
THE SENATE DEBATES

(OFFICIAL REPORT)

FIRST SESSION 2003 – 2008

THE SENATE

Wednesday, February 1, 2006

The Senate met in the Senate Chamber, Parliament Buildings on Wednesday, February 1, 2006, at 11.10 a.m.

PRESENT

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

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

Senator the Hon. E. R. GRIFFITH, G.C.M., B.A.
(Econ. & Hist.), Dip. Pub. Admin., M.Sc. (Financial
Studies), J.P. (Minister of Agriculture and Rural
Development) (Leader of the Senate)

Senator the Hon. Miss L. V. EASTMOND, LL.B.
(Hons.), LL.M. (Minister of Commerce, Consumer Affairs
and Business Development)

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

Senator T. E. BARKER, B.A. (Hons.), M.A. (Econ.),
J.P. (Parliamentary Secretary in the Ministry of Finance and
Economic Affairs)

Senator R. W. GRANT, B.A. (Econ.), G.Dip., M.A.
(Parliamentary Secretary in the Ministry of Tourism and
International Transport)

Senator I. St. C. LINTON

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

Senator Miss P. E. PARRIS, J.P.

Senator G. P. I. GOODING-EDGHILL

Senator G. P. B. NICHOLLS, B.Sc. (Hons.), LL.B.
(Hons.)

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

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

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

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

Senator the Very Reverend H. E. CRICHLAW,
G.C.M., B.A. (Hons.) (Dunelm)

Senator Sir Allan FIELDS, K.C.M.G.

Senator Dr. F. L. CHANDLER, Ph.D., B.Sc. (Hons.)

Senator R. O. Marville, B.A. (Hons.), M.A. African
Studies, M.B.A.

Prayers were led by Rev. Father Errington Massiah.

Mr. PRESIDENT: This Senate is in session.

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

SENATOR THE HON. E. R. GRIFFITH: Mr.
President, I beg to move that Standing Orders Nos. 22 (1)
and 45 (2) be suspended for the rest of this Sitting.

The question was put to the Senate and agreed to.

Mr. PRESIDENT: I have received an apology from
Senator Sir Roy Trotman, who is out of the island on trade
union business.

ANNOUNCEMENTS BY HIS HONOUR THE PRESIDENT

Mr. PRESIDENT: I should first like to welcome all
Honourable Senators of this first Sitting for 2006. I have
received an apology from Senator Sir Roy Trotman, who is
out of the island on trade union business.

PAPERS

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

1. Report on the Public Enterprise Investment Fund for quarter ended September 30, 2005.
2. Report of the Accountant General for the financial year 2004/2005.
3. Annual Report of the Barbados National Bank Inc. for the year 2004.
4. Value Added Tax (Refund) (Pegwell Community Church) Order, 2005.
5. Value Added Tax (Refund) (Bay Street Auto Parts Inc.) Order, 2005.
6. Value Added Tax (Refund) (Howes Inc.) Order, 2005.
7. Custom Tariff (Amendment) Order, 2005.
8. Value Added Tax (No. 2) Order, 2005.
9. Value Added Tax (Refund) (The Barbados Legion of the British Commonwealth Ex-services League) Order, 2005.
10. Duties, Taxes and Other Payments (Exemption) (Caribbean Gift and Craft Show) Order, 2005.
11. Annual Report of the Securities Commission for the Financial Year ended March 31, 2005.
12. Annual Report of the Labour Department for the year 2002.
13. Value Added Tax (Refund) (S. P. Musson & Son and Company Ltd.) Order, 2005.
14. Duties, Taxes and Other Payments (Exemption) (Coast Guard Relocation Inc.) Order, 2005.
15. Report on the Implementation Status of the Economic and Financial Policies 2004.
16. Ministry of Finance Half-Yearly report on the Revenue Collecting Departments for the period April 1, 2004 to September 30, 2004.
17. The Chairman's Report and Financial Statements of the Grantley Adams International Airport Inc. for the year ended June 30, 2005.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

SENATOR THE HON. E. R. GRIFFITH: Mr. President, I am commanded to move the First Reading of the following Bills:

1. Copyright Amendment Bill, 2006.
2. Intellectual Property (Miscellaneous Provision) Bill, 2006.

The question was put to the Senate and agreed to without division.

PUBLIC BUSINESS

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 IN THE PARISH OF SAINT MICHAEL IN THIS ISLAND FOR THE PUBLIC PURPOSE OF FACILITATING CONSTRUCTION ON THE BRIDGETOWN ROADS AND SAFETY IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Griffith.

SENATOR THE HON. E. R. GRIFFITH: Mr. President, as you indicated, this is the first Sitting of the Senate for this year, therefore, I seek your permission to extend to you and other Members of the Senate, Clerks, staff and their respective families all the best for the New Year.

Sir, I am particularly happy to see my two friends, Senator Stuart and Senator Dr. Lowe, because they can believe me when I say that I was deeply troubled when I saw the information that was being spread across the newspapers, so, I am now speaking with great relief. I am happy to see them with us still.

Mr. President, the matter before us is a fairly straightforward one and I have a feeling that it would not lead to any controversy. The two parcels of land which have been identified in the Resolution, have been used in the road development at Eagle Hall, near the Plantrac Building, and at the development near Dalkeith Hill. The appropriate notices were issued and the matter before us is now seeking to bring closure to the matter.

Sir, the two parcels of land are being used in the Bridgetown Roads and Safety Improvement Project, which covers eight kilometres of roadway in St. Michael, and also part of the Bridgetown By-pass Project. The work there has been infrastructural improvements, which include the

widening of the roads, for example, at Dalkeith, the installing of traffic lights, the improvement of junctions, construction of footpath and improvement in the drainage system. The land is being used for a cause which I am sure will gain the support of all Senators.

Mr. President, everybody knows the congestion on our roads and the need for proper footpaths and sidewalks for pedestrians to avoid some of the danger than can easily befall them when they encounter reckless drivers on the roads. Everybody in this day and age seems to be in a hurry. The question is, where are we all hurrying to go?

