
THE SENATE DEBATES

(UNOFFICIAL REPORT)

PARLIAMENT 2008 – 2013

THE SENATE

Wednesday, August 12, 2009

The Senate met in the Senate Chamber, Parliament Buildings, on Wednesday, August 12, 2009, at 11.20 a.m.

PRESENT

His Honour SENATOR Dr. B. M. TAITT, M.A., M.B.A., B.A., (Hons.)M.P.A., LL.B. (Hons.), D.H.L. (Hons.) (President)

Her Honour SENATOR Miss K. F. IFILL, M.B.A., B.Sc. (Hons.) (Deputy President)

SENATOR the Hon. Miss M. P. O. McCLEAN, M.A., M.B.A. B.Sc., (Hons.), LL.B. (Hons), (Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade) (Leader of the Senate)

SENATOR the Hon. H. LaV. BENN, G.C.M., J.P., E.M.B.A. (Marketing)(Minister of Agriculture)

SENATOR the Hon. A. B. WALTERS, M.A., DPSA (Oxford) (Minister of State in the Ministry of Labour, and Immigration)

SENATOR the Hon. D. W. BOYCE, M.B.A. (Finance), B.Sc., CMA, F.C.A., (Minister of State in the Ministry of Finance, Investment, Telecommunication and Energy)

SENATOR P.W.B. GILKES

SENATOR D.K.A. GRIFFITH

SENATOR Rev. P.A.V. MILLINGTON. M. (Theology)

SENATOR Mrs. V.I. SANDIFORD-GARDNER, M.B.A., CIM, Dip. Mng., (Parliamentary Secretary, Prime Minister's Office)

SENATOR Miss P.I. INNIS, B.Sc. (Hons.)

SENATOR K. D. SYMMONDS, B.A., LL.B.

SENATOR Miss H.E. THOMPSON, LL.B.

SENATOR Sir ROY TROTMAN, K.A., M.A.

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

SENATOR R. O. MARVILLE, B.A. (Hons.), M.A. African Studies, M.B.A.

SENATOR J. A. C. HUTSON, B.C.H., M.R.A.C.

SENATOR J. INCE, J.P., M.B.A., B.B.A., DIP.,

Prayers were led by Rev. Father Errington Massiah.

Madam DEPUTY PRESIDENT took the Chair in the absence of Mr. PRESIDENT.

Madam DEPUTY PRESIDENT: The Senate is in Session.

MESSAGE FROM HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL

MADAM DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Message No.2/2009

HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL

TO

THE HONOURABLE THE SENATE

His Excellency the Governor-General, has the honour to inform the Honourable The Senate that-

a. in accordance with the advice of the Prime Minister under Section 39(1)(f) of the Constitution, the seat in the Senate held by Mr. Derek MacDonald Alleyne has been declared vacant, with effect from August 1, 2009.

b. in accordance with the advice of the Prime Minister Mr. Jepter Ince has been appointed under Section 36(2) of the Constitution as a Senator with effect from August 1, 2009.

Governor-General

Government House

BARBADOS.

31st July 2009

I therefore direct the Marshal to invite Senator Ince to his seat in the Senate.

Thanks.

Senate A21, sequence 03, 11:30:20

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Senator Ince was escorted to his seat by the Marshal.

Her Honour SENATOR Miss K. F. IFILL: Senator Ince, first of all, I would like to congratulate you on your appointment to the Senate. It is also my great pleasure, on my own behalf and on behalf of all Honourable Senators, to welcome you to the Senate. The history of this body dates back to a very early period in the life of Barbados when this island was managed by a Governor and 12 nominated members. You therefore join a long list of Barbadians who have the privilege of serving in this Honourable Senate.

I am sure that you would make a useful contribution to the work we do here. I am sure you will observe the procedures and practices and time-honored conventions of this Honourable Chamber. The Clerks and staff of Parliament are available to assist you in whatever way they can. I wish you all success.

SENATOR J. INCE: Madam Deputy President, Members of the Senate, I want to thank you for welcoming me to this Upper Chamber. I vow to uphold the traditions that have made this Upper Chamber an institution of learning and an institution of political stability.

I thank you.

ANNOUNCEMENTS BY HER HONOUR THE DEPUTY PRESIDENT

Her Honour SENATOR Miss K. F. IFILL: I am in receipt of a letter from Mr. Derek Alleyne which is addressed to the President of the Senate, and it reads as follows:

“Dear Sir:

By now you would have been informed that my appointment to the Senate of Barbados has been revoked. The suddenness of this decision did not provide the opportunity to say thanks to you, fellow Senators and the staff for the cooperation rendered over the last year and a half.

As you are aware, I have been offered the opportunity to serve as Director of the Urban Development Commission for a period of two years. I deem this opportunity an honour and in the likelihood that some conflict of interest may have arisen it was agreed that the Senate appointment should be ended.

I will admit that on entry to the Senate Chamber a sense of trepidation prevailed, but on leaving, I believe I would miss the environment and the company of all Senators, especially Elizabeth Thompson. Please be assured that while my presence in the Chamber may be missed, I will follow the debates and pass originally to lend support from the Gallery.

The short stint was a learning experience and I hope that my presence did add some value to the proceedings. In any case, thanks and may God guide your actions and good health be yours.

Yours truly

Derek Alleyne.”

I take this opportunity to thank former Senator Alleyne for his contribution here and I am sure that the other Senators join me in wishing him well in his future endeavours.

I am also in receipt of excuses for absence from Senator Goddard and Senator Chandler.

PRESENTATION OF PAPERS.

SENATOR the Hon. Miss M. P. O. McCLEAN: Madam Deputy President, I am commanded to lay the following documents:

1. Financial Statements of the Grantley Adams International Airport Inc. for the year ended June 30, 2007;
2. Annual Report of the Enterprise Growth Fund Limited for the year 2008;
3. Duties, Taxes and Other Payments (Exemptions) (Sir Garfield Sobers) Order, 2009.

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

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

SENATOR the Hon. Miss M. P. O. McCLEAN: I beg to move that Standing Order 45(2) be suspended for the remainder of this Sitting.

The question was put to the Senate and agreed to.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

SENATOR the Hon. Miss M. P. O. McCLEAN:
Madam Deputy President, I beg to move that the following Bills be read a first time:

1. Order of National Heroes (Amendment) Bill, 2009; and
2. The Student Revolving Loan Fund (Amendment) Bill, 2009.

The question was put to the Senate and agreed to.

PUBLIC BUSINESS

ORDER No. 1

RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE BORROWING UNDER THE SPECIAL LOANS ACT, CAP. 105 BY THE GOVERNMENT OF \$165 000 000 FROM THE BARBADOS NATIONAL BANK INC. FOR THE PURPOSE OF FINANCING THE BARBADOS ROAD NETWORK INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

SENATOR the Hon. Miss M. P. O. McCLEAN:
Madam Deputy President, this Resolution seeks to approve the borrowing under the Special Loans Act, Cap. 105 by the Government of Barbados of \$165 million from the Barbados National Bank Inc. for the purpose of financing the Barbados Road Network Infrastructure Improvement Project.

Madam Deputy President, I must say very early and categorically that this is not the borrowing of new money. I listened and observed the discussions that went on and there seems to have been some confusion as to what this \$165 million is about.

Madam Deputy President, in looking at this matter, I would use a lay person's language that most of us would understand. It is intended to convert a bridging financing arrangement to a long-term loan facility which has been substantially used to date for payments in relation to the highway project which has pre-occupied the minds of Barbadians and, certainly, which has had to require considerable concern of this current Administration.

Madam Deputy President, in looking at this, we are talking about the project which, among other things, was intended to widen sections of the ABC Highway as we know it, and more importantly, in its original configuration, to impose on the landscape of Barbados a set of flyovers in addressing what was seemed to be an effort to address the congestion on the roads of Barbados.

Senate A21 Sequence 4

11.40 a.m.

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SENATOR the Hon. Miss M. P. O. McCLEAN:
Madam Deputy President, I believe that in looking at this and at the fact that we are now having to make the decisions that we have to make, to pass this Resolution to make this conversion is, perhaps, indicative of a situation which seems to face this Administration in relation to several things. In other words, to put very simply, it is an exercise in trying to finish some unfinished business.

It is not unfinished business in the normal scheme of things as Governments transition from one to another, as we see one Government steps out and another comes in, it is perhaps indicative of the approach to doing business that seems to characterise a number of decisions of the previous Administration.

Madam Deputy President, in talking about the financing arrangements, perhaps one of the things that we also want to clarify in our minds - because again this was an issue for many people between 2005 and 2007 - is exactly what this project was about. It seems to have had its genesis in the desire to address the congestion on the roads of Barbados. As we know, we are a small country with a very dense network of roads and with a dense population and therefore falling from that population, from the quality and density of network of roads, there is a lot of vehicular traffic. Madam, it was deemed necessary to address it. It was happening at a time which preceded what was supposed to be a major event in Barbados, Cricket World Cup, 2007, that we saw played out in Barbados and around the Region.

Madam Deputy President, there were some issues in relation to this. Madam, as I attempt to research this exercise, and as I tried to understand what it was, it led me to ask some questions about the design of this exercise, about the process by which we have come to the planned expenditure, when all is said and done, of \$165 million.

Madam Deputy President, what we saw was a project which was intended to do a number of things. The concern that I certainly have, and I am sure that many of us had, was why was it a contract that was put in the hands, given to or assigned to some entity called SSS (Barbados) Limited. Madam, we could put a whole set of spins on the three S's and we could come up with a number of things but, perhaps, I would leave that for somebody else, or maybe as I continue, some interesting explanation of those three S's might come to mind.

Madam Deputy President, what we understand that was given the original intention to address the traffic situation a number of things happened. Sir, I do not have necessarily the technical language of an engineer or architect, so I will try to keep it as simple as possible. Sir, what we had was a situation where, bearing in mind the initial issue of alleviation of traffic congestion, companies were asked to speak to solutions to that problem and were invited around 2002 to express interest and proposals to address those issues. Madam Deputy President, I believe that at some point in time there were several responses to those requests.

Madam Deputy President, the long and short of it was that somewhere between 2002 and 2004, that process seemed to have fallen apart and some persons submitted to the relevant Ministry some suggestions to how to address this. I say "some persons" because, in researching this company, SSS (Barbados) Limited, it did not exist in 2002. It did not exist in 2004. In fact, after some allocations were made to some entity, or to some persons, SSS (Barbados) Limited was started in 2005. That created some of the challenges I faced in trying to understand the process by which we have come to a situation where we debate today in this Honourable Chamber this financial arrangement.

Madam Deputy President, in understanding the financing and in understanding the timing of this decision, we have to understand something about the series of events which have brought us to this position.

I want to say that in doing that, the Barbadian companies that would have participated in the initial exercise to secure the solution to this initial problem of congestion, was overlooked and some person or persons would have received the green light to go ahead.

Madam Deputy President, in designing the project, some "smart" person - I use the word "smart" because I trust that if people were to understand the landscape of Barbados, if people were to really study the patterns of traffic, what was put on the table probably would not have been, a design of a project was put in place.

Madam Deputy President, I want to say from my research, it is my understanding that there was a company, an engineer or engineers designing the solutions from an office somewhere, probably in New York. It is my further understanding that during that process of design, persons had never set foot on the soil of Barbados and, in fact, probably relied on aerial photographs, engineer reports, et cetera.

Madam Deputy President, as a consequence of that design exercise, I can tell you that up to last week - and you probably can speak to either one of the two subcontracting companies - that errors were still being corrected from that

design. Madam, perhaps that is a part of those things that have led us to have to spend so much money on this. I think that obviously speaks to the whole issue of governance, as we talk about this matter.

Madam Deputy President, if we recall the lengthy discussions that took place, I would want to say again that we heard of several costs incurred in producing this exercise. It is my understanding that the initial position was that the exercise would have cost us, as was signalled by what has become SSS (Barbados) Limited when they approached the Ministry, was a proposal to spend US\$59 875 000 for the construction of eight overpass bridges, the widening of the highway between the Everton Weekes and Norman Niles Roundabouts, the upgrading of the signal system, the undertaking of a Bridgetown Traffic Study and the establishment of two monument parks for the relocation of the Emancipation and the Sir Garfield Sobers Statues.

Madam, what this says is that in terms of the initial expense, it was for road widening in certain areas along the highway, in order to accommodate what we call the flyovers or overpass bridges, as some people describe them. Again, Madam Deputy President, I cannot say with any confidence what is the difference between the two of those names and probably I have failed to do some research on that.

Madam, it was not only in terms of that but it was a Bridgetown Traffic Study, which I presumed would have preceded any work being undertaken, and some other critical ancillary work. As such, we are talking about a project, some of which I am not sure was even undertaken, therefore, if we look at the portion of money that should have been allocated to the actual road widening, it should have been substantially less.

I also want to suggest, before moving off the question of design and the awarding of the contract, that it was interesting that in my readings, in my listening to debates and discussions over the last number of years, that I have come away with a blank as to what was the value brought to this exercise by 3S (Barbados) Limited.

11.50 a.m.

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SENATOR the Hon. Miss M.P.O. McCLEAN: Madam Deputy President, I am not sure that they brought any new knowledge. They did designs and I believe with some additional exploration we can get a listing of all the flaws. They did a design which clearly was flawed because, as I have said, some of those flaws are still to be corrected or have been corrected and they are being corrected by the very people who were not accepted to do this work in the first place.

Madam Deputy President, it is my understanding that they did not bring any new technology, any new knowledge or any new particular skills that could have been passed on. Sir, in other words, when we look at the execution of the designs and the corrections that were necessary et cetera, we have a situation, that Barbadian engineering companies; Barbadian road building companies, Barbadians with the necessary skills were retained to subcontract and, Madam, these persons could have done the same thing without layering on top of it the extra cost to be borne by this company.

Madam Deputy President, I want to move away a bit from the design and I will come back to that because there is so much in this, in respect of lessons to be learnt because of the many errors, bad decisions, poor decisions and really sorry situations - those are two "S's" and maybe I will come up with another one - which leads to significant dismay and confusion on the part of people.

Madam Deputy President, I have suggested that we had a situation when this decision was taken to give a project to 3S, or to people because, as I have said, and I want to stress the point that 3S, a company called Structural Steel Solutions, LLC was started in 2005, but what I find interesting in the selection of the person or persons and then the subsequent identification of a company to do this...

Asides.

SENATOR the Hon. Miss M.P.O. McCLEAN: I believe that is how I would have to identify it. Madam Deputy President, a former teacher of mine used to say that if you have a grain of brain and an ounce of commonsense that a lot of things start to make sense. It makes me wonder whether having identified some person or persons, we did not get something created.

Madam Deputy President, in looking at this, one of the things we have to recognise is that the persons who are key players in here, come to this process with a history and a sordid history, that is another "S". I will elaborate because that is important because, as I have said before, Madam President, there are lessons to be learnt.

Madam Deputy President, the President of 3S Barbados SRL, I think that is what it became, was sued. I do not know if I am in a position to call his name but he was sued by a former employer, who happened to be a British company in the business of building major roads, bridges and flyovers.

For example, this company with which one of those principals of 3S Barbados, as it became later on, because we saw Structural Steel Solutions and then we had this other company which morphed, to use the language of the

young people, into a 3S Barbados SRL. This company was sued by a former employer because the principal worked previously with this other company but this company also had a sordid history. Madam President, this company built bridges in Jamaica, it built 13 bridges in Panama and it had operations in similar things.

Madam Deputy President, one of the interesting things that came out of this was a court case in which the principal person associated with 3S, who was the guy in Barbados, for want of a better word, testified to his involvement in the bribery - that is what the report said, not my word - something sordid, of Jamaican and Panamanian Government officials.

Madam, reference in that Court case was also made to similar corruption re bids in the Dominican Republic and, if we move outside of the Caribbean to West Africa, in Ghana. The company that he was previously involved with, who was also suing him. Madam, there is an old saying "A thief from a thief makes God laugh". Madam, the principal that we know involved with 3S was sued by his employers, who were in turn being prosecuted by the United Kingdom Serious Fraud Office.

Madam Deputy President, my question is: How did they get involved in Barbados? What has become of the concept of due diligence? Madam Deputy President, perhaps the due diligence sent people to these people, I do not know but it really has some serious lessons in there that we want to really look at.

Madam Deputy President, when we start to look at this matter, we have come to a situation where this Government is again forced to walk behind the previous Administration and do a major clean-up job. Sir, we have that situation before us and we are forced to do this. It makes us then ask the question: What about the sum of money that we talked about? Madam Deputy President, it leaves me to speak a bit about the question of the whole matter of the scope of works.

Madam Deputy President, I recall in 2006, perhaps in 2007, this whole discussion that the scope of work had changed. What was the original scope of work and how did it move from the almost US\$60 million to another figure et cetera? Madam, I did my research, I talked to people, I read my articles and I want to say that the scope of work did change somewhere along the line. Sir, I do not want to get too bogged down in that, but I want to make the point that by the time the subcontractors had bid, and a price had been agreed to, the scope of works had already changed.

Madam Deputy President, let me explain that and make the tourism industry as simple as possible. Sir, at the point in time somewhere around July 24, 2006, when the subcontractors were requested to submit their costs, what

was given would have been the costs for an amended scope of work. Sir, at the launch of the project around the same time, the former Minister responsible would have quoted a price of US\$17 million.

Madam Deputy President, the question is, if all that had happened, why is it then that we were getting a revised cost of something like US\$133 million in August 2007? Madam, perhaps, I need to go through a little bit of these things to help you to digest, Madam Deputy President, and my Honourable colleagues in this Chamber that somewhere, when this project was launched in 2006, we had the relevant Minister identifying the price at US\$70 million, which was stated at the launch and, Madam, around August 2007, I understand that they had a meeting at Government Headquarters, in which we had four Ministers of the Crown present, other stakeholders, the project team, the representatives of the Ministry and the typical type of persons who would have been involved, and a revised cost was given as US\$133 million.

