenomena have informed the Government on this particular project.

We also want to know whether or not those persons who will be occupying those vending stalls at Redmans Village are residents of that area, and if they are residents who also do agriculture, so that they actually will be doing agriculture on one side, and bringing their products to the vending area.

Mr. President, has a study been done to suggest to us, how many young entrepreneurs are in the Redmans Village area. I believe that it may be good for us to be able to gather that information to decide the viability of the project in that regard.

Mr. President, I pass, and from time to time, pull into the Redmans Village Service station, and there is hardly, on a given day, any interruption getting to the gas pumps. The activities of the public service vehicles occur at the end going towards Holders Hill, St. James. There is usually a rapid spin around of vehicles that park on the side of the street.

Mr. President, I also go through Bridgetown where there are stationed police officers and see the disorder that exists in Bridgetown, or at the points where these vehicles congregate. I am asking whether or not, the creation of a physical space is sufficient to guarantee the management of the disorder that is currently a part of the culture of the public service vehicles.

There is nothing presented in this Resolution to suggest that the Government is going to inject these regulatory systems that will assure us that the creation of this wonderful space, which again we believe is well, will correct the issue identified, as part of the reason the Government is purchasing the land. Sir, until those queries are answered, it is our view that while we support the concept, we must still be left to wonder what really is the programme.

I am suggesting to you that to bring vendors together, as we have been doing across this country, assuring them physical space, they will have concerns about licensing, they have concerns about some of the encumbrances that they must overcome in order to ply their trade. They have concerns about certain regulatory systems that they believe are against them, and they will also have concerns about the sizing of these stalls which are created.
12.30 p.m.

I would like to know how would we engineer a process to determine efficiency, sustainability and profitability for these persons who may for the first time see a great opportunity to actually ply their trade and to make something out of their lives, only to recognise six months down the road, as perhaps is the case with the people down in Deacons, at Six Roads and at the Glebe that they are struggling to survive.

Mr. President, it is our responsibility to ensure that this Resolution gives us the answers that we deserve. Remember, Sir, that we agree with the principle.

I am much obliged to you.

SENATOR Sir ROY TROTMAN: Mr. President, I thought that the Leader of the Senate tried to be fairly brief in his presentation. Indeed, I was about to support the Resolution without comment, but the very many interesting contributions which have been made, forced me to record some positions which we have taken before and which I would need to have repeated, if not for any reason than the reason to have the records reflect the position of my interest group.

I would wish to commend my mutual colleagues – I am sorry that I was not able to join them before because I was out on business – particularly the younger of the female presenters who spoke earlier, Senator Husbands, for what I thought was a well-rounded and excellent presentation as it relates to small and medium size business persons.

I want to make a point that the reasons which have been given so far by the Leader of the Senate for wanting to use this, I am told, one-third of an acre of land at Redmans Village, are to my mind, sound reasons and commendable reasons. I would wish therefore to say that I am supportive

of Government enterprise in this particular area. There are very many reasons why to have such a facility will be in the overall interest of the public at large. I am wondering though whether it is possible for that one-third of an acre of land to be made larger because if we are going to put a public facility there for the turnaround of vehicles, we have to be able as well to think in terms of human provisions within the facility.

Indeed, if we are expecting that there is going to be a confluence of traffic in that area and the meetings of people, then it would seem to me that physical human facilities would have to be provided there. I cannot see us having facilities of that sort present on less than a half of an acre of land which would provide then the arrangements for vending facilities as well as for parking and turnaround facilities, because unless my knowledge of space is very limited, half of an acre of land is not a large amount of land.

I am hopeful this would be fitted into the plan in such a way and that we make every effort we can as leaders in Barbados to ensure that we try to discourage the Barbadian person, especially the Barbadian man, from the very improper habit of believing that every corner is a corner for male relief. People have told me, when I travel overseas that you can always tell a Bajan man when he travels overseas when you see somebody breaking the law and believing that every utility pole or every corner is an area for instant relief. We have to break that and we have to make sure that when we put down facilities for commercial purposes we also put down facilities for human relief. I would very strongly recommend that if the space is available that that should be built into the overall plan for vehicular traffic and for vending facilities.