Sir, I notice that persons will pass you at top speed but when you continue at your usual speed travelling for ten minutes or so, you have caught up with them. Sir, I wonder why they wasted so much gasoline, just to 'rev-up' and pass you, but they do not seem to look at it that way. I trust that they would look at it that way, particularly in this age, when we need to conserve energy. That is how it is. Sir, I suspect that the young and adventurous would always look for some type of adventure to excite them.

Mr. President, the point is, these two parcels of land are part of the road development project and I really do not believe that anybody should object to that. I, therefore, beg to move that these Resolutions do now pass.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Stuart.

SENATOR F. J. STUART: Mr. President, may I first of all join the Honourable Leader of Government Business on the occasion of the first Sitting of the Senate for the year in extending my very best wishes to all fellow Senators for the year 2006, and of course to Your Honour. I am also flattered by his very kind remarks in respect of my Colleague, Senator Lowe and myself that he is glad to see us back here. I hope that does not mean that he regards us as a delightful political meal for the Government but he respects and looks forward to our contributions.

Asides.

11.30 a.m.

SENATOR F. J. STUART: I noticed, of course, the very loud thumping of the tables. I hope that from time to time, as will necessarily happen, when I have to deliver the occasional philippic against the Government that, the tables would be thumped as loudly.

Sir, the Honourable Leader is quite correct in saying that there is nothing controversial about the Resolution before the Senate. The issue of roads and the safety of roads is a very current issue in Barbados. As far as St. Michael is concerned, given the increase in vehicular traffic and, of course, pedestrian traffic, it is important that the St. Michael

area in particular, be targeted for the kinds of improvements with which this Resolution deals.

I am aware of the vast improvements in Dalkeith, where some of this road improvement took place. I hope that in the not-too-distant future those improvements would extend to that entire stretch at Beckles Road, which is in urgent need of widening and repair. I am also aware that in the Estimates of last year, the Government committed itself to spending about \$23 million, over a two-year period on road improvements in St. Michael.

Therefore, as we move closer towards World Cup 2007, I expect that the more difficult arteries in St. Michael will receive the Government's attention. The Beckles Hill road is one of those arteries. It has become very busy and to the extent that it is a means of gaining access to the Bay View Hospital and the Geriatric Hospital on Beckles Road, it is important that some attention is paid to that road. This is not another way of saying, of course, that St. Michael is the only area of Barbados that needs road repairs.

I am aware that the Government is carrying out road repairs in other parts of Barbados. In the past, I have commented on the resurfacing of the road that leads from Six Roads to St. Philip Parish Church. This road is still under repairs but some significant progress is being made in getting it ready and allowing people in that general area to return their lives to normal.

I am concerned though that when these road repairs are being carried out, necessary though they are, that there is so little communication with the people whose lives are daily affected by these repairs. The water is turned off, nobody is informed and people just discover that they have no water, also, the whole process of keeping the dust down to a minimum by frequent wetting of the surfaces is very shoddily done, in my respectful view. I hope that more sensitivity would attach to the carrying out of these repairs so that people's lives would not be affected as profoundly, as I have seen them affected in Marchfield, St. Philip, where people had to leave their homes for considerable periods of time just to allow these repairs to take place.

Sir, horror of horrors, one noticed a few days ago that the asphalt was being put on the roads but we were told that it has to be dug back up now to facilitate the natural gas lines. I think that a lot more planning has to go into these road improvements and consideration has to be given to how much disruption a lack of planning visits upon the people in the environs of these road repairs.

Sir, having said all of that, there is really no gain in life without pain and one has to call on the public as well to be understanding when these inconveniences are visited on them, and hope for a smoother flow of communication

between the workers at MTW or workers for private contractors, the villagers and residents in the respective areas.

There is nothing controversial therefore about the Resolution and it commands the Opposition's support but the final point I want to make is this. I listened very carefully to the Minister. We are here discussing work that has already been done and we are now coming to the House to acquire the land. Therefore, it means that the cart was really put before the horse, as has been happening quite frequently with Resolutions of this kind.

I know that when the road from Rock Hall to the Crane was being resurfaced, people's land was routinely taken up. They were not informed by letter or even by oral communication that their land was being taken up. Long after the repairs were finished and without any communication from the Government, they received notice that their land was to be acquired. This is precisely what is happening here with respect of these parcels of land. The work is finish and the land is now to be acquired.

I would like to suggest that there should be some communication with landowners on these matters. If the Government is not certain how much land is going to be needed because of the very nature of the work, at least that should be explained to people so that their fears would be allayed and their anxieties kept down to a minimum.

With those few words, Mr. President, we do not oppose the Resolution.

I am obliged to you, Sir.

The question was put to the Senate and agreed to.

ORDER NO. 4 – RESOLUTION TO APPROVE IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 5 OF THE CROWN LANDS (VESTING AND DISPOSAL) ACT, CAP. 225 THE VESTING IN THE NATIONAL HOUSING CORPORATION OF PARCELS OF LAND, THE PROPERTY OF THE CROWN, SITUATE AT JACKMANS IN THE PARISH OF SAINT MICHAEL IN THIS ISLAND FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF AN ACCESS ROAD TO A HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

SENATOR THE HON. E. R. GRIFFITH: Mr. President, the Resolution deals with the vesting of 1 481.92 square metres of land at Jackmans, St. Michael in the National Housing Corporation. The purpose of this vesting is to facilitate the construction of an access road to a housing development, which is being managed by the National Housing Corporation.

When the 80 lots were being developed, at that time the National Housing Corporation acted on the assumption that

the existing road would have been used. They were subsequently advised by the Ministry of Transport and Works that the existing road should be left for the use of the plantation – the road was being used by the plantation and the residents – and a new access should be created leading into the housing development.

Therefore, the purpose of this vesting of land is to facilitate the creation of a separate access, leading into the development, whereas the existing road, which would have needed substantial repairs, would be left for the use of the plantation and that is the reason for the Resolution before us.

11.40 a.m.

Mr. President, as you know, housing is a matter that engages everybody's attention these days. Therefore, I believe that any effort that is being made to facilitate the new owners of those lots and the houses in that area should be supported.