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SENATOR the Hon. Miss M.P.O. McCLEAN: A revised cost was given as US\$133 million. The question is, how do we get from US\$70 million, and I want to stress the currency, because I remember, Madam Deputy President, when I was in Another Place, I used to sit and listen to people speak on these issues, and I would comment.

The question was, let us know exactly what currency we are talking about. Sir, when it started to escalate to \$133 million I noticed that the US explanation started to fall off. We are talking at this point about US dollars. So we are talking then, Madam Deputy President, of an increase of \$63 million, almost 100 per cent increase.

Madam Deputy President, my question is, what could have accounted for that? Remember, I made the point that at the end of the day when the project was launched, revisions were made to the scope of work. So when people came a year and a month later to talk about a revised price, the scope of the works had been adjusted. Unless they had opted not to share the full cost at the launch, which I would hate to think would have been done, and I am sure that would not have been the case. I hope that they would not have hidden information from the public, or if there was some level of incompetence, again, I would hate to think that was the case. Certainly, there are a lot of questions to be answered between there, in that one-year period, what happened to have pushed the cost up to this level.

We recognise that we had a project which started out at about US\$59 875, I think that is what I quoted in the beginning, moved from there within about two years to

US\$70 million, and a year later to US\$133. That really makes us ask a question, what about the quality of governance in terms of this whole arrangement?

Madam Deputy President, we are at a stage now where this Administration had, very early, to make some hard decisions. As part of the process of coming into Government, it took the time and energy to review all of these capital projects and to make some hard decisions. The decisions taken in relation to this project are known. One of the key decisions was to abandon the idea of flyovers.

I have travelled, recently, with one of my colleagues, and he drew to my attention, I think we were in Trinidad, and he said, "Look at this flyover. You notice something about this flyover and what was proposed in Barbados? This flyover is in a situation where the road is running from North to South, and the flyover is going from East to West. That is how flyovers are supposed to be."

We had a proposal in Barbados to take a flyover running from South to North, on a road that runs from South to North. What were they doing? They were taking traffic from point A and dropping it at point B, and proposing to solve congestion, and in the process ensnaring or saddling, another "S", the citizens of Barbados. I cannot spell citizens with an "S", but it sounds that way.

Madam Deputy President, saddling the people of Barbados with a bill for something which would have gone nowhere, I am sure, in addressing the problem. It was done in a manner which really bothers me, which I am sure bothers, hopefully, those who made the decision when they reflect on it, and certainly would be bothering all people who sit around this country now trying to come to solutions in relation to a problem facing the world.

Madam Deputy President, when we imagine the cost of this road, the cost of paying a set of people, who later created an entity, a significant percentage of this, the interesting thing is, when we look at the details of that court matter I referred to, the percentage that seemed to have been a magic percentage was 15 per cent. Even if it were only that, there are fees outside of commissions and so on, which would have been incurred in this.

When we look at that and we estimate as a reasonable figure of that, let us say that we were talking about the initial \$60 million and that commission was 15 per cent of that, subtracting that from \$60 million you get about \$9 million. What could that do in these times? When we start to look at what I consider to be the gross indecent waste of taxpayers' money, it hurts my heart that here we are as Barbadians struggling now to stay afloat like the rest of the world, in hard economic times, when in times of plenty there was plentiful waste, a sad situation for us to deal with.

Madam Deputy President, it really makes me wonder whether the persons who participated in this exercise...when I say persons who participated in this exercise, I want to say something about persons participating in this exercise. It is often the escape route of politicians to blame public officials. I want to probably share with you some of...

Mr. President assumed the Chair.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator McClean, continue please.

SENATOR the Hon. Miss M.P.O. McCLEAN: Mr. President, as I indicated before, it is often, and I think I used the words "escape route" for the members of the political directorate to blame public servants when things go wrong. I think in this case to blame public servants would be grossly unfair, and it would be a very sad situation to do that.

It is my understanding that a number of senior public servants cautioned the Government against going in that direction, and decisions were taken in light of that advice to ignore that advice. I believe it is an unfortunate situation to see this happen, especially when we look at the end result. We have spent significant sums of money and we believe that in a situation like this, where monies have been wasted, something really should be done. I certainly would not accept or allow anybody to blame any public servant.

In fact, it is something I will have to research. It would be useful to look and see if some of the individuals who would have been in the Ministry making decisions, and by the time this happened where they were. It is something I would certainly caution public servants in the future that when you give your best professional advice, stick to it. You are not necessarily the decision maker, but you should give that best professional advice.

I will also caution the political directorate that it is good to accept it, because at the end of the day, having not accepted it, you should not then seek to blame persons for your own bad judgements, your own deliberate decisions, and at the end of the day decisions which subject the taxpayers of Barbados to unnecessary expenses, and the loss of that money to other important projects.

S A21 12.10 p.m. Sequence 7

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Senate A21, Sequence 08, 12.10 a.m.

SENATOR the Hon. Miss M. P. O. McCLEAN: Mr. President, overall, I believe that looking at the situation, we have a matter before us which is illustrative of a number of

weaknesses in how decisions were taken in the past. It is illustrative of a number of critical lessons that we have to ensure that we learn. It is illustrative of what is less than best practice, in fact, what I would deem bad practice and therefore lessons to be learnt in the importance and the necessity of best practice.

The decision to convert this financing arrangement to a long-term loan is one which was absolutely necessary, in terms of the normal method of financing such projects. Initially, it was conceptualised to be a BOLT arrangement which, in the context of a public highway, did not then and does not now make sense. I believe that we, as a Government, would have committed ourselves not to have allowed the madness to continue; to bring the project to a sensible halt in relation to the full proposal of the project, and to ensure that we did not continue along a path of a highway to hell.

Mr. President, it has led to some serious decisions being taken. I believe, at the end of the day, it has also demonstrated that as a country, it is important that the decision-makers put the interest of Barbados first. Sir, we also have to recognise the quality of professionals and the quality of expertise that we have in the country.

Mr. President, I certainly support the passing of this Resolution.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Ince.

SENATOR J. INCE: Mr. President, I rise in support of this Resolution to borrow \$165 million. There is no doubt that road improvements and road networks are important to any developing country. They are important because road improvement brings social development. We looked at communities being developed and the relocation of industries. For example, the Warrens industry is a result of an improved highway. We also looked at Six Roads and Oistins. These things are important, so we cannot argue with the efforts made by Governments to improve the road network of a country.

Mr. President, I have a challenge with the management of the finances and the project itself. Let us take a look at where it all started. The improvement of the road network, commonly called the ABC Highway Project, started against a background of Cricket World Cup 2007. We were given promises that this project would have been completed in time for Cricket World Cup 2007. The studies were done by the Ministry of Public Works to show what types of improvements were necessary, the traffic flow and what problems could be created if we had congestion. Mr. President, in all of that, the Ministry was left behind in the initial stages of this project.

Mr. President, it was only when the Democratic Labour Party came to power and saw the mass confusion, the mismanagement and the abuse of public funds that the Ministry got involved. The Prime Minister made a decision to remove a company called 3S, which had no idea of even building a common dog kennel, but we brought them into this country to construct a highway.

Mr. President, they went ahead, again against the advice of the technocrats in the Ministry. They went to the financiers and established a special purpose vehicle to build this Highway. The financiers said to the Government at the time that they are going to manage. Sir, you could imagine financiers saying to a Government - and they agreed to it - that they are going to build, operate, lease and transfer? This special purpose vehicle was a company called ABC Project Corp., and the purpose was that it was 100 per cent owned by the financiers.

Mr. President, what I found amazing is that a Cabinet that boasts of outstanding legal luminaries, brains of economists, brains of brilliance...

Mr. PRESIDENT: I do not like to interrupt the Senator, but to the best of my knowledge, there has been no Cabinet that boasts of any of those things. I would like you to be a little more temperate, as you discuss the Cabinets of Barbados.

SENATOR J. INCE: Thank you, Mr. President.

Sir, we heard boasts about the brilliance and when a sector that could have this reservoir of talent, brilliance and outstanding economists, could agree to a BOLT arrangement for a public access road, what were they thinking? They said that it can be done, no questions, we can lease a public road for 25 years. Sir, we are going to lease the Highway to the financiers, and if we do not pay, the financiers have a right to get up one morning and block off the road, because we defaulted in monthly payments. This is the situation when we talk about governance.

Mr. President, in the initial stages, they carried out a launch for the construction. I also wonder about the \$60 million in the initial stages for the construction. It jumped from \$60 million to \$70 million; from \$70 million, no excuses, no bills of quantities, no reports, but they increased it to \$80 million on the premise that if costs increased, you would have had enough funds available to finish the project. In reality, this project was supposed to cost the taxpayers of Barbados US\$80 million and we can do the conversion, approximately BDS\$160 million.

Sir, against that background, there was a further situation where 3S, the company that was contracted to do the road, made a proposal to Government of approximately US\$59 million, about BDS\$122 million. This was the first

proposal. They stated that this amount would include the overpasses, what we call the flyovers, complete the expansion, and carry out the studies. Sir, that is what this money was supposed to do.

Senate A21, sequence 08, 12:20:12

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SENATOR J. INCE: Against all the advice and incomplete designs, the Government of the day went ahead and built the road on hindsight. They were building a road like throwing darts. It reminds me of giving a guy a diesel truck, the guy fills it with gasoline and expects it to function. They were given a diesel truck and they filled the truck with gasoline and within eight months to a year the truck started to malfunction and they decided then to allow the Ministry to have it. These are the types of things that I question.

Clearly, Mr. President, the Government of the day did not understand what a BOLT arrangement was, but they proceeded with it, so now we have a situation where the construction of this road is costing the taxpayers of Barbados \$165 million to correct the problems that were created due to no fault of theirs. Mr. President, if you had to do it mathematically, you would have seen that the increases were tremendous. Within a year, you had a 93.80 per cent, almost 94 per cent increase, in the cost of that road.

Mr. President, I found it amazing that all the present Government did was to move water bills from \$20 to \$32, a 60 per cent increase, and the Opposition is making noise talking about the massacre of poor people and draconian measures when they increased the cost of a road in less than eight months by 94 per cent. They did not hear from any reports. They did not want any reports but they are talking about increases. We are talking about this road structure and the final figure is what has to be dealt with.

Mr. President, this Democratic Labour Party, on coming to office, realised that if something was not done, this road would never come to an end. Mr. President, there is something that my father said to me. I am kind of saddened that he is not alive today to see or hear me in the Senate.

My father said to me: "Son, I want you to remember one thing, bad management is worse than witchcraft." He said that with witchcraft you have a point to start and a point to end but with bad management you do not know where it starts or where it ends and you do not know what it is going to destroy in the process. Mr. President, this is an example of this Highway Expansion Project.

Mr. President, if the Honourable David Thompson did not make a strong decision to remove 3S (Barbados) Limited and restructure this project, we would be in a situation where the bad management would not come to an end. This contract was issued to 3S (Barbados) Limited without it making a tender. 3S (Barbados) Limited was given this contract based on a proposal that was sent early. They gave 3S (Barbados) Limited permission to go ahead and do what it liked.

Mr. President, I want the Upper Chamber to take note that the Memorandum of Understanding only came into effect eight months after the road construction was started. Before that, there was nothing in place. They took \$60 million of the taxpayers of Barbados money and gave it to a company called 3S (Barbados) Limited to build what they like and no questions were being asked.

Mr. President, at the completion of Phase I, there was mass financial confusion. 3S (Barbados) Limited are saying that the cost of Phase I was \$117 million, excluding the designs which were not completed, which cost \$9 million. Mr. President, I would love to see those designs. We are now saddled in Phase 1 with a cost of \$126 million.

Mr. President, I am not surprised at this type of behaviour and I do not want this Upper Chamber to be surprised either. This is nothing new for the last Administration. For the 14 years they were in office they never completed a project within budget or on time. The building at Newton which started at \$18.7 million is now costing the taxpayers \$25 million. The Crab Hill Police Station, Greenland Landfill and the St. Leonard's School cannot be done. They had the greatest economist and the greatest legal minds on the earth, yet you cannot point to one project in those 14 years that does not have a problem.

Mr. President, I am not surprised at the road project. It is inherent behaviour. When behaviour becomes inherent, mismanagement of public funds is also inherent. Mr. President, I am appalled that the Government of the day asked no questions. When the Democratic Labour Party took office in 2008, and the examinations were done, we were heavily criticised for it. The former Minister of Public Works said they had tax structures in place to recover the cost. Mr. President, as a financier, I want to know what tax structures there were? I would love to see the tax structures they had in place to recover this misspending.

Senate A21 Sequence 9

12.30 p.m.

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SENATOR J. INCE: Mr. President, we continued along that vein, and at the end of the day, we have to ask ourselves the question whether or not procedures were followed. Sir, the answer is "No". No procedures were followed, no management structures were in place, no attention was paid to the technocrats within the Ministry of Public Works. They were actually placed on the back burner and then the Opposition went on a crusade to criticise public servants. Sir, not only that. During this project, they took it to another level and questioned the ability and integrity of the Auditor General.

Mr. Speaker, the Auditor General was nice when they were in power and everything was going wrong, but everything was all right. How come that the integrity of the Auditor General, a competent individual, a public servant who has done yeoman service for Barbados, out of the clear blue sky his integrity is now being questioned, all because of a Report that was submitted on a road that went out of control.

Mr. President, there are no apologies to be made about what the Democratic Labour Party is doing. We have no apologies to make, none whatsoever, make no mistake about that. Sir, at the end of the day, we must protect Barbadians and we must protect the monies that Barbadians have entrusted in us.

This \$165 million is going to cost us almost \$229 million, when you work out the interest rates. Sir, if my mathematics serves me right, on \$165 million, 8.5 per cent interest should be around \$13.2 million. If you multiply that figure by 10, you should get approximately \$133 million, plus \$165 million.

Mr. President, I would want my Senator colleague, Senator Symmonds, to correct me if I am wrong about the cost of this road. That money, Mr. President, could have created a type of stimulus package that is needed in this current environment. If we had to take that interest, it can create a stimulus package for small businesses.

It can be allocated to the Welfare Department. It can be allocated to Urban Development Commission. It can be allocated right across Barbados. It can also be used to improve the working conditions of the public servants, who the Opposition has criticised.

Mr. President, when we look at the use of funds as far as this road expansion is concerned, I am saying yes, the road expansion is important. I am saying yes, I would not criticise the initiatives of the former Government. I would say yes, the initiative was correct, but that the management and execution of that initiative leaves a lot to be desired.

I would wish to say that, at the end of the day, it is not going to go away. Sir, they have a lot of answers for the public of Barbados and the Democratic Labour Party, the Prime Minister the Honourable David Thompson, will take whatever action is necessary to protect the citizens of this country. We will deliver to them a quality and efficient service.

Mr. President, I thank you.

SENATOR the Hon. H. LaV. BENN: Mr. President, I rise for a few brief moments because the Resolution before this Honourable Senate is to approve the borrowing under the Special Loans Act, Cap. 105 by the Government of \$165 million for the Barbados National Bank Inc., for the purpose of financing the Barbados Road Infrastructure Improvement Project. Mr. President, one of the reasons I would like to spend a few minutes is that the general public needs to have a clear understanding why we are borrowing this money.

Sir, only last week I was some place in the rural district and a citizen of this country, who listens and follows debates in both Houses and reads well, indicated to me that she is watching us because she heard that Government is borrowing money. She wants to know why Government is borrowing this money and how this money would be used. Sir, all eyes are upon this Government as we seek, from time to time, to correct a lot of the ills that would have happened previously.

Mr. President, you would remember that, over the past few weeks and months, we have been engaged in a number of valuations of one kind or another, in completing projects and programmes that were started by the then Administration, where the Democratic Labour Party, now in office, has to put properly in place.

Sir, I want to say that anything that starts badly or wrong will end badly or wrong. The original tender process for the infrastructural work on the ABC Highway was started wrong. It was seriously compromised. There was total disregard for the tendering process from the very beginning.

Mr. President, in 2002, a Paper was submitted to Cabinet seeking approval for the engagement of consultants. Sir, let me repeat, in June 2002, a Paper was submitted to Cabinet seeking approval for the engagement of consultants for the widening of the ABC Highway. The objective of that project was to identify the solution to alleviate traffic congestion along the highway.

Mr. President, there were some amendments and corrections done but in August 2005, the Cabinet authorised the Ministry to sign a draft Memorandum of Understanding with the firm 3S (Barbados) Limited. The

Cabinet further agreed that the then Ministry of Finance would issue a letter of comfort to the Barbados National Bank, to the effect that Government will undertake to reimburse 3S (Barbados) Limited for monies spent or liabilities incurred.

Mr. President, a proposal was received from 3S (Barbados) Limited before invitation letters were issued to the other bidders. I want to repeat. A proposal was received from 3S (Barbados) Limited before invitation letters were issued. Those who were invited to tender, therefore, expressed concern about the difficulties they encountered when vying for the contract. Sir, that smacks of suspicion. The other bidders complained that the time allotted to them to respond was short and that the tender invitation lacked details.

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SENATOR the Hon. H. LaV. BENN: Sir, the then Government, in 2006, gave approval for the amended scope of work of the project, which included the construction of overpass bridges, the widening of the highway, the synchronisation of traffic signals and a review of the Bridgetown Traffic Study.

