
THE SENATE DEBATES

(UNOFFICIAL REPORT)

PARLIAMENT 2003 – 2008

THE SENATE

Wednesday, March 24, 2004

RESUMPTION

Mr. PRESIDENT: This Sitting is resumed.

SENATOR I. St.C. LINTON: Mr. President, I am very delighted to be present in this Chamber to take part in this debate of what I, like the Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, believes is the real budget of the country. Sitting in other places with responsibilities, the matter of the Appropriation Bill is the way things are done, that is, you look to see how you will manage your expenditure, and that is what this Appropriation Bill before us is doing.

Mr. President, I say to you and to Honourable Senators here today that Barbados stands at a crucial point in this world in regard to where its future lies. Everyone of us as Barbadians have a responsibility to this country more than ever before. I want to congratulate the Honourable Leader of Government Business, Senator Griffith, for the erudite way in which he presented this Appropriation Bill and for his deep knowledge and understanding of economic matters. I also observed that he has great faith in God because he made a profound statement in his presentation on Monday, which is, that we as Barbadians must do our best and leave the rest to the Almighty. I am going to return back to this point later.

Mr. President, I want to congratulate the Minister of Finance, the Prime Minister of Barbados, for so ably leading this country for the past 10 years. We have discovered in the halls of administration, not a tall man but a giant for a Prime Minister, a Minister of Finance and a professional economist.

Mr. President, I want to look at this country in relation to its management and the way the finances have been managed in this country since Independence.

Independence brought upon us as a people tremendous responsibilities to find our way in a world with a small open economy and without much natural resources. The greatest resource that has been to our benefit is our people, and that is magnificent.

Mr. President, the economy of this country has been managed by our Finance Ministers many times on a knife-edge. We have had a history of deficit financing and to have achieved what we have achieved in this world, we must appreciate all of our Finance Ministers in this country over the life of our Independence.

Mr. President, there was only one occasion that things got out of hand and I do not want to dwell on that only to say that that one occasion should be an oasis for us in understanding the difficulties that can come upon us as a people in this world. I want to say from this point what is the fiat in the presentation of the Minister of Finance at this present time. Have we catch it? I followed the debate in the Other Place and I am sad to say that nearly all of the Members of the Opposition and some of the Members of the Government seem not to have caught the message.

Mr. President, it is important for us to understand the message that came to us from our Leader, the Prime Minister of this country. I myself seem to have caught that message, which is fiscal reformation. You cannot reform something that does not exist. Fiscal reformation calls for many things. It calls for efficiency and accountability. It calls for the best behaviours on the part of every Barbadian, on the part of the private sector, on the part of Government itself and its managers and on the part of the trade union movement.

Mr. President, we as Barbadians have been blessed with a trade union movement whose maturity stands out in relation to its commitment to Barbados and its people. Fiscal reformation also calls for the strengthening of institutions - I am going to come to those things as I go along - therefore, it is important for us as individuals to

personalise the message from the Minister of Finance, the Prime Minister of Barbados.

Mr. President, as an individual I must manage my family. I have grown children, but I still have to assist them from experience in managing themselves and on being responsible citizens of this country. I have to be efficient in that. I have to be accountable and I have to behave.

Senate 12 Sequence 99

10.10 a.m.

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SENATOR I. St.C. LINTON: Mr. President, I want to put before the people of this country the question of behaviour. Only last Sunday I went to give a Biblical study at a mother and her daughter's home and before leaving there, like a father, I sat that young lady down and spelt out what were the dangers to young people.

Sir the greatest danger for the young people of today is sex because it is used a weapon for murder, as regard to HIV/AIDS. Therefore, we as older persons in this society, in our various responsibilities at Church, in the various organisations, within the families, teachers in schools; and as managers, we must be able to be exemplars in our life in relation to our behaviour. There are husbands who leave their wives for extra sexual relationships, and in some cases bring home the weapon. Some wives have died from the weapon that the husbands have brought home, and vice versa.

Sir, the question of HIV/AIDS stands between us and whether we are going to have a Barbados. When we get the information of the devastation that HIV/AIDS through sex has brought to Africa, almost the inside of the habitation of these countries are gone, older people are alive and there are many young persons without mothers or fathers. In Barbados we have to get the message about how we behave in this manner.

Mr. President, I want to give kudos to the private sector in Barbados whose response to the mission of this Government has been excellent. They have acted maturely. Sir, let me give an example. This Government came to office under the Honourable Prime Minister, Owen Seymour Arthur, with its first objective of job creation. The Honourable Prime Minister said that he wanted to create 30 000 jobs, since the unemployment rate stood at over 21 per cent.

Mr. President, during the late 1980s, the Honourable Prime Minister was challenged by the Opposition that he was padding the public service. This is now 10 years. The public service has created approximately 6 000 jobs out of

the 30 000, with the private sector creating the others. On the Call-in programmes I hear callers knocking the private sector of this country daily and in spite of it all, history has been that the private sector has been the greater employer in this country from the time I was born. Indeed they have their particular ways because we cannot do without them because of the investments they make and the risks they take.

Sir, in this world in which we live, nobody owes us anything. When we consider that because of the management of our Finance Ministers and the political parties in Barbados, the Democratic Labour Party and the Barbados Labour Party, have both brought this country where it is today, that is from a developing country to being very close to a developed one.

We must understand that when the World Bank graduates us from concessional loans, nobody has anything for us as a people. It is us that must chart our course for a future Barbados. Therefore, as adults and older persons like myself, we must be determined to support a country that stands firm and on its ideals and characteristics to the younger people.

Mr. President, in this wise I want to talk to young politicians, both in the Other Place and here, about what is set for them all, about how responsible they must be and that, as an exemplar in honesty, efficiency and maturity, would strengthen the institutions of this country for the future. I want all of you who are in these Assemblies and those outside who are looking forward to getting into either one of these Houses of Parliament, to think on it. The course is not going to be easy and, therefore, from now on, they must all put their backs to the wind and prepare to take over and to prosper this country for their sons and daughters, for my grandchildren and great grandchildren.

Mr. President, I am on this tenet because as a matured person, I want to be real and to set a tone of being positive as I have this opportunity. I was really disappointed yesterday but I am going to forgive my good friend Senator Stuart for what he said in response to an aside from me in particular.

Mr. President, when asked to give us an idea or to put something on the table, his response in essence was that the Democratic Labour Party was not here to keep Barbados Labour Party in power. Sir, I have forgiven him for that indiscretion.

10.20 a.m.

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SENATOR I. St.C. LINTON: Sir, I think he would have scolded himself on that statement, so we forgive him for that.

Mr. President, if what he is saying is what he means, it means that the people of Barbados should not give the Opposition any seats in Parliament if they are not prepared to be part of Government, and as he said, and build a society. Having forgiven the Honourable Senator, I look forward for something on the table.

Sir, for 10 years the Opposition did not table a single Bill to Parliament. I would like to challenge the Leader of the Opposition, a well-qualified person in economics but I know that he is not very great in politics but certainly his skills are akin to develop a political mind that would be positive and that can be challenged to bring before this Assembly some of the things that they have put in their Manifesto.

Do not wait until the Barbados Labour Party is in Government because we on this side are not going to forfeit the Government to the Democratic Labour Party as they forfeit it to us. We did not take it from them. They forfeited it by their own conscience that they had done a bad job. Sir, if they want a formula to remain in Opposition in the forfeiture of Government, do not bring matters to this Honourable Senate and the Other Place that are not for the development of a good society.

I am going to live long.

Asides.

SENATOR I. St.C. LINTON: I am going to live long and I am going to wait until you bring it. I am going to come and shake your hand. I am going to come and say thanks because I am looking forward to it.

Sir, let me look at a few areas in sections of the economy of Barbados. I must first speak on the question of the policy on persons with abilities though having disabilities. I had the privilege of working for one year on that committee of recommending a policy for persons with disabilities and something has been done. I also had the privilege to sit on Sir Henry Forde's Constitution Review Committee.

In that particular Report, we worked hard to get something on that because what was coming through to me was - I wanted a Bill of rights for persons with disabilities. There were members who felt the country could not bear it but you cannot deny persons who have problems the rights that they should have from the State.

Sir, I have some ideas but I do not have the time now to say what there are. A Green Paper came to this

Honourable Senate and a White Paper is being promised. Mr. President, about two weeks ago, the Prime Minister gave his thoughts about what he holds for persons with disabilities at the opening of the Council for Disabilities. That is a good start.

However, I want to register that this car must not start without a battery. It cannot be jump started. It must have a spark. It must have something on which to go and, in my view, the Ministry of Social Transformation and the Minister, whom I love, are too slow. I want some movement. I want something done, more than what is being done for a people that have been disadvantaged, not by their own doing, some may have, but if you were born with disabilities somebody has to help you.

I have a disability but I was not born this way. I was born with a problem that would have eventually become what it is. I was determined that in spite of my problem nobody can sit me down. I was determined that whatever I can do for myself nobody would have to do for me. I want to appeal to persons with disabilities, while you need help, get up and use what ability you have for yourselves.

Sir, this country, though it has done well for its people of disadvantage, there are too many of us, I am not just referring to persons with disabilities, who expect that the Government must do everything for them.

Mr. President, during the debate in the Other Place, the Opposition said that the economy is in shambles and that nothing was happening. Do you know something? Not one of them said not to spend anymore money on this or that. Do you know what they were saying? They were saying to spend more. Give us more. The old people want more. This body wants more, more for the hospital and education. They went around in circles and yet the economy is in shambles.

Sir, to oppose for opposing sake is a crime. Again, I want to call on the Opposition to be mature and call a spade a spade. The Democratic Labour Party came to power in this country in 1961 but they seemed to have a character which I want them to get rid of. They believe that Barbados popped up somewhere between the Atlantic and the Caribbean Sea in 1961 and when they are out of office it goes back down. They do not recognise the history and success that this Barbados Labour Party, over 60 years of existence, has brought to this country.

Sir, in three tranches of Government, in every case that they governed, they governed with success and the country has always been better off when the people take the Government away from the Democratic Labour Party.

H12: 10.30

*Sequence 101**Wednesday, March 24, 2004*

SENATOR I. St.C. LINTON: I do not have the time to tell you, Mr. President, and the Honourable Members here and those who are listening, if you would research the record of the development that took place in a single five years, 1956 to 1961, which is significant that it took place between 1976 and 1986 and is taking place today, 1994 to 2004. The Barbados Labour Party has always done sectorial development in this country.

There are many examples but I will use two because I do not want to lose any time. The sea port and the airport. In 1958 I worked at the airport development and at the same time, there was the building of the port at the Harbour, in an economy that was less than \$50 million in revenue. At the same time I left the Airport and went to work at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. I want the Democratic Labour Party to write them down somewhere and remember them.

They said that when the Port was built that the great patriot Moses, the late Rt. Excellent Sir Grantley Adams, I think that somebody should visit his grave and collect the dust that still remains and put it in an urn and put it somewhere that everybody could see, because the late Rt. Excellent Errol Walton Barrow, who was seeking to become Premier, and if you all knew him as an Opposition Leader in Barbados, go back and read it and consume it, he was not easy and he was powerful as an Opposition Leader. You had to take him on, and one of the only people who took him on was Mencea Cox.

He said, Mr. President, that the late Rt. Excellent Sir Grantley Adams should be tied hand and foot, bounded and thrown in the Deep Water Harbour. When we constructed the Hospital that I just told you about, do you know what the Minister at the time said? I think he was Joy Edwards, that \$9 million was too much to spend on a hospital. The Barbados Labour Party is now spending \$115 million, which is double what the Democratic Labour Party was spending in 1994.

Every time they are striving, but it is still the finest health institute in the Caribbean, despite its problems. Sir, we have to learn to be honest and truthful. The Queen Elizabeth Hospital was a problem for you as well as it is a problem for us. Do you know why? I cannot afford to go to any doctor today. I do not have the money to do it. The cost of private medical care in Barbados is too much. This is why the Queen Elizabeth Hospital has a problem and the medical personnel, the doctors in this island, owe it to the people of Barbados to be more reasonable, and stop smiling their way to the bank out of people who are ill. They should be reasonable and in many cases, they are not.

I want to turn to education. Sir, for the last 35 years, the Government of Barbados, not political parties, have spent about \$10 billion on education in this country, a consistent approach by the political managers of this country, in building the institution of education in Barbados.

The signal established for our intention for education was made in 1947 and the Caribbean should be proud of this, when we set up the University College of the West Indies at Mona in Jamaica. The part that our own Barbadian, a national hero, the late Sir Hugh Springer, did in planting that institution in the Caribbean and Governments across the Caribbean have spent billions of dollars in educating its people.

Let me tell you, when you look across the landscape and see the quality of those who were educated in this institution, as well as having an opportunity to go abroad - I have a daughter who got a first degree here, who went to Erdiston, who taught here, went abroad and was in a position to eat up the education in the United States, that when she got her Masters, she had so many credits to go on to do the Ph.D. that she did it in less than five years. The basic potential came from our educational system, and this is an example of what has taken place.

When we look at the professionals, we have in Barbados, lawyers, doctors, you name the whole gamut. Where did they come from? Some of them did not even have a proper pair of shoes to wear to school but the parents made sacrifices when it had to be paid for and incidentally, free secondary education by the Democratic Labour Party, meant that they were advancing, but no student who went to school at Parkinson, Richmond, Grantley Adams or Princess Margaret, ever paid for anything.