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

SENATOR Dr. D. S. LOWE: Mr. President, this particular Resolution does not find any objection from the Opposition. However, Mr. President, we would like to ask the Honourable Minister to take note of a couple of observations that might be passed on to the relevant authorities.

Mr. President, any effort to reduce or to extinct any struggles on the behalf of Barbadians regardless of their location is indeed a worthy endeavour as we seek to develop the society and to create a social care environment where all Barbadians, regardless of their station in life, would have equal access to the resources of this great country. Therefore, Mr. President, we in the Opposition would not find it necessary to persecute the Government when it seeks to demonstrate that level of sensitivity for Barbadians. Mr. President, I would like to consider most of us in here as ordinary Barbadians, although that might be a stretch of my imagination.

Mr. President, I notice that around the country there have been a number of access roads to give residents in new developments access to their homes. I have also noted with some concern that in some cases those access roads are quite inadequate. Perhaps, they satisfy the need for pedestrian travel. However, what we are finding is that the roads for some reason, in some cases, are inadequate because of the difficulty that emergency vehicles have when they have to enter these roads in terms of manoeuvrability. Therefore, we certainly would want to ask the Honourable Minister to take note and that an instruction or a suggestion

be made to those involved in the construction of access roads that they bear in mind that from time to time emergency vehicles may well have to access these roads and that they should be able to do so with the minimal amount of difficulty. I think that is a very important note.

Secondly, Mr. President, we know that there has been a lot of discussion in Barbados relative to the drainage problem. There are cases currently where new roads have been built and there has been a substantial amount of flooding. I would like to suggest, very respectfully, that the necessary cautions be observed in the construction of these roads so that the whole struggle with drainage is not extended by these new and appropriate endeavours and that the engineers and the other persons involved really study the landscape sufficiently, so that the trajectory of the roads are of such that where the water is carried is where it is supposed to go.

Mr. President, I know of a case now where recently we have been having unseasonable weather and, frankly speaking, people were expressing concern that they perhaps were more comfortable before the access road than after the access road. The reason being that there are large settlements of water that are not getting to the drainage system and are causing some unnecessary travail on the part of these individuals. Mr. President, while it is not a criticism, it is simply a note to be passed on to the appropriate authorities that that be taken into consideration.

Mr. President, the other thing I want to mention, which we need to look at carefully, is that if we are improving the society in general, we are building new housing developments, we are putting in access roads and we are putting in lights and so on, those access roads should not come without some sort of sidewalk or something to assist not only the children who are moving into these developments, but those grannies and grandpas who from time to time have to walk to church late at nights.

Mr. President, I am sure this has not escaped you, but some of these access roads are being used as raceways by irresponsible drivers, not necessarily young either. Mr. President, maybe in consultation with the residents, Government may need to consider putting in some systems that would slow down these reckless villains for people's safety. So I am hoping that as we continue on this developmental trend that these things would be taken into consideration so that the good that Government seeks to do is not compromised because there are elements of neglect relative to some of the systems that should be considered in the process.

I thank you, Mr. President.

SENATOR THE HON. Miss L. V. EASTMOND: Mr. President, I think it is appropriate for me as well to join with Senator Griffith to welcome back my Colleagues, Senators

Lowe and Stuart. A great weight has been lifted from my heart. I must say that I marvel at the political acumen that has caused them to retain their seats in this Honourable Chamber, but I will look, listen and learn. I must say as well that today, in terms of the contributions that have been given by the two Honourable Senators, there has been a degree of soberness. They were very moderate and measured, clearly reflecting individuals who have just emerged from a rather tumultuous episode. Therefore, I believe that they are probably gathering their strength.

Mr. President, I marvel at what would happen too after this particular Sitting because I know that they would have been able to sit and reflect and refresh themselves. I also know that they are aware that their statements may very well be monitored – and mine as well – and therefore when I refer to them as my Colleagues and say that I am happy to see them return and that a great weight has been lifted from my heart, one might very well think that we are colluding.

Mr. President, I hope that what I have said has not in any way undermine any negotiations in which they are involved – because for all we know, the negotiations might be ongoing – to ensure that they always have a place here with us at least for this current term. Certainly, I look forward to continued interaction with them.

Mr. President, this particular Resolution is with respect to an access road to a housing development. This is only one of the types of roadworks that Government is engaged in in its roadworks programme.

11.50 a.m.

Mr. President, as we can see from looking around the country, there is a great effort now being made to ensure that we respond to the calls from Barbadians that we need to accelerate what we are doing, in terms of road works in Barbados. Sir, we are responding to that request.

Mr. President, it cannot be said that we have a Government which is not listening, for the Government certainly listens to people's concerns. Therefore, I believe everyone has noticed that every effort is being made to enhance existing roads, for example, by widening them or by resurfacing them where appropriate. We are also engaged in a programme for building new roads, which is very important. Of course, our road system is a very dense one.

Mr. President, I sometimes hear individuals speaking of going to other countries and finding that their roads are not as bad as ours, in some instances. I am not sure which countries those are within the region but nevertheless, I believe it is quite clear that in the case of Barbados, our road network is denser than many of the countries of which we speak. Therefore, for example, for Government to build 10 or 20 roads and to maintain them, would be easier than

continuing building out roads in Barbados and maintaining them, because the price tag would be very high.

Mr. President, sometimes when I am speaking to constituents in St. Philip West and they raise questions about road works, when I say to them that, for example, even though the road in question might be a short road, that it would actually cost about \$1 million, they tend to be shocked.

Sir, I do not think we have enough dialogue with the people about the cost of these road works. These road works are quite expensive. For example, to put down a short concrete road in a village, can cost about \$50 000. I think that more information like that needs to go out to the people of Barbados because I believe they would then better understand the amount of money that has to be spent in developing the road works programme in Barbados.

Mr. President, unfortunately I am not one who can say that I am completely satisfied with the attention that is being paid to the rural constituencies in Barbados. Many of us do not pay much attention to them but if we were to drive around the City and the suburbs, we would see that the people in those areas do not suffer from a lack of well-paved roads, unlike the people living in rural constituencies.