Mr. President, this scope of work was to include a Section 1 and work on Section 2. Sir, included in Section 1 was to prepare and submit bills of quantities for the full cost of Section 1 of the project, and in Section 2 there were to complete designs for the subsection of Section 2 of the project and submit designs and documents for all the said work to the project sponsor for approval and notwithstanding the fact that there was completion of technical drawings; no completion of specifications; no bills of quantity; no agreement of cost and no formal contract documentation, Cabinet still gave the go ahead for the project. Mr. President, I want to indicate to you that anything that is started incorrectly, or in haste, will end that way.

Mr. President, in keeping with the terms of the Memorandum of Understanding, 3S failed to submit complete road widening drawings; detailed bills of quantities and costings. Sir, as the learned Senator Ince indicated, my question is this: How could you have a Cabinet that we heard is so filled with intelligence and the greatest gurus in economic affairs and financing, what informed their decision to go ahead with a company called 3S, despite the fact that there was no submission of what I indicated?

Mr. President, in addition, no agreement was reached with respect to the legal documents associated with the project. Sir, these legal documents were the

implementation agreement, the project management agreement, the employer's requirement, lease and lease back agreement associated with the special purpose vehicle and maintenance agreement. Sir, none of those agreements were provided.

Mr. President, as a result of not reaching an agreement, additional Letters of Comfort had to be issued to the Barbados National Bank to continue the financing of the project so that work could continue uninterrupted. Mr. President, the bank itself expressed some concern about the continuous use of short-term commercial paper and indicated that they wished to see the long-term financing finalised.

Mr. President, I am indicating to you that we all should cry shame on our own behalf, and on behalf of the former Administration. Sir, they did not cry shame of themselves because they had no shame, and they decided they would go ahead and do what they wished.

Sir, one of the good things about it is that the Auditor General in his report indicated that if the Ministry responsible had waited for a full design and final construction cost, that they would have been able to evaluate and avoid the issues that the project had encountered with respect to the cost. Mr. President, if they had waited for the full designs and the final construction costs, it would not be costing this country well in excess of the \$165 million that it is now costing us.

Mr. President, I am urging the public to listen and find out why the Democratic Labour Party is borrowing money. Sir, I am thankful that the learned Senator Ince, in his opening speech to this Honourable Senate, could give us so much food for thought, and to educate us, and give us a proper background that was seriously lacking before.

Sir, the Democratic Labour Party Administration assumed office on January 16, 2009, and consequent upon that assumption of office, instituted a review of all projects, including the Barbados Network Infrastructural Improvement Project and Cabinet, at a meeting in February, made the decision that Phase 1 would be completed, but that Phase 2, comprising the overpass bridges would be terminated.

Sir, in the light of the misunderstanding between the firm 3S and the Government of Barbados, with respect to the cost of Section 1, 3S Barbados and the Ministry had several meetings, including one chaired by the Attorney-General in an effort to reach agreement on the contract because none of this was done before.

Mr. President, the new Government publicly expressed dissatisfaction with the progress on the project

and hence, as a consequent, 3S Barbados vacated the site on July 7, 2008.

Mr. President, what you are seeing now being done on the highway, is being completed by Rayside Concrete Works and C.O. Williams Construction, two of the original subcontractors of the project. Sir, somebody asked the question if nobody got charged or jailed?

Sir, I remember many years ago when advice was given to the former Administration on another project called Greenland, that the technocrats and persons who had spent decades in that area, also persons living in that area - I cannot call names because I have not asked permission to do so - advised the former Administration, headed by the Barbados Labour Party against the work, but against the good advice they went ahead and spent millions of dollars in a facility that has not yet been used and, perhaps, will not be used for that original purpose.

Sir, the significant thing about it is that the then Minister, who had responsibility for that project, said after the responsibility was taken from her and she was no longer in the Cabinet, indicated to the public that she never agreed. Do you remember that, Mr. President?

Mr. PRESIDENT: I do not wish to be involved in the debate. Please do not involve me in the debate. I remember what I have to remember.

SENATOR the Hon. H.LaV. BENN: Sir, often times when we speak, you remind us that we must address you. Sir, I am raising the point that in this particular project with 3S, a Minister of Government, under the past Administration, who had responsibility for transport and works, sought to absolve himself from any blame for the hiring of the firm 3S. Now, I suspect that if everything worked out well, that everybody would stand up, raise their hands and take a bow, but this project ran sour...

Asides.

SENATOR the Hon. H.LaV. BENN: Yes, the three "S". Mr. President, the Minister who had responsibility for this project told the Other Place that 3S was brought to the Minister of Public Works by the staff. Sir, could you imagine that? He said it has nothing to do with him as Minister, that they did not handpick 3S and that there was a tendering process.

Mr. President, we have already made it clear that the tendering process was compromised and, Sir, I wish that when persons are given responsibilities as Ministers, sometimes things will go right and sometimes things will go wrong and if they are going to take the accolades for what go right, they must accept responsibility when things go wrong.

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SENATOR the Hon. H.LaV. BENN: Sir, I know why the Honourable Minister, and I will not mention it in here, would have said that he was not to blame, because 3S, and I say 3S because I do not know what 3S stands for. All along, during the period leading up to the campaign, I heard how 3S made contributions here and there. I thought it was Samson, Saul and Samuel, in the Bible, because I was reading my Bible.

When I recognised that this 3S had submitted a proposal at a cost of US\$59 875 million that would have included the overpass, two monuments and parks, and then represented it as a tendering process in January - Sir, do you imagine what we are talking about? Therefore, we are now way past 94 per cent in increased cost, and the public is prepared to sit back and accept that, apparently, but will grill and haul the new Democratic Labour Party Government over the coals, whenever there is an increase to correct some of the problems that we came and found, when the Democratic Labour Party was in Opposition.

Sir, before I close, I want to say to the public, through you, this new Administration, in all of our dealings, we intend to be above board. We intend to spend whatever money that is available to the country wisely. One of the things that I really feel good about is, every time we have a money debate, or we have a discussion on money, you hear the now Opposition seeking to question how the Democratic Labour Party Government is seeking to spend.

Sir, despite the economic downturn, we were able, last year, to grant a decent increase to public servants in Barbados. Earlier this year, we gave them backpay that was due to them, and were still able in April 2009 to honour the second year of the increase, something that a lot of the other countries in the Caribbean, and the wider Region are struggling to do. This is an assurance that we intend to be prudent in the management of the public affairs.

I want to ask the present Minister of Public Works and Transport, now that the Other Place is in recess, to take the opportunity to drive through the countryside, particularly Boscabelle, French Village and Mount Brevitor Road, and give us an opportunity as well to benefit from some good roads.

It hurts me to know that we had a Parliamentary Representative for over 24 years, 14 of which as Prime Minister, and the roads in the rural side of St. Peter are still in such a bad state. I wish anybody to drive from Mount Brevitor to French Village, even if you are driving, you

will twist your ankle. The road is that bad, and there are other things to be done in the rural parts of St. Peter.

Sir, 44 started prior to the last Rlection, 44 roads, some of which were neither started by the Rural Development Commission nor the Urban Development Commission, and some of which were not started by the Ministry of Transport and Works, particularly the ones in St. Peter. Sir, I know of a road right now in Mile-and-a-Quarter, St. Peter, and one in Tom Bend Gap, Ashton Hall, St. Peter, that were started under the control of the entities, but were organised through, maybe the Representative, with a large contractor building the roads.

Now that we are seeking under the Urban Development Commission and the Rural Development Commission, and after a lot of questions, and suggestions to have the roads finished, no records are there on the books to show the cost of the roads. This is a clear manifestation of what prevailed under the last Administration.

Sir, this Resolution before us, I am urging our colleagues in the Senate to be wise to give it your fullest attention, as we in this Administration of this new Government seek to rectify a number of the ills. This 3S should never have been granted the contract. They knew absolutely nothing of the . . .

While I am on St. Peter, I should not leave St. Peter without even talking about the St. Joseph Hospital because a lot of song and dance were also made about that when we, after a lot of signatures, sought to put a facility in place that would have serviced the residents of Barbados, but particularly those in the northern parishes. A Commission of Inquiry was done and persons held up to public ridicule.

Sir, do you know one of the things about the Democratic Labor Party Government, when we came and found things a certain way, we never carried out a Commission of Inquiry, not a fellow got a day. You go back to the days of Duffus and the Hospital, the Arawak Cement Plant, and that is what the public is saying to us. If you came and found things like that, somebody should be called to account.

The same prison that was built at Dodds for astronomical amounts, whoever is responsible should be spending at least a day in that facility, but nobody has been called to account. The integrity of the Honourable Attorney-General has been called into question. Why, rather than people taking responsibility, but for their poor action we are faced with this sort of stuff?

Mr. President, I want to close with those few words. I want to urge our people... I have not said anything of lighting the highway from Warrens to Mile-and-a-Quarter.

This Highway has been in place throughout the tenure of office of the Barbados Labour Party, not a light. Sir, the only light we ever saw on that highway is the moon shining and the stars are out, not a light.

Sir, can you imagine we had Ministers of Government from that rural area of St. Andrew, who would drive from town to St. Peter and St. Lucy on a daily basis, and not a fellow could come to the Other Place, or even in here, and seek to put up two fire flies or a smut lamp, so that people could see on their way down. I am calling, as well, on the Honourable Minister of Public Works, to give serious thought to having adequate lighting to the Highway stretching from Warrens to St. Lucy's Parish Church.

Sir, with those words, I am much obliged.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Inniss, you have the Floor.

SENATOR Miss P.I. INNIS: Mr. President, I would like to add my support to this Resolution, the borrowing of \$165 million from the BNB. From the outset I would like to say clearly this is one Resolution that has drained me. I have listened for the last two years to this matter of 3S. In the past two years I have heard many stories that have plagued 3S. Coming to this Honourable Chamber I got the opportunity to peruse a lot of the documents.

S A21 13.00 p.m. Sequence 12

Wednesday, August 12, 2009

Senate A21, Sequence 13, 1.00 p.m.

SENATOR Mrs. P.I. INNIS: In the year and a half that we have been here, this document has me drained, exhausted, and I am hurt even as I speak to you today.

Mr. President, I have left partisan politics eons ago and now I am looking at a situation where strange things have happened. I can even say that I am afraid. When we looked at what happened as related to 3S, this is going to go down in history. Sir, you know how we have little stories like Mary, Mary Quite Contrary that related to Queen Mary and a number of issues, I bet, Mr. President, that from this day on, people will say, oh, you are working a 3S. My fear is that nothing like this happens again in this country. It cannot be allowed to happen.

Sir, today, we have heard a number of the Senators speak about the problems related to 3S and I wanted to offer my little piece, as I understand it because, of course, as I told you, I listened to the discussions, the debates and all that have been said during the Election and further on, but you know the sequence of events can sometimes get

lost, and you do not grasp the magnitude of the dilemma. I now grasp it, Sir, and a lot of Barbadians sometimes are not quite clear about the sequence of events.

Mr. President, I am so thankful for your indulgence because whereas I see today in the Upper Chamber that a number of the Independent Senators are not here, some of which have sent excuses, a few are here and whereas the Opposition Senators are not here. Of course, one of the Senators was here but he left. I do not know but, it maybe that he is due in Court, Sir, of course, not in a legal matter but that is another issue. My contention here is that it seems to have been given little attention but, Mr. President, it has great significance to me.

Asides.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator, pay no attention to anything, except what the President is doing.

SENATOR Mrs. P.I. INNIS: Indeed, Sir. I thank you, Mr. President.

Sir, my concern, and the matter that I am grieved about is in regard to the way in which we have an Opposition, as we heard in the Other Place, seeming to make this entire Resolution and all that this present Government has done about 3S and the borrowing of this \$165 million, as if there is some kind of transition; that the former Administration, in dealing with the ABC Highway, has started a good work and it will be continued. The Lord forbids, Sir, that understanding goes down in history. Sir, there has been no transition.

I heard in the Other Place it being said that the former Government started, and this present Government has come into power and found things in place. As related to 3S, that is not the case. Mr. President, they said that everything is based on a Barbados Labour Party programme, and this is what grieves me. Sir, we have heard a lot of discourse.

The Honourable Leader of the Senate has spoken and some of my colleagues have spoken on matters that profound them. I wanted to just mention one or two points in chronological order, Sir, hoping not to burden you, but which caused me great distress, and which Barbadians need to understand.

We heard one of the Senators who said that in 2002, the then Administration invited Expressions of Interest, and that it was for expanding the Highway. Sir, we did not hear, as has been said that in 2002, after seven companies submitted Expressions of Interest, as well as Field Proposals, that it was done, and as the people say, the dog was dead. Sir, it came to nothing so we skipped, and that is the first thing that has me.

Sir, let us come to 2004. Again, Senator Benn spoke to this point but I want to belabour it just one more time. According to the Auditor General, on November 19, 2004, this grand novel 3S submitted a proposal. The Auditor General writes on page 1, No. 4, that on December, 2, 2004, "Cabinet had approved...":

Sir, what happened to the tendering process? I heard in the Other Place, "Oh, tenders went out, seven and eight," and all kinds of anomalies. The Auditor General said that on November 19, 2004 3S submitted a proposal and on December 2, 2004 "Cabinet had approved in principle, the Barbados Road Network Infrastructure Improvement." Sir, Barbadians have to remember these dates.

The Cabinet spoke of it being a first-ranked firm. Government was convinced that it was one of the few firms offering steel overpass solutions, so the sequence of events now follows on, that the Auditor General said, and I quote:

"...even though due diligence conducted at the request of the Ministry stated 3S started operations between 2003/2005, and there was no evidence that it was a construction firm at all."

Sir, I would like to add to what Senator McClean had said. There is no evidence that it is a construction firm, so this is the Auditor General putting out one flag of concern. Then we move on.

Mr. President, of course, under the Financial Rules we know that from 1991, Government is required to go to public tender for the undertaking of work, services or procurement of goods in excess of \$100 000.

Mr. President, so you see that sequence of events, where I go here from November 19, 2004 and by December 2, 2004, they were being approved in principle. The Letters of Invitation went out December 23, 2004 so they approved in principle and then weeks after, they sent out Letters of Invitation.

Then, by December 15, one company had submitted a proposal, as one of the Senators spoke about earlier, and then 3S. Sir, I heard in the Other Place, and I heard here how 3S resubmitted. It was already approved, so the whole tendering process was thrown off.

The Auditor General said:

"Based on the sequence of events, it is clear that the firm awarded the contract should not have been considered, since it was not invited to tender."

I have heard, as has been said in the Other Place, Sir, talk about the Auditor General and how the Report that was submitted by him should be questioned. The Auditor

General, in his unbiased Reports, listed a whole range of things that were done as related to this matter. Interviews by officers of the Ministry of Public Works, interviews of Members of 3S, examination of accounts, examination of a Cabinet discussion, examination of MOUs, correspondence and review of literature.

Sir, he went through the gamut and these are the things that came up. Sir, we found out after that happened and the Letters of Invitation went out, the Letters of Invitation, as has been said by Ministry reports and by the Auditor General, did not have clear scope of works, as we heard today; had restricted time frames, so people did not tender. Sir, it is very clear that the proposal from 3S was approved before Letters of Invitation went out.

Then, Sir, based on that first scope of work, while Letters of Invitation stated that the Planning and Priorities Committee of the Cabinet approved for design and the construction of overpasses and intersection, there was confusion because the Cabinet was saying that the number of sites were undetermined. The Ministry was saying that it was another thing, so the scope of work relating to what was done, was confusing.

Mr. President, the Letter of Invitation said that there would be widening from the Darcy Scott Roundabout to the Garfield Sobers Roundabout.

Senate A21, sequence 13, 13:10:14

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SENATOR Miss P.I. INNISS: The Cabinet approved the widening from the Everton Weekes Roundabout to the Norman Niles Roundabout and even that was confusing as they were not quite sure where they were widening, as related to the scope of work, the Letters of Invitation and Cabinet approval.

Mr. President, there was even disagreement between the Minister of Public Works and the contractors for the scope of work. I want to get to the Ministry's Evaluation Committee because, as has been mentioned before, we are in a sorry state if after a Government had done, or not done something, the fault lies with the civil servants. This is the same Ministry's Evaluation Committee that in Another Place was said to have been responsible for the 3S (Barbados) Limited approval.

The Ministry's Evaluation Committee felt that the overpasses might not even be necessary at all since the critical traffic data had not been collected. Up to this day in Barbados, the traffic data has not been collected. The same Evaluation Committee, after disagreeing, did all within their power to deal with the confusion. After the Evaluation Committee said that the critical traffic data was not present,

they then were told to evaluate these two firms, the one that submitted, and 3S (Barbados) Limited that submitted even before the tenders came.

Mr. President, the Auditor General then reports that the criteria for evaluating the proposal was deficient. I heard in the Other Place the former Minister of Transport and Works saying that the Evaluation Committee made up the criteria, not the civil servants. The Evaluation Committee said there are problems and they were not taken into consideration at all. It was developed by the Ministry.

Mr. President, here comes this poor Evaluation Committee having problems with it because they did not have the critical data, and then being given evaluation systems that they were not in agreement with, so they spewed out something that was necessary.

Mr. President, the Auditor General said that neither bidder submitted designs or drawings but gave broad indications of what could be provided. The Evaluation Committee judged what the Ministry described as expressions of interest rather than proposals.

It goes on to say that the appointed and preferred contractor, based on these expressions of interest, was unacceptable, so there were have another sign. Mr. President, both the Auditor General and the Ministry said that it was unacceptable, but the confusion continued.

Mr. President, this Barbados Road Network Infrastructure improvement Project, as has been said here, was supposed to be a BOLT arrangement. Under BOLT arrangements, many things are gained. Mr. President, Barbadians have to understand this. Sir, under a BOLT arrangement you gain a number of things. I am lowering my voice because they say that when you lower your voice sometimes people hear better.