Asides.

SENATOR I. St.C. LINTON: Let me say that the cadre of professionals in this 275 000 inhabitancy, in preponderance, is greater than anywhere else in the world. I want to appeal to the young people on whom we are spending this coming financial year, almost \$242 000 million on them, and if they must be the future Government and professionals and managers of our country, we expect from them more than what they are doing and better behaviour.

I want to charge parents with that responsibility that they train their children and not behave like their children, so their children behave like them. I want to challenge those managers in education to continue to strive in difficult times to impart understanding for young people.

We are now schooling, pre schooling and over schooling.

Senate 12, sequence 102, 10:40:14

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SENATOR I. St.C. LINTON: We have set up systems under the Ministry of Social Transformation to educate the elderly. Is not that great progress? Is that not an institution that all governments deserve to be proud of, so why tear it down? Everybody has problem. A writer whom I know said that you should not focus on the ills of people or societies, that you should focus on the good, and we need to learn that.

How much more time do I have, Mr. President?

Mr. PRESIDENT: You have 25 minutes.

SENATOR I. St.C. LINTON: Mr. President, I want to turn now to the Barbados of today. I said earlier that nobody owes us anything and we should not believe that anybody owes us anything, so I want every individual in this country to know that nobody owes them anything. They ought to be thankful that their mother and father caused them to be in this world and if they have all that human beings should have, like coming into the world with a good body that is working well, they should thank God for it and put it to work for the good not only of themselves but of those who are born in the home with them and who are born next door in St. Philip, St. Andrew or St. Lucy. We are all in this together and as a country we must hold together to seek to create good not only for ourselves but for our country and everyone else.

Mr. President, this is not the time for a person to boast that they manage to get a Ph.D. Some of those who gained that and those who are serving well in their professions, they may not have gained a Ph.D but they might be a well-qualified lawyer, doctor or businessman, should reach out to a young one who needs their help. Mr. President, when Sir Winston Churchill was a little boy about two years old he was warned not to go to the pool but he frequented it and one day he fell into it and the gardener saw him and plunged into the water and saved him. Sir Winston Churchill's parents asked the gardener what they could do for him, and the gardener replied that he wanted an education and he was educated. I cannot remember his name I think it was an Alexander something.

As Prime Minister of England, Sir Winston Churchill made a trip abroad and took sick, I think it was with malaria, and he would have died, and they had to send a medical personnel from England to him and the person that was sent to inject him with the penicillin was the same

boy that saved his life. When Sir Winston Churchill recovered he told him that he had saved his life twice.

Mr. President, I said that to say this. Those of us who are better off in society have a responsibility, not only Government, to share our prosperity with some boy or some girl, perhaps they may save our life, I am being profound. I am teaching today. I am a teacher. I am a thinker. I think things out.

Mr. President, I want to turn from Barbados to the international scene. Mr. President, let me say up front that trade liberalisation is impossible. I am going to show you how it is impossible. Senator Eastmond and Senator Fields spoke yesterday about standards. The better-off nations are starving small nations like us with finance. They can afford to give us concessional financing but they would not because they say that we are too good, we are developed and we are managing well, yet they are asking us to meet their standards with the advantages, with the technology, with the money and with the institutions that they have. There is skulduggery with it too as was pointed out yesterday when Senator Fields talked about how many times they had to send their beer to collect a standard and what was revealed.

Mr. President, what is being flaunted as trade liberalisation is nothing but protectionism. All of the rules that Germany, Japan, Britain and the United States of America set, they break with the United States of America being the chief culprit. A few years ago when our relatives came here and they were going back they could have taken with them yams, potatoes, fish, et cetera, but that cannot happen now. The ploy that they are using is that it causes drugs to come into the country. That is skulduggery again.

Mr. President, the World Trade Organisation is a front for protection of the rich countries in this world. I want us to recognise that we do not stand a chance. They stand from outside and come up with a facade and behind that facade is the breaking down of your borders so that they can run into your borders with any kinds of goods. When they come, they are going to stifle our manufacturers, kill our institutions and subjugate our people. The Caribbean Single Market and Economy and Caribbean co-operation and unity are the only opportunity and the only hope we have in being able to come together as a Caribbean people.

Mr. President, the test of maritime boundaries must define that the Caribbean Sea belongs to all of the countries in the Caribbean, and they must allow each other to fish in their waters. We should also be able to use the resources of those waters to build the West Indies countries. It is the only way forward for us to establish ourselves in a position that we could cut niches into the Free Trade Area of the Americas.

Mr. President, I believe in trade groupings because that is how trade started. Asian people loaded their camels, their donkeys, their horses and their caravans and moved to areas with their produce and sold them and bought what they wanted to take back home.

Senate 12 Sequence 103

10.50 a.m.

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SENATOR I. St.C. LINTON: Mr. President, that was not done by a Government or a World Trade Organisation (WTO). Trade has been free in this world until now. The protection barriers are put up to recolonise us, and we have to work together to find a way to continue to live and that our people will live.

Mr. President, I want to turn to the point I made when I said that Senator Griffith, the Honourable Leader of Government Business, came to that point. We must do our best but must allow the Almighty to do his part. As Senator Griffith has said, if rain does not fall, what are we going to do?

Sir, the greatest history in this world is history that is revealed in prophesy. I am a Christian. I believe in God. My whole existence is to be right with God and to be honest and true to myself and to others.

Mr. President, in Daniel Chapter 2, there was this great King Nebuchadnezzar who built an empire, the first world dominant power. He did it so well that he went to bed one night and said to himself: "I have built with pride. I have built great Babylon," and probably conjured up in his mind that he had nothing more to do. During the night he had a dream that troubled him and the next morning, he called in all his magicians and advisors and asked them to show him his dream. He even threatened to destroy the lives of everyone of his magicians, astrologers and sorcerers and to make their homes dunghills.

Mr. President, in Daniel Chapter 1, there was this young lad named Daniel, who ate the right foods and who was 10 times wiser than any of the soothsayers, astrologers or magicians. King Nebuchadnezzar sent for Daniel to interpret the dream. Daniel asked the King not to be so hasty and to give him time to interpret the dream, that it was not one that he could have interpreted at that time. Daniel then went back to his house and told his three companions, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah the problem who all got together and fasted that the secret of the dream would be revealed unto them.

Mr. President, I think perhaps the Church today, including my own organisation, needs to call a fast and a

prayer meeting for this nation because we are facing difficult times ahead. Prayer is the key that unlocks heaven's storehouse that reveals the bounties of God's love. Prayer changes things. Therefore, Daniel and his companions went to pray and God revealed the history of this dream to Daniel.

Honourable Senators know the great image and what it stood for. The great image stood for the fact that Babylon was to be the greatest dominion in the world but the successive ones would have been inferior throughout.

Sir, 99 per cent of this prophesy is history, and in the 43rd verse of Daniel, Chapter 2, it says several words: "They cannot cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay."

Mr. President, that is where we are today in history. Three Frenchmen tried to unite this world in one dominion, Louis XIV, Charles Maine and Napoleon. Then there was Keizer and Hitler, who almost did it. Hitler almost succeeded but made the wrong turn to go to Moscow, and the Lord dealt with him there.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator, you have five minutes remaining.

SENATOR I. St.C. LINTON: I want to say, do not matter what world system comes up, it cannot prosper in this world. It will not, for God has said so, and any attempt to have a world power will fail. The Nazis failed, Communism failed, Polytheism will fail on the religion side and I want to say to us as responsible persons, not to look for any good coming out of trade liberalisation.

Sir, I want to speak to the liberalisation of telecommunication in Barbados. We are ready to destroy Cable and Wireless but it is Cable and Wireless who has built telecommunications in Barbados and they would have to downsize to keep in the marketplace. Sir, the other institutions that are coming in, are doing so with a diamond-cleaved sword and we have not realised it because as a people, we want something for nothing and it cannot be done.

Mr. President, I am staying with Cable and Wireless no matter what are their rates. Senator Stuart has made a point about this. Barbadians must be sensible, objective, and must learn to think. When we see the debacles of Enron and these other financial institutions and businesses that came crashing down, let us watch it and beware of gifts that come from the Greeks. I say this to the Government of Barbados, to the Opposition, to the private sector and to the trade unions, to the various managers of the institutions of Barbados: "Good things don't come easy. Anytime it comes easy, it is trouble and destruction." Sir, the way ahead for us is to strengthen our resolve, to

build this country and to give it a fair opportunity to be united with our brothers in the Caribbean.

11.00 a.m.

Wednesday, March 24, 2004

SENATOR I. St.C. LINTON: Mr. President, there is a saying that dead people roll in their graves and I believe that sometimes they roll in their graves.

Sir, when the late Right Excellent Sir Grantley Adams became Prime Minister of the Federation, he was on the ball when he said to the countries to zone industries and to let Guyana be our bread basket. The people who broke up the Federation are in more trouble than we who are still here. For example, Guyana and Trinidad had a South American destiny and Jamaica had an American destiny. Where are they today? There are in financial difficulties, floundering on the rocks.

Therefore, I want to close by saying that we must be grateful to those who led this country, who managed our finances and we must support fiscal reform, not just in monetary terms and dollar value but what we as a people can do for our nation and assist our leaders - although it may be a long time before the Democratic Labour Party becomes the Government and they cannot become the Government if they do not postpone it by deciding that they are not putting anything on the table.

Sir, whichever Government reigns this country, as Barbadians we have our political moments, but when the decision is made, we must stand firm behind our leaders, especially when they are imbued with qualifications and expressed wisdom from what they say and this time we have in Barbados one of the best leaders in the world.

Sir, my call today is not what the future will bring but how we respond to the Minister of Finance and Prime Minister's word and message. If we respond in a positive way, this country will go forward.

Thank you, Mr. President.

SENATOR the Very Rev. H.E. CRICHLAW: Mr. President, Members of the Senate, I want to comment on four aspects of the debate, namely handling difference, change, attitude and Barbados's people and its land, A - attitude, B - Barbados, C - Change and D - Difference.

Sir, first of all, the clash between Government and the Opposition Senators over the last two days was not just one of words, economics versus society; it pointed to a very important and fundamental difference in Barbadian politics. Like my colleague, Senator Stuart, the lead spokesman for the Opposition in this Chamber, I was

impressed by the way in which the Leader of Business, The Honourable Erskine Griffith, introduced the Appropriation Bill 2004/2005. Sir, for me it was a public lesson in budgeting by Government. He gave three broad objectives:

1. To secure adjustments and efficient allocation of resources;
2. The distribution of income and wealth through tax policy and transfer and,
3. To secure stabilisation of the economy.

Mr. President, people must understand that Government does not have an unlimited amount of money and, therefore, Government has to ensure that funds are apportioned to the many areas of national development in a careful manner. They must be reminded that Government relies on taxes of one kind or the other but mostly on taxes paid by individuals and businesses in Barbados. Everyone contributes to this.

Finally, Government must watch over the receipts and payments to avoid embarrassing situations to the entire population. Every household has at least one family member who has to do this with their income.

Sir, the Honourable Minister went on to explain, sometimes in technical language such as fiscal prudence, percentage of Gross Domestic Product, which will be unfamiliar to many Barbadians, and how Government handles the economy.

Senator Stuart must have been thinking of the thousands of Barbadians, some of whom he has represented before, and, perhaps, hopes to represent again in the Lower House, who have been struggling to make ends meet not knowing where the next meal is going to come from. There are people who are in very poor circumstances amidst all the luxury living here in Barbados.

Mr. President, if you who have been driving along the main highways to and from work, would wonder where is all this need that we talk about. Within the last 50 years many thousands have climbed out of their abject poverty due to efforts by successive Governments.

Mr. President, for those political parties claimed to be interested in the broad masses of the people, to say that there is no distinction between the two parties is to say that there is virtually no change to Governments, which is against the spirit of democracy, which we former Governments have inherited from Britain which we praise.

Sir, the doctrine of politics of inclusion is destructive of the multi party democracy we practise, in my view. Politics of inclusion meant that persons with particular gifts from other parties could be given political appointments but remain in the party of their choice. This would be a different matter all together. It has not worked out that way

because of the cultural and adversarial politics that we encourage. No Opposition Party could accept the politics of inclusion while we stay a one-party state.

In small societies like ours in the Caribbean and where democracy is relatively new, there have been many instances where almost all the seats at the general elections are won by one party. We in Barbados are still in that stage. We are now creeping out of it.

Mr. President, when you add to this that at some times there is little difference in the total number of votes between the two leading parties, because of the first past the post system which we have inherited, there is a need for proportional representation for which the Leader of the National Democratic Party had been calling.

The exchange between the two parties is not foolishness or rubbish nor should the Opposition Senator be accused of being intellectually dishonest. He is pointing to a difference in emphasis or perspective between the two labour parties in Barbados.

Mr. President, if a bright young Senator Nicholls wants an example of a difference between the two parties, let him consider Senator Collymore's analysis of the need for heavily subsidising the Transport Board since the \$1.50 bus fare had been unchanged for the past thirteen years. Would he advise Government to raise it to \$2.00, \$2.50 or \$3.00?

11.10 a.m.

Sequence 105

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SENATOR the Very Rev. H. E. CRICHLOW: We have to try to handle political difference, that means, we have to be tolerant of the ideas of other individuals or parties.