Sir, we are not saying these people in the City and suburbs should not have well-paved roads. What we are saying, is that more work needs to be done within the rural communities, in order to put the people living in those areas in a similar position to those living in the City and the suburbs. Mr. President, my understanding is that these road works programmes are meant to be dealt with by both the Rural Development Commission and the Ministry of Public Works.

Mr. President, we, in St. Philip West, have been concerned with a number of roads and after the election in 2003, we went around and tried identifying those roads that were in need of repair, including those that required building out in the constituencies. Sir, there were about 60 of them and in different lengths. We then developed a very comprehensive Paper and submitted it to both Ministries.

Mr. President, when I speak to the people in these constituencies, they clearly understand that all of these roads cannot be done at the same time. I would also say that sometimes it is very difficult to console individuals or to appear as though we are genuine in our empathy to these people, when they may say that the state of that road has been like this for more than 90 years, and that they would like to see a better road done before they die, as it becomes difficult for these people to walk to Church, or when they are walking from the supermarkets with their groceries.

Mr. President, in Barbados many of us do not do much walking because we drive everywhere. Therefore, we would find it very difficult to understand when individuals are

complaining about the state of the roads that provide an access to their homes, as these are the individuals who have to walk on these roads. In addition, when the rain falls, it is even worse because some people find themselves having to walk through, if not marl, mud.

Mr. President, because of this fact, having provided proper road works in the City and in the suburbs, there becomes a competing interest between those persons and those living in the rural constituencies. Sir, a number of individuals who live in housing developments, whose roads might have a small number of potholes, they too would feel that they are entitled to get their roads repaired because they pay taxes, but the fact is that many of those individuals living in those housing developments drive cars, therefore, their complaints would surround having to drive through these potholes.

Mr. President, on the other hand, what those individuals who live in these old cart roads, from the plantation days when tractors were used along these roads, their complaint is that when they have to walk to Church, by the time they reach the main road, they may need a new pair of shoes the next day.

Mr. President, these are real concerns that sometimes I wish those of us who find it very convenient to drive and have access to cars, would understand because the Government has to make sure that it addresses the concerns of both sets of constituents. Sir, to me, it is harder for someone struggling with two bags of groceries, trying to get to their homes, in circumstances where they have to be avoiding mud or potholes, as opposed to individuals living in housing developments, who simply have to avoid potholes when driving.

Mr. President, it is not that those matters are not going to be addressed but I think we have to recognise that Barbados generates a certain amount of revenue, which has to be deployed across many sectors in Barbados. It must also be recognised that the bottom line is that a lot of the work we are doing is still developmental work.

Sir, in terms of its infrastructure, especially the roads, Barbados is still very much a developing country and if one goes into many of the areas in Barbados, for example, Sweet Street, Lowthers, Christ Church, one would see that the road there is in very bad condition. Sir, usually individuals drive there, only to realise that it would have been better if they had walked. Of course, there are people who live out there, who drive all the time. There are also roads in Brereton, St. Philip, that are in very bad condition.

Mr. President, all of these things we want to try to work on but, of course, we have a public that is very

demanding in terms of what it wants or in terms of what it feels that it must have. Therefore, it becomes a very difficult job for Government to seek to allocate its resources among all of these demands across sectors and demands across all types of road works.

12.00 noon.

There are individuals who believe that since a particular road might be an access to several areas, that it should be given priority in terms of its repaving, for example, Highway 5.

Mr. President, many individuals speak about Highway 5 and the fact that it is a road that leads you from Bridgetown into the country and, therefore, it should be given priority. Although this might be true, there are individuals living in the country who believe that after all this time, that there should be a properly paved road in their particular village. Sir, those concerns resonate with me.

Mr. President, in terms of the work done thus far, we see that the Minister of Public Works is engaged in quite a vigorous programme. I have seen that recently they are repaving the road from Windsor to Lower Greys and it is my understanding that it should be repaved right to Coral Ridge Cemetery. I would be happy to see that because it would mean that residents living in Lower Greys, Yorkshire and Dayrell's Hill would also receive some relief. I am sure that they are happy that this particular road repair is under way.

Mr. President, Marchfield is the home of Senator Freundel Stuart and he should be pleased with the work being done in Marchfield. We have discussed previously that the Marchfield Close road has been completed, which was done by the Rural Development Commission.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator, I hate to interrupt you but could you also tell us a bit about Jackmans in the parish of St. Michael.

SENATOR THE HON. Miss L. V. EASTMOND: I am glad that you have reminded me, Mr. President, because this particular road in Marchfield Close is part of the same programme because it is an access road to a housing development. Sir, it is not a new housing development but an old housing development and is consistent with the policy of Government in terms of providing access to housing development.

Mr. President, similarly, the road leading from Six Roads to St. Philip Church is a very important access road as well. I am glad that Senator Stuart has been monitoring developments there. I am sure that he would also be pleased that the residents of Marchfield are now getting natural gas for which they have been asking for some time.

Mr. President, as I have said before, this is a Government that listens to the concerns of residents and is seeking to address them. Sir, I simply wish to share with my Colleagues the context within which this particular Resolution falls in terms of the construction of an access road to a development. Sir, when we have debates and they are placed within the appropriate context, it is often the case that those listening to us do not quite understand fully what we are speaking about. Mr. President, I was just seeking to provide that broader context for my Colleagues and also for persons out there who are listening to us. I apologise if I strayed a bit but I am sure that the people of St. Philip West are happy to hear that Government is addressing their concerns. With those few words, I support the Resolution.

Mr. President, I thank you.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Sir Allan Fields.

SENATOR Sir Allan FIELDS: Mr. President, I crave your indulgence for a few minutes. Thanks to Senator Eastmond for straying from Jackmans because, hopefully, it would give me an opportunity to respond to something which she said. I had absolutely no intention of speaking to this Resolution this morning but Senator Eastmond eloquently spoke about the cost of building roads and the vigorous programme which the relevant Ministry is now undertaking. I hope my credibility would be of such a nature that people would believe what I am about to say because I would not have believed it if it had been told to me.