You not only gain innovation, you gain the fact that it obviates the need for Government to borrow to finance infrastructure investments and you ensure a high quality by the contractor since the contractor is responsible for the maintenance during the lease period. In layman terms, under this grand BOLT arrangement, 3S (Barbados) Limited or Steal, Steal, Steal, would be responsible for the maintenance of the highway for 25 years.

Mr. President, I heard all over the place that there was a BOLT arrangement but there was no BOLT arrangement. The Auditor General on page 4 of the same document, which is a document of this House, says that the correspondence on file from the eventual financiers of this Project...

The Auditor General goes on to say that it is uncertain why Government, at the time boasting of a BOLT

arrangement, would have conducted direct negotiations with a financier to provide funding to 3S even before Letters of Invitation were sent out. This is what the Government did claiming it to be a BOLT arrangement. The Government at that time went into direct negotiations, which the Auditor General says is uncertain, continuing then in the saga.

Mr. President, it was later revealed that the former Government, speaking about BOLT, said that it would carry out the maintenance of the Highway, therefore nullifying any benefit th BOLT arrangement offered in this regard and so we are in this predicament.

Mr. President, I heard Members of the Opposition in the Other Place only a few days ago asking how is Government going to maintain the ABC Highway now. They mashed up the BOLT arrangement, and after doing that, they say that Government has to tell them what major programmes would be put in place to maintain it.

They then went on to say that there is not enough lighting on the Highway, that 20 lights are out and that the signage on the Highway is not international. After they did what they did, they are now going to come here to ask about maintenance.

Mr. President, there is the problem of drainage at the Bussa Roundabout. They destroyed the BOLT arrangement, if there ever was one, and now Government has to look at maintenance. This is what is spoken of in this \$165 million.

Mr. President, 3S (Barbados) Limited brought nothing to the table. Furthermore, as it relates to BOLT arrangements, which are new to Barbados, it has often been stipulated, even by the Auditor General, that in such conditions and in other jurisdictions Government would usually compare the cost of the project done by traditional methods, which is Government funding, versus a BOLT arrangement. As we said just now, 3S (Barbados) Limited was tendering US\$59 870 000 and the other firm proposed \$60 million.

Mr. President, the Auditor General on page 28 noted that the Ministry prepared an estimate of the project in April 2005 at \$57.7 million, so we are saddled with 3S (Barbados) Limited, which had Government financing, never went to tender, proposing \$57 875 million. Mr. President, in September of 2005, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed where the design phase started, but there were problems.

Sir the same Evaluation Committee, the civil servants, had to deal with those who are making the decisions. Who is making the decision? There was a Government, so when you try to throw it off on civil

servants, or throw it off any other way....The civil servants objected and said: "Help us. There is no final scope for the project. There are no design drawings. There are no details about bills, quantities or anything about rates. We cannot start."

Sir, do you know that even after nothing was done correctly, 3S (Barbados) Limited wanted to start? The poor Ministry now in a "cuffuffle", stated it did not have the permission to modify the first Memorandum of Understanding and said that the Cabinet Paper needs to be adhered to by this grand 3S (Barbados) Limited.

Senate A21 Sequence 14

1.20 p.m.

Wednesday, August 12, 2009

SENATOR Miss P.I. INNIS: Mr. President, do you know what happened at this stage? Sir, a Cabinet Paper was withdrawn. A second Cabinet Paper came into place and the second Supplementary Memorandum of Understanding that we have heard about came into place. This second Supplementary said that a rolling basis will now start. Sir, in no way were persons who had the integrity to make sure that things were put in the right manner cautions were heard.

Sir, we have a second Memorandum of Understanding where they are saying that 3S (Barbados) Limited will continue on a rolling basis. Sir, do you know what the rolling basis then said? In essence, with this grand rolling basis, 3S (Barbados) Limited started in July 24, 2006. The Auditor General came again and talked about the Ministry's concern about starting on a rolling basis.

Mr. President, you cannot want a more caution. Sir, the Auditor General goes on and talks about the potential to increase the length of the contract to create longer project cost had been realised and that it could have been avoided.

Sir, Barbados, under a former Administration was shooting in the dark. Sir, they were shooting all over the place, then darkness fell and persons were caught entangled in a number of problems because they realised that after doing all of this, 3S (Barbados) Limited had not even signed a contract.

Mr. President, I heard many persons speaking about the fact that there was a Memorandum of Understanding and that the Memorandum of Understanding is a legal contract. Sir, the Memorandum of Understanding stated clearly that it shall govern the relationship between the parties until a formal BOLT contract was implemented. The Memorandum of Understanding itself said there had to be a formal contract. Sir, that never happened.

Mr. President, the Financial Rule, No. 127 stipulates that a contract should be drawn up for the undertaking of work and services in excess of \$100 000. Sir, that never happened. Sir, no wonder the Auditor General said clearly that the Ministry is in breach of the Rules. Sir, this is the dilemma that hurts me. What can we do as an entire nation to make sure that what happened with 3S (Barbados) Limited would never happen in Barbados again, where Rules upon Rules were breached, where a Ministry and Ministry officials had to say stop, do not do this.

Sir, if I have a house 2x4 and I want somebody to paint it, I am going to find out first off what would be the cost of the paint, how much the person is going to charge for that paint job and how long that paint job is going to take. I am not going to let him say: "Madam, I am going to paint this first column and then I am going to tell you how much it is going to cost and what you have to do."

Sir, that is exactly what happened in this country, Barbados, 3S (Barbados) Limited said, you know what, we are going to build a little piece of the highway, then we are going to get back to the Government and tell you what it costs. That was the rolling basis. They said they would build a little piece, then they would do some designs about it later on, then they would give those designs to Government.

Mr. President, it means that under such arrangements you cannot tell how long something is going to take, when it is going to finish, what it is going to cost, you cannot tell anything. Can you believe that this great country was in this state under a former Administration? Sir, no formal contract was negotiated because they could not agree on rates because, in the first place, they had never set rates in their contracts.

Mr. President, I would want to say that if you are having work done and the workman does not tell you what he is going to charge you, if you leave that to chance, that workman could charge you any figure. Sir, that is what happened in this country under a former Administration.

Mr. President, the present Government is not continuing where the former Government has left off. There was no agreement on legal documents. Sir, as I read this information, I had to stop, there was no agreement on any legal documents. Sir, 3S (Barbados) Limited did not even want to sign workers related contracts, neither were there any design drawings nor any Bill of Quantity.

In essence, the security was that the bank would get Letters of Comfort from the Government, the Government was saying that it was going to secure the monies by Letters of Comfort. The bank itself was in trouble and inquired from Government how many Letters of Comfort was Government going to send. Sir, the icing on the cake

was when a former Administration was butting and running around because they could not get 3S (Barbados) Limited hold back in November 2007 because of an upcoming election.

Sir, they were frantic, and 3S (Barbados) Limited finally said that they wanted \$117 million. Sir, 3S (Barbados) Limited would have to say that because there was no contracts. There was nothing and so they could say what they like.

Mr. President, 3S (Barbados) Limited wanted \$170 million, when it was supposed to have been US\$60 million for the entire project. At the last stage of frantic, 3S (Barbados) Limited said that they want \$170 million for the first part of the project.

Sir, 3S (Barbados) Limited then went on and said that it wanted another \$9 million for the detailed drawings. They then stopped and said that if Government wanted them to do Phase 2 of the project, Government would have to pay them another \$145 million. Sir, that was going on just before Elections in this country.

Mr. President, I am not talking politics, I am talking about the reality of what happened. Lord help us in this country, if Elections had not come and a new Government had not come into place, where would 3S (Barbados) Limited have carried us? Sir, a new Government came in and said: "Stop. This cannot happen. You cannot work like this."

Mr. President, what a new Government said was that it does not understand what was going on and that there does not seem to be any BOLT arrangement because \$117 million was already in Letters of Comfort to the bank. Sir, this \$165 million, as has been said by Honourable Senators, is not a new loan. It will settle amounts due, legal fees and a number of other things. Sir, finally, this strange rigamarole has come to an end.

Mr. President, we are here now, 3S (Barbados) Limited, a runaway mad horse, has been bridled. Sir, the former Government could not get it bridled. Sir, all kinds of Ministers came in and tried to hold down 3S (Barbados) Limited but could not get it done or they did not want to do it. Sir, what is interesting is that, as the Leader in the Other Place said, Barbados has to be even more clear until further action is taken. Sir, when I heard that I said yes, I wonder what that further action was going to be. Sir, I am hoping for that because I have never seen so many breaches in Barbados.

Mr. President, now suddenly work is being done in Barbados. Anybody traversing the roads of Barbados would see that work is being done. The ABC Highway is

being completed. Sir, it is not a continuum. There is a new policy regarding the ABC Highway.

Sir, let us look at Pine Hill Road. It is beautiful. Let us look at Britton's Hill. Sir, for all my life, I know Britton's Hill Road to be like that, with drainage problems being experienced in that area. Sir, Britton's Hill has now become a beauty as one drives along that road.

If you drive along the Pine and pass the Ministry of Public Works and Transport, you would see that the men there seem to have a zest about them. They are working. Let us look at Station Hill. In all my life I have never seen work being done on Station Hill. Sir, for more than 15 years, Station Hill Road presented a number of problems, and now suddenly Station Hill is having a facelift. Sir, even before Crop Over, I heard the residents of Station Hill expressing confidence that Station Hill would be ready in time for Crop Over, for the revellers to traverse that road. Sir, what did those great technical workers of the Ministry of Public Works do? They did whatever they had to do, in order for the revellers to traverse that road. They are now continuing with the road works.

Mr. President, the Ministry of Public Works and Transport has a new impetus and it should have, since the things that were happening when 3S (Barbados) Limited was going up would daunt any worker. Sir, in St. Michael North East, the corner between Bush Hall Yard Gap and Spooner's Hill, which the resident said has never been changed.

Sir, if you come down Spooner's Hill and look across Bush Hall Yard Gap, you would see that both sides of the road have been cut. The workmen of the Ministry of Public Works and Transport have told me of the number of jobs they are doing in that area. Sir, this has nothing to do with this Government. The workers are enthusiastic. They said when they are finished there, they will continue that great work at Sundown, which is a part of Skeete's Road in the same area.

1.30 p.m.

Wednesday, August 12, 2009

SENATOR Miss P.I. INNIS: Sir, for more than 15 years, there is a parking lot before you get into Sundown and the 20 residents or 30 residents of Sundown park their cars before they go into Sundown because it is so bad. Sir, you have to park your car and walk home, traverse for 5 minutes or 10 minutes and not even jeeps can get through there but, Sir, you know what, Sundown is being done. Sir, the sun is indeed rising on Sundown and on this Government.

Mr. President, when we talk about this \$165 million and when we talk about the budget, where they wasted \$45 million, this Government is obviously spending money on roads in this country and it is clear. Sir, I am totally in agreement and I totally support this.

Mr. President, let me reiterate clearly for Barbadians to understand and, Sir, do not be “cuffufled” because God is not the author of confusion because there are persons in this place, or in the Other Place, trying to confuse people. Sir, a BOLT arrangement was never in place in this country, there was no contract. There were no terms of reference and there was nothing.

Sir, you do not have to take my word and I would be happy for any Barbadian to come here and ask me to show them the documentation because they did not want to take my word for it because, Sir, they were never done. Mr. President, finally, we have things being done and, Sir, it will go down in history as a colossal misuse of management.

Mr. President, it was not a transition and, Sir, I support this Resolution.

Mr. President, I thank you.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator McClean.

SENATOR the Hon. Miss M.P.O. McCLEAN: Mr. President, I rise to wrap up the debate on this Resolution to borrow a sum of \$165 million. The debate has clearly demonstrated that the project financed by this sum of money is one in which there were clearly many errors. Sir, there were poor decisions and, at the end of the day, it translated into a significant cost to the citizens of this country.

Mr. President, I believe that the lesson to be learnt from this is that proper procedures must be observed at all times, that we also respect the advice of public servants, who are paid by the taxpayers to advise the political directorate, that advice should be treated with due respect and that, at all times, the responsibility to properly utilise taxpayers’ monies should be uppermost in the minds of not only public servants, who would implement, but the policymakers, who would make policy and make decisions to spend those sums of money.

Mr. President, we have before us a situation where substantial increases in the final cost of this project would have been realised. We saw a level of spurious decisions being taken which, to my mind, should inform this Administration and any other Administration going forward.

Sir, I anticipate that as we approve this arrangement that we recognise that the outcome of decisions like this one, not only impact on us in the short-term, but also in the medium term and in the long-term because, at the end of the day, we are (1) depriving the public purse of necessary funds in the short-term and (2) we are saddling this generation and generations to come with a debt burden that was totally unnecessary.

Mr. President, with those few words, I now beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

The question was put to the Senate and agreed to.

SUSPENSION

SENATOR the Hon. Miss M.P.O. McCLEAN: Mr. President, I beg to move that this Sitting be suspended for one hour until 2.40 p.m.

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

Sequence 16

Wednesday, August 12, 2009

RESUMPTION

Mr. PRESIDENT: The Sitting is now resumed.

ORDER NO. 2 – RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE LEASE, IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 5 OF THE CROWN LANDS (VESTING AND DISPOSAL) ACT, CAP. 225, TO THE TRUSTEES OF THE BARBADOS DIABETIC FOUNDATION OF A PARCEL OF LAND, THE PROPERTY OF THE CROWN, SITUATE AT LOT B, WARRENS IN THE PARISH OF SAINT MICHAEL IN THIS ISLAND FOR THE PURPOSE OF CONSTRUCTING THE HEADQUARTERS OF THE BARBADOS DIABETES FOUNDATION, A DIABETES CENTRE AND A DIABETES CLINIC

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator McClean.

SENATOR the Hon. Miss M.P.O. McCLEAN: Mr. President, the Resolution to lease a parcel of land, approximately 36 000 square feet at Lot B Warrens, St. Michael, to the Barbados Diabetic Foundation, is in support of an initiative to facilitate the work of the NGO, the Barbados National Diabetes Foundation, in a collaborative effort to establish the Diabetes Primary Care Unit as a state of the art facility, which is intended to address one of the problems that plague this society. As we all know diabetes as a chronic disease, one of the non communicable disease, is something that is, in my mind, as

a lay person, perhaps has reached an unacceptable proportion. Persons suffering with diabetes, particularly Type 2 diabetes is a major problem facing the society.

The initiative, which is supported by this lease, is one which the Barbados Diabetes Foundation has partnered with an international philanthropic agency, a donor agency, Medicorp Trust, and in fact will also be partnering with Government to deliver services very critical and very important services to persons in respect of preventing this illness, and managing and assisting people suffering from diabetes to cope.

Sir, it is a programme which has been on the cards, I believe since 2004. I am certainly happy that this Administration had been able to address this matter. I would, in fact, say that the opportunity to access the funding of the Foundation, the entity which I spoke about, Medicorp Trust, was in jeopardy, to put it simply, because of the lapsing of time.

Sir, if I could speak to the issue of the purpose of the project, then we can talk beyond the purpose of the project, to the structuring of the project and the role of multiple stakeholders, we must certainly agree that any facility to speak to a chronic illness such as diabetes, and as I said before, it is a major challenge in this society, along with hypertension, obesity and heart disease.

The work of the Foundation, alongside the work being done by the Public Service, within the structure of our medical programme, is one that has to be supported and is, in fact, being supported and seen as important to this Administration.

In respect to the actual location of the project, I think it is useful that it is located close to the Warrens Polyclinic, which, as we all know, is an area of business and a centre close to several major housing developments in St. Michael, St. James, St. Thomas, and perhaps you can even say the St. George area. This is a very useful location, adjoining the Polyclinic.

It is intended that we will see constructed a facility which offers a range of services including, of course, matters to prevent the onset of diabetes. It is also going to offer clinical services. I believe a very important component of the activities would be the research and development elements of it. It is envisaged that this will also, perhaps, constitute a tertiary care teaching facility.

Sir, we have seen the expansion of training, medical education, undergraduate and postgraduate level, within the University of the West Indies structure, as well as the opportunity for our graduates of our Medical Faculty, their interest and active involvement in research, particularly in the area of these chronic diseases. It is also perhaps an

opportunity to partner with some of our neighbours in doing research.

If I can talk about the activity, especially the research activity, I recall earlier this year participating in an official visit with the Prime Minister of Barbados to Cuba. There we were told and shown some of the very serious work that the research specialists in Cuba are doing. The typical diseases that plague Barbadians, diabetes being a very critical one of them. In fact, therefore, this is a prime opportunity for Barbados, through this initiative and through the work of the Barbados Diabetes Foundation, and the members of the medical fraternity, especially persons attached to the Ministry of Health, to explore opportunities to collaborate with Cuba. That was something actively explored when we made that visit. The comprehensive work that is expected to come out of that state-of-the-art facility, I believe it is expected to speak to the mechanism by which this is being created.

As I said, it is an initiative started, I believe, by the Barbados Diabetes Foundation, partnering with the Ministry of Health, and an external philanthropic entity. Sir, to me, this clearly exemplifies the role of philanthropy in the development of the various sectors and certainly in the delivery of social services.

Sir, if I could recall recent discussions when the Prime Minister spoke of the initiative to establish a Philanthropic Foundation, there was much derision totally out of place and totally inappropriate. People sought to suggest that we were trying to get people to build our hospital and take over the delivery, I suppose, by extension, of medical services, which, in fact, was a totally immature unrealistic and simplistic lack of understanding, or misrepresentation, perhaps of what was intended.