I want to move on to handling change, especially social change. Education has been the greatest force for social change in Barbados. Every working-class parent wanted to ensure that his or her child did not have to work in the broiling sun in the canefields, as he or she did. Parents sacrificed much to achieve this. Some of the better-off families had children who won scholarships to second grade schools and later to first grade schools.

Most of the children attended elementary schools, mainly Anglican ones where, with the later support of Government, they had a good 7th standard education upon which modern Barbados has been built. Free secondary education opened opportunities to many more students until recently, when it was compulsory for all students, up

to the age of 16. At the tertiary level, one Barbados scholarship was offered every year, and this took the scholar to Oxford University or Cambridge University.

From 1875, the few who came close to the coveted scholarship, read degrees at Codrington College which was affiliated to Durham University. It has been spoken of at times as the Oxford of the West Indies, and it served the Caribbean until the University College of the West Indies, and later, the University of the West Indies was founded.

Codrington College and the Royal Institute also trained many of our teachers until Erdiston Teachers' Training College came into existence. Now, we have an addition, the Barbados Community College (BCC) and the Samuel Jackman Prescod Polyclinic (SJPP), the last three of which will form the new University College of Barbados.

Free university education for Barbadians has been the greatest improvement we have seen in Barbados and will make for the most radical changes in the future. Wealthy countries like America, Britain, Canada, among others, cannot afford to offer this facility to their citizens and they have resources. A poor tiny country like Barbados with no material resources to speak of is doing it. It will take much hard work, energy, brains, creativity, et cetera, to continue this and I hope we shall be able to do it.

This will mean that all those who received degrees and diplomas from the University of the West Indies will have to sacrifice part of their salaries on a voluntary basis, or they may be forced to borrow the fees and repay them over a reasonably long period. It is not too much to say that it is not too soon for the country to plan for this eventuality. I do not see how, with the rising cost of education, Barbados can maintain free university education.

There is much wastage in the field of education. This is caused mainly by the fact that most of our influence between the ages of two and five, do not get any mental nourishment, apart from their parents cursing them.

Asides.

SENATOR the Very Rev. H. E. CRICHLOW: This is because of the very harsh economic conditions, under which those parents live. I do think that consideration should be given to young parents who have two or three children. I know, of course, you would say that this would be to encourage them to have more children, but many have a lot of children because men come along and promise to help them with the child or two children, another man or other men have left, and that particular man would give them a third child and then leave.

Then somebody else comes along and promises to help the family and gives them one more child and so on. You can imagine the misery that those parents have, and when they curse their children and say to them: "You know, I sorry I ever did born you", or "I don't know why you didn't dead when you did born". I do not know if any of you have ever heard these expressions...

Asides.

SENATOR the Very Rev. H. E. CRICHLLOW: Imagine yourself being told that as a child, but a lot of our children hear this, and so, they are spoilt really before they get to school.

Sir, we have a lot of wastage at that point and we saw this in the 1970s when a Committee was set up by the Government to enquire into the transfers from primary to secondary schools. We felt that part of the solution to it was to have nursery schools, so that we could take these children away from home between the ages of two and five. Things have got worse now, because parents bring children to school at four or five years old and tell the head teachers to see what they can do with them because they cannot rule them.

Failing this, we should find that most of them are rejected as soon as they enter primary school, in order to allow a smaller number to get the best training for the Common Entrance Examination, five or six years later. We saw this as we went around to the various schools. The success of the smaller group will bring glory to the school, as they enter some of the secondary schools.

Sir, I look forward to the time when the Common Entrance Examination will be abolished and pupils will move automatically to schools in their zones. All the teachers by then will be professionally qualified. The curriculum will be the same. The books will be standardised and all of our children will be given equal opportunity to develop their talents. By that time, all the primary schools will be staffed by graduates. Some teachers will not have to dread going to school to teach all backward children, because there will be children of all abilities in all of our schools.

This would help to reduce the amount of class prejudice in our society. It will prevent young people from wasting their time and talents on the block, because the society has not done anything for them. That is why we have much of this antisocial behaviour among the youth. You cannot try to get them to love Barbados because Barbados has done nothing for them. They have been rejected at the significant stages in their lives.

It will help every person to be able to express his or her deepest feelings and experiences. This is part of the

reason for some of the domestic violence that we have. In some other Caribbean countries, I know one for sure, because people cannot express themselves in word, they do it by stabbing or shooting.

Senate 12, sequence 106, 11:20:14

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SENATOR the Very Rev. H.E. CRICHLLOW: When people can express their feelings, they do not have to use violence. The question of violence is a much bigger one. I am aware that the family is under attack. I am aware too of our historical past and what our people endured through slavery and the post slavery years. That is still with a lot of our people, so the neglect that we find in many families cannot be traced to only 10, 15 or 20 years ago. In the life of our nation it may take generations before people can get this sort of cruelty out of their system.

Mr. President, education will help our people to develop self-esteem which many of our people lacked. Our people also lacked the ability to appreciate things that are done by people of their own colour, and because they feel that they are not worth anything, they believe that anyone looking like them cannot be worth much either. They were given European standards of beauty and so on to aim at. We have a problem of identity which complicates the whole issue. All of this has remained with our people.

These and many other advantages will be derived from more children being led out into broader fields through education. It is by taking advantage of higher education that our young women are developing themselves and through qualification and experience they will be the leaders of this society in about 20 years. Mr. President, I am very impressed when I listened to the young women in our Senate. If the present trend of boys opting out of learning alongside girls continues, this means that 20 years from now the men will hardly have a look in, they may look in to take photographs as they do now.

Mr. President, I was the headmaster of a secondary co-ed school for five years and I never noticed any disadvantage among the boys. The Teaching Service should be given every support and the Teaching Commission which was planned for in the 1982 Education Act should be proclaimed. I say this because teachers are now public officers, but you cannot run a school like how you can run a civil service department, so I am sure that the proclamation of the Teaching Commission will help to make our schools better.

Mr. President, as far as possible, we should keep politics out of the schools. Parents have a way when anything happens to their children at school of running to their political representative, but that is not good and

politicians should advise people who run to them like this to go to the school and have the matter explained by the head teacher.

Handling economic change - one thing we can be equally sure of in life is change. As far as our national life is concerned, most of our experience has been with sugar. Now that sugar has lost that pride and place, we have tourism. Therefore, we should do all that we can to assist with the development of our tourism industry. However, we must always be aware that tourism is a very fragile product. Anything happening in the Caribbean can frighten tourists away because they think that the Caribbean islands are only a few hundred yards or a couple miles away from each other. They would never think that a thousand miles lies between Jamaica and the islands in the south of the Caribbean.

Mr. President, we are also living in a very dangerous world. Although people for the most part have got over the fear of travelling by air, you could never tell when something very tragic may happen which will mean that our leading money earner will go into recess. I am sure that the Minister of Agriculture, Dr. Chandler and all those who know about agriculture are right when they insist that agriculture should be subsidized and that the growing of food, animal husbandry, et cetera, should always be part of what happens in Barbados.

We are a tiny island. We do not have much land and we should see that all of our land is cultivated even if it is in grass cultivation so as to have sheep and cattle farming. I know there is a problem with water but that was addressed earlier. There is a natural fear of the land among our people because of its historical association with slavery, but I hope that we will get rid of that entirely in a few generations so as to be able to value our land.

Mr. President, when I travel, say, from Brussels to Berlin I see all hundreds of square miles of cultivated land and I had to say to myself that here I am driving through hundreds of miles of cultivated land and in a 16 x 21 Barbados we can find areas that have been allowed to run into bush. That is so because most of our people do not really have any feel for the land. Barbados could be a very beautiful garden, so to speak, when you look at it from the air. You get that impression, but when you get nearer to it you would see that there are still many areas...

Senate 12 Sequence 107

11.30 a.m.

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SENATOR the Very Rev. H. C. CRICHLAW: Mr. President, the Minister of Agriculture is very enthusiastic

and I am sure that much will be done during his period of office to see that agriculture is promoted but I think we need more persons who will help in this regard.

Mr. President, I need not speak on regional change. Many of you, including the last Honourable Senator who has spoken, have dealt adequately with this at the regional, hemispheric and world trade order.

Mr. President, there are many personal and family attitudes that do not make for healthy living in Barbados. We need to remember that our physical health is affected by our mental attitudes. I think Senator Stuart touched on that when he averted to socio medico-centric as against preventative medicines.

Mr. President, Professor Stanley at the University of the West Indies (UWI) has been preaching that for years, and it is something that everyone should know, that is, prevention is better than cure, but most of us are lazy and, as far as diets are concerned, have grown up hating the best and most nutritious part of our diet, so that we hardly take exercise. Those of us who have been sitting here for three days now will know how we feel by not walking around. We would also notice how much weight we have gained, so one can imagine those who work every day in sedentary jobs, but there is a connection between our mental and physical health.

It is a great pity that so many beautiful young lives are thrown away by HIV/AIDS. I think young people ought to be helped to understand that health is the greatest possession of all. I find that those exercises that we used to do in the 1960s, when we were around the ages of 9 or 10, for instance like ordinary stretching, et cetera, can come in very handy when persons reach 60, 70 or 80 years. Therefore, physical education should be part of every school's curriculum but adults need to take some time out and do exercises too.

Mr. President, family neglect is rampant in our society. Some years ago, I was very pleased to see a year that more men have been taking an interest in their families, which I am sure would be good for everybody. I know of the torture that some men go through in trying to see their children after they have been separated from those children's mothers.

Sir, by and large there is much neglect in the family. People who are working, especially fathers who own their children, neglect them, and are not aware of the damage this does. I can think of a student, not in this country, who could not work for days. She ended up crying because of the fact that she had realised that she had never called anybody "Daddy". It was not to say that her father had died but simply that she never knew him.

Mr. President, another attitude is work ethics. I think that most of us would not mind if we had a bank holiday every week. A number of us hate working. We want to be on the paysheet, of course, but we really do not see the connection between work and salary. To some persons, there is the obvious connection but not to everybody. Sir, the perks are so bad that some people take every chance to get away from work.

Sir, one of the reasons why I said that we needed a teaching commission is that teachers are allowed 21 days off as casual leave but teachers cannot afford to believe that they can take up to 21 days off school. They are entitled to it as public servants but they must then think of the number of classes, the number of children who are waiting to be taught. Sir, in all of my teaching years, I cannot remember ever taking a day off in that manner because most teachers in the past felt that way. I think we are causing teachers to create very bad habits by allowing them to think that they could take the usual days off as allowed in the Civil Service.

Mr. President, we need to help our people to understand that work is important and that the country could not move forward without work, for example, if we think of the Sanitation Services Authorities workers being off for two or three weeks, let us think of the number of lives that would be lost, the number of people who would be hospitalised or who would have to attend the polyclinics, et cetera. These are important people so that our trade unions and employers must be conscious of the need for people to be on the jobs and they should go all out to see that we minimise the numbers of strikes, et cetera.

11.40 a.m.

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SENATOR the Very Rev. H.E. CRICHLLOW: Sir, if we did not work the land, think of what Barbados would look like. The land would go to ruins in a year or so.

I have not seen this tremendous energy being put to work as we move toward the Caribbean Single Market and Economy, Free Trade Areas of the Americas and World Trade Organisation. We are competing against countries that understand what work is. Our people must be told that they must change their attitude towards work.

Mr. President, of course, the conditions under which they work must be improved if they need to be improved so that they can feel comfortable on the job. I take it that is part of the management studies in which people are engaged in at this time.

In our service industry, we still think that service is servility. This is part of our social history as well but we

hope that with the widespread secondary education that, in the near future, we would be able to help people understand that when they serve others it does not mean that they are demeaning themselves. As a matter of fact, service is the hallmark of greatness. Jesus said "I came not to be served but to serve."

Sir, our attitude to law and order- I think that we are fortunate in having the kind of society that we have. I suppose that it is mainly due to the schools and churches in the past and the law courts. In all of us there is a streak of trying to get about the law. We cannot progress unless we have some kind of law and order. I do not mean that we have to have a regimental society. Sir, people must be reminded that the freedom they now enjoy carries a number of responsibilities and their freedom only exists to the limit of other people's freedom. They are not free to do what they like, when they like or say what they like to whom they like and when they like.

Mr. President, in an age when we are trying to development our human rights, when all over the world they are trying to get rid of cruelty and injustice and to see that people are treated in a humane way, in Barbados we have traditions that we can build on so that our country remains free.

Mr. President, I am very pleased when I hear visitors say that the best thing they enjoy about Barbados is people, the warmth of our people. I wish that our people would express some of this warmth to people who live here as well. I do not get the impression that people in Barbados are so very warm and hospitable. We seem to be waiting to explode if something happens that we do not like, even if it is the right thing.

Asides.

SENATOR the Very Rev. H.E. CRICHLLOW: For example, if you happen to drop into a pothole on a rainy day and they get splashed, they think that you left home with that intention.

Asides.

SENATOR the Very Rev. H.E. CRICHLLOW: I am very pleased when visitors enjoy not only the sun and sand but the warmth of our people.

Barbados would be a much happier place to live if we could show some of this warmth to each other.

Finally, handling all things Barbadian - We are very judgmental. I am not sure if Honourable Members are aware of this. They expect you to be perfect. You cannot make mistakes. Or is it only the clergy that is to be perfect?

Asides.