Mr. President, the road between Coral Ridge Cemetery – I believe it is the Newton Road that takes you towards the highway at Durants and Chickmont – last week had significant potholes and is filled with marl. Sir, there is no vestige of barbagreen or bitumen and it is filled with marl. I passed there on Sunday on my way to the airport and I marvelled that anybody could expend that type of money at a time like this when we are trying to conserve money and make sure we do the appropriate things.

Mr. President, on Sunday after rainfall, the potholes were very evident because the marl had all washed away. I hope that the leader of this Honourable House would have a word with the relevant Minister about this road and tell him, as Senator Eastmond said, that this is a very expensive programme in rehabilitation of roads and that this is not the way to go about it. Sir, it is not even a stop-gap method because it lasted for one rainfall.

Mr. President, as you know, over the last several weeks, the rain has been falling virtually every day and I would invite anyone in this Honourable House to travel on that road. Sir, they should be very careful because I split a

rim on my car by dropping into a pothole filled with marl two days previously.

Mr. President, I am much obliged to you and I am happy to support the Resolution.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Linton.

SENATOR I. St. C. LINTON: Mr. President, I crave your indulgence as the same as Senator Fields. First let me welcome my two Colleagues Senator Stuart and Senator Lowe. I have not commented on the going-ons in Barbados because I was simply hurt when I see the body politics severely challenged in Barbados and if they were not here today, I might have shed a tear.

Mr. President, Senator Stuart made a point about the communication that exists between the relevant authorities when it comes to acquiring land and do particular works on our roadways. He made particular reference...

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Linton, only Senator Lowe spoke on this Resolution.

SENATOR I. St. C. LINTON: Thank you, Mr. President. Sir, the bypass road, to my mind as I remember, was about 20 years in planning and three regimes were involved in it, the Tom Adams regime, the Erskine Sandiford regime and now this Government. Yet, there are persons whose lands have been used in Roebuck Street by the Transport Board and in other places where settlement for the owners of those estates, persons in businesses that should have been rewarded because they lost their businesses, have not yet been settled.

Mr. President, in relation to communication on the bypass road, I remember between 2000 and 2002, I was a member of the Board of the Seventh Day Adventist Secondary School. They had taken a good slice, even more than was originally planned from the school premises of the playground of our children.
12.10 p.m.

Sir, communication, as I remember, was very good because we were able to put forward a plan to approach the Ministry for compensation for our area, to properly fence above the wall, so that children would not bounce a ball over the fence to damage people's cars on the street. We ask the Ministry that rather than compensate us with cash, to work out a system where funds are available to assist us in fixing our yards; they accommodated us and that was done.

Mr. President, I cite this to show that there has been communication, but if Senator Stuart's comments are true, that Government is using lands which belong to property owners in Barbados without notifying them, I would ask the

administration to look into this matter carefully. Sir, it is true that sometimes after land has been acquired for many years by the State, persons do not receive compensation.

Mr. President, I hope that in future planning of the development of Barbados and the acquisition of lands for various purposes, that some competent method is used to accommodate property owners speedily when their land has been acquired by the State.

I thank you, Sir.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Williams.

SENATOR THE HON. J. E. D. WILLIAMS: Mr. President, I rise to lend my support to this Resolution, but I believe that I should begin by extending best wishes to you Mr. President, your family and to all Honourable Senators and their families.

I am extremely happy today to be in the presence of Senator Dr. Lowe and Senator Stuart. I too was a little worried for a moment, because I believe that this Honourable Chamber would have been the poorer, indeed, if they were not with us today. Sir, Senator Stuart could appreciate that this indeed is a compliment from the heart.

Asides.

SENATOR THE HON. J. E. D. WILLIAMS: Sir, the Honourable Senator wants me to repeat that the Senate would, indeed, be the poorer. I believe that with his absence now or in the future from the Senate, the Senate would, indeed, be the poorer.

Mr. President, I know that the Resolution relates to an access road to a housing development, but in my brief presentation I really want to offer my commendation to the Ministry of Public Works. The Ministry of Public Works is bombarded with demands and requests for both road widening for existing roads and the development of new roads into areas across the country.

Sir, for example, Senator Fields alluded to what he considered were potholes. I am not here to say that we must condone potholes in our roads. I think that it is also true to say that never in the history of this country have we seen an administration that has done so much to extend, widen and provide road access. Mr. President, the building of roads is nothing new to the Barbados Labour Party, the ABC Highway is a classic example of the easy movement across Barbados. At present we have challenges with respect to traffic management, but it is more important to ensure that we have proper road access.

Sir, while from time to time we may observe one or two potholes, I know that there are some newspapers in our country that will take a certain sense of pleasure in identifying potholes, which in many respects does us a disservice. Sir, miles of roads are constructed but there are no commendations when roads are completed. However, you may see one or two potholes in roads, highlighted in the newspaper. Sir, when this is done, it discredits our country more than anything else.

Mr. President, I say to myself, why do people portray that element in this country, why look for all the negative things and not positive things. I want to take this opportunity to inform Barbadians that the challenges for the Ministry of Public Works are indeed great, but they have been doing a tremendous job without any fanfare.

Sir, I want to salute the Ministry of Public Works for all that they have been doing. We all want good and proper roads because it is something that we all deserve. However, at the same time we recognise that the resources we have as a country, we are still a small country with limited resources, but we have been doing a tremendous job under the difficult circumstances in which we operate.

Mr. President, I think that an Opposition Senator spoke about a number of motorists racing up and down the roads in small developments. It is an unfortunate practice. I know that in many respects humps will help, but it would also help if people report these matters to the relevant authorities.

Sir, we can help ourselves sometimes by doing simple things. Sir, these cars that are driven at reckless speeds have registration numbers. These numbers should be recorded and reported. Eventually, we hope to get some of these drivers off the streets. It is a serious matter.

Mr. President, this particular Resolution, indeed, has my fullest support and I too, like all the Honourable Members who spoke, give it my support on this occasion.