I am particularly pleased with a line that was taken by our Senator colleague who spoke to the development of small businesses. Mr. President, in commending that aspect to the case and in taking note of the 6 000 or so registered small businesses which there are and the ones unregistered, I want to take note of the larger concern that we in Barbados need to have. I think it is fair to say at the moment that we may be very comfortable with the level of workers we have in the formal sector and the level of businesses which might be considered as formalized businesses which are structured within the established economy, but I think by now we should have recognized that the onset of globalisation and the liberalisation of trade have brought with them, for many other parts of this Caribbean that we are so concerned about, such a terrible increase in the informal community that it brings fears of chaos.

We have to be very concerned, wherever there is the building of an informal community, informal sector, informal economy or whatever you want to call it, with seeing the extent to which the Government will do its part and the other social partners will do their part to bring that informal

community into the mainstream of economic activity in such a way that we will be able to assist informal into becoming formal and wherever that is possible to assist small or minuscule into becoming larger and so set back the pressures which we can get from the onset of mega stores or the onset of other types of businesses which may lead us to some levels of difficulty.

Since we are in Redmans Village, and I do not wish to stray too far away from St. Thomas or the borders of St. Michael with St. Thomas, I think it is not too far away for us to remember that there was a possibility of a major mega store in that region not so very long ago and that in the minds of some of us the presence of such a mega store would have done particular mayhem and difficulty to these same small vendors and small businesses that we are speaking to. We have to be sure to build within our community such a structure that those kinds of mega stores will do nothing more than to make the few privileged ones wealthier while making more impoverished the larger groups and we must do whatever is possible, as our Senator colleague said, to build into the Barbados public an attitude of buying local and an attitude of taking care of the Bajan and the small in such a manner that we do not lose sight of the importance to all of us that there is in being able to recognise that it is from that small size, that small economy and that informal economy of 6 000 registered small businesses that Barbados must now look to its future as a growing economy moving into the full 21st century.

That is not to say, Mr. President, that we are rejecting the concept of a Caribbean Single Market and Economy, the labour movement fully supports the concept of a Caribbean Single Market and Economy. It is not to say that we do not understand the reality of a globalised world. We recognised that globalisation is here and we are ready to play our part within such a globalised community. So I do not want to have any confusion as there may appear to be from time to time when one addresses such subjects. Rather, I am saying that within the broader framework of a globalised economy in a globalised world and within the broader context of a Caribbean Single Market and Economy that there has to be a certain drum that beats in our hearts and in our communities daily, the drum that is a home drum that beats best. That is the point I am being very careful to make.
12.40 p.m.

SENATOR Sir ROY TROTMAN: If such a drum being beaten tells us that we have to move away from the mega store concept to that of the smaller communities where there are vending communities and where other communities are encouraged to go into nearby communities to do localised purchasing, then I think we ought to be able to recognise it as something from which we might benefit. Therefore, we ought to be able to see within the linkages that would exist among animal farming, the agricultural farming, *et cetera*, to

make the Barbados economic plan a viable one and to make for the mainstreaming of the economies.

Sir, that is not to say that the points raised by other Honourable Senators are not valid because several of my colleagues did not limit themselves to looking at the question of the vending facilities only or of the turning around of commercial traffic, instead they looked to the wider question of land and land use policy.

Mr. President, I see nothing wrong and, indeed, I would imagine that persons who are more skillful as debaters than I am, would accept that once the Leader of the Chamber introduces an item, one is able to interpret that item raised as widely and as in a broader context as one chooses, subject always to the instructions of the Chamber. Therefore, when one recognises that a differential could have been drawn between the objectives of setting down a community and the establishment of land banks, I think it was very adroitly addressed.

It also gives me the opportunity, since it has already been addressed, to indicate that within that arrangement for land banking, I would have a certain plea that I would wish to make to this Honourable Chamber for passage to the appropriate minister. That is, my former constituents in the Belle View in St. Michael Central, would have a problem where there is such a facility of land banking and such reserves in land, that the same kind of energies that are being input into the Redmans Village project, could be equally put into the land bank exercise, in such a manner as to bring relief to those residents who otherwise run the risk of having all of their properties and resources bulldozed, much to their detriment.

Mr. President, one has always to bear in mind that where there is the possibility for bringing relief, that that possibility be addressed with the level of expeditiousness that is necessary.