SENATOR the Very Rev. H.E. CRICHLLOW: I find that if you are waiting at the traffic lights and then the lights turn green and people start to walk across the road, they use the green lights for the motorists at the time to cross the street, and if you go near them they are ready to curse you. In the meantime you would have been waiting at the traffic lights for a long time but they do not consider you at all. They ask if you are blind and if you want to kill them.

Mr. President, Bruce St. John, in one of his dialect poems, although George Lammings said that he cannot find the title, said that "Every Bajan born with a chopper in he hand." I think that all of us will experience this business of people waiting to chop us down.

Asides.

SENATOR the Very Rev. H.E. CRICHLLOW: I heard a story of someone in the supermarket who was getting ready to do some shopping. This supermarket was owned by a Barbadian and she said, "Let me get out of here. He can't get rich out of me."

Asides.

SENATOR the Very Rev. H.E. CRICHLLOW: Our...is responsible for a lot of this. I think we need to be more responsible in our island.

There is a complaint that people are moving from the villages to the heights and terraces and this is increasing the class prejudices. I think that this is a normal behaviour. Villages are usually crowded and everybody knows everybody's business,

11.50 a.m.

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Senator the Very Rev. H. E. CRICHLLOW: et cetera, and if people have worked hard and decided to have with a little space around them, then they are entitled to it.

We should continue this community feeling. In every country it is not so, and certainly, you would not get it in big cities. I think we have a good nation. I am very sorry that I was not here for the funeral of Sir Harold St. John. He really deserved all the tributes that were paid to him. He was a very fine statesman.

I can think of the time that the Government was lost when he was Prime Minister for a year. I did not think that

he had it in him to sacrifice the nation's welfare for his own personal gain or his Party's personal gain. He told the groups that threatened to strike that the country could not afford what they were asking for and, therefore, in all conscience, he could not grant them. Others might have granted them the increases and then taken them back in taxes or so, but I think many would say that his sense of integrity and so on would not allow him to do that, but, I paid tribute to him for his very fine work and example and dedication to the nation of Barbados. I wish we had many more people like the late Sir Harold St. John. The country needs it.

Sir, speaking on the landscape of Barbados, there is not time to go into the environment but I am sure all of you would agree with me that Dr. Colin Hudson who died recently loved Barbados with a passion and he worked for the good of Barbados and will be remembered by his many friends for a long time. Whenever we think of the environment, the landscape of Barbados and treading lightly, et cetera, the Future Centre Trust, we will think of the very fine sustainable work he did.

As I drive around the island, I am very pleased to see that Barbados has become a place for living, and not just for working. There are now many beautiful houses which we need to make into beautiful homes. There are playing fields and community centres, and we do not have playing fields like the one that used to be at St. Augustine, what do you call it?

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator, please address the Chair.

SENATOR the Very Rev. H. E. CRICHLLOW: Sorry. There was a playing field there next to St. Augustine School, where people fielding in the gully were actually in the gully. What was it called? Nobody remembers the name?

I am glad to see that we have proper playing fields and this will add to the beauty and the health of our people.

Mr. President, I have tried to show that we need to handle difference, change, or attitudes, Barbados, its people, and landscape. I hope that the Appropriation Bill for 2004-2005 will help us to continue this development that is going on all around us.

Thank you very much.

SENATOR R.W. GRANT: Mr. Speaker, I would first want to start by acknowledging the presentation made on Monday by the Honourable Senator, the Leader of Government Business, the Honourable Minister of Agriculture, Senator Hon. E.R. Griffith. His, Sir, was a presentation which informed this Chamber about the relevance of financing. His, Sir, was a presentation which

discussed certain aspects of the various sectors of our economy and the relevance which they have to these Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure.

I think, Sir, it is very important that from the outset, we recognise that these Estimates do not simply stand alone. We must also recognise that there are a number of programmes through various ministries, which these Estimates will make a reality.

Sir, on Monday afternoon, for some two and a half hours, we were treated to a presentation by the Opposition Democratic Labour Party's main spokesperson in this Chamber, which sought to give the impression that the Barbados, which we in the Government recognise and nurture, is a Barbados which is non-existent. In fact, Senator Stuart would have indicated in his presentation that he did not recognise the Barbados which the Honourable Leader of Government Business spoke about.

Sir, I listened to the contribution from Senator Stuart and the references he made to his not having an understanding of how we, as a Government can accomplish for Barbados our being a developed country by the year 2010. In fact, I remember some of the comments which Senator Stuart made. He said he was looking forward to the Barbados Labour Party seeing Barbados as a society and not simply as an economy. He said that is where the divide is to be found and where the battle will be. He said that we are concentrating on the issue of growth as opposed to development.

Mr. President, that would seem to suggest that there is necessarily a conflict between the economy or economics and society. It would seem to suggest, Sir, that there is a conflict between economic growth and development but that is not the case...

Senate 12, sequence 110, 12:00:14

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SENATOR R. W. GRANT: Sir, you can develop programmes and you can have policies which would encourage growth and also accommodate development. I want us to recognise very clearly that the economic policies which a government pursues will have an impact on the society.

Sir, this Barbados Labour Party Government has put in place a number of wonderful programmes such as EduTech which seeks to ensure that our young people, the future of this country, would have the capacity and the ability to function in an information age and to make sure that Barbados in the future is relevant. Through the Ministry of Social Transformation we have programmes in

place for the eradication of poverty and for the protection of the vulnerable and the disadvantaged in our society.

We also restored to the public servants of this country the 8 per cent cut in salary which was taken from them. I want us to reflect on the fact that during the Administration of 1991-1994, we saw a lot of social problems in this country because of the policies instituted by the then Democratic Labour Party Government.

Sir, I heard Senator Lowe speak about difficulties and challenges. We exist in a society where everyone has the right to speak and everyone has the right to communicate how they feel on any particular issue. Nothing is wrong with that. There would be times when there are disagreements and there would be times when there will be different points of views, nothing is wrong with that either. However, we have not seen during the period of 1994 until now the level of disruption in the society which existed when the Democratic Labour Party was administering the affairs of this country.

Sir, we put in place incentives for small businesses through the Small Business Development Act. We made \$5 million available through an Innovation Fund. The point I am making is that it must never ever be accepted that there must be a divide between focussing on the economy and ensuring that you have a good, desirable and sustainable society.

Mr. President, Senator Stuart is an attorney-at-law and I am sure that any client he represents when he goes before the judicial officer that he argues on points of law. Sir, if you are seeking to ensure by your governance that you provide for growth and development for your people you must, by necessity, focus on the economy. That is the only way that it can be done, so to seek to give the impression that we in this Barbados Labour Party are trying to cause a divide, is really wrong.

Sir, when I listened to Senator Stuart I remember something that I had read which talked about a person going into a dark cellar at midnight with no light looking for a black cat which was not there. I remember those things that I heard and I always use the aspects that are relevant.

The point I am making is that Senator Stuart in his submission was really groping in the dark seeking to talk about issues which really were not there. We want the Opposition in this Chamber to be able to say how they would provide for the upliftment and the development of the people of this country, but Senator Stuart indicated that his task is not to be here to tell the Government what to do.

Sir, those in the Democratic Labour Party often talk about the Right Excellent Errol Walton Barrow and I just

want to say something to Senator Stuart. In 1985 at the 30th Annual Conference of the Democratic Labour Party when the late Right Excellent Errol Barrow was President, he indicated that the conference document which he had contained a number of policies with respect to how the Democratic Labour Party would have administered the affairs of Government.

He said that there is a school of thought which believes that you should not share with the people policies and programmes and he said that is a school to which he has never enrolled. He said that he did not believe that you should spring policies and talk about programmes to a surprise electorate.

Sir, I only mention that because the Democratic Labour Party will say one thing and talk about one set of values, but they will do something else. They should come to the table, bring programmes and let us discuss the issues. They should come and let us talk about it and tell us how they would facilitate through the Estimates by ensuring the people of Barbados that their lives are better. That is what we want to talk about. We want to deal with issues, we want to deal with programmes and we want to engage the Opposition intellectually in order to ensure that Barbados is a better place for all.

Mr. President, I believe that by providing greater economic opportunities there can be significant improvements in the quality of life of the people. Yes, we will focus on the economy, which is something we know to do well, and by focussing on the economy we are able to make the lives of Barbadians better. I know Senator Stuart well. He is my good friend. I know when he speaks from his mouth and when he speaks from his heart. Senate 12 Sequence 111

12.10 p.m.

Wednesday, March 24, 2004

SENATOR R. W. GRANT: Mr. President, I am telling you that he too must recognise that the 8 per cent cut, the low foreign exchange reserves caused by the fact that there was a lost of confidence in the Administration of this country during 1991 and 1994, and the massive job layoffs, all had a severe negative impact on the society. Therefore, never let it be said that this Barbados Labour Party Administration will seek to demonstrate that there is a conflict between the economy and the society or between growth and development.

Mr. President, I heard Senator Lowe speaking about EduTech and about the fact that we have allocated a lot of money and much is not happening with EduTech. I want to remind Senator Lowe and to say to Members of this Honourable Chamber, that today we exist in a world where

we need to be at the forefront of technology, where we need to ensure that all of our countrymen are able to function in an information age. That is part of the reason why we have sought to liberalise the telecommunication sector.

Senator Stuart did say that during a previous debate I had made reference to the Fair Trading Commission and to the fact that exclusive telecommunication licences provided to Cable and Wireless for the provision of domestic and international telecommunication services were not given for the 10 years, as was the custom, but for 20 years. It is a fact that today we are involved in the liberalisation of the telecommunication sector because of the manner in which the Democratic Labour Party had functioned.

Sir, I believe it is very important to present facts and the Education Sector Enhancement Programme (EduTech) is a revolutionary approach to ensuring that we provide the tools for our young people and that we are able to allow them to function properly and to engage in a new economy.

Sir, the reality is that in seeking to prepare schools for EduTech, it was recognised that there needed to be significant refurbishment. Therefore, up to 1999 the physical facilities of 19 primary schools were upgraded. Civil works were completed at 12 primary schools and these schools were prepared for this technology. Sir, new primary schools such as the Hilda Skeene Primary, the Ignatius Byer Primary, All Saint's Primary and the St. Christopher's Boys' Primary were constructed. The Lester Vaughan Primary School was refurbished.

Sir, I need to ensure that as soon as I deliver these facts, Senator Lowe would be able to repeat them to his colleagues. Sir, \$30 million has been allocated in these Estimates for EduTech and a number of programmes have been identified for 2004-2005. Those programmes involve expanding the flexible learning programme, ensuring that we are able, through the Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic, to cater in the short-term because we are looking to a University College, which will be a reality. We would be able, through a website and other facilities, to cater to the students 16 years and over both in technical and academic subjects, to train them for the world of work.

Mr. President, I heard Senator the Very Reverend Harold Crichlow speaking to values in this society and one of the things which we are doing is to ensure that as we provide the technology for our young people, that we do not allow them to have access to the type of material which is likely to corrupt their minds.

Sir, between 2003-2004, twenty-one schools were further outfitted for EduTech, and civil works and

technology were installed and staff trained on an ongoing curriculum reform programme.

Mr. President, as a country, we have done well because we have been able to enhance that one resource, which is our human resource, and as we look to the future with all of the challenges which it will bring, we have to ensure that our people are able to function and to operate in the new global environment. Therefore, EduTech is very important, relevant, and we will see the gains in the very near future.

Mr. President, last week I was watching a CNN News report and there was a caption at the bottom of the screen which stated that global tourism is expected to increase slightly after the September 11, 2001, SARS and wars. Sir, immediately I started to think of our tourism sector and of the challenges which we faced with respect to SARS and the terrorist attacks that have occurred in other parts of the world, and I thought to myself that we have done remarkably well.

Sir, I heard the last speaker talking about the tourism sector and to the fact that it is a sector that if there are other terrorist attacks, could have a severe negative impact on our economy.

12.20 p.m.

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SENATOR R.W. GRANT: Sir, I want to say to all Honourable Senators that you can feel confident that the leadership of this country and the Barbados Labour Party will ensure that we take protective measures to safeguard our tourism sector and you do not need to think too far back because after the terrorist attack in 2001, many countries within the Caribbean faced significant challenges. Many countries within the Caribbean up to this present time are not able to rebound from the impact of September 11th, SARS and the like.

What has happened in Barbados? The Government of Barbados speedily put a programme in place to ensure that we were able to sustain the tourism sector. Last year, 1,157,159 visitors came to Barbados, an increase of 7.5 per cent. Sir, this is the highest number of visitors in the history of this country. Mr. President, 626,000 cruise passengers were included in that figure. The expenditure from tourism was \$1.5 billion, the highest ever in the history of this country. I think that the Government should be congratulated for that.

Sir, I need to speak about these things because it must be clearly understood that tourism is our lifeblood and it is significant to this economy and we must take the necessary steps to ensure that we safeguard this sector. It

must be interpreted that we still have a lot of work to do but we also have to ensure that we talk about the successes that we had.

Mr. President, during the last year Barbados received numerous awards and I wish to talk about a few of them. Barbados's airport was adjudged the best in the region.

The Barbados Tourism Authority was awarded a trophy for being the best marketing agency of its kind. In addition to that, this small country, Barbados, sought to have one of the retired British Concorde to be placed here and, as all of us know, we were able to achieve this at no cost to Barbados.