There is room for the various stakeholders, nongovernmental organisations, and in this case, health NGOs, to partner with Government and to partner with entities who have an interest in the eradication, or certainly the control and the reduction of certain illnesses, and the pursuing of a standard of wellness, that I suppose every citizen deserves.

Sir, in terms of the philanthropic effort which is now being supported by Government, we see the Foundation partnering with a third party to create this facility.

S A21 15.00 p.m. Sequence 17

Wednesday, August 12, 2009

Senate A21, Sequence 18, 3.00 p.m.

SENATOR the Hon. Miss M. P. O. McCLEAN: All Barbadians will be the actual beneficiaries of this, because

at the end of the day, we have a situation where we cannot leave the business of wellness; we cannot leave the business of health care to the persons who are likely to become the victims of illness, or the persons who seek to avoid illness to the Government alone. It has to be a joint effort by critical stakeholders, indeed, within the country and outside of the country and, therefore, the contribution of the Medicor Trust cannot be minimised.

Mr. President, as I said before, even though the contribution of the Trust is of significance, which will allow the Diabetes Foundation to construct the facility, the role of Government must also be recognised. The Government has committed itself to supplying support in the area of medical teams, such as the contribution of nutritionists because, as we know, diet and nutrition are critical elements of any effort to manage or prevent diabetes so that is very important. Mr. President, I believe that in looking at this, we have to recognise that this Administration is very much in tune with the modus operandi of getting such an initiative in place.

Mr. President, I want to say that this is not an isolated situation. I have a sister who has had lupus for the past 32 years. In fact, she was the first case that I knew about and is, perhaps, one of the longest surviving persons with that illness. I hope she does not mind me talking about her in This Place but I think it is important. I happen, therefore, out of an interest in the issue, to be a member of the Hope Foundation.

I recall that for several years, the Hope Foundation received a subvention from the previous Administration of \$1 000 a year, and that has now risen to several times that I believe the subvention granted, has been more than \$100 000 by this Administration, and that is not a small commitment. I think that is significant of the commitment because in the case of another health NGO like the Hope Foundation, what you have is an entity which focusses on the illnesses that are auto-immune related; sickle cell anemia which affects some of our young people and which needs to be studied; lupus, as I said, and rheumatoid arthritis.

Sir, I believe in looking at this example, I use this to illustrate the support that has been committed to this cause. As I said, it is a project we have inherited, but it is one that we almost lost. I anticipate that the Minister of Health, the Ministry of Health and, certainly, this Administration, will use this as a model in which we can address specialised areas of concern.

Sir, having talked about the importance of the facility, and having spoken about the mechanism by which it is supported, I want to say something about the issue of non communicable chronic lifestyle diseases. It is interesting that as we talked about expenditures of

hundreds of millions of dollars on road networks, which are essential, what is not essential, of course, is wastage, in the name of the construction of those things. When we talk about those, it is interesting that a very critical component of our existence as a society that the people, and that component being the good health of the people, is not something that has been adequately addressed in the past. I want to say that again. When we look at the plans that the Ministry of Health and, indeed, the Minister of Health is doing, and he himself is championing, is a set of strategies to do a number of things.

Mr. President, I believe the term we use is very apt and necessary for the first one, which is: "Rescue the QEH". I know that is no mean task but, to date, I am happy to report that a number of critical positions in the Ministry of Health are being filled. We have, in the form of a Board of Directors, a team of very competent and committed persons.

I have personally had to interface with the Chairman and some other Board Members and they have gone about the task of undertaking the herculean change management process that is important. I believe that in my interfaces with the Members of that Board and the Minister of Health, it is clear that they understand the magnitude of the task, they understand the difficulties that any change management will tend to engender and they understand the necessary strategies to turn those things around.

Sir, a critical part of understanding this is that in doing so, it cannot be a piecemeal approach. It has to be a holistic approach, which focusses on addressing the several needs of the institution, along with the several needs of the persons who must utilise our health services and, therefore, any process of transformation, will be building into that process a proper transformation - if I could use the word again - of the other facilities that support a critical part of the process.

We are talking about the polyclinics, the Barbados Drug Service and all that it takes to bring this process into existence. It is unfortunate that as we are talking about health, that the monies expended on an investigation into the St. Joseph Hospital could not have been available to partner with this project, which is similar.

Sir, if I can go back now to the whole question of diabetes and similar diseases, our population is one in which heredity plays a part. It is a situation in which diabetes has been identified as something for which some of us will have a propensity. Sir, having a propensity, of course, does not translate into the contracting of the illness.

In fact, what it says is that of necessity, we must address it, in a way that we seek to minimise it and, therefore, as we speak to the issues of health, we also have

to speak to the issues of nutrition. If we talk about nutrition, where do we look?

One of the first places to look is our agricultural sector. A critical component of a proper diet will be fruit, vegetables, legumes, et cetera. When we look at the plans for agriculture, we will see that the Ministry of Agriculture has engaged in a number of new initiatives. I think, as one of my colleagues put it, we are seeking to awaken a sleeping giant in the Ministry of Agriculture, in terms of the kinds of initiatives that we will seek to undertake.

This also will involve, Mr. President, a process of education and a critical part, therefore, of addressing the challenge of chronic non communicable diseases would be education of the population, not only in the formal setting, or an adult situation, but all across the population.

Certainly, one avenue in which that can be done is in relation to our children. I believe, Mr. President, that as we look to the situation of our health, we have to address the issue of our children. When we talk about good health, it is also important that we think in terms of our school programmes.

If we can talk about our school programmes, I also want to mention that the school programmes where we teach children health and nutrition, and we engage in formal exercise and fitness components in the curriculum, we also have to think beyond that.

I want to laud the initiative where Mrs. Mara Thompson, wife of the Prime Minister, who herself is the epitome of good health, is spareheading a campaign to address the issue of wellness, and the reduction of illness in our society.

Senate A21, sequence 20, 5:20:30

Wednesday, August 12, 2009

SENATOR the Hon. Miss M. P. O. McCLEAN: Mr. President, I believe that all of these things come together in ways that we, as a society, do not necessarily have to think of in terms of how many millions of dollars have to be expended but how do we get the best bang for our buck and how do we, in fact, achieve some very important and tangible outcomes without even having to expend on realistic sums of money or, in some cases, expending little or no money at all.

I also believe, Sir, that when we look at this we could tie it into something else. If we talk about healthy communities, one of the critical places to start is with our Community Councils. I am happy to see that those have been launched. Recently, advertisements have been run to

solicit interested parties to be nominated to serve on the remaining Constituency Councils.

Mr. President, it is for the communities served by those Constituency Councils to say to the persons who are in leadership positions that they want those Constituency Councils to bring the communities together.

Mr. President, I know that at least two of them have actually identified some very concrete programmes - I have not interfaced with all six of them so I can only speak about the two that I know - to get our communities involved in exercise, diet, nutrition, the utilisation of indigenous foods and traditional ways of doing things which see Barbados generating over the last several decades many centenarians.

Mr. President, it is our hope that we ourselves, if that is God's wish, would reach that landmark and reach it in a way that we can appreciate the landmark. Mr. President, I believe that we have a situation where we have several cogs in a wheel, so to speak, that are being brought together in order to address the issue of a healthy society. The health of a nation, as we often say, is the wealth of a nation.

Mr. President, the work of the Barbados Diabetes Foundation in creating a diabetes centre and clinic in close proximity to one of our major polyclinics is a start in the right direction of putting together a comprehensive mix of initiatives, some of them wholly Government sponsored and run, some of them run by communities and non-governmental organisations, and some of them by bringing together a cross section of interested parties in order to ensure that we are able to address the question of the health of this nation.

Mr. President, if we are able to address the health of our nation, we would be able to ensure that Barbadians have an excellent opportunity to benefit from them and, by extension, to live a healthy life.

With those brief remarks, Mr. President, I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

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

ORDER No. 3

RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE LEASE IN
ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 5 OF THE CROWN
LANDS (VESTING AND DISPOSAL) ACT, CAP.
225 TO THE NATIONAL INSURANCE BOARD
OF A PARCEL OF LAND, THE PROPERTY OF
THE CROWN, SITUATE AT PRINCE ROAD,
PINE PLANTATION ROAD IN THE
PARISH OF SAINT MICHAEL IN THIS
ISLAND FOR THE PURPOSE OF
CONSTRUCTING THE
HEADQUARTERS OF THE
CARIBBEAN EXAMINATION
COUNCIL (CXC)

SENATOR the Hon. Miss M. P. O. McCLEAN: Mr. President, I rise to speak to the matter of a Resolution leasing 2.2 acres of land at the Pine, St. Michael to the National Insurance Board to facilitate the construction of a new headquarters building for the Caribbean Examination Council.

Mr. President, the quality of accommodation of any agency, whether national or Regional, is very critical. The Caribbean Examination Council, as one of the Regional bodies offering major service to the Region's students, those studying for CXC and those studying for CAPE, what used to be "A" levels, is of major import to all of us, education being the foundation of the lives of people, the foundation on which we build and the basis on which people acquire knowledge and skills in order to work.

Mr. President, this is a piece of legislation which has been around for some time. The need to provide accommodation to the Caribbean Examination Council is part of our commitment to CARICOM. Mr. President, I have become even more aware of this as I became Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade and had to deal head on with issues relating to the CARICOM Single Market and Economy and our place in CARICOM.

Mr. President, prior to that, having had to deal with matters relating to immigration, I have had to respond to a number of what I call unwarranted and unfair criticisms about Barbados and Barbadians, more specifically about the commitment of this Administration and the head of this Administration, the Honourable David Thompson, and our so-called apparent lack of commitment.

Mr. President, as with several other entities, this Government has demonstrated its commitment in the past and, definitely in the present, to our assuming responsibility for our fair share of what are the institutions, mechanisms and processes by which CARICOM and the CARICOM Single Market and Economy is made real.

Mr. President, I am not going to accuse anybody of anything, I would just use a supposition and illustration. If one were to look at the conditions that prevailed for the

Caribbean Examination Council for the last several years, one would wonder whether, in fact, we were as committed as we said we were. Mr. President, we have therefore felt the need to push to have these facilities relocated to fitting conditions.

Mr. President, the new CXC building, when completed, will allow the Caribbean Examination Council to deliver its services in a manner that is indeed befitting the importance of the work that it does in the Region.

Senate A21 Sequence 19

3.20 p.m.

Wednesday, August 12, 2009

SENATOR the Hon. Miss M. P. O. McCLEAN: Mr. President, it will also demonstrate to the world, certainly to the people of the Region and certainly to those Barbadians who would seek to be naysayers, that they appreciate there is an important commitment to this matter.

Mr. President, if I could move away from the Regional picture to a local picture, this now falls into a situation where we have inherited a situation of what I would term neglect of the physical facilities owned and occupied by the public service entities, and most important, neglect to the public servants, the men and women of this country. In fact, as we look at that, what we see happening is an effort, in difficult times, to address these things in a prompt manner.

Mr. President, in terms of the actions to date, we heard of a decision by Government to construct new facilities. We have seen a concerted effort to relocate some of the offices of the Attorney-General, for example, staff of the Solicitor General's Office who need to be relocated. Sir, it is important, not only from the perspective of their physical comfort, but also from the sheer ability of those officers to deliver. We know what it is if legal officers need to have access to a library and that library is not in a place that they could easily access that information.

Mr. President, I believe that puts paid to the notion that public servants were probably taken care of in the past. They certainly have not been, and what we now have in place is a serious effort to ensure that those things are put in place.

Mr. President, I want to say that as we talk about facilitating the construction of a building for the Headquarters for the Caribbean Examination Council, this Administration is also critically aware of the importance of maintenance. The problems that we face with a lot of the current accommodations for Government offices, have to do with the absence of a preventative maintenance

programme. I believe that we cannot, and we will not engage in any new construction, without clear and definitive programmes for preventative maintenance.

I am also happy to say that as we look around the existing buildings, those that are subject to renovation and repairs, that much of that is happening at a point in time in which we would love to be able to do all those things.

Sir, because of all the challenges we have inherited - and I will make no apology for talking about inherited challenges because that determines what we can do - I can tell you that as we look around and as you go into several buildings, for example, on the Wharf there has been work done on the Immigration building and on the old National Insurance Scheme Fund building, where several floors have been unoccupied or under-occupied. Sir, efforts are being made to rehabilitate some of those buildings.

Mr. President, I believe that as we look at this Resolution, what we have is a situation where Government is very aware of the need for adequate, safe and healthy physical accommodation. It is therefore engaging in working towards achieving this and meeting all of its obligations, not only to locals in the form of public servants, but also to those persons who are part of any Regional or CARICOM entity.

We have seen provisions for several offices and that continues. Again as Minister of Foreign Affairs, I have to address issues of the legal arrangements made in terms of Headquarters Agreements where we negotiated and agreed to certain terms and conditions, where we continued to ensure that we make the best provisions for the continuation of those services.

I look forward therefore to a situation where the Caribbean Examination Council can say to the Government of Barbados that we are now in a position to deliver services across the Region to all who need those services. It is now in a position to do so, in a manner that is befitting of an institution of that importance, one in which we as Barbadians can be fairly and reasonably justified.

Mr. President, I am obliged to you.

SENATOR J. INCE: Mr. President, I rise in support of this Resolution. The National Insurance Scheme has played a social role in Barbados as well as providing benefits in an efficient manner to individuals. Sir, from an economic perspective, it provided a role of maintaining the viability of the Fund in the short, medium and long term.

The Caribbean Examination Council Headquarters, in a short synopsis, will be located as indicated earlier, at Prince Road, Pine, St. Michael. The construction cost is going to be approximately \$31.3 million but this can be

subject to change as a result of the additional square footage, as requested by the Caribbean Examination Council.

The terms and agreement of that construction states that the National Insurance Fund will undertake the construction. They will undertake the lease of the Ministry of Housing and Lands, to house the staff of the Caribbean Examination Council. At the end of the 25 years, it is expected that facility would be transferred to Government.

Mr. President, part of the investment strategy of the Fund is to diversify its portfolio. Through that diversification strategy, the National Insurance Scheme has undertaken the real estate development of lands, to provide adequate housing to Government staff and Government agencies.

Sir, I must say and I must commend both parties for undertaking an initiative like this. Sir, one such initiative was started back in 2001 with the Insurance Corporation of Barbados Joint Venture Project; in 2004 with the United Nations Building, and we are now looking at the Caribbean Examination Council.

Overall this will add to the portfolio of the National Insurance Fund. The portfolio of the National Insurance Fund now stands at \$3.2 billion, the real estate side of the portfolio represents \$2.9 per cent and the benchmark or target we expect to reach is about 5 per cent. Sir, from that perspective, I do expect that the returns on the building will represent approximately 8.25 per cent per annum, which means that this proposed project would be viable and would be viable as far as the returns of the Fund is concern.

Mr. President, I am obliged. I thank you.

SENATOR the Hon. A. B. WALTERS: Mr. President, I rise to make a small contribution to this debate on the leasing of the property at Prince Road, Pine, St. Michael, to construct the Headquarters of the Caribbean Examination Council.

3.30 p.m.

Wednesday, August 12, 2009

SENATOR A.B. WALTERS: Mr. President, CXC, as you know, is one of those surviving Caribbean institutions, which has made a substantial contribution in the area of certification. Sir, there are four areas which I am going to concern myself with on those contributions.

Mr. President, at the 11-plus level, they are in the business of setting and testing examinations for 11-plus around the Region; at the secondary school level for the school leaving certification; at the GCE equivalent, the

CXC qualification; at the Sixth Form Level, the equivalent to an “A” level certification through CAPE, and at the level at the introduction of a QVC within the secondary school system throughout the Caribbean in a limited number of technical and vocational subjects. However, the question that needs to be asked is why is it necessary for CXC to be moved?

Mr. President, CXC has been headquartered in Barbados since the early 1970s in buildings at the Garrison. Those buildings, quite frankly, have served their useful purpose and as the operations have been expanded, the buildings have presented a number of challenges to the employees within the CXC operations.

Mr. President, CXC has two Zones; one Zone in Barbados and one Zone in Jamaica. Sir, not that the buildings in Jamaica are any better than the ones here. In fact, the one in Jamaica is probably a lot worse than the headquarter’s building here in Barbados. Sir, among the challenges are a number of occupational safety and health hazards, which exist in a number of our old public buildings, which were not designed to be offices.

I believe the major CXC building was used as barracks some 200 years ago and is now being used as an office. Sir, it presents a number of challenges for the employees in that a number of them have suffered from various ailments like upper respiratory tract infections, including sore throats, hoarseness, chest infections and the like. Sir, having worked in that building myself as a senior officer to CXC, I recognise some of the challenges which they have had.

Mr. President, among those challenges have resulted in a position where CXC has had to lease a number of buildings outside of the Garrison headquarters around the St. Michael area. I believe they are now located in five different locations and, Sir, that makes life very difficult to manage for an organisation such as CXC.

Mr. President, one of the other challenges is the whole business of the security of examination material. Sir, some of the buildings are so old at the lower level that the solid stone begins to weaken and sometimes affect the material if you leave it in those locations for more than a few weeks.

Mr. President, I want to also make the point that it is the one institution that is in the forefront of curriculum development at the level of academic, technical and vocational education and training. It is also the one institution that is involved in testing and evaluation of educational material and, as part of our standard setting machinery, it has a reputation second to none.

Mr. President, the advent of competence-based vocational qualifications to the Region, in the form of CVQs really makes it, at this point in time, necessary for the CXC to have to be located in one purpose-built building, which has the security features in place and which allows the management of that organisation to continue for the benefit of the working population and for us to be able to compete internationally.

Mr. President, I fully support the Resolution before this Chamber to approve the lease of the lands for the purpose of constructing the CXC headquarters in Barbados.