Thank you, Sir. I am obliged to you.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Grant.

SENATOR R. W. GRANT: Mr. President, I too wish to give my support to this Resolution that is before this Chamber.
12.20 p.m.

Sir, I think the policy of the Government is commendable in seeking to ensure that communities throughout Barbados have access through the provision of roads, so that in the cases of emergencies, vehicles would be able to get to those families that would be in peril.

I am aware, Mr. President, of situations throughout the country where persons have to park their cars a distance from their homes. I am aware also of situations when it rains, persons have to walk in muddy areas so I think it is very important that the Government continues with this programme of providing access roads. I know, Sir, that there are times when the Government has challenges in terms of the ownership of land in areas where the particular Ministry or agency is seeking to provide an access road. Individuals who own land are not always willing to sell that land for the provision of access.

I would simply want to encourage all Barbadians to be concerned for each other. I would also, Sir, wish to make a request that there be a general level of respect on our roads. I would hate to see, Sir, that as we speak in relation to this access road at Jackmans that a situation develops where there is a need for emergency services and the road is blocked because some individual places a vehicle blocking the access to a home in peril.

I remember only a couple of weeks ago, I happened to be in the Station Hill area, where I was going through an access road that was blocked by a vehicle. I waited some five minutes before I could find out who was driving the vehicle.

I think, Sir, there has to be a general level of respect, not only in relation to access roads but our roads in general. As the Leader of Government Business clearly indicated, there are times on our roads when people seem to be in a hurry and it obviously places other persons using the road in danger. I would wish to encourage Barbadians that as we travel throughout Barbados to have more respect for persons who are using our roads. I think it is very important as a society that we are able to respect one another and ensure that all of us have a certain level of utility from the use of our roads.

Sir, I want to give my full support to this Resolution. I would also wish to join with the Leader of Government Business in saying welcome to all Senators, particularly Senators Dr. Lowe and Stuart. I am very happy to see them here.

I just want to leave a few words with them from the Soothsayer. You would recall, Sir, in Shakespeare's Julius Caesar, the Soothsayer said to Caesar: "Beware the Ides of March." Caesar responded: "The Ides of March are come." The response of the Soothsayer was: "Ay, Caesar; but not gone."

Sir, today is certainly a new day but it is still quite early.

I give my full support to this Resolution. I am obliged to you, Sir.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Barker.

SENATOR T. E. BARKER: Mr. President, I rise to support this Resolution. I especially note the purpose for this Resolution to allow for the construction of an access road to a housing development in the Jackmans area, which we all know well, by St. Matthews Church. This Resolution is allowing the Government to purchase land from these individuals, in order to provide access to the housing development.

Sir, I want to commend this Government of which I have the Honour to be a member for the proactive way it is going about the whole question of satisfying what seems to be an inexhaustible demand for housing in Barbados.

Sir, demand is highlighted by the number of applications to the National Housing Corporation, which is the main agency involved in housing, especially for the low income earners. I also want to note that this great demand for housing is a direct result of the tremendous increase in the standard of living of our people. It is indicative of the way that we have managed this economy so that we now have the record low levels of unemployment for a long time. Therefore, this is really an indication of the success that we have had in ensuring prosperity for the people of this country.

Sir, we have to redouble our efforts to make sure that having created this economic boom, we are able now to satisfy the concomitant demands that are placed upon Government, in terms of housing and so on. We will do our best to make sure that our people are properly housed. We have done our best to ensure that they are properly fed and we now have to make sure that they are properly housed.

Sir, as we look around this country, we recognise that is an area where more needs to be done and this Government is ensuring that they are doing all in their power to meet this demand. We want to put measures in place that the private sector can also help to meet some of the demands for housing.

Sir, the point to note here is that this Resolution is not for housing, but first to ensure that when we create a housing development, when we take land and put it into housing that at the same time, we have a responsibility to the people to ensure that not only do we provide housing solutions but that the facilities and the necessary amenities are also put in place.

Sir, one of these is the provision of proper roads and all the necessary services. We know that our people are demanding them and this Government, in the past 11 years, has ensured that every community in this island, once it is a settled community that we are committed to providing proper roads for these people.

Sir, gone are the days where people used to need two and three pairs of shoes, one pair to walk through the mud and other pair to walk on the tar road. Probably, other Governments may have concentrated on making sure that the large Highways are there but this Barbados Labour Party Government has gone out of its way to ensure that the small communities have proper roads.

12.30 p.m.

Sir, we want to commend the work of the Rural Development Commission and Urban Development Commission in ensuring that all of our citizens, regardless of where they live, have access to proper roads. Sir, this is what separates us to a large extent from many of our neighbours. They may have at times better highways, but this Government, in relation to keeping the highways going, has spent a lot of resources on the byways. Sir, that is important because we have to carry the services to the people.

Mr. President, the provision of roads, especially small roads, to service more communities show that this Government cares about the people and are ensuring that their needs are properly met. Sir, this is especially so in St. Philip, St. Michael South and other places where we have done a lot of work.

Sir, I notice that my good friend is looking at me, but he would testify that the place he wants to represent is well-represented because services are there for the people. That is what separates us from the Other Side. We care about the small things which are important things.

Mr. President, if it is one thing we have to guard against, it is the creation of two 'Barbadoses'. Sir, where you live, whether it is in a rural area or whatever, should not determine what sort of services the Government gives you. We have a duty to every community to make sure that they have access to proper roads. Mr. President, with the tremendous increase in the number of people having motor vehicles, the provision of roads become even more necessary.

Sir, I also would wish to see those private developers following Government examples with regard to road construction, that is, to pay special attention to drainage. Sir, I think it is wrong for a private developer to develop land and make a reasonable return on it but then do not pay enough attention to drainage and these other considerations. Sir, when attention is not paid to drainage, years 'down the line', it inevitably falls on the Government to remedy the problems, not the ones who have made their returns from developing the land. Therefore, I think that the Government, through its agencies, has to ensure that when private developments are done that all of the basic rules and regulations regarding drainage are properly enforced.

because, in the end, the taxpayers end up fixing the problems. Mr. President, a lot of the drainage problems are there because the developers did not pay enough attention to ensuring that there are enough properly positioned wells and so on. That is very important because a lot of the flooding could be reduced if enough attention was paid to those things.