Regarding the matter of parking facilities which there would be at Redmans Village, I want to make one point in closing and that is the point of safety that has been raised by Senator Linton. Sir, I think that whenever we deal with the matter of traffic, be it building parks for turning-around of traffic or otherwise, we obviously need to recognise the volume of traffic there is on our roads. We have to recognise the level of indiscipline globally that exists and not only in Barbados and therefore, we must be able to take note of the fact that we would have an ongoing responsibility to do whatever lies within our power to make life easier for those of our residents who might not be driving large and powerful vehicles; people who are walking the streets, standing at corners, or who might otherwise be subjected to the problems of crazy driving, have to be protected to the full extent possible.

Senator Linton, with some latitude, did make a very beautiful presentation that there are so many of them on our roads and not just the ones on which he lives, that some may be made to go north/south while others go south/north, or some other direction, which is a very useful suggestion, in my view. I think, therefore, that in those circumstances, we ought to take note of the relevance and usefulness of such a suggestion.

Sir, one final point is that vendors' market is a good thing. We know these markets would have to have staff who are prepared to represent them. We only wish to issue a word of caution and that is, while appointing those persons, we do not allow ourselves to enter into the fiasco of things that were obtained at the Glebe a few months ago because workers' rights have always to be respected in these areas and we would not allow ourselves to be sidetracked by more immediate ratification than there was in this particular exercise.

Mr. President, I support the Resolution before us. I do not share the fears of many of those who might have fears in terms of where this stands in the overall position of Government but I think an occasion like this should provide an opportunity for us to be much more outspoken regarding the country's land use policy. We have to make the issue of land use policy known, published and easily available for all in such a manner that everybody knows where land is, what use is intended for that land, *et cetera*, so that no one would be in any doubt regarding what overall plans there are for Barbados.

SUSPENSION

SENATOR THE HON. E. R. GRIFFITH: Mr. President, I beg to move that this Sitting be suspended for one hour, to be resumed at 1.45 p.m.

The question that the Sitting do now suspend until 1.45 p.m. was put to the Senate and agreed to and Mr. PRESIDENT suspended the Sitting accordingly.
12.50 p.m.

RESUMPTION

Mr. PRESIDENT: This Senate is resumed.

SENATOR T. E. BARKER: Mr. President, I rise to give my full support to this measure in which Government is acquiring a parcel of land at Redmans Village for the purpose of providing vending facilities and a parking area for public service vehicles which use that area. Sir, I know this area very well since I live very close to it and this is a welcome move by Government to provide vending facilities in that area. As was noted before, we are talking about an area where there is a large population concentration.

Sir, we should note that the facilities will require more land than the amount acquired here and Government has in its possession, land in that area already so the piece of land being acquired is not the only piece to be used for this project. I am told that some land was also required by private treaty but that would not come to this Chamber for debate. Sir, the total acreage of the facility is more than 13 000 square feet which is the amount of land being addressed in this Resolution.

Sir, I look forward to the completion of this facility. Those of us who love locally produced ground provisions can find difficulty at times in getting them and over the years farmers have found difficulty in finding an outlet for their goods. The irony is, that it is easy to find foreign produced goods in supermarkets but it is difficult to find locally produced goods and I think that the facility in that area will go a long way to alleviate this problem.

There was a facility not far in that area that specialised in local produce that was well-patronised but it was closed.

Sir, I want to put in a word of caution that markets in general have to take into account cultural nuances. If you look at Bridgetown, for example, I am told that on Saturday mornings at five or six o'clock many persons go to the open market to purchase goods so if the market is going to be opened at eight o'clock, it will create certain difficulties. Also, when people go home on evenings, they would not mind going to the market to purchase their produce. If the markets are operated on a strict eight to four basis, then we are not taking into account that many people like to shop early in the morning. I went to the market a few weeks ago and a lady made this point quite forcibly to me. She said she was in the market from four o'clock that morning because she was expecting her customers as early as five o'clock.

In the operation of the facility, since the consumer is king we should, as far as humanly possible, ensure that the consumers' wishes are satisfied. We may have to build some flexibility into the working schedule of the people who operate the markets but we must take these things into consideration because there is no sense having the facility and they are not used as intended or it will be a waste.

Government is doing a lot to make sure that the facilities are available. The Cheapside market is a lovely structure that has done a lot for the architecture of Bridgetown and its ambience. The much maligned Eagle Hall market will soon come into operation and it will be of tremendous benefit to the people in that area as Eagle Hall is a well-traversed part of Barbados and we know the market there will do well. Once the other markets get over the usual teething problems, we know they will have the potential to provide a real fillip for agriculture production in this island.