There were other people in other places who said that we should not pursue that. There were also people who could not understand why we ensured that one of the Concorde aircraft is based in Barbados. This was done so that we could differentiate our attractions and Barbados as the premier tourism destination in the Caribbean. Sir, that was not all.

During the last year we saw a number of airlines increasing flights to Barbados to facilitate the airlift capacity. We saw a new airline, Continental Airways, coming out of Newark, New Jersey. British Airways increased their flights to Barbados 11 weekly, Virgin Atlantic increased their flights to Barbados to eight weekly and Air Canada increased their flights from Montreal and Toronto to Barbados.

Sir, for the first time since 1988, Condor has a yearly service to Barbados from Frankfurt, Germany. The US Airways, out of Philadelphia, even though they did not increase their service to Barbados, for the most part they used an A340 120-seat aircraft as opposed to the 130-seat A319 aircraft that was used previously.

The point is, we have been able, not only to ensure that we have additional seat capacity coming into Barbados, we have been able to ensure that we are putting passengers on those aircraft, and I am going to get to that shortly. There is an individual who shall remain nameless, I believe associated with the Democratic Labour Party, who constantly seeks to give the Barbados Tourism Authority a lot of negative talk and who would want to suggest that additional flights coming to Barbados have not really been beneficial to us.

Sir, recently, I was at a function hosted by a company called "Gold Medal Travel". This is a company based in London which deals with promotional and marketing aspects relating to tourism. While at that function, there was a ten-minute video presentation which looked at various destinations throughout the globe that had the potential for growth in tourism and that would be at the

forefront in tourism. During the presentation they spoke about Dubai, India and China. I was extremely happy when they spoke about Barbados. Let us understand that there are people within the international communities who are watching us and taking note of what we are doing and the successes that we are getting.

Sir, we anticipate that in the coming year we will have a 5 per cent growth in tourism arrivals. These Estimates provide for the continued growth within tourism by facilitating infrastructural development, human resource development, expansion in air services, by having continued capital investment, marketing and promotion of Barbados as a premier tourism destination.

12.30 p.m.

Sequence 113

Wednesday, March 24, 2004

SENATOR R.W. GRANT: Sir, the Barbados Tourism Authority will continue to focus on market and promotion of this country, over the next year. Barbadians can expect that during the next financial year, there will likely to be additional airlines coming out of the United States of America (USA), England, Europe and Africa. Emphasis will not only be placed on ensuring that we bring new airlines, but on stimulating demand to fill the seats.

We will be pursuing an aggressive strategy to ensure that we bring tourists here and that we enhance and strengthen the relationship between tourism and the other sectors of the economy. We would not wish, Sir, to have a situation where tourism alone continually is benefitting. We will be strengthening the linkages, already it has started. I will speak about it later.

Sir, a critical success factor within tourism is international transport. In 2003, passenger arrivals out of Europe increased by 54 per cent. There was a 34 per cent increase in airline seat capacity. Out of the U.K. arrivals increased by 12 per cent. There was a 13 per cent increase in seat capacity. Out of the U.S.A. tourist arrivals increased by 2 per cent. There was a 2 per cent increase in seat capacity.

The point has to be made that, yes, when you bring additional airlines into your country, it may necessarily take some time through your marketing efforts, depending on the time at which the airlines come to fill the seats, but the point is the statistics show that for the large part, we are filling the seats coming into Barbados.

Sir, I need to tell you that the Ministry of Tourism and International Transport will be pursuing a number of air service agreements during this coming financial year. It

has been determined that we will be working through CARICOM to have an Open Skies' Agreement with the USA, essentially providing for airlines here to land at any point within the USA, and vice versa, within CARICOM.

During the next financial year, we will be seeking to conclude air service agreements with South Africa, Italy, Brazil and Panama. We are ensuring, Sir, that we do not rest on our laurels and become complacent with the successes that we have had thus far. I mentioned earlier that the Grantley Adams International Airport was awarded for being the best airport in the region.

I also mentioned that the Grantley Adams International Airport, as you know, is now going through expansion work and I want to say at this time that, yes, there has been some inconvenience, because there are demolition and construction, and the airport is being expanded at a time when it is still being utilised.

I want, Sir, to thank the travelling public, tourists, business persons who would have been here for their patience in this regard. The expansion work taking place at the Grantley Adams International Airport is to ensure that our airport continues to be the hub for the eastern Caribbean region, both in passenger and cargo business, as well as for South America.

Sir, I talked about the fact that we are going through expansion work. I talked about the fact that we are bringing in additional airlines. I must mention that in addition to those increased numbers in tourists that I talked about, you will recall Senator Newton saying yesterday that the Grantley Adams International Airport was designed for a carrying capacity of 800 passengers per hour at a peak time. I must tell you, Sir, that in addition to that, we have on some days another 2 000 passengers coming through the Grantley Adams International Airport, both inbound and outbound with respect to home-porting.

Home-porting is business, Sir, that many countries within the Caribbean are seeking to be involved and there are those who have questioned the decision of the Government to aggressively pursue the home-porting business. I want to say, Sir, that home-porting allows entities within our country to have an opportunity to participate further in the cruise tourism sector.

There are companies in Barbados which provide juice products to cruise ships. There are individuals who provide engineering assistance to cruise ships. There are also services done by doctors, dentists, taxi operators, tour operators and we will be seeking to build and to enhance that particular type of business.

Sir, we have given a commitment that we will be establishing a separate facility to deal with light cruise

operations, because we do not wish to put additional pressure on the Grantley Adams International Airport.

Sir, after September 11th 2001, and you know that security became the buzz word and I would want to touch later on aspects of security. I feel that I must tell you at this time that Grantley Adams International Airport provided a new security system which is now presently being installed to allow us to have improved security lighting, CC TV and monitoring, security communications and a security control post, and will allow that there is a control system for all access points of the airport.

We are taking security very seriously both at the Grantley Adams International Airport as well as at the Bridgetown Port. Maybe, at this time, I should also speak to the security at the Bridgetown port. Sir, there is a code facilitated through the international maritime organisation which requires, and it is a mandatory code.

Senate 12, sequence 114, 12:40:14

Wednesday, March 24, 2004

SENATOR R. W. GRANT: Sir, at the 22nd International Maritime Organisational Assembly a Resolution was adopted which sought to review the procedures with respect to acts of terrorism. Subsequent to that there was a diplomatic conference in December 2002. The objective of that Conference was to look at mandatory maritime security requirements. Coming out of that Conference was an amendment to the International Convention on the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS) which brought into effect the International Ship and Port Security Code (ISPS).

Under the International Maritime Organisation (IMO), Part A of that code is mandatory and Part B is not. As you know, Sir, the United States of America has the United States of America Maritime Transportation Security Act which focusses on security.

Sir, there are provisions in these Estimates to ensure that we properly deal with aspects of security. I talked about security because security can very well be used as a barrier to business activity. I heard the Honourable Minister of Commerce, Senator Eastmond, as well as Senator Fields speaking about non-tariff barriers yesterday. If we are not able to have proper security measures in place, we are likely to realise that the activity of engaging in cruise tourism and even in land-based tourism, because the tourists coming here for land-based tourism have to fly, so we have to make sure that we have our security in place.

I am very happy to report to you, Sir, that this ISPS code is expected to come into operation from July 1 and that we are preceding diligently in ensuring that we will

have all of our measures in place by that time, so we are not taking any chances. We are also working very closely with our CARICOM partners because I made the point in this Chamber previously that no one destination can make an itinerary.

I believe it is the United States of America Maritime Security Act which speaks to the fact that if a cruise ship goes to any port within the last 10 ports which does not comply with the security requirements of that country, that they would not be allowed entry in the United States of America. That would have implications for us and so we are working with our CARICOM partners to ensure that all of us are at the required level of security to safeguard our important industry in this important sector.

Sir, the Estimates make provision for \$16.2 million to be allocated to the Airport Expansion Project. I am not going to go through all of the aspects of the Airport Expansion Project because I believe that time may be against me, but I want to say that it involves the rehabilitation and expansion of the existing passenger terminal, the construction of a new arrivals terminal and the replacement of sewerage and fire protection facilities.

As you know, Sir, the new departures terminal is fully operational. I am happy to report that we are doing well and we are getting very, very good compliments. Sir, everyone I meet who has utilised the new departure area congratulates this Government for what we have done. We even get some congratulations from the Opposition side, which is good.

We are constructing a new arrivals terminal which we expect will be completed this year. We expect very shortly that we will be able to have another aspect of the Airport Expansion Project in operation, that is, the new airlines operations counters, part of what would be the full airlines operations area. We are doing it in phases and so we expect very shortly to have utilisation of that area. We are going to hoard off another section and ensure that we facilitate the work there as well to have that area properly constructed.

We are utilising the system known as the CUTE system where now no airline will be restricted to one place. We are ensuring that we properly, efficiently and effectively utilise the resources which we have. This CUTE system will allow airlines to operate in any area, and we have invested heavily in that. We are constructing a water reclamation facility, which simply means that it would be a sewerage plant. We are ensuring that we do not put pressure on the water reserves we have here and that we are utilising.

Sir, provision is also made with respect to having the parameter of the Grantley Adams International Airport

extended. We have previously constructed the Fairy Valley Road and we are ensuring that there is construction and realignment for the Parish Land Road. There would be acquisitions in the financial year of property for the relocation of residents in the environs. Sir, you would recognise as well that there is provision in the Estimates for the construction of a new airport fire station. As I said previously, we have to ensure, through the Grantley Adams International Airport Incorporated, that we properly utilise and allocate all of the resources that we have. One of the challenges that we face at the Airport relates to the parking of aeroplanes.

If you go to the Grantley Adams International Airport any Saturday you would see many aeroplanes on the ground. You would see 3 British Airways, 3 Virgin Atlantics, Air Canada, BWIA, and Air Jamaica aeroplanes. We will be constructing a new fire station and we would be looking at properly allocating the land which we have to ensure that we could properly develop and properly grow the airport facilities in the future.

Sir, the arrivals terminal would have proper facilities and enhanced facilities for Customs, Immigration, the Port, for health and for offices of all Government departments operating in the Airport. They will have new extended inbound duty-free shopping and location for tour operators.

Sir, the new departure lounge which is able to facilitate some 2 000 passengers at peak time is in use.

Senate 12 Sequence 115

12.50 p.m.

Wednesday, March 24, 2004

SENATOR R. W. GRANT: Mr. President, yesterday Senator Newton talked about washroom facilities and maintenance and we are placing greater emphasis on that. Sir, when the expansion project is completed, the number of washrooms available at present in the departure lounge is six in one area and six in the other area. Sir, the washrooms which previously would have been in the old departure area, as well as the washrooms which are in the existing arrivals area, will all be part of the new departures lounge.

Mr. President, when we looked at the expansion of the Airport, we sought to ensure that the facilities would be adequate for 2015. We are growing rapidly because the policies that we are pursuing are working well. We may have to look at it before 2015 but be that as it may, one can rest assured that for the next few years, it will be more than adequate.

Mr. President, I did indicate that the International Civil Aviation's Regulation requires that we have a clear and safe zone for aircraft coming into the country. That is why of necessity, we have to expand and adjust the perimeters of the Airport.

I agree that we need to ensure that we can and that we do properly maintain the facilities at the Airport. During the Estimates of 2003-2004, as well as the Estimates of 2004--2005, there is provision for resurfacing and widening of the runway shoulders. That is to ensure that our facilities are such that we can properly provide for aircraft coming into our country.

In fact, one would notice that in the Estimates, there is provision to procure equipment, to be able to constantly check the runway because we are moving to higher heights and are taking every precaution to make sure that we safeguard our valued and valuable sector.

Mr. President, I would not want to finish without making some reference to the Bridgetown Port and the expansion work that will be taking place there. While we are focussing on bringing more airlines into Barbados, we are also focussing on bringing more cruise ships to Barbados. Therefore, we will be providing a new cruise pier which would allow us berthing facilities for two additional mega ships.

Sir, on a recent business travel, as I always do, I went on the Internet and read the Nation Newspaper and I saw that on the Tuesday it was said that we were expecting six cruise ships to Barbados. I was at a Sea Trade Convention where we were seeking to ensure that we encourage more cruise operators to our shores. Sir, at the Barbados booth, with the assistance of our partners, we were able to display photographs of the Bridgetown Port, with the ships being in port.

The new cruise pier will not only facilitate cruise ships but will also ensure greater employment for our taxi operators, more duty-free shops and that we involve more Barbadians.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Grant, your time will expire in two minutes.

SENATOR R. W. GRANT: Sir, I need to tell you about what is happening in the Ministry of Tourism and International Transport. I need to tell you that the Barbados Tourism Investment Incorporation (BTII) is ensuring that it enhances the tourism product. This is a matured tourism destination and work has been going on in St. Laurence Gap.

The Barbados Tourism Investment Incorporation (BTII) has dealt with the restoration of the Old Town Hall.

I need to tell you that the new Tourism Development Act has been able to facilitate private sector capital investment of \$66.7 million, through the expansion and upgrade to hotels and restaurants, villas and new tourism facilities.

I need to tell you about a private jet centre at the Grantley Adams International Airport. Sir, I need to tell you that we are working continuously to ensure that we utilise programmes such as Tourism Education Awareness and Me (TEAM), to involve persons. I need to tell you that through the Heart of Barbados Programme, we are utilising and working with communities to ensure that more communities are involved.