Sir, we have a problem in Barbados where people feel that Government must do everything. For instance, there is a well in a community which is blocked with grass or whatever, but nobody in that community stops to think that spending five minutes to clear it can prevent flooding. Everybody feels that it is the Government's responsibility alone to do these things. Therefore, when the wells are blocked and the rain comes and flooding and all sorts of problems occur, they blame the Government. Sir, I believe that communities must be so developed and people must have a sense of belonging so that they can effect their own solution to the whole question of drainage and so on. That is very important because it takes virtually nothing in terms of money to keep the well heads clear. A little effort can save a lot of problems.

Mr. President, I do not want to call names but I know that there are many communities where that is an issue because people would clean around their houses but then they will refuse to spend a few extra minutes to keep the well that is near to them clear and then trouble comes and Government, because we believe that Government must do everything, is going to be faced with a massive tax bill.

Mr. President, if Government must do everything, the Government must have the funds to do everything. Therefore, the funds that we need to look after the schools, the hospital and the roads would be used for these purposes, whereas if we save Government having to do these things, it will redound to our benefits 'down the line'. Therefore, I am calling upon our people to be a little more considerate in ensuring that these things are done because in the final analysis we are one community, so we want to make sure that in all developments attention is paid to drainage. At the same time, Government has a responsibility to ensure that the wells are kept in proper condition. However, because there are so many wells across Barbados the task of keeping them clear is tremendous because every few years you have to go in and take out the silt and so on that would have got into the wells.

Sir, there is a suggestion that we may need a body of persons whose responsibility it would be to keep the wells clean, but there is a specially equipped and funded Drainage Unit, whose job it is to make sure that the wells are kept clear, but because of the large number of wells that are all across Barbados the task of keeping them clear is monumental.

Sir, we must not understate the task that is needed to keep Barbados in a relatively good position with regard to flooding. Mr. President, it is a tremendous task and every year it is costing more and more, so we must ensure that it is properly done. Mr. President, as we go about building more roads for our communities to improve the life in the communities we have to remember that these things come at a great cost, but they have to be done.

Mr. President, we want to commend Government for looking after the people in this area. I am told that parts of this land are reserved for the people who have to move from the Lewis Gap area, which is in Zone 1. Mr. President, Lewis Gap is a place that is very close to me because that is an area next to where I came from. Mr. President, the movement for the people from the Lewis Gap area would not only improve their own position but would also make sure that our important water resources are not in any way contaminated. This is something that we would have to do from time to time to make sure that housing developments do not impact negatively on our water supply which is vital.

Mr. President, Barbados has a worldwide claim for having very pure and very clean drinking water. People come from all over the world and, without any thought whatsoever, drink our water, whereas, they do not want to drink water from the tap in some of the bigger countries, so we have to make sure that things are put in place to keep our water supply free from contaminants.
12.40 p.m.

Mr. President, Government sometimes have to make these kinds of moves but we have to make sure that when people are discommoded for the national good, that their circumstances are not in anyway inferior, as a result of that move. In addition, if people are making a sacrifice for the national interest, we have to make sure that sacrifice to the rest of the nation is appreciated and that they are not 'put out' because of that sacrifice.

Mr. President, we note that Government's record on ensuring proper service to the people is second-to-none. Sir, we, on This Side, are proud to be a part of a Government, which is not only looking after the social and physical well-being of the people but one that is doing everything in its power, to ensure that the economic well-being is also sustained.

Sir, all of these Resolutions point to the fact that we have to keep our economy vibrant and growing, and that the movement of people at times is a necessary part of that process. We note that in so doing, we are making sure that the people have proper service.

Mr. President, with those few words, I want to commend this Resolution to this Honourable Chamber. I thank you.

SENATOR Miss S. V. HUSBANDS: Mr. President, I want to rise and to join with my Colleagues in expressing our joy at having Senator Denis Lowe and Senator Freundel Stuart with us. We certainly have enjoyed a very cordial and professional relationship with both Honourable Senators. I also think that we have come to respect and to look forward to their contributions, deliberations and to the objective reasonable positions which they would put at times. Sir, at other times, we choose to disagree but I think there has always been a very deep respect for them both. Therefore, we are very happy to have them here.

Mr. President, I rise to make a contribution to the discussion concerning the issue of roads, which is not an easy topic for Barbadians. Sir, whether the issue surrounds the acquisition of land to be developed at Jackmans, road works, or land available for people to be able to advance their lives in housing, we know this is a topic that is very much in the air at the moment. We know people have very grave concerns about these issues, which is natural.

Mr. President, we have a population that would have stretched from slavery in the early days, when there were chattel houses on tenancies lands, where people would eke out a living in those situations as best as they could. From those times, we have come into the 20th Century, where we are seeing tremendous development and growth in the standard of living Barbadians enjoy.

Sir, this factor has brought with it a desire for more and for better things. Therefore, for everyone to get there, and to get there in the shortest possible time, it creates a great deal of challenge for any Government to see how to utilise the resources effectively. On the one hand, it is necessary to put resources into activities that will generate further revenue in the future, to allow Government to continue to supply more of the services and goods in which people would be interested, yet at the same time, there are people on a waiting list, looking for and longing for the opportunity to be able to buy that land or that house. Therefore, it is not always easy to deal with it.

Mr. President, the project at Jackmans, I think, presents a ray of hope for Barbadians who are suffering the anxiety that perhaps, they would not be able to get what they need, whether it is road improvement or to be able to buy land. Sir, here is a project where Government is being able to locate persons living on Zone 1 land, not only from Lewis Gap but from other places, to be able to provide them with the opportunity to own their properties at Jackmans, while, at the same time, to be able to put in the necessary infrastructure, to allow them accessibility.