There is no sense in producing a lot of agriculture goods which have a short-shelf life without ensuring that proper facilities are in place for getting the produce from the farmer to the consumer. The vending of fishing is another issue because people living away from the sea coast always have problems in getting fish because everything is concentrated on the coast.

I see this as an opportunity for fish vendors to provide the people in Redmans Village and the surrounding area with an avenue for buying fish because people in this area usually have to wait for a van, which may or may not pass by, to purchase their fish. If people know there is an outlet to purchase fresh fish, I believe with proper marketing and opening hours, these markets can be of tremendous good to the agriculture and fishing sector. It will also mean a lot for the whole commerce in the area.

Sir, there is nothing that says that only the people in the area can sell at the facility because, we must bear in mind that everybody in the country can have access to the facility although certain geographical niceties should be observed. In the final analysis, we are providing outlets for farmers so that they can produce with confidence because they know there are avenues through which the goods can reach the consumer.

Sir, as I have said before, the imported goods do not have a problem because they have their own avenues and can easily be found in the supermarket. To a large extent the ones who will benefit from these vending facilities are the local producers. Sir, the local goods need these facilities and this Government must be highly commended for the vast improvement in the physical structure of the vending facilities across Barbados.
2.00 p.m.

Sir, this Government took vendors off the street and built a lovely market a stone's throw from this place where people can sell their produce in a more hygienic and congenial atmosphere.

Asides.

SENATOR T. E. BARKER: Sir, I am not referring to Eagle Hall.

Asides.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Why did you raise Eagle Hall?

SENATOR T. E. BARKER: Sir, for those who do not know, Eagle Hall is not a stone's throw from this place.

Asides.

SENATOR T. E. BARKER: Sir, I support this Resolution and commend it to this Honourable Chamber. I am sure that the Honourable Members on the other Side would appreciate when Government is doing something that is worthy. Although the members on the other Side had to find something to say, one would sense an undercurrent of satisfaction in their voices.

Asides.

SENATOR T. E. BARKER: I am sure that they joined us in applauding when Government is providing things for the working people of this country and I know that Senator Stuart would appreciate that.

I commend this Resolution to this Chamber and thank you very much.

SENATOR I. G. P. GOODING-EDGHILL: Mr. President, I rise to support the Resolution before this Honourable Chamber and in so doing, I think that we have to commend the Government for its foresight in terms of its community planning development in the Redmans Village area. I think that it is fair to say that the Government is creating an entrepreneurial spirit throughout Barbados. By starting in the Redmans Village area, it brings economic life to these areas. It is no different from what obtains in other countries.

Sir, I remember when Bill Clinton was President of the United States of America, he set out to bring back economic development and life in certain areas. I think that we should commend Government for the Resolution before this Senate.

Mr. President, I also want to stress that in terms of providing parking for public service vehicles, I think that it speaks volumes to the government's initiatives in the area of safety and planning. We have a situation where the area concerns itself with a lot of traffic and it is important for the health and safety of the well-being of the residents of that area.

Mr. President, the area creates a lot of developmental and economic activity. For example, if you look across the street from Redmans Village there is an Auto Mart, and that is a striving economic development. In bringing this Resolution before this Senate, Government is giving rise to further economic development, not only to residents of the community but to all those who live within the surrounding areas.

Sir, I want to briefly touch on the issue of land banking. I think that it is fair to say that Government has set out on a very ambitious programme, its continuous

stride from the last term in terms of creating more estates for the development of housing in Barbados. For example, if you look at the Lancaster development, the Husbands and Kent areas, you will see that Government is fully committed to the development of its infrastructure in terms of housing in Barbados.

Sir, I want to say to those who are skeptical about the land banking facility, that Government has acquired more land than any other administration in the history of Barbados in terms of putting land into a bank to be distributed to the housing sector.

Sir, we are confident that with the ongoing support of the housing fund and the first-time mortgage fund, we would see enhanced facility for workers to take advantage of such opportunities in order to invest in Barbados.

I want to say that legislation is going to be put in place to deal with the Transport and Works Authority and that too must be commended. Mr. President, we are beginning to see the discipline which ought to exist in Barbados coming into being.

Therefore, I want to join with Senators on this Side and other Senators in supporting the Resolution before this Senate.

I thank you.