Mr. President, I thank you.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Griffith.

SENATOR D.K.A. GRIFFITH: Mr. President, I rise to support the Resolution to lease the 2.2 acres of land to the National Insurance Board for the purpose of the CXC Examination Council’s new headquarters building. I am specifically driven to speak towards the issue of the necessity and the expediency that are required in developing this facility which has languished for far too long un-started.

I believe that we must give adequate attention to the fact that CXC is one of the often unthought-about-successes of CARICOM. Sir, as such it is vital if we continue to address our role in CARICOM and try to develop CARICOM to the extent where we all benefit. It is important that we do ensure the stability and efficient functioning of organisations like the Caribbean Examination Council.

Mr. President, in speaking today, I am very mindful of the fact that several areas of the existing CXC plant are less than adequate, that for far too long, there has been a delay in the process of building this new headquarters’ building and that it is necessary for us to now get this process on the way.

Mr. President, in looking at the documentation with regards to the process of developing the new CXC headquarters, we have to look at the failures of the previous Administration to actually implement what was necessary for CXC to efficiently function. Sir, Senator Walters spoke before me and he spoke to the need for a purpose-built facility to ensure that the functions of CXC were, indeed, being met.

Sir, we see in the current situation a building that was not designed for what it is being used for, as so many others were, because we saw similar problems with the National Insurance Building being converted to the Attorney-General’s Office and mould, spores and other things being introduced into the environment in an

unhealthy level because the building was retrofitted in a manner that then affected the design of how air-conditioning units worked, and how the breathing of the staff was affected.

Sir, if you do not have intake and out-take in air-conditioners and different components of the system set up in the correct way, then you often have a problem arising and, Sir, we saw that in this building and others around and what we must now do is assess where we must go.

Mr. President, it is documented that we have come very close to losing the headquarters for CXC because of our inability and our inefficiency to act.

Sequence 21

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SENATOR D.K.A. GRIFFITH: In my assessment, I am very mindful that very harsh critiques have been made of this Government with its ability to extend and to be involved in CARICOM. While I do not agree with these critiques, what I must say is, we need to look at the deeds that are done. I think this Government is putting action, rather than words, by bringing this Bill today, by making the commitment to expedite the process of creating a new facility. It is important that we do this.

Sir, again, I go back to the languishing that this project has seen. There was no initiative to say, as a committed Member to CARICOM, we are going to push this project not just in the interest of Barbados, but in the interest of the entire Caribbean, in the interest of maintaining when there are so few real tangible elements to CARICOM in existence, and functioning in the manner that CXC does.

We do have many arms of the Caribbean community, but we can see that the Caribbean Examination Council has been a fundamental success. We have been able to replace external examination bodies. As Senator Walters indicated, we have also been able to encourage the development of the Region's specific curriculums. This is very important.

As a student at University, I remember one of my favourite Lecturers always saying to me that he won Scholarship to study overseas when he went to sit his examinations, and this would have been, of course, under the GCE system and the "A" level system.

Asides.

SENATOR D.K.A. GRIFFITH: It was not called a Barbados Scholarship at that point in time. It was a Commonwealth Scholarship.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Order, please.

SENATOR D.K.A. GRIFFITH: That Scholarship he was able to obtain by sitting and writing an essay as part of the component. He was given two options, the first of which to write about his first train journey, at a point in time when there was no longer a train in Barbados.

The second option was to write about, "The day that snow fell so hard, he could not go to school." Sir, coming from the Commonwealth Caribbean, neither option was really practical, and it was true in his good graces he wrote and adapted the piece on snow, about having to live through a cane fire and the ash that would come down, such ingenuity.

Sir, he was able to actually adapt to the situation, but we now have progressed to such a point, where curriculums in the Caribbean are truly of our own making. It is not us trying to adapt to something else that someone else has compiled, and it is not an assessment of other cultures. It is truly really based on Caribbean culture.

The Caribbean Examination Council must receive the proper tools to complete this task. I believe it is vitally important that we support them in developing the structures that our school age population is going to learn from, because we often hear complaints about how often our youth are influenced by external sources, whether it is MTV or BET. Whatever it is, we are often hearing complaints. If we want to mitigate the effects of foreign influences on the youth today, we then need to come up with programmes, with curriculums that captivate their attention, that allow them to reconnect with a lot of things that many mature Barbadians reminisce about.

We have to take responsibility for ensuring that our curriculum reflects our culture, and the Caribbean Examination Council is vitally important to this process. As such, it is with my whole heart that I support this Resolution, to ensure that the Caribbean Examination Council has a home going forward, that they are no longer begging and borrowing, that they are in their own space and they are empowered to achieve the vital role for which they have been assigned. It is important that we expedite the process of housing the Caribbean Examination Council.

I thank you, Mr. President.

The question was put to the Senate and agreed to.

ORDER NO. 4 – ORDER OF NATIONAL HEROES
(AMENDMENT) BILL, 2009

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Mcclean.

SENATOR the HON. Miss M.P.O. McCLEAN: Mr. President, I rise to speak to the Bill which, I believe, is one that will face no opposition. It is a Bill intended to make provisions for the exemption of the payment of duties and taxes, in respect of vehicles bought by National Heroes present and in the future. We do, of course, have at this time a living National Hero, the Right Excellent Sir Garfield Sobers.

In speaking to that, as I said, it is a case where it is evident that Sir Garfield, as our only living National Hero has brought fame, and I would indeed say fortune, not necessarily fortune to himself, because cricket played at the time of the Right Excellent Sir Garfield Sobers was not as financially rewarding as it is now,

Of course, we know that while it was not financially rewarding, it was cricket to be proud of. I am not so sure that we will find, from our current crop, immediate past crop, and may be, based on some of what we see the immediate future crop, a National Hero in the making.

Sir, I believe that in recognition of the contribution of persons such as Sir Garfield, Barbados should do all in its power to ensure that those National Heroes, if they live to be so identified and honoured, should be given all the support that is fitting the status. This particular Bill is such that we, as I said, can find, I certainly can find no quarrel with the provision. I certainly endorse it fully, and I believe that it should be put into force as soon as possible. Therefore, part of that whole process would be to ensure that it is passed.

The cost to the Treasury of a loss of a minimum amount of revenue, when we look at it in the total scheme of things, is nothing that we should, in fact, debate. What we should debate is how do we find a way to perhaps try to instill in our young people, our budding cricketers, the kind of love for the game, the understanding of what it takes to ensure that in order to succeed, you have to put in the requisite effort.

S A21 15.50 p.m. Sequence 22

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Senate A21, Sequence 23, 3.50 p.m.

SENATOR the Hon. Miss M. P. O. McCLEAN: You have to defer to your superiors, to those who went before, those who understand the game and those who therefore can guide you, through the process. I have observed recent developments at the level of the game, at the level of the player, at the level of play and at the level of management.

I must say that I suppose Barbadians look back nostalgically about the glory days of cricket. It is important

that we, as citizens, try to find a way to influence the process of bringing cricket back to the days of the Right Honourable Sir Garfield Sobers. I believe that the necessary Amendments to this would just be one small token of our appreciation for what he did for The Caribbean and Barbados.

I happened recently to have been on a flight on which Sir Garfield travelled, and when we landed at the airport, it was interesting to observe the officials, I think it would have been the Custom officials and so on, when they established whom he was. I think this was in England, if I remember correctly.

It is that recognition of his contribution, not only to Barbados, but to the world, that we are able to appreciate what he has done, not only for the Caribbean, Barbados in particular, but for the game of cricket. It is a pity that our young cricketers do not seem to understand or take time to appreciate the traditions of cricket, the contribution that was made to the game and all that stood for cricket. I anticipate that we will come off this down-cycle sometime soon and will do much to rebuilt cricket.

Sir, as I said, I do not believe that the Amendment to this piece of legislation is something that we should debate and, therefore, I beg that this Bill be now read a second time.

The question was put to the Senate and agreed to.

On the motion of SENATOR the Hon. Miss M. P. O. McCLEAN, the Senate resolved itself into Committee on the Bill, Her Honour SENATOR Miss K. F. IFILL in the Chair.

COMMITTEE

Madam CHAIRMAN: The Senate is now in Committee.

Clauses 1-4, inclusive, were called and passed.

The Schedule became the Schedule to the Bill.

On the motion of SENATOR the Hon. Miss M. P. O. McCLEAN, Madam CHAIRMAN reported to His Honour the PRESIDENT, the passing of one Bill in Committee and Mr. PRESIDENT resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

On the separate motions of SENATOR the Hon. Miss M. P. O. McCLEAN, the Bill was read a third time and passed and cited as the Order of National Heroes (Amendment) Act, 2009.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

SENATOR the Hon. Miss M. P. O. McCLEAN: Mr. President, I beg to move that this Senate be suspended until 4.15 p.m. today.

The question that the Senate be now suspended until 4.15 p.m. was put to the Senate and agreed to and Mr. PRESIDENT suspended the Senate accordingly.

Senate A21, sequence 23, 15:58:12

Wednesday, August 12, 2009

RESUMPTION

Mr. PRESIDENT: This Sitting is resumed.

ORDER No. 5

STUDENT REVOLVING LOAN FUND
(AMENDMENT)
BILL, 2009

SENATOR the Hon. Miss M. P. O. McCLEAN: Mr. President, the Student Revolving Loan Fund was an initiative started by the Government of Barbados in the 1970s to facilitate the efforts of Barbadians seeking to study overseas, to supplement scholarships in some cases and generally to finance their education. The Student Revolving Loan Fund was intended to replace the Higher Education Loan Fund, which at the time was administered by the Tertiary Section of the Ministry of Education.

As you are aware, Mr. President, education for the average Barbadian is an important undertaking. It is a stepping stone to a better life. Mr. President, it is the desire of almost all Barbadians to take the fullest advantage of the educational opportunities available. Many of us who sit in this Honourable Chamber can probably testify to the impact that education has had on our upward mobility and our ability to access reasonable positions and salaries.

Senate A21 Sequence 24

4.10 p.m.

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SENATOR the Hon. Miss M. P. O. McCLEAN: Hopefully, what it would have also brought with the education would have been a sense of commitment and responsibility to the country as, in most instances, many of us did not have to foot the bill for education directly from the family purse, so to speak. We have been privileged, certainly those of us who I would label the post-independence generation, to have benefitted significantly in

the area of education, from primary to tertiary and, in more recent times, from nursery to tertiary.

It is part of a grand scheme of providing a mix of social services which, at the end of the day, contribute to the experiencing of a quality of life not common to many people across the world, either in developed or developing countries. I believe that Barbados has been blessed.

Mr. President, personally, I have been fortunate to have benefitted from that kind of arrangement - free primary, free secondary and free tertiary education at the University of the West Indies. Sir, in the context of my family, it has certainly made it possible for half of the children in my family to make the same claim.

I also believe there are many Barbadians who, for a number of reasons, find themselves perhaps unable to take advantage of post-secondary education in Barbados and, therefore, find it necessary to fund their education outside of Barbados. I believe firmly that in respect of that, persons in that situation should not be disadvantaged.

Mr. President, it is, therefore, a pleasure for me to recognise that this initiative seeks to achieve a number of things. In being amended, it obviously makes provision for some basic changes to the legislation. This amendment is in an effort to respond to the changing needs of Barbadians, it is an effort to respond to the changing modes of the delivery of education.

The Student Revolving Loan Fund, in its initial stages, I believe, envisaged a situation where students entered into a classroom situation at a tertiary institution, a polytechnic or a university, and was able to participate in what may be described as traditional modes of delivery of education.

Mr. President, with the advent of technological innovation, with the changing modes of delivering education, distance education, non classroom situations have developed. Sir, the average student seeking to undertake university education has now been able to explore a number of options which many of us did not have before.

Sir, some of us are familiar with distance education but we now find ourselves in a position to take advantage of other remote forms of delivery, for example, via the Internet, where people send you packages of materials, where you prepare the assignments and post these assignments back to the educational institutions. Those situations have now changed where the available options are several.

Mr. President, even within the context of the University of the West Indies, we have a situation where

the student has the option of a distance programme, where he or she can stay at home and remotely access their training material, instructors, et cetera, or they can participate in an on-campus experience.

Mr. President, in addition to that, we also recognised that the days when Barbadians saw tertiary education as a programme, for example, a First Degree programme at the University of the West Indies and a limited range of programmes at the Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic, we now have a situation where they can access Associate Degrees offered by the Barbados Community College.

The Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic is now looking to offer online programming in a number of enhanced and new programmes. The University of the West Indies, as I said before, is offering those programmes. Sir, in relation to the traditional institutions, we have seen an expansion in the curricula and in that expansion we have also seen that supported by new modes of delivery and instruction.

In addition, we have a situation where the students, who would have participated in the programmes of the University of the West Indies at the First Degree level, are now very much interested in financing their postgraduate education. Sir, what we see in place is a situation where students are seeking to access funds to pay for postgraduate degrees, which are offered in the same way, some of them by distance education.

Mr. President, if we look around the Caribbean, what we have are several options available to prospective postgraduate students at institutions in North America, Europe and in other parts of the world. I know of persons who have taken distance programmes with universities in Australia, for example, who did not have to leave their homes in Barbados but who were still able to complete those programmes successfully.

Mr. President, in response to the demand, the Students Revolving Loan Fund has sought to be proactive and responsive to the needs and requests of prospective borrowers. They have asked for financing of part-time programmes and distance learning.

In addition, they have also sought to access loans at a higher level and so it is possible that is happening. In the July 2008 Financial Statement and Budgetary Proposals, it was agreed that the Students Revolving Loan Fund should be increased to

\$100 000, and that is one of the significant changes made to the Regulations.

Mr. President, I would wish to say that a necessary, desirable and obvious accompanying provision should also

be the provision to increase the life of the loan. Sir, that has been done. I think too that the age limit of borrowers has also been increased and that is also a reflection of the fact that in the scenario I painted, where persons had completed their First Degrees and are desirous of financing postgraduate degrees, or graduate training, as you would imagine, would be likely to be older students.

Many persons will opt to study, work for a while, and then return to postgraduate training. Therefore, the amendments are all intended to ensure that those needs are met.

Mr. President, the Student Revolving Loan Fund, over the years, has also experienced some challenges. It was initially financed by the Inter-American Development Bank but over time, as would be expected with a fund where people are required to service the loan, it was envisaged that the Fund would become self-sufficient. In its efforts to do so, it has to ensure that people service and repay their loans.

Mr. President, from time to time, we have heard complaints about the failure of persons to do so. I believe that it is an unfortunate situation that persons who do not have genuine cases of hardship, or who have not faced adversed situations but who are, in fact, benefitting directly through the kind of salaries they earn, that such persons often fail to either service the loans at all, or to service them in a reasonably and timely manner.

4.40 p.m.

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SENATOR the Hon. MISS M.P.O. McCLEAN: We hear of individuals in a small society like this, who we know are well-heeled. Sir, they have good employment in the major professions, but they have failed to service the loans and, Sir, that has put some challenges before the Student Revolving Loan Fund. Sir, as such, what has been required is a rethinking of the process by which the loan fund and the persons who manage that fund are able to correct that situation.

Sir, in essence, as with any entity lending money, the Student Revolving Loan Fund should have a mechanism which makes for a timely and neat arrangement for the collection of those funds. Sir, in that process, there is some provision for the establishment of clear procedures, intended to provide for the garnishment of salaries or wages. I believe that is a very useful arrangement.

Mr. President, I am sure that many of us are aware of the arrangements that are in place, in places like North America. Sir, if I speak to the United States of America, having studied there on two occasions, I can tell you that if

you speak to any of the persons who would have accessed a student loan and who may have other debts like credit cards, mortgage, et cetera, that one of the first loans that they tell you that they must pay and will pay is, in fact, their student loan because the penalties that go with that are significant. It is clear that level of seriousness that has been accorded to that has, in fact, created an environment in which people recognise that they need to service those loans.

Mr. President, it is on the basis of a prompt servicing of loans that the pool of funds can remain intact. I believe that the terms and conditions are such that it is possible for students to have some breathing space between studying, starting to work, earning and repaying those loans. If we look at the options available to them, many options are, indeed, not available, as a matter of course.

Mr. President, I believe that as we look to encourage our young people to take advantage of opportunities, and as we look at expanding the range and scope of training and education for our population, the maintenance of a fund like this is important. The management of the fund is equally important and the structures that are put in place must, of necessity, be put there to ensure that we minimise the level of default and that we minimise the challenges that the fund has in maintaining its stability and its sustainability.

Mr. President, it is important that the persons who have served as guarantors for these loans - I move away now from the Fund and persons who are seeking to borrow from the Fund put themselves in a place to encourage those persons who have borrowed to pay back. I know what it is to serve as a guarantor.

I am fortunate not to have been called upon to repay the debt but, as a guarantor, that is par for the course, so to speak. I believe that persons who have acted as guarantors should, in fact, use their powers of persuasion, so to speak, to ensure that the persons who were beneficiaries and who are able to access these funds make every effort to repay.

Mr. President, I speak also to those persons themselves who would have borrowed from the fund, who have earned significantly, who perhaps have seen their children grown up and still not properly serviced their loans to do so because, in failing to do so, you are depriving the individuals who are looking to that fund, many of whom have little or no choice in terms of alternate options, to be able to access financing for their ventures.

Mr. President, it is clear that these Amendments are necessary as we seek to change the method for charging interest. I also believe that as we look at the question of interest, that it is still, perhaps, one of the cheapest loans you could get to finance education.

It is important that there is a definitive firm process to ensure the recovery of debts through the courts and ensure that there are proper mechanisms to do that through acquiring judgments through the Courts and the provision for garnishment of salaries as we seek to increase the loan limits.