Mr. President, we are not speaking about the monied person or the middle class person with access to a lot of resources, but what this is saying for the average Barbadian, is that Government is putting a programme in place, that is going to assist the ordinary Barbadian to be able to enjoy and to participate in what is on the table. Therefore, in dealing with the twin issues of keeping the economy going and providing for those at the bottom, is a constant balancing act.

Mr. President, when we look at the record of Government pertaining to roads over the last 10 to 15 years, what we would see, though there has not been much fanfare because there have been so many roads that were built, that to put them all in the newspapers or on the air every month, would mean that after a while, such news would simply bounce off the population.

Mr. President, the truth is that over the last 10 to 15 years, a large number of roads have been done in the country. That road work has been divided between the main arteries and the local access roads within communities. Sir, I would like to point out that when a road in St. Joseph is opened, when one is done in Water Hall Land or at The Whim, St. Peter, the general population is unaware of these things and might not be aware of the amount of work that is being done.

Mr. President, I think it is important to understand that there is an ongoing process for the development of roads, both in urban and rural Barbados. Sir, in the rural areas, one of the challenges there is, would be the fact that there are lots of unplanned development, where the houses may not be structured in the way that we would have liked to create straight roads because of the layout of these houses. Therefore, that kind of unplanned development that would have taken place in the early years, now makes it difficult to structure a road system that gives proper adequate access for all. Therefore, it would have been a situation that we would have inherited and therefore, we would have to work with it the best way we could.

Mr. President, the Rural Development Commission has been very assiduous in pushing its programme forward in terms of developing roads for the rural areas. Sir, to date the Rural Development Commission has done more than 630 roads in rural communities. What that means for the people who live in rural Barbados, is that they do not now have to walk with a plastic bag containing an extra pair of shoes, they do not have to be constantly repairing their shoe heels, and that they are able to access their homes because of these 630 roads that have been done in these communities.

Mr. President, each of these roads would affect many families, therefore, thousands of Barbadians would have experienced the benefits. In addition, some of those roads

are concrete roads, while some are asphalt. Sir, concrete roads are extremely expensive but extremely durable. Therefore, here again is the balancing act that Government has to play, which would be, how many roads can it afford to put in concrete and how many can it afford to put in asphalt.

Mr. President, the challenge with the asphalt road is that very often because of how our substrata is organised, the average Barbadian might not be aware...

Sir, before I had enough information to understand what was happening with the roads in Barbados, it had seemed to me as though years ago, they had built better roads and that the roads lasted longer. Therefore, when the roads started breaking down with such frequency, I felt that the problem was that the Ministry of Transport and Works was not building proper roads and that they were not providing the quality roads that used to be obtained years ago. Sir, it was not until someone said to me that because Barbados has a limestone structure, that it is a very porous rock. Therefore, if heavy weight goes on that limestone, it would gradually crush and remove the space between the rock, and as a result the road would become compacted and would bend very easily. Therefore, when we compare Barbados with that of St. Lucia, which might not have that porous limestone, we would see that when St. Lucia builds their roads, those roads would have lasted much longer.

12.50 p.m.

The problem is compounded by the development and growth in the economy because growth in the economy has resulted in more and more Barbadians wanting to have their own vehicles. Sir, if you drive through roads in the urban tenancies like Sealy Land, Industry Road *et cetera*, you find people with cars but there is not enough space and they are parked scotching onto the side of the road and it inhibits vehicular access if there is need for an emergency vehicle in areas like that.

Mr. President, we have a challenge because more people are getting vehicles. We recently read that almost 500 additional new vehicles are on the road every month and with the tremendous pressure of cars on our roads, the roads are going to breakdown faster even when they are repaired. So, a long-term solution is needed in order to be able to deal with growing demand for roads and our capacity to keep repairs of the roads in the way we would like to see it happen.

Mr. President, when as Barbadians we are looking at the whole issue of Government's provision in this area, I

think there needs to be a better understanding of the dynamics and, therefore, appreciate that the dynamics which occurred would slow down the process. We also need to be aware of the number of communities crying out for roads and appreciate that all these roads would not be done at the same time. Therefore, some people will have to wait until we get to that particular road.

Mr. President, one of the things we need to do is to make sure that we structure our road management programme in such a way to be able to maximise the particular investment and not have situations where the roads are quickly dug up to put in some utilities. I know that Government has been making some effort to address that problem.

Mr. President, I want to commend the Resolution to the Chamber and to say to all Barbadians that we are working on building a developed society, seeking to improve our social conditions and that the challenge of the road is a great one. Sir, with the increasing traffic, when people go into side roads that it causes more pressure on those side roads. Sir, we need to do something about it but we need to take an ordered, deliberate, well-planned approach to change the condition of roads in Barbados and understand that it will not happen overnight but that we will eventually get there.

Mr. President, we are hoping that we could work together as citizens and be as accommodating, understandable and responsible as we could be. Sir, even in those small tenantry roads, we should not put our cars down anywhere but understand how it will impact on other people. We should act with consideration until we could develop the kind of infrastructure that would accommodate economic growth and social development of our country.

Mr. President, I am obliged to you.

The question was put to the Senate and agreed to.

ADJOURNMENT

SENATOR THE HON. E. R. GRIFFITH: Mr. President, I beg to move that this Sitting be adjourned until Wednesday, February 8, 2006 at 11.00 a.m.

The question that the Senate do now adjourn until Wednesday, February 8, 2006, at 11.00 a.m. was put to the SENATE and agreed to and Mr. PRESIDENT adjourned the Senate accordingly.
12.55 p.m.

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12. Report of the Accountant General for the financial year 2004-2005.
13. Annual Report of the Barbados National Bank Inc. for the year 2004.
14. Value Added Tax (Refund) (Pegwell Community Church) Order, 2005.
15. Value Added Tax (Refund) (Bay Street Auto Parts Inc.) Order, 2005.
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21. Annual Report of the Securities Commission for the Financial Year ended March 31, 2005.
22. Annual Report of the Labour Department for the year 2002.
23. Value Added Tax (Refund) (S. P. Musson & Son and Company Ltd.) Order, 2005.

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