SENATOR THE HON. E. R. GRIFFITH: Mr. President, I wish to thank all Honourable Senators for their contributions to this Resolution. I have taken notes of the various concerns which have been raised. Let me assure Senator Lowe, since he seems to be in some doubt, that he needs not to be in any doubt at all as to the objective of the Government when it comes to the question of empowering rural communities, that is a priority of this administration. Sir, as Minister of Agriculture, I have a double interest in this matter. I have the responsibility for markets and rural development.

Mr. President, when I was in another place I spoke daily of the importance to Barbados and agreements at a multi-lateral level. These agreements include provisions which would allow us to promote rural development because of the significant role that we are convinced that we can play in our economic development. Therefore, there should not be any doubt in any member's mind where we stand on this issue.

Sir, several weeks ago, I took part in a meeting with a number of vendors organisations. The purpose of that meeting was to speak with them about vending across Barbados. All of us know that at present people set up, at all points along the highway and elsewhere, to pursue their

trade. We want to bring some order to that kind of activity and create spaces where they can ply their trade in safety and can permit persons who want to make purchases to move off the highway and engage their business in a safe environment.

Mr. President, in that context, I wish to assure Senator Sir Roy that we have taken into account the need for establishing at these particular points, toilet facilities and other facilities. These are things that we discussed when we met with the various Vendors Associations.

Sir, before coming to the Senate this morning, I took part in a discussion with Dr. Chelston Brathwaite, of the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA), and the subject of our discussion was largely on the question of rural development and the creation of rural enterprises, which is part of the responsibility of my Ministry, and how the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture can assist us in doing some of that work.

Mr. President, Senator Stuart was concerned as to whether we had information that the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture would be using the facility. If I could show him the information, I am sure that he would be surprised to see the number of applications that we have for spaces in the existing markets, but... activity. If I could show him the information that we have, I am sure he would be surprised to see the number of applications for vending spaces, not only in the existing markets, but across Barbados. 2.10 p.m.

Only last night, I heard a knock on my door and when I looked out, I saw a young lady who came to see me. She apologised because she did not know if she had come at the right time. I had to assure her that anytime was the right time, as long as she had a problem.

Asides.

SENATOR THE HON. E. R. GRIFFITH: Yes, she was there. She is who welcomed her to the house.

The point is that she came to tell me about a space she saw in a particular area. She wondered if she could be allowed to lease it, and said that she would be prepared to build the stall, if necessary. This is the kind of situation we encounter every day, where people are looking for opportunities.

Sir, we have accepted the responsibility to help them to find these opportunities. You can be assured that during my tenure in the Ministry of Agriculture, with the responsibility for the creation of rural enterprises, we will leave no stone unturned because we have to make a difference to rural life.

Senator Stuart is from the rural community like me, and he knows the role that the village shop previously played in our societies which has been lost. We want to put the people in the rural communities, back to the position where they can earn their living, by doing things which go beyond agriculture.

I made the point this morning in my discussion with Dr. Brathwaite, that while agriculture will be part of the rural enterprise initiative, it is only a part. There are many other areas which people in the rural communities will need to get involved.

Asides.

SENATOR THE HON. E. R. GRIFFITH: Certainly, even though they go beyond agriculture, since we have the responsibility for rural enterprise and development, we will provide all the support, technical and others, that is necessary to give them the opportunity to achieve their objectives.

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

The question was put to the Senate and agreed to.

ORDER NO. 5 – RESOLUTION TO APPROVE IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 5 OF THE CROWN LANDS (VESTING AND DISPOSAL) ACT, CAP. 225 THE VESTING IN THE BARBADOS TOURISM AND INVESTMENT INC. OF PARCELS OF LAND SITUATE AT LOWER BAY STREET AND THE PIERHEAD, BRIDGETOWN, IN THE PARISH OF SAINT MICHAEL TO BE USED IN THE PIERHEAD DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

SENATOR THE HON. E. R. GRIFFITH: Mr. President, this Resolution before us, as indicated here, seeks to vest 13 parcels of Crown Land, into the Barbados Tourism Investment Inc. (BTII).

The Pierhead project is one of a number of projects which the Government is keen to support to bring about increased activity within Bridgetown, and the country as a whole.

There are a few parcels of land which formerly were used as roads that are now abandoned. The Government is seeking to vest them in the BTII, as BTII's contribution to the project, which is a joint venture between the BTII and the private sector. When this project is completed, it will make a tremendous difference in Bridgetown. There are many facets to the project which I will not go into at the moment, but you can be assured that they will improve our economic activity significantly.