Sir, it is absolutely necessary that we push all those who have benefitted to pay back. Sir, even though persons might have received education and, in some instances, individuals might have found themselves ill, or found themselves with other kinds of financial challenges, which would impact on their ability to pay, Sir, to those persons I would say to them to speak to the officials at the Fund, as with any other decent entity, and I am sure that your circumstances would be considered and accommodated in some manner. Sir, as that happens, we are then in a position to maintain a Student Revolving Loan Fund of an amount and with a structure that is beneficial to those who would seek to utilise it.

Mr. President, as I proceed to wrap up my initial comments I would just want to signal that in relation to this, an amendment was, in fact, made to this Bill and, on review of that amendment in the Lower House, the Chief Parliamentary Council has had time to reflect on this and, later on, as we go into Committee on this, it will be a recommendation of a further amendment and, Sir, that I would want to signal to my Honourable colleagues.

Sir, with those words, I am obliged to you.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Griffith.

SENATOR D.K.A. GRIFFITH: Mr. President, I rise to support this Bill on what is the UN designated day for International Youth Day. Sir, given this coincidence, I do think it is important that we look at the necessity of access to education for the development of Barbadian citizens. Sir, we must put that in the context that much of the development that we have experienced thus far has been driven by access to education.

Mr. President, I believe that this Bill seeks to adapt the current scenario to one which is more favourable for persons pursuing studies, especially when that course of study is not available in Barbados, but must be undertaken either in the United States of America, Canada, the United Kingdom or wherever in the world there are much higher rates pertaining to the cost of education than those at the University of the West Indies locally. Sir, specifically, this is particularly important, given the scenario in Barbados where there is no product in the commercial sector that addresses this need in the same way that the Student Revolving Loan Fund does.

Mr. President, we have not yet reached the sophistication in our loan market that you see in the United States of America but rather, this programme is, unfortunately, Government driven, where there are many entities.

S/A21/16:40 Sequence 26

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SENATOR D.K.A. GRIFFITH: You have many commercial banks that are in the position to offer loans but are yet to develop a product. I believe that as we go forward this will be a fundamental point that needs to be addressed. I believe Government should urge commercial institutions, to consider what role they can play in the offering of loans to students.

I say this because there are a number of restraints still necessary in the Student Revolving Loan Fund, and it would be unreasonable to think that the Fund could be the sole source of loans for a Barbadian student. Instead, I actually listened in agreement with a Member of the Other Place, who pointed out that instead of trying to couch and restrict access to certain forms of education based on what would be some person's understanding of a need or lack thereof of the particular skill, that we start to consider that education in what is a global environment would empower people in Barbados to move to where their skills can best be marketed.

A skill might necessarily be required in Barbados at the current period of time. It might not be important to our national development strategy, but we can then empower one of our citizens to go out into the wider world, to find a niche for themselves that might or might not in the future have an impact on Barbados' development, but definitely will enable them to finance themselves, and to develop a lifestyle which they want to seek. I believe this is going to have to be our concern going forward.

The Student Revolving Loan Fund, with this Amendment, will be a very attractive product, but it will also have its limitations. Again, I think we are far too apt to look to Government to drive all significant policies in Barbados. There are means outside of Government. There are funding sources outside of the Government that should be relevantly involved in this process.

It is important that while we support this Bill, we look to the future, and understand that our encouragement and our guidance will be necessary, to create a scenario that students in Barbados can continue to excel, continue to access new and innovative programming to ensure not only our development, but the development of the Caribbean Region and the wider world.

Barbadians have, for a long time, been involved in the development across the globe, whether in the Commonwealth, going into the United States of America, or the United Kingdom. We can see that in the United States, the Attorney-General has lineage from Barbados. He is a product of our shores. We need to therefore get past the narrowness of thought that says, a university degree is something that I get to have and to hold. It makes me special and important.

We need to get to the point where we understand that it is one of the tools in our arsenal. If we continue to speak about developing our country, about developing our Region, education is going to be fundamental to that point. Therefore, we need to look at education in the academic sense, but this Bill also speaks to technical and vocational training, which is something that we often look down upon in Barbados.

I smile when I see the voracity with which American institutions advertise technical and vocational training. We have a concept in Barbados that book sense is everything, but in reality, a number of the problems we face as we go forward, whether there are issues with NISE, issues to deal with the development of not just customer service, but standards in all areas of business, these are things that have a more practical component to them.

If we implement and give access to the proper technical and vocational training areas, then we will see the results, because far from having, now, degrees in Tourism Management and those related areas, we can see in our tourism sector practical courses that encourage and educate employees on actually being able to put across, to sell, to be the soft and hard sellers of the company's product. Sir, access to these types of activities have always been limited. I find far too often that sort of access limited to the higher levels of companies and not to the entry level employee, or to the day to day, face to face, employee.

Sir, Bills like this ensure that we do continue to have access for all levels of society because a business will not always send its employee for training. Employees can recognise their need and through their own ingenuity, can access programmes that make them more employable, and more important in these particular economic times, more resourceful and more productive. Access to education is vital if we want to maintain our role in the world, and indeed improve that role, because that relies on productivity, it relies on ingenuity.

I am very pleased to wholeheartedly support this Bill.

I thank you.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Crichlow.

SENATOR the Very Rev. H.E. CRICHLLOW: Mr. President, I rise to support the Bill, the Student Revolving Loan Fund. I think those who use the Revolving Fund should be told that if they had to go to a commercial bank, they would not receive a loan that the Student Revolving Loan Fund gives them, because the commercial bank would have to be sure that there is collateral. Most of our students would not have that collateral.

The Student Revolving Loan Fund is a special Fund. It was introduced because students would not be able to get loans like this at the commercial bank. They should be told in a very blunt way, as the Amendment to the Act does, that they have to repay the money.

You cannot borrow and not repay. That is something that certainly we Barbadians have to learn. Many of us are not very good at repaying loans. We like to borrow money but we are not good at repaying.

S A21 16.50 p.m. Sequence 27

Wednesday, August 12, 2009

Senate A21, Sequence 28, 4.50 p.m.

Senator the Very Rev. H. E. CRICHLLOW: I think it is in Hamlet where Shakespeare says:

“Neither a borrower, nor a lender be;...

And borrowing dulls the edge of husbandry,

For loan oft loses both itself and friend...”

I repeat that because it seems that some of us are not familiar with that quotation from Hamlet:

“Neither a borrower, nor a lender be...

This above all: to thine own self be true,

And it must follow, as the night the day,

Thou canst not then be false to any man.”

Sir, some people come and borrow from you and they tell you that they will pay back in such and such a time. When that time comes, they are not able to pay back and instead of coming and asking you to extend the date of the loan, they begin to hide from you. If you are walking down Broad Street, and they see you in a distance, they will slip into a store until you pass. When they get tired of doing that, and they see you, they then tell people, I hate to see him, or I hate to see her.

Of course, they do not tell the people why, so the people think that he must be a very bad man, if he hates him like that, just to see him. Sir, some of them wish that you would die, and they would never see you again. This happens in Barbados. I do not know if you are aware of that, but it happens in Barbados.

I remember lending a man some money and he never came back. We met at the corner of a building. We could not possibly see each other, there were not any doors and he pulled out \$200 and offered to me as part of the loan. I said to him that no, I cannot take that \$200 from you like that, when you came to borrow it, you did not behave like that, so bring it in a decent way and so on. I never saw him again.

I believe he said that was foolish. I offered him \$200 and he says that he will not take it like that. If I had not seen him, he would not have offered, but there is a real problem about borrowing and repaying in Barbados.

Sir, some of you may know the saying in England that you can run away with a man’s wife but if you borrow from him, you must pay him back. This is most important.

Sir, this is a matter of simple honesty when it comes to money, and post graduate students must take this to heart that if they know they are not going to pay back the Fund, they should not borrow. I hope that the sanctions and so on outlined in the Bill will be administered. It is a tough Bill, but most of the time we fail to enforce the Laws we pass, or we fail to see that they are enforced and so, the society remains the same.

Sir, you do not go to the university just to get a degree so that you can work for a lot of money and provide for yourself and family. The university is not just for cramming a lot of book knowledge information. You are expected to grow in your personality when you go to the university, and that is why I think that our university should be very strict in observing levels of entry.

I think that Senator Marville said somewhere recently, and I agree with him, that we should insist on matriculation standards; that is, you must have gone to Sixth Form level in order to gain entrance to the university. I know that this is controversial. I know that people can gain entry to the university on “O” Levels. I know that in some American universities, you can get entry with “O” Levels but if you have “A” Levels, you go into the second year, I think it is called Sophomore.

Sir, I know that when I was in Jamaica, some 30 to 40 years ago, people were going straight from the Fifth Forms to the university because they saved a year. Those who remained at the Sixth Form schools, would spend two years in the Sixth Form, and then they would spend three

years getting their degree; that is five years. If you had “O” Levels entry, you would spend four years, instead of three doing the degree, so that they gained a year by not going to the Sixth Form.

I think that Sixth Form education is vital, if you are thinking of going to the university. You develop more in the Sixth Form than you would in just the Fifth Form. You become more responsible, and you have a broader outlook.

The first thing we were told in the Sixth Form was to forget all that we had learnt up to that period in History. Mr. Ronnie Hughes started by saying to forget all the history you have ever learnt. Then, he gave us a book list of more than 100 books which we had to consult. There was not one text book in the Sixth Form. We had to write extensive assignments and so on.

Senate A21, sequence 28, 17:00:14

Wednesday, August 12, 2009

SENATOR the Very Reverend H. E. CRICHLAW: There is a whole different approach to knowledge. That is the kind of approach that we get in the first year of the university when the University of the West Indies used “A” Levels as the matriculation standard. The students from the Sixth Forms were able to relax in their first year because they had already learnt in Sixth Form how to study at the university level. Mr. President, the Sixth Form does a lot for a student far more than I have said. Mr. President, I think we should go back to that standard of “A” Levels for entry into the university.

Mr. President, I am aware that one of the reasons we have used “O” Level for entry into the university is because there were more students to teach and so it is more economical to have people come in at the “O” Level stage instead of having a few at the “A” Level stage. Mr. President, I think that now that we have expanded our educational net, we should insist on “A” Levels, what they call CAPE nowadays, as the entry requirement.

At the university, we should think of developing qualities that we will use throughout our lives, and honesty is one of those qualities. I know of students who use books that are scarce at the university who tear out the most important pages and return the books to the library. That is terrible. That would bring about the death of knowledge. It is so selfish. They go to seminars and do not open their mouths because they do not want the other students to benefit from what they have read in these scarce books and whose pages they have torn out.

Mr. President, if you are not interested in knowledge, you should not go to the university. We are really wasting a lot of time and money sending people to

the university who have no love of knowledge or no interest in knowledge. We in Barbados have to be very careful because education has always taken a great part of our budget, so we should really go for standards.

When it is said that we have a degree from the University of the West Indies, that should be a sign of quality. I know that our degrees are accepted everywhere but I am just saying that we have to continue to insist on standards and on rigorous study, and think of the best. Most of all, we have to be creative.

Recently, we had a debate in this Chamber on research. We are a young university, we are not very near to other universities as would happen in very big countries, and so it would take much longer for us to reach the stage when we would have a lot of research students.

Much research is being done in bigger universities in bigger countries that we do not want to reinvent the wheel, but we should look for things that are Caribbean or tropical, and so on, and do that kind of research so that others will come over to the University of the West Indies to do research in Caribbean Studies and so on.

Mr. President, there is a lot we have in the Caribbean. One of the good things we possess is that we have learnt how to live together with people of all races, of all religions, of all political beliefs and all nationalities. These are things that are tearing the world apart. Although it is not perfect in the West Indies, we still know how to recognise persons. I suppose that sounds silly but we must not take it for granted that people recognise us as persons everywhere. There are some people in some countries who do not know that black people have feelings, have ambitions and sensitivities. They think that our blood is black because we are black. They think that we have tails. That is the belief in the 21st Century. I do not know if some of you have ever come across any of these people but I have.

Many of our people who went to England in the 1950s and 1960s know that what I am talking about is true. One day a little girl in the supermarket was looking at this black man and then she said, Mummy, Mummy, it talks”. In England I used to spend a lot of time talking to these children, not to the adults because they do not know and some of them are ashamed to ask and so on.

When I was doing research, I was asked whether I would stay on in England to work and I said that I could not work there because if I had to work there I would spend most of my time going around telling people that black people are persons and that they have minds and souls and so on, and that it would be a waste of time for me to go around saying this.

Mr. President, the person who asked me that said, no, no, not at all, that would be the best way that you could spend your life in England because that is what people need to know. I said that if the people here do not know that the drivers of the buses and the trains that take them to work on mornings and bring them back from work on evenings, and that the nurses and doctors at the hospital are persons with just a difference in skin and culture and so on, they will not know it from me, I have work to do back in Barbados.

Senate A21 Sequence 29

5.10 p.m.

Wednesday, August 12, 2009

SENATOR the Very Reverend H. E. CRICHLLOW: Mr. President, I say that because at the university level we take this for granted. What is happening, as Dr. George Lamming said recently, I think it was at Mrs. Drayton's funeral, is that we are losing the concept of university in the Caribbean, that is, the vast majority of students at Mona are Jamaicans; the vast majority of students at St. Augustine are Trinidadians; the vast majority of the students at Cave Hill are Barbadians.

Mr. President, that was not so in the early days of university education. In the early days, students from the various territories met and got to know each other because there was not that much inter-island movement in the Caribbean, people met for the first time in London.

Mr. President, we need to be careful, just as we spend a lot of money on our education - and I support that - we need to be careful that we are spending the money in the right direction in helping our people to develop as persons. They are not to go to university to work, to get a degree, get a job and so on, they are to go to the university to learn how to serve others and not themselves.

Asides.

SENATOR the Very Reverend H. E. CRICHLLOW: Sir, if that is not the practice, then we should start it. The university should help to open up our minds. Barbados is a very small island in the Caribbean and people think that Barbados is on top of the world. Sir, people go to America, England or Canada. Why do they go? They go down because to them Barbados is on top of the world.

Mr. President, I think we should be tough on those who do not repay the Student Revolving Loan Fund because they are preventing others from having the opportunity to have higher education, overseas for instance. Therefore, they must be made to realise that if they repay their loans, other people will benefit.

Mr. President, nowadays we are taking so many things for granted. University education started in the West Indies in 1875, when Codrington College was affiliated to Durham University and so we in Barbados are not new when it comes to university education. Sir, most of our people are now getting the opportunity to go to the university, and richer and bigger countries than Barbados cannot afford this. There is a means test and it seems that successive Governments have given people the impression that Government has money and that sometimes they just have to ask for things.

I think sometimes we are getting too many freenesses and that means that we are not able to appreciate it. Sir, that is happening with university education. Let us look at the number of men who do not go to the university. Let us look at the imbalance between the number of men to women. This is strange, and it is going to have very bad social consequences as we go forward.

Mr. President, I want to finish by saying that I am glad that we are making these amendments. I hope that postgraduate students would see them in the light in which they are being made, and that the whole society must learn to give back. Sir, it seems that everything is free and people are not aware that all of this is done on taxpayers' money and that they must give back something to the society.

Mr. President, I wholeheartedly support this Bill and hope that the sanctions would be enforced. I thank you.

SENATOR the Hon. A. B. WALTERS: Mr. President, I rise to make a short intervention. Sir, probably 10 minutes ago I did not intend to say very much but I heard a number of things from my fellow Honourable Senators that stirred my mind into action to deal with some of the issues arising out of the Student Revolving Loan Fund and the Amendments that we are seeking to make to this legislation.

Mr. President, one of the first issues I would like to raise is one of a delinquency culture which has developed around the Student Revolving Loan Fund. Sir, I remember having had a very bad experience out of the 1980s with a relative of mine who had borrowed \$35 000 out of the Loan Fund. That relative got the education, even progressed to the point of getting a Doctorate at an American university but still expected me to repay the Fund.

Sir, I had to remind that young man on a number of occasions that I have three children and three grandchildren and that I expect that some day when those grandchildren would wish to make use of these funds - I might not be in a position to act as guarantor - that I would not wish to have a red mark around my name because of the delinquency of

that particular person. Sir, that is 20 years ago that person had accessed that loan from the Fund.

Mr. President, we may have developed some of this culture because of the experience out of our educational systems, starting way back in the 1960s, where we had the concept of free primary, free secondary and free tertiary education. Sir, the freeness culture sometimes cause us some difficulty.

I have had a different experience. I did not have the opportunity to make use of the Student Revolving Loan Fund out of the 1970s and I was fortunate to live on a system where, in fact, there were a series of loans and grants available to mature students, and I made the best of those mature student grants.

Sir, the new rules that regulate grants and loans in the United Kingdom, there are provisions for persons to do a First Degree and then that person would have to look for other reserve funding or go to a students loan fund, or to a commercial institution to obtain that loan.

Mr. President, there are commercial institutions in Barbados that, in fact, will offer loan facilities to young Barbadians. For the most part, their parents are saddled with repaying those loans.

5.20 p.m.

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SENATOR the hon. A.B. WALTERS: It is also noted from the 1960s and the 1970s that there are some very proud, very skilled and professional Barbadians, who have made use of these funds and over the years have not repaid one blind cent. Sir, that term may be unparliamentary but, nonetheless, I have used it. Sir, sometimes you really have to look and ask why people have behaved in that particular manner in relation to the people's funds.

Mr. President, one of the other points I want to make that has come to my notice within the last few months, is that we are concentrating largely on the loans of medicine, law and social sciences but the areas which we said we were going to build up, like our skill banks and technical and vocational studies, very few people have had access to those loans.