Sir, I would want to finish on this note. I would want to tell you that unlike some of my colleagues from the Other Side in this Chamber, we believe that by getting the economics right and by focussing on the economy, we can create a better society.

Sir, I am confident, as all of my honourable colleagues are, that these Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure, facilitated through the programmes that we provide, will ensure every Bajan a winner.

I am obliged to you.

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 2.00 p.m.

The question that the Sitting do now suspend until 2.00 p.m. was put to the Senate and agreed to. Mr. PRESIDENT suspended the Sitting accordingly.

12.57 p.m.

Wednesday, March 24, 2004

RESUMPTION

Mr. PRESIDENT: This Sitting is resumed. Senator Griffith.

SENATOR the Hon. E.R. GRIFFITH: Mr. President, I wish to thank Honourable Senators for their constructive contributions which were made over the last two-and-a-half days as we discussed the Government's Budget for the fiscal year 2004-2005.

There are a few issues which I feel compelled to respond to, starting, of course, with the issue raised by Senator Stuart when, in his disappointment, he was not able to criticise the Government over the management of the fiscal affairs of the country, that the deficit had been

reached well within the target set by the Government, sought to give the impression that there is no need for focussing on the fiscal management of the country and somehow there is a disconnect between the economic indicators and the society.

I know that Senator Stuart does not believe that because he knows that if there is no growth taking place in a country, there is nothing to distribute and the social and other programmes which are necessary for the advancement of the country cannot be implemented, so, I am sure that he was not serious with his statement that we were talking about things in the abstract. They are real. Sir, if he wants to discover how real there are, let the economy go into a serious recession and then, I am sure that Senator Stuart would speak about the reality that would have existed in that situation.

Mr. President, I first turn my attention to the statements with reference to those comments mentioned in the Auditor-General's Report. Let me say for the record that this Government has nothing to hide in relation to matters pertaining to the St. Leonard's School. In fact, if you read the Auditor-General's Report carefully, you would discover that it was not one of his routine audits that led to these disclosures.

It was at the request of the Ministry of Finance to the Auditor-General to conduct a special audit. That is how these matters were brought to the fore. The Government has nothing to hide because nobody in the Government instructed anybody on that project to breach the Rules as described by the Auditor General, and certainly nobody in the Government condones that kind of behaviour.

Sir, it is a fact that because of the system of governance which we have, that the Government got the blame. That is not because anybody in this Administration condones those things. My advice to those persons who are heads of departments and accounting officers, that those positions do not only carry salaries, they carry responsibilities.

I made that point abundantly clear in my introductory speech when I said that there is no room for mismanagement of the kinds described by the Auditor-General and I trust that those persons who are responsible for that the grave mismanagement, have taken heed and that corrective measures will be put in place by the appropriate Ministry to make sure that there are no recurrences of this situation and that those persons whenever they are asked to account for their action or lack of action, will be dealt with appropriately.

It is not for me, at this moment, to decide what consequences they will bear. The matter is on the agenda of the Public Accounts Committee and that Committee will

do its investigation. I will repeat that if persons are engaged by the Government to manage projects on their behalf, whether they are from the private or public sector, they have an obligation to do their job properly.

Sir, when I read the Auditor-General's Report I could only conclude that was not the case and in the appropriate place that matter will be dealt with.

Mr. President, as far as the issue raised regarding tenantry roads, I noted carefully Senator Collymore's remark that there is nothing new about building tenantry roads and that they were being built for decades, and I agree with him. Mr. President, nobody on this side is making any claim to doing anything novel when a road is built in a community that had no road.

Sir, what we are saying is, that since tenantry roads were being built for so long, we do not accept that today there are in excess of 600 communities with unpaved road accesses. We have pledged that during this term in office we will make sure that every community has a paved road.

Mr. President, it is not acceptable for us or anybody to say to those persons who live in communities without paved roads that it is nothing new about building tenantry roads and that was going on for decades. That does not deal with their problem.

Sir, two Saturdays ago I had the honour to officially open a tenantry road in a community and as I mingled among the members of that community, they told me many things. Some of them told me about the inconveniences and discomforts which they suffered for years but they told me other things. They started to draw to my attention the housing development that has started to take place in that community since the road was fixed. They also told me about other plans for that community.

Sir, Senator Collymore wants to know what the Rural Development Commission does besides building roads or fixing houses. The Rural Development Commission is the agency that has been given the mandate for rural development in this country. Rural development includes building roads, the installation of street lights and fixing houses. Those three things are only a part . . .

14.10 p.m.

Sequence 118

Wednesday, March 24, 2004

SENATOR Hon. E.R. GRIFFITH: Those three things are only a part of rural development. The Rural Development Commission is the agency that has the mandate to work with respective communities to ensure

that economic activities take place in those communities, so that we can have vibrant communities in this country, which is also the cause of the economic activity taking place there, cohesive communities.

Now, you may say that is something that any other agency would do. That is true, but the Rural Development Commission is the agency that has that mandate and that is what the Rural Development Commission does besides building roads.

When I went to that community two Saturdays ago, some of the things we spoke about, as I moved through the crowd, included the activities that some of them were planning to do now that they have a road. I visited some farmers in Ealing Park not long ago and Senator Lowe would tell you what the issue is with them. They have the land but when the rain falls, they cannot have access to their land to move their produce anywhere. It is not simply a question of just building a tenantry road. There are purposes behind that and the intention is to facilitate activities taking place in the communities.

The Rural Development Commission has three loan schemes that it uses in pursuit of that objective. It has a Livestock Development Fund, a Rural Enterprise Fund and a Fruit Orchard Development Fund and it lends money to these three schemes to any person in the rural communities.

When we speak about rural development, we are speaking about activities taking place in particular communities. We are not speaking about lending Mr. A from community B money to set up a business in another community. We are talking about developing an environment where people can work, live and play. If anyone wants to know what the Rural Development Commission does in that respect, visit some of the communities.

We held, not so long ago, Town Hall meetings across Barbados and met with various communities to hear from them what are the activities they want to get involved in their communities. We can share the information we collected, Senator Husbands knows that because she has been part of this exercise, and you will see the plans they have. People want to be involved in agriculture of one kind or another, planting food, or rearing animal.

Sir, that is not all. When we speak about a rural development, we do not only mean agriculture. People want to be in crafts, set up cottage industries and the Rural Development Commission works with those people to help them set up those businesses.

One of the activities that they pursue through the Small Business Association is training. You can look at the many training courses they have been conducting across

Barbados, preparing those people to manage the small businesses which they set up in their community.

Of course, they can borrow to set up elsewhere but the great emphasis is on development of economic activity within the community. That is what the Rural Development Commission is expected to do. That is what it is doing and that is what it will continue to do. Coming out of those Town Hall meetings which we held, we have a plan which we are now implementing.

Only yesterday morning when I was leaving the Ministry of Agriculture, I saw two young ladies at the door. They had not come to see me. They came to see another officer in the Ministry but I took the time to chat with them to ask them how far they had reached since we had the Town Hall meeting at Princess Margaret School and they came with a plan for the community of St. Philip where they live to do a range of activities and the Rural Development Commission has been working with them.

The Rural Development Commission is serious about rural development. As I said, this is more than fixing roads, installing street lights or repairing houses. Those three things are a critical part of rural development, because just as the farmers in Ealing Park require a road so that when the rain falls, they are able to move their produce in and out.

When I visited them, they raised another issue with me, which is one the things done by the Rural Development Commission. They raised with me a site from which they would be able to sell their produce and the Rural Development Commission does that as well. The Rural Development Commission sets up vending areas in communities so that people are able to sell what they have grown, without having to go to Bridgetown.

What is the reason for a farmer coming from Six Roads all the way to Bridgetown to sell produce, if he can set up his business somewhere in Six Roads or a more convenient area, so that is what the Rural Development Commission does, besides building roads, fixing houses and installing street lights. We think this is a very important mission they have to fulfill. If you doubt it, speak with any of those people who are now benefitting or better, those persons who expect to benefit and then you will see how important that is.

The issue, Mr. President, of recent job evaluations. I cannot say much about what happened in 1989. I was working in the public service then but I was not affected by it, except in a very strange way. I was a permanent secretary then, and at that time, they had two grades. Grade 2 and after working for a certain number of years, you went to Grade 1.

I never knew that there was any reference. Maybe, there was but I was not aware of any reference to the level of responsibility. I was Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Finance. This is the only place that I have been a Permanent Secretary. I never knew that I was at Grade 2 because it was felt that my level of responsibility said I should be at Grade 2 rather than Grade 1, or anybody had done any exercise to see what skill I should have had to be in that position and determined that those skills suggested that I should not be higher than Grade 2. I was at Grade 2 because they had Grade 2 and after a number of years, you moved to Grade 1.

Therefore, when the exercise came in 1989 and everybody was put at Grade 1, I had reached there, but what I would tell you, in the event of reaching there I had a very strange experience. This would tell you some of the ad hoc things that are done in the public service, even up to this day and I would speak about that in a little more detail when I speak about public sector reform.

Sir, I discovered that a gentleman who was appointed at Grade 2 the same day as me, I suddenly looked in the Official Gazette and saw that his appointment was back-dated. When I enquired what was the reason, I was told by the then CPO that he was going to reach retirement age before getting to Grade I, so it had been decided to back-date his appointment to when he started to act in the post.

I drew to the CPO's attention in a letter that I had been acting before him and my appointment should then be back-dated to when I started to act in my post and that if they do that I would have reached Grade I two years ago, and they owe me some money. I got a very nice letter at home which I had framed. The letter told me that the Governor-General, acting on the advice of the Public Service Commission, had denied my request.

Senate 12, sequence 119, 14:20:14

Wednesday, March 24, 2004

SENATOR the Hon. E. R. GRIFFITH: Do you want me to repeat that, Mr. President? A decision had been taken by certain persons to back-date a certain individual's appointment so that he could reach Grade 1 before he retired. I telephoned the Chief Personnel Officer who deals with personnel matters and he told me that the decision had been taken to backdate the appointment to when the gentleman started to act as Permanent Secretary.

I foolishly thought that the same thing would apply to me through natural justice, so I wrote the CPO, who on the telephone had agreed with me, asking for mine to be back-dated from the time I started to act. Up to now I have

the letter framed to show future generations of the way matters are done in the public service.

Mr. President, when it comes to anything even remotely associated with money or land, there is always a great dissatisfaction, so I would be surprised if there is an agreement with any evaluation exercise in the public service. The 1989 and the previous evaluation exercises, to my knowledge, were less transparent than this one. Certain people knew of them, but this is the first one I am aware of that such a wide range of people had any say in it. I am not talking about after the report is developed and then circulated. I am talking about helping to develop the criteria to determine.... These criteria include things like level of skills required, level of responsibility, training and the academic qualifications that are thought necessary to do the job and the extent to which you operate on your own. This was an attempt in a transparent way because a committee was set up which included representatives of the workers and other persons to try to come up with objective criteria. That does not mean that the exercise is flawless. It may still turn out that some people in presenting information would say that they do more than they do and some may not give all the necessary information. At the heart of all this, everybody wants to be at Grade 1, so if you are not at Grade 1, or if you were put at Grade 1 because somebody was your friend and decided to put your post at Grade 1...

Mr. President, I have seen things like that in the public service in my time and I have suffered from some of them. I remember well the time when I returned from studying in Glasgow and discovered that I had not only to revert to my substantive post, but I had to go on leave because in my absence a person who was 10 years my junior was put to act and when I returned I was told by the then CPO that he is a human and that he had become accustomed to the acting allowance and how would I expect him to revert.

I thanked him for letting me know that I was not human because I had reverted and I had to go on leave to accommodate that situation. Thanks to the Almighty, I have risen about those challenges and I would not support any system that would continue to allow those situations to exist.

Mr. President, when it comes to public sector reform I have my thoughts on it and in some instances they differ from those of a lot of people because the injustices which I suffered, I do not want to see inflicted on anybody. The four years I served as Head of the Civil Service, I was appalled at the kinds of situations that existed in the public service.

All of my life I did not know some of them existed. The one thing that I find unacceptable even up to today is

the fact that when decisions are made by the Public Service Commission and other people supercede people, sometimes without good reasons, they have no recourse except under the Administrative Justice Act to go to court and pay away what they do not have.

Mr. President, I believe that any reform of the public service has to take into account a number of things. Everybody focusses on what the individuals are to do. I focus on that too, but I say some other things such as you need to have in place a set of objective performance criteria. They do not have them now. At the end of every year somebody writes on a form which has a number of things on it such as attendance, punctuality and skills and you put an A. That is not done on the basis of any record that is kept over time or anything like that.

We have put in place a set of objective criteria that would measure the performance of people which they will know are being used to measure their performance and when they falter along the way someone would call them and tell them where they are falling short, how they could correct it and give them six months within which to correct the problem and when they fail, to call them back. With all of that, we are still going to have difficulties with the management of the public service.

Mr. President, I feel also that there is need for modular training in which people are trained to perform the jobs they are being asked to perform and not leave it to chance and then find fault with the quality of their service when you did not prepare them to do the job. I believe that has to be done. All those people who were responsible for managing the public service over the years could have done that.

I also feel that there must be a different approach to the issue of discipline in the public service so that when people falter after having been given a generous amount of opportunities to put themselves right, appropriate action could be taken against them. All the other issues in my view would fall in place when you do those things. Mr. President, that is as far as I would go on the issue of public sector reform.