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

The question was put to the Senate and agreed to.

ORDER NO. 6 – URBAN DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION (AMENDMENT AND VALIDATION) BILL, 2003

SENATOR THE HON. E. R. GRIFFITH: Mr. President, the Bill before us seeks to do two things. It seeks to amend the Urban Development Commission Act to remove the words, "slum clearance area," which now exist in the Act, and to substitute them with, "redevelopment area." There are many areas in Barbados which are in need of redevelopment and cannot be categorised as slum areas. We think that to keep those words, with all the negative connotations, will not fit into our philosophy, in terms of moving this country forward. Therefore, we are of the view that we should remove those words and substitute them with "redevelopment areas." Sir, I do not feel that any Honourable Senator will have a difficulty with this change.

The second amendment has to do with the validation of certain actions taken by the Minister of Social Transformation and the executions of his responsibilities under that Act. The legal authority for those actions is vested in the Ministry of Housing, but the responsibilities are under the Ministry of Social Transformation, that is why it is necessary to validate what the Minister has done, in the execution of his duties, under that Act.

I therefore 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. E. R. GRIFFITH, the Senate resolved in Committee on the Bill. HER HONOUR SENATOR DAME PATRICIA SYMMONDS in the Chair.

COMMITTEE

Madam CHAIRMAN: The Senate is now in Committee.

Clauses 1, 2, 3, 4, inclusive, were called and passed. 2.20 p.m.

Clauses 5 – 10 inclusive, were called and passed.

Clause 11 was called.

SENATOR B. R. COLLYMORE: Mr. President, in the earlier part of the debate I said there was a nagging matter for me under Clause 11 which seeks to place in order, all acts done by the Minister of Social

Transformation on or after 25th January, 1999, and lawfully conferred on the Minister of Housing under that Act, shall be deemed to have been lawfully and validly done. What happens to acts that might occur after this is passed? In similar vein, the Ministry of Social Transformation might confer certain authority on the Minister of Housing, but this seeks to legalize those that took effect from January 1999 presumably until now.

Madam CHAIRMAN: Thank you for that observation, Senator Collymore.

SENATOR G. P. B. NICHOLLS: Madam Chairman, I think it is safe to say that the Act basically validates what was done prior to the vesting of the Ministry of Social Transformation under the responsibility of the Urban Development Commission. What would happen now and after the passing of this Bill would be that the Minister of Social Transformation would be the Minister responsible for the ambit of what the Urban Development Commission does, so there is no conflict in the Resolution.

Madam CHAIRMAN: Yes, thank you for that explanation and that elucidation, Senator Nicholls.

Clause 11 was called and passed.

On the motion SENATOR THE HON. E. R. GRIFFITH, MADAM 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. E. R. GRIFFITH, the Bill was read third time and passed and cited as the Urban Development Commission (Amendment and Validation) Act, 2003.

ORDER NO. 7 – FINAL APPROPRIATION (2002-2003) BILL, 2003

SENATOR THE HON. E. R. GRIFFITH: Mr. President, the tradition of this Chamber, from what I have

been able to observe, is that the Final Appropriation Bill is not usually debated, therefore, I do not expect any different situation on this occasion. I therefore move that this Bill be read a second time.

The question was put to the Senate and agreed to.

SENATOR THE HON. E. R. GRIFFITH: As you are aware, Sir, this Bill has been certified as a money Bill, therefore, it is not necessary for us to go into Committee. I therefore beg to move that this Bill be read a third time.

On the motion of SENATOR THE HON. E. R. GRIFFITH, the Bill was read a third time, passed and cited as the Final Appropriation (2002-2003) Bill, 2003.

ADJOURNMENT

SENATOR THE HON. E. R. GRIFFITH: Mr. President, as you are aware, the Other Place is on recess until October 7, 2003, so it does appear that we have the opportunity to take a well-deserved rest. I am hoping that during the coming months and weeks that Senators would make much of that opportunity and would come back refresh so that we could carry on with our business. I therefore beg to move that the Senate be adjourned *sine die*.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Before putting the motion let me join the Leader of the Senate in wishing you, Honourable Senators, as he did, a well-deserved rest. I hope you would return in October, he said refresh, but I would add reinvigorated.

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.
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