Sir, maybe we probably have to change tact and recognise that, in that area, we may have to give persons loans to go to the Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic and other technical institutes overseas to pursue distance learning in technical subjects like information technology, computer engineering and the like, and that has to be the

focus from this point on, as opposed to focussing on the traditional professions as we know them.

Mr. President, in my view, funds now have to be put aside for those persons, who want to go into some of the traditional artisan trade and some of the other vocational educational areas. Sir, we probably need a cadre of social workers and of persons working in the area of social sciences.

Sir, we probably need a cadre of good human resource practitioners and, we probably need a cadre of good teachers because out of our educational system we may find that we have a number of teachers who are very good academics, but in terms of the area of science and technology, we need to keep abreast of the technology. Sir, at the level of post graduate studies, I would think that the focus now has to be on those technical and vocational areas like science and technology.

Mr. President, the new thinking in a lot of the mature universities now suggest that they would prefer to see a student who is over 30 years old than a student who is 18 years or thereabout because a lot of those institutions are making the point that the mature student had time to go into the workplace; had time to build up relationships, has travelled and the like and, therefore, they bring a much wider experience to the whole business of the acquisition of knowledge.

Mr. President, Senator the Very Reverend H.E. Crichlow mentioned the whole business of the destruction of the knowledge and, Sir, I was going to say that the University of the West Indies is one of the worst universities around in terms of books and how people deal with the acquisition of knowledge. I have always dealt with the acquisition of knowledge and if you want to gain some knowledge, one of the things you have to be prepared to do is to buy yourself the knowledge by way of purchasing the books.

Sir, Barbados does not have a culture of people purchasing books, even to the extent that in secondary schools people are given free books or they pay a pittance for those books for one year. Sir, sometimes one gets the impression that a student leaving a fifth form or even a sixth form environment would go into university and, Sir, he believes that he only needs one book for one subject but, Sir, you may need 250 books.

Mr. President, I remember in my days at Oxford, when I left tutorials, I would normally go into the faculty of social sciences that had a library that would have a minimum of 15 copies of each book that might be required in that faculty and you also had second-hand book shops around that you could purchase books at some reasonable price.

Mr. President, I think we have to develop that kind of culture where we say to our young people that we can give them \$100 000 dollars to go and study but part of the study culture has to be that he will purchase the means of acquiring that knowledge.

Sir, maybe, part of that might be in the new dispensation, the purchase of a computer but also purchase some books, so that when you want to do some research, you do not have to go to anybody's library, you go to your own library, pull it off the shelf, sit down and do your research, and you are comfortable and, Sir, that is the position I have adopted over the years.

Mr. President, I finally want to make the point that the Student Revolving Loan Fund really needs to expand the opportunities for new disciplines. We have spent a lot of time on old disciplines and we may have missed the boat because there are very few opportunities, internationally, for us, unless we can create a new person, who can compete in the international arena.

Mr. President, I am a product of the 1960s. I have listened to Senator Crichlow and I am one of those fellows who had to meet and greet the people in London on a train, bus or in some other institution that I would have worked, so I understand the challenges.

Sir, the second and third generation of Barbadian or West Indian does not have that challenge but I was in that environment at a period when it was normal for most young West Indians, by the time they got to 14 years old, they had a police record and when you have a police record, you are not going to get anywhere at a serious university.

Asides.

SENATOR the Hon. A.B. WALTERS: Mr. President, I make that point because one of the things that we are going to deal with is that we have very few opportunities for export of labour. Sir, in the 1950s and in the 1960s we were able to export labour overseas. We did not have a university then, but we had, coming out of the school system, young bright Barbadian men and women, who were able to fit into jobs overseas and they did not have access to any money or any university, but when some of them got there, they may have had access to universities or technical colleges at that point.

The fear we may have to have in dealing with matters like this, is that there are probably 25 000 Barbadians living in London and their offsprings; sons, daughters and grand children may find themselves in a position that they might not have the kind of opportunity. Although they have the education and the training, they may not have the opportunities there and they may seek to

come back here and, Sir, that is a challenge we might have to face.

Sir, there is not going to be a lot of brain-drain from Barbados, but there is going to be some traffic coming from the developed world back into Barbados and, Sir, some of those persons are going to be able to make demands on these funds.

S/A21/17:30 Sequence 31

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SENATOR the Hon. A.B. WALTERS: Certainly, I want to make the point, as best as I can make it, that whatever mechanisms we put in place, for the delinquency from this point on, we have to make sure that we collect whatever funds that are due, once people have taken those funds.

If you raise the limit from 30, 50 to 100, it is not two cents you are talking about. If we do not begin to recover some of those funds after the 3, 5, 7 years, or whatever, then we are going to be back in the same place, having to replenish that Fund. That is something I would not wish to contemplate, because some of my offspring certainly might be affected by that kind of difficulty.

Sir, with those short remarks, I thank you.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator McClean.

SENATOR the Hon. Miss M.P.O. McCLEAN: Mr. President, the proposal to amend the Student Revolving Loan Fund Bill is one which seeks to give some strength and some teeth to the Bill, in terms of its provisions in relation to recovery. That comes against a background of the recognised need to enhance the Fund, in terms of the level of borrowing that any persons borrowing from the Fund can do, and the cost of borrowing with the arrangements in relation to the interest charges.

Sir, the cost of borrowing, as you would have heard, is very attractive. The terms and conditions of the loan are attractive, therefore, while that creates the opportunity for Barbadians to access funds to finance a wider cross-section of educational opportunities, it really should create on those persons an obligation to repay, in as expeditiously a manner as is possible.

In the absence of a commitment to do that, an action to do so, the provisions also seek to make clear the power to collect outstanding debts through garnishing, et cetera. It can only serve to enhance the structure of the system and to make it, at the end of the day, better serve the needs of the people of Barbados.

Sir, with those few words, I beg to move that the Bill be read a second time.

The question was put to the Senate and agreed to.

On the motion of SENATOR the Hon. Miss M.P.O. McCLEAN, the Senate resolved itself into Committee on the Bill, Her Honour Madam DEPUTY PRESIDENT in the Chair.

COMMITTEE

Madam DEPUTY PRESIDENT: The Senate is now in Committee.

Clauses 1-3, inclusive, were called and passed.

Clause 4 was called.

SENATOR the Hon. Miss M.P.O. McCLEAN: Madam Deputy President, at Clause 4 there was a proposed amendment in the Lower House which would have been inserted at 16A 1B, the words “along with the certificate obtained pursuant to Clause 3.” If I read what was intended, it would have read, “The Committee knows or suspects that the person is entitled to or due to receive a payment....” They would have inserted, “along with the certificate obtained pursuant to Clause 3 from another person”, in this section referred to as the third party.

As proposed, there was a review of the Amendment by the Chief Parliamentary Council who has indicated that Amendment, as read, the wording that was proposed cannot properly follow the word “payment” in Section 1B. If you read it, it does not seem to flow logically. Therefore, the recommendation of the Chief Parliamentary Council is, these words be placed later between the words “may” and “deliver”. It would therefore read as follows, Section 16A 1B, the last two lines:

“The Committee may, along with a copy of the certificate obtained in Section 16, deliver to the third party a demand for payment.”

Madam, I therefore propose that the Clause be so amended.

Clause 4 was amended and agreed to.

Clause 5 was called and passed.

On the motion of SENATOR the Hon. Miss M.P.O. McCLEAN, Madam DEPUTY PRESIDENT reported to His HONOUR the PRESIDENT, the passing of one Bill, as amended in Committee, and Mr. PRESIDENT resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

SA21 17:40 p:m

Sequence 32

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Senate A21, Sequence 33, 5.40 p.m.

On the separate motions of SENATOR the Hon. Miss M. P. O. McCLEAN, the Bill was read a third time and passed and cited as the Student Revolving Loan Fund (Amendment) Act, 2009.

SENATOR the Hon. Miss M. P.O. McCLEAN: Mr. President, this brings us to the end of Government Business for the day, and before I move the adjournment I want to take this opportunity to congratulate former Senator Derek Alleyne on his assuming a new position at the Urban Development Commission.

Mr. President, for the past year and a half, I thoroughly enjoyed serving in this Honourable Chamber with Senator Alleyne, as a very knowledgeable individual, who has had several years of experiences in the Public Service, as a person who has had for the years I have known him, a very keen interest in this country and in the politics of Barbados. He brought a very strong and vibrant approach to debating. He brought significant knowledge of the workings of Government and made an excellent contribution to this Chamber.

Sir, I believe that as the former Senator said in his correspondence to you, he was keenly aware of the importance of ensuring that there was no conflict of interest. We understand that the whole question of integrity and good governance is of paramount importance.

His contribution will be missed, but I believe that his successor has demonstrated, very early, his capacity and I told her what I told Mr. Alleyne, and he is a fitting successor. I believe that Mr. Alleyne will take comfort from the contributions of Senator Ince, as he moves from strength to strength.

I take this opportunity, certainly, on behalf of my colleagues, who themselves may want to share their thoughts, to heartily congratulate Derek Alleyne. We will miss you here but we look forward to your contribution in the position that you have assumed and we anticipate that in the same way that you have left your mark, you will make an indelible mark at the Urban Development Commission. I wish you well, and all of God's Blessings.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Thompson.

SENATOR Miss H. E. THOMPSON: Thank you very much, Mr. President.

I would wish to join Senator McClean in extending good wishes to now former Senator Alleyne, now Director Alleyne. We will be observing him, I am sure, with a lot of acerbic commentary at times from This Side as in the nature of what we do, he has tremendous capacity. I enjoyed his use of language, often used against me.

I am sorry that he is not here so that I can tease him to his face. I was very flattered when I learnt that in his parting note he particularly mentioned me. I want to thank him for his kind mention, and assure him that I will continue to be as provocative as he seemed to think I was, just so that I could get his attention.

Senator McClean has rightly said that he goes on to take up a very important post. I think that the Urban Development Commission has a significant role to play in national development, and it will be interesting to see how he defines the institution and what style of leadership he will bring to it. I will be observing both at the political level and certainly from the level of a Barbadian because I have a very strong perspective about what the Urban Development Commission can do, if used as a development instrument.

Sir, it will be interesting to observe whether there will be some partisan port under him or whether there is going to be equitable distribution of what some might consider entitlements.

I think too, Sir, that it would be remiss of me if I did not also take this opportunity to say that I truly enjoyed Senator Alleyne's, as he then was, speeches. I think that I only managed to agree with him on one occasion in the last 18 months, not unusual perhaps, given where we each sit, but I always loved the colour of his delivery, and the vigour with which it was delivered.

He brought tremendous depth of perspective, political and otherwise to his commentaries. One of the things that I like particularly about the way that he spoke is that he had an excellent facility with English and a very good command of English. He tells me that he was a Latin student, perhaps that helps to explain it.

Mr. President, I wish him well and I say that in all sincerity. I do not think that leadership of any type is easy, and leading institutions in a political environment is a particularly difficult task at the Urban Development Commission because of how the institution may be perceived.

There are many who will have different perspectives about the role that the Commission is to play and, therefore, what is his individual role. I believe that leaders of institutions like that have a responsibility to walk a role between the pure partisan and delivering what they think

has to be the broader policy remit of an institution of that sort.

Sir, it is an interesting position that he takes up and we wish him well in it. I am sure that I speak for Senator Symmonds as well, who had an opportunity to work with him in an earlier political life, and whom I know continues to have a very cordial relationship with him, and would certainly want to wish him well, as he goes on to a different level of national service.

I am much obliged to you, Mr. President.

Asides.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Hutson.

SENATOR J. A. C. HUTSON: Mr. President, I too would like to join others in congratulating Senator Alleyne on his new position. I know he is going to do very well in it because when he was here, he showed his dynamic personality.

Senate A21, Sequence 33, 17:50:14

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SENATOR J. A. C. HUTSON: His English language was absolutely first-class particularly when he was attacking my dear friend on my left and Senator Symmonds as well.

Asides.

SENATOR J. A. C. HUTSON: I am sure he will do well. I know that he has now been followed by the eminent Senator Ince who I can see is going to take over from Senator Alleyne. I wish him all the very best. I really appreciated listening to him and I hope that one day again I would have the privilege of hearing him speak again.

I thank you, Sir.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Honourable Senators, I believe it would be remiss of me if I did not join in the encomiums that are being distributed on Both Sides of this Chamber, to the extent that it has sides, as we discussed the departure of a Senator who has made a contribution of lasting significance to this Chamber.

I am sorry that I was not here initially to welcome his successor, if you would pardon the expression. In observing Senator Derek Alleyne, as he then was, since I came to the Chamber, I have no doubt that he would have no compunction about welcoming his replacement colleague, Senator Jepter Ince. I take this opportunity to welcome Senator Ince into the Chamber which was so

magnificently done by my colleague, the Deputy President, in my absence and for which I am grateful.

Senator Alleyne will be missed in this Chamber if for no other reason than that he brought a quality of magnificence to the performance of political diatribe. I say that without prejudice to the efficacy or decency of his presentations. I take note of Senator Hutson's reference to his eloquence as he attacked, on the one hand, his colleagues on the Other Side. I say that at the same time recognising that they gave no quarter and they asked none.

I am sorry that Senator Symmonds is not in his place so I could have congratulated him and Senator Thompson, neither of whom is leaving us, I think. You never could tell these days what is going to happen but I do not think that they are in danger of leaving us any time soon because we did not expect or anticipate that Senator Alleyne would be leaving us and here it is we are in a position where we are discussing his departure.

Senator Alleyne contributed significantly to this Chamber. I believe that I should be unhappy that he is not here, even as I am happy to welcome his successor Senator Ince who, on the basis of his presentation, while I was here today, suggested that nothing is lost of the flavour which Senator Alleyne brought to the Chamber while he was here.

I wish him well in his new endeavour. I think he is going into a different environment. Those of us who have had the privilege of working in all of those environments know that there is a difference between being a flamboyant Senator and being a subservient officer in an organisation which requires you to take directions as opposed to giving directives.

I look forward to what would happen over the next few weeks, months and years but I think that the record should show that I regret losing Senator Alleyne but at the same time, I am pleased to welcome Senator Ince.

I hope that at the time when subsequently we are able to discuss the departure of all of us, sooner rather than later, we would be able to say with equinity that Senator Ince has filled the role effectively and maturely. I congratulate him on his appointment and I am glad that I finally got an opportunity, thanks to the Leader of this Honourable Senate, to say to him welcome and may you have a good term in this Honourable Chamber.

This Senate is one of the magnificent areas of our public life. Even if I, with a long activity in the field, speak with a certain degree of regret when I say that the Senate is the Upper Chamber in every respect, no offence intended to my distinguished colleagues in the Other Place... This is where I was politically born and this is where, no doubt, I

shall politically rest my sword in due course, to the extent that such a sword exists.

I welcome you Senator Ince and I thank all the Honourable Senators who have spoken so glowingly of the departed, departed must not be misunderstood, Senator Alleyne as he once was.

I thank you.

ADJOURNMENT

SENATOR the Hon. Miss M. P. O. McCLEAN: Mr. President, as you are aware the Other Place has gone on recess, therefore I want to take this opportunity to say thanks to the staff of Parliament for facilitating this session of the Senate, to all those persons who provided support services in the dining room and all those who made the Sittings of the Senate comfortable which have allowed us to function efficiently and effectively.

Mr. President, that brings us to the end of Government business for the day and I beg to move that the Senate do now adjourn sine die.

Mr. PRESIDENT: In moving the question that this Senate do now adjourn sine die, I think that it is appropriate that I should inform the Senate that I am grateful for the opportunity to proceed on recess.

The Senate is going to be on recess for some considerable time not exceeding the time of the Other Place, which dictates how we live and how we survive. I shall be out of the country for a period of time, not beyond what is reasonable, as I understand it.

I wish Honourable Senators to have a period of happiness during the recess. The recess is for Honourable Senators and Parliamentarians generally to have a period of refreshment, so feel free to do all the things that you have not done, or ought to have done during the period prior to your recess.

I am very grateful to the Leader of the Senate for allowing us the respite from the arduous task which the Ministers especially will welcome the opportunity not to have to defend their positions in this Honourable Chamber, whatever those positions are, and the Members of the alleged Opposition.

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Mr. PRESIDENT: Honourable Senators, I do not know of any opposition in this Honourable Chamber, I have never seen anything which could be described as opposition, but I hear everybody saying the opposition and so I join in that. As you would know, the Chair does not know the difference between opposition and other. We do what we have to do from this Chair.

Honourable Senators, I speak for my colleague, the Deputy President, when I say I wish you all to have a good summer, enjoy it, do that which you must do and that I look forward to seeing you, in due course, over the recess.

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

6.00 p.m.

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EDITORIAL NOTES — NOT PART OF THE REPORT

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

EDITORIAL QUERIES

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

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

Q2. Order No. 2. The Resolution and its heading name the ‘Barbados Diabetic Foundation’, while the Leader of the Senate refers to ‘the Barbados National Diabetes Foundation’ and ‘the Barbados Diabetes Foundation’. Printed as in the source.

Q3. Order No. 1, speech labels. Senator P. I. Inniss is labelled both ‘SENATOR Miss P.I. INNISS’ and ‘SENATOR Mrs. P.I. INNISS’. Printed as in the source.

Q4. Message No. 2/2009. The Governor-General’s Message reads ‘Mr. Jepter Ince has been appointed’, and Senator Ince’s reply reads ‘this Upper Camber’. Printed as in the source.

DEBATE SUMMARY

(Editorial summary — not part of the record.)

The Senate met in the Senate Chamber, Parliament Buildings, on Wednesday, 12th August, 2009 at 11.20 a.m.; prayers were led by Rev. Father Errington Massiah, and Madam Deputy President, Her Honour Senator Miss K