Mr. President, I turn to look at the issue of supplementaries which Senator Chandler raised. I am sorry she is not here. Supplementaries come from time to time because of all sorts of reasons. Some may very well be genuine underestimations of the situation at the beginning, but all need not be as a result of that. Circumstances change over the period of the year. New shoes arrive.

Our system is one which does not permit variance, that is, if you have savings under item A but because of changed circumstances you have to expend more money under item B, so you cannot take funds from item A to

spend on item B, you have to come back to Parliament. Usually you do that by saying that you have savings here but you need additional funds there and the overall expenditure of the vote would remain unchanged.

The Ministry of Finance would agree to that with their eyes close once they hear that you would not be spending more. Simply because people come for supplementaries, does not mean that they are inefficient and incompetent. It is very easy sometimes to perceive that public servants are inefficient people, but I have found inefficient people wherever I went in the world.

Senate 12 Sequence 120

2.30 p.m.

Wednesday, March 24, 2004

SENATOR the Hon. E. R. GRIFFITH: Mr. President, in keeping with that feeling about public servants, when we were preparing for the changeover with the Y2K problem, I had chaired the committee which was preparing the public service for that changeover. Sir, there was not a day that I did not get a complaint from a former civil servant who had felt that the Civil Service had stopped since that person had left the service, or from a private sector person who felt that people in the public sector were incapable of dealing with it, unless they were given a contract.

This situation went on to that very day. When that day came, none of the chaos that they were foretelling came and the changeover came so smoothly that nobody knew there was any problem which might have been as a result of the changeover.

Mr. President, therefore, I am not one of those persons who feel that everything that happens in the public sector happens as a result of incompetence or inefficiency. I know there is some of that but from my experience, I do not believe that everything is like that.

Mr. President, the issue of statistics which Senator Chandler has raised is one with which we in the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development have begun to deal with. We have engaged a new statistician who has had much training at the Statistical Department and has started work collecting statistics. I am sure that in the very near future there would be a great change to the situation within the Ministry.

Mr. President, as far as the services to farmers are concerned, there is always room for improvement. Therefore, we in the Ministry are taking steps to ensure that we produce the best service for the farming community. Next week we are going to be launching our new and

updated website and all farmers will have access to it to research whatever information is necessary.

Mr. President, yesterday Senator Collymore made reference to what he heard two Prime Ministers say about success or otherwise at the Ministry of Agriculture. I lay no claim to any ideas behind anything that is happening in the agriculture sector. All I say is that the ideas which are now bearing fruit and will bear greater fruit in the future, are the ideas of the farmers. They are the persons who have the investment in the industry. I have simply met with them and with the officers and have discussed what were the problems they were experiencing, where they wanted to go, what difficulties they would have encountered, and how they think the Ministry could help them.

Mr. President, we in the Ministry of Agriculture operate on the basis that we have learnt from the lesson of those persons with the talent. We have no intention of hiding our talent in the bushes and using the excuse that we know the Lord. We intend to use our talent and leave the rest to the Master.

Mr. President, the issue of water is not whether or not the rain falls. When I visited Ealing Park, one of the issues that the farmers raised was an issue of which I was aware, that is, there is a large deposit of brackish water at Gibbons Boggs. I do not know if Senator Lowe knows that.

We in the Ministry have our views and have put them forward on how the shortage of water could be dealt with for the farming community. When I was resident in Geneva, at the request of the Ministry of Finance I went to Frankfurt to take part in a number of discussions. One of the discussions in which I became deliberately involved, was how water stressed countries were seeking to solve their water problems. We were talking about Arab countries, most of them almost desert, and we saw how they were solving their water problems by using desalination plants.

Mr. President, Senator Chandler is right. There is water all around us and at certain parts of the earth here too, for instance, at Gibbons Boggs. It is, in my view, that persons who are charged with the responsibility of water resources have taken the approach like that of the person who had the single talent and have kept putting notices out saying not to do certain things, as though Barbados must stop going forward. That is not something that we in the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development will accept.

Those persons can accept that if they want to but as far as the farming community is concerned, we have accepted that there are two issues with which we have to deal, which are the issue of a land use policy, as was dealt with by Senator Chandler, and the issue of water.

Mr. President, if the farming community is to do the things that they, the members of that community wish to do, and things that everybody expect them to do as we seek to lift agriculture to a new plateau and to increase its contribution to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), land has to be made available and the water issue has to be solved.

Mr. President, we are not saying that because we expect it to be done by somebody that we have put forward our proposals on how it could be done. I am, therefore, confident that it would be dealt with.

Sir, I am not the Minister responsible for water but if I had to deal with it, I would be able to solve it. I also know that there are members of the private sector who have produced plans to be able to solve it, and that very shortly it would be solved.

Mr. President, Senator Lowe was right when he spoke about stabilisation, about the fact that if one continues to stabilise the patient, at some time that patient would die. I was pleased to have seen in this case, that he was more advanced in his thinking than his colleague. That is exactly what I was saying when I pointed out that after the recession following September 11, 2001, the Government got involved to take up the slack that had resulted from the downturn and that Government had put extra spending in that area.

Mr. President, the emphasis then changes as soon as the economy returns to its growth path because the restructuring has started too. Sir, all of those issues I spoke about with reference to the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development have to do with restructuring, for example, the cotton industry, the sugar industry, the expansion of all the other sub sectors, and that is the position that this Government has taken.

Mr. President, it is not only happening in agriculture but in manufacture and in international business. If one would look at the Estimates, one would see that the provisions are there. Senator Husbands has spoken at length to the various measures that are being put in place to generate new small businesses. If one would read this document, when the Minister responsible for Economic Affairs presented his economic policies to Parliament, this is what he said:

“We have to lift our average real growth rate of economic output to between 3 per cent and 3.5 per cent and sustain that average rate over an extended period of time. To accomplish this, major changes have to be made to the sectoral composition of our Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and to the emphasis of our recent growth strategies with a view to creating a more balanced economic system.”

Mr. President, the point we are making, certainly from our small corner of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, is that a Barbados that is diversified in its economic base, is a stronger Barbados than one which is moving like a vehicle on one piston. We are a strong services sector, providing the driving force as the way forward.

2.40 p.m.

Wednesday, March 24, 2004

SENATOR the Hon. E.R. GRIFFITH: Mr. President, if by chance there is a faltering along the way in one sector - it is like a jet flying. If the jet has only one engine and it fails, we know what will happen. If the jet has two engines and one fails, it is likely to land somewhere before it falls from the air. This is the same thing with the economy.

Sir, the Estimates of Expenditure are constructed on that basis. Efforts are being made during the coming fiscal year to allow the respective sector of the economy to play their part. They all do not have to grow at the same pace.

Sir, in the agriculture sector we do not expect every sub-sector to grow at the same rate but we have taken the view that we would want to see growth in every sub-sector because we know that is stronger growth than having one sub-sector growing and the others are lagging. This is the same thing with the economy, so you are perfectly right Senator Lowe. We could have exchanged places.

Asides.

SENATOR the Hon. E.R. GRIFFITH: Mr. President, Senator Collymore raised the question of pensions and he raised it within the context that the Government, as part of its policy, was capping certain expenditure and he interpreted the issue of pension as one of them. If I understood him correctly, he might very well be suggesting that in a sense it was false budgeting because he somehow assumed that this capping, with reference to pensions, was done in order to keep the deficit down but I can tell him that was not the case.

The capping to which the document refers is in relation to the statutory bodies that receive funds from the Government and the objective is fairly straightforward. A number of those agencies now provide services and the fees that they charge for these services are no way near the cost of providing the service and there is scope for them to look at that.

The issue of pension, the revised Estimates for the current financial year, 2003-2004, is approximately \$136 million. The provision for 2004-2005 is \$127 million, so there is a difference of \$9 million. The Senator was correct

when he said that the bulk of that expenditure is made up of two items, the retiring benefits and other benefits. One is statutory and the other is not. If it becomes necessary to provide additional pensions, the additional amount can be provided without coming back to Parliament. That is correct.

Mr. President, this is an Estimates made up after persons have tried to work out how many persons are likely to retire in the year. They may be right or wrong. In this day and age there are many people in the public service who do not wait until retirement age to leave. There are some persons who are required under the existing legislation to retire at the age of 60.

Sir, one can assume that all of those persons will retire at age 60. This information can be achieved by checking the personnel records to determine those persons who would reach the age of 60 in the coming fiscal year. You cannot determine how many of the large number of public servants will decide to leave if they are offered better jobs, so, you may or may not be correct.

Sir, let us assume that this is incorrect and that the expenditure will be \$136 million, the same as last year. Take that as a percentage of the expected Gross Domestic Product of approximately \$5.63 billion and you will see that it amounts to 0.14 per cent and you add that to 2.7 per cent and you get 2.8 per cent.

Mr. President, this is an estimated deficit to start with but let us assume that nothing will change between now and March 13, 2004, and the deficit comes out at 2.8 per cent of the Gross Domestic Product, Barbados is not going to go into a crisis over that but, also accept that persons are managing the situation.

Sir, if perchance the pensions went up to that and you had to add 0.14 per cent to 2.7 per cent, it is here where you will make adjustments. It reminds me of a gentleman who was a Minister, when I worked in the Ministry of Finance, and I had reasons from time to time to advise that he should not be given some of the money he was asking for and I told him why we had to keep the expenditure within certain limits.

At the end of the year when I came down to Parliament, during exercises like this, and the deficit came out to where we wanted it to come out, he would come to me and say: "You see, there was no crisis, everything came out well," but he never stopped to remember that we were managing the situation and the deficit did not come out by accident.

Sir, the point that I am making is, it is very farfetched for anyone to assume that if we want to keep a deficit at 2.6 per cent, that we would have to cap pensions

and reduce them by \$9 million in order to do that. I would leave that where it is.

I thank you.

Mr. President, I will briefly touch on some matters specific to agriculture that I did not get the chance to speak about. For example, the proposed plan for the Scotland District which, in our scheme of things, is a very important plan. The Scotland District, as you know, represents 1/7 of the land mass of this country. It is an area where there are peculiar challenges, instability in the soil.

Over the years, the Soil Conservation Unit has done an exceedingly wonderful job in trying to stabilise the land in that area. Some months ago when I visited the Scotland District with members of staff of the Unit, the Chairman of the Board of the Scotland District worked in that Unit many years ago. As we visited the area in Sedge Pond, he stood with pride and pointed out to me areas which were unstable in the 1960s, when he worked there, that area now standing firm with a lot of vegetation and so on.

Mr. President, it is our view that is too large a portion of the country to be left unattended and to be allowed to slip away. Therefore, we have devised a plan to develop that area, not only to keep the land stable but to add to the food production of the country, remembering, of course, that we have set ourselves three objectives in the Ministry of Agriculture.

14.50 p.m.

Sequence 122

Wednesday, March 24, 2004

SENATOR the Hon. E.R. GRIFFITH: 1. To increase the contribution of the sector to the Gross Domestic Product of the country.

2. To safeguard our food as far as possible.

3. To reduce the food import bill in the process.

Our approach to agriculture is one where we are trying to build an industry which has backward and forward linkages with other parts of the economy and I will give you some examples.

When I visited a number of the producers of cut flowers, and they told me that at the present moment, they sell all of the flowers they produce to hotels, with a few exceptions which they sell to churches. This is what we mean when we talk about building linkages with other sectors of the economy. The hotel product gets some of its value from an output of the agricultural industry, namely, in this case, the horticultural industry. If the horticultural

industry in Barbados goes under, for whatever reason, the hotel will then have to import flowers to beautify their rooms. If we keep the horticultural industry going well, it is able then to make a contribution to tourism.

The black belly lamb is another output from the agricultural sector into the hotel sector, but manufacturing as well. We are talking about agro-processing as one of the ways of solving the problems, so that is a linkage with the manufacturing sector.

If we speak about the distributive trade sector, as the agricultural sector expands, it has to take more inputs from the distributive trade sector, so that is another linkage.

Sir, all three sectors will benefit from an expansion in agriculture and vice versa, they will suffer from a contraction in agriculture as well.

Sir, if agriculture expands, other sectors of the economy with which we build linkages, will expand. In the Scotland District, we are doing two things besides stabilising the land. We are speaking here about a number of projects. Some of them have already started. There will be the planting of forest trees at Morgan Lewis, which has started. These forest trees will eventually create the opportunity for people who are interested in trails as well. We are also planting, as part of that programme, a number of fruit trees. Those fruit trees, in due course, will produce fruit that can be used elsewhere.

When I met with the officials of the Pine Hill Dairy and spoke with them about the possibility of this project coming to fruition in the Scotland District and fruit being available for making pulp to go into the making of juice, they gave me a list of the kind of fruit they would be willing to take. They also indicated to me their willingness to work with the farmers to bring a project like that to fruition.

We are not necessarily talking about large processing units. We are talking about cottage industries because this is part of rural development as well. We are talking about creating activities in the Scotland District so that the people who are living there can get involved in activities within their respective districts and they do not have to move out to live elsewhere. This Scotland District Project is a very important project for them as well. There is much more about it but I will not go into that at the moment.

Mr. President, there is the issue of the Sustainable Development Agricultural Development Bill. We now have the outline of that Bill, and we are in the process of preparing the policy document that will lead to the development of the necessary legislation. We will be setting out in that Bill issues such as the water use,

including the saving of water by using drip irrigation and other devices that would save water and still allow the farmers to do what they want. There is also the issue of land use and many other things in that Bill on which we are working.

Mr. President, I have touched quickly on some of the issues raised by Senator Stuart in relation to the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Education, particularly the one where he spoke about the need for careful attention to diet and exercise.

I would just like to let him know that the points he made are well taken and they are being acted on, even now. If he takes a look at the programmes for the Nutrition Centre, they would discover that they have been doing programmes like that for quite a while. A visit to some of the polyclinics will also show that there is emphasis on diet, especially when dealing with persons who are already affected by some of those problems to which he referred, but also, trying to get others to avoid reaching that stage. Maybe, there is need for expansion, but that is okay then.

Sir, the issue of solid waste which was raised by Senator Collymore, if you look at the Estimates for the Ministry of Health, Sub Programme 373, under Structures, \$4.3 million, the note reads as follows:

“Provide for the physical facilities to be constructed during 2004-2005,”

Sir, the activities which are going to be there, have to do with construction of the waste transfer station, combustion facility, bulky waste, disposable facility, chemical waste storage facility and so on. There is already provision for that and there is also a provision of \$1.4 million for professional services.

Mr. President, I currently chair a sub committee of Cabinet which is dealing with issues related to this project, the terms of reference for the consultants and other people, so this is a matter that is being dealt with at the moment.

Mr. President, I have been overtaken by time. I will therefore conclude by saying that I am sure that in spite of the queries which had been raised, the Honourable Senators support the Government's budget for the year. My advice, Mr. President, is that the Speaker of the House has certified the Bill as a money Bill, therefore, it is not necessary for us to go into Committee to consider it further.

I therefore beg 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 Bill was read a third time and passed and cited as the Appropriation Act, 2004.

Senate 12, sequence 123, 15:00:14

Wednesday, March 24, 2004

ORDER NO. 2 – RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE GUARANTEE BY THE GOVERNMENT OF THE PAYMENT BY NEEDHAM'S POINT HOLDINGS LIMITED OF COST OVER-RUNS WITH RESPECT TO THE CONSTRUCTION OF A RESORT HOTEL TO AN AMOUNT NOT EXCEEDING

US\$10 613 732.20; AND THE PAYMENT OF DEBT SERVICE TO AN AMOUNT NOT EXCEEDING US\$7 MILLION ANNUALLY

SENATOR the Hon. E. R. GRIFFITH: Mr. President, this Resolution before us is as the result of a request by the financing agencies which are funding the construction of the Hilton Hotel. As you know the estimated total cost of this project is US\$106.1 million and it is being funded by a number of commercial banks, by the Caribbean Development Bank, the National Insurance Board, the Hilton Hotel and the Government of Barbados.

The commercial banks as well as the Caribbean Development Bank have made a request to the Government that it should provide a guarantee to deal with any cost over-runs up to 10 per cent of the project. This is just a measure to be put in place in the event that this should occur.

Similarly with the debt, the Caribbean Development Bank and others have asked the Government to provide a guarantee that in the event there is some likelihood of a default, that the Government would guarantee the repayment of the debt as well. Mr. President, these are just precautionary measures and therefore I would ask Honourable Senators to agree to the Resolution.

I therefore beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

SENATOR F. J. STUART: Mr. President, in light of the explanation given by the Honourable Leader of Government Business, there is really no need to detain the Senate on this issue. When I read the Resolution, I was under the impression that there have, in fact, been cost over-runs, but the explanation has clarified the issue for me so there is no longer any misunderstanding on my part. We on this side understand that if it is a requirement of the lending agencies that it is not something from which the Government can walk away and therefore the Resolution has our support.

I am obliged to you, Sir.

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

ORDER NO. 3 – RESOLUTION TO APPROVE IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 5 OF THE LAND ACQUISITION ACT, CAP. 228, THE COMPULSORY ACQUISITION BY THE CROWN OF PARCELS OF LAND SITUATE AT DRAX HALL GREEN IN THE PARISH OF ST. GEORGE IN THIS ISLAND FOR THE PUBLIC PURPOSES OF HOUSING DEVELOPMENT AND RECREATION

SENATOR the Hon. E. R. GRIFFITH: Mr. President, this Resolution deals with the acquisition of two parcels of land amounting to 5.89 hectares at Drax Hall Green, St. George. The first part of the land is to be used for housing development and the second part is to be used for recreational facilities.

Mr. President, during the past two and a half days there was some discussion about the need for housing lots and for the construction of houses. This Resolution for the parcels of land at Drax Hall Green is an effort to help ease that problem which now exists. This Resolution is also in keeping with Government's philosophy that when housing areas are created that sporting facilities are created as well in an effort to develop rural communities.

Mr. President, when I spoke just now about the role of the Rural Development Commission, I did not mention that there are other components to rural development that fall outside the jurisdiction of the Rural Development Commission. The Rural Development Commission has a role to play in coordinating the activities of other agencies since it is ultimately the agency that is responsible for rural development.

There are many services that will make up part of this rural development that are provided by other agencies but, to avoid duplication, we are allowing the Rural Development Commission to do the coordination, so the intention here is to develop the first portion of the land, 3.18 hectares, into housing lots and the second portion, 2.71 hectares, for the purposes of sporting facilities.

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

SENATOR Dr. D. S. LOWE: Mr. President, I rise to indicate our support for the acquisition of this land and also to reiterate our position that the cost of housing in this country, particularly for low income persons, has to be studied.

I believe we are on record in this Chamber in suggesting that the Government needs to contemplate using the National Housing Corporation in the construction of these homes so as to reduce the cost of housing since the National Housing Corporation is a functioning entity of Government and there are artisans within the bosom of that institution that can provide the kind of service that would be required in the construction of these homes.

Therefore, we would want to again ask that in the moving forward of such programmes that the role of the National Housing Corporation be studied to ease the burden of cost on those persons who are sitting at the bottom of the earnings table to enable them to afford housing.

Mr. President, I well recall a similar project in Orange Hill where a number of excited first time low income homeowners rushed to be part of the ownership process only then to encounter a number of problems because of poor construction, the size of the homes and the cost which was based at around \$55 000.

Senate 12 Sequence 124

3.10 p.m.

Wednesday, March 24, 2004

SENATOR Dr. D. S. LOWE: Mr. President, while we embrace the Government's attempt to continue to find housing solutions for Barbadians, we would want to instruct that in the provision of those solutions, it contemplates in a most serious way how we could create a more affordable cost range to those persons who currently sit at the bottom of the earning ladder in this country.

Mr. President, the second point I wish to make is that it is, in fact, a progressive idea to twin the provision of housing with the provision of recreational facilities. Indeed there are a number of existing areas where recreational facilities are not part of the ambience of services provided for persons in housing districts. Therefore, we see that the attempt to twin the provision of recreational facilities with the provision of housing as a good and progressive move. Therefore, we would hope that any further efforts by Government to create housing solutions, would also be accompanied by the provision of recreational services.

Mr. President, with that comment, I support the Resolution.

SENATOR Miss S. C. V. HUSBANDS: Mr. President, I wish to inform Honourable Senators of some of the initiatives in terms of housing. At present the Ministry of Housing, Lands and the Environment has put out

contracts to build approximately the 1 000 houses that are spread between middle income and lower income housing.

The matter that has been raised by the Honourable Senator Denis Lowe is well taken by Government in terms of the high cost of construction of homes, which makes it very difficult for people at the lower income level to be able to get affordable housing, with which they could feel comfortable.

Sir, the Ministry of Housing, Lands and the Environment is currently investigating low cost technologies in housing construction and is seeking to bring a reasonably-sized house in under \$100 000, which would be more affordable for the use of low income persons. There would also be the provision of 100 per cent mortgages for that type of housing, making it more affordable.

This would mean that someone does not have to look for a large deposit but could look at a repayment plan that is similar to perhaps that of a rental, to make it easier for low income persons to access housing. Therefore, the Ministry of Housing, Lands and the Environment is doing a great deal of work in that area in seeking to provide affordable housing on behalf of the working class.

Mr. President, I thank you.

SENATOR the Hon. E. R. GRIFFITH: Mr. President, I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

The question was put to the Senate and agreed to.

ADJOURNMENT

SENATOR the Hon. E. R. GRIFFITH: Mr. President, before moving the adjournment of the Senate, I wish to thank all Honourable Senators for their contributions over the past three days but, particularly, I wish to thank the members of staff of Parliament for their great efforts over the past three days. We do appreciate the work they have done. I hope now that they can take a breather after today's Sitting.

I beg to move that this Honourable Senate be adjourned sine die.

MR. PRESIDENT: Before putting the motion, let me just say that this is the 10th occasion on which I have had the privilege of presiding over the Annual Appropriation Bill.

Let me also say that it was a debate of high quality and I would like to congratulate all Honourable Senators who have participated.

The question that the Honourable the Senate be adjourned sine die was put to the Senate and agreed to and Mr. PRESIDENT adjourned the Senate accordingly.

3.15 p.m.

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H.E.CRICHLLOW, Senator the Very Rev.

HUSBANDS, Senator Miss S. C. V.

LINTON, Senator I. St.C.

LOWE, Senator Dr. D. S.

STUART, Senator F. J.

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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. Opening. The source opens without the convening sentence (Pursuant to the adjournment ... met at ...). The date is taken from the heading of the source.

Q3. Appropriation Bill, Senator the Very Rev. H. E. Crichlow's speech, take-slip HS12, 11.50 a.m.. The source has a gap marked 'Our...is responsible for a lot of this', and after the take-slip a new speech heading for Senator Crichlow opens mid-sentence with 'et cetera, and if people have worked hard'. Printed as in the source.

Q4. Appropriation Bill, Senator R. W. Grant's speech. Senator Grant opens 'Mr. Speaker, I would first want to start by acknowledging...', although the Senate is presided over by Mr. President. Printed as in the source.

Q5. Take-slip, about 2.50 p.m.. One take-slip reads 'S12: 14.50 p.m.', mixing the 24-hour clock with 'p.m.' Printed as in the source.

Q6. Appropriation Bill, Senator the Hon. E. R. Griffith's reply. After the take-slip at Sequence 122 a new speech heading opens with a numbered list item ('1. To increase the contribution of the sector to the Gross Domestic Product of the country.'). the introductory words having apparently been lost. Printed as in the source.

Q7. Speech labels. Senator Crichlow appears once as 'the Very Rev. H. C. CRICHLLOW' instead of H. E. CRICHLLOW. Printed as in the source.

DEBATE SUMMARY

(Editorial summary — not part of the record.)

The Senate resumed on Wednesday, 24th March, 2004, the third day of its debate on the Appropriation Bill, 2004, with Mr. President in the Chair. Senator I. St.C. Linton, who said he agreed with the Prime Minister and Minister of Finance that this was the real budget of the country, congratulated the Leader of Government Business, Senator Griffith, on his presentation. He spoke on the behaviour of young people and argued that nobody owed Barbadians anything and that trade had been free in the world long before the World Trade Organisation.

Senator the Very Rev. H. E. Crichlow commented on four aspects of the debate: attitude, Barbados and its land, change and difference. He spoke of political tolerance, the harsh economic conditions in which some parents lived, the expression of feelings as an alternative to violence and the warmth Barbadians show visitors, and he regretted missing the funeral of Sir Harold St. John.

Senator R. W. Grant said the Estimates should be read together with programmes across the Ministries, and recalled the 8 per cent cut, low foreign exchange reserves and job losses of the early 1990s. He said the Barbados Tourism Authority would focus on marketing and expected additional airlines from the United States, England, Europe and Africa, outlined maritime security measures and answered Senator Newton on washroom facilities at the airport. The Sitting was then suspended until 2.00 p.m.

In reply, Senator the Hon. E. R. Griffith answered Senator Stuart on growth and the deficit, said the Government had nothing to hide over the St. Leonard's School matters in the Auditor-General's Report, described the role of the Rural Development Commission, answered Senator Collymore on pensions, and set out the plan to stabilise and develop the Scotland District. On solid waste he cited \$4.3 million under Sub Programme 373 of the Ministry of Health and \$1.4 million for professional services. As the Speaker had certified the Bill as a money Bill, there was no Committee stage, and the Bill was read a second and third time and passed as the Appropriation Act, 2004.

Order No. 2, the Resolution approving a Government guarantee of cost over-runs on the construction of a resort hotel by Needham's Point Holdings Limited, up to US\$10 613 732.20, and of debt service up to US\$7 million annually, was explained by Senator Griffith as a precaution requested by the lenders to the Hilton Hotel project, estimated at US\$106.1 million. Senator F. J. Stuart said the explanation had cleared up his misunderstanding, and the Resolution passed.

Order No. 3 approved the compulsory acquisition of 5.89 hectares at Drax Hall Green, St. George: 3.18 hectares for housing lots and 2.71 hectares for sporting facilities. Senator Dr. D. S. Lowe supported it but urged that the National Housing Corporation be used to cut building costs, recalling the problems at Orange Hill with homes costing around \$55 000. Senator Miss S. C. V. Husbands said contracts had been put out for about 1 000 houses and that the Ministry sought a house under \$100 000 with 100 per cent mortgages. The Resolution passed. Senator Griffith thanked the staff, the President noted that this was

the tenth Appropriation Bill over which he had presided, | and the Senate was adjourned sine die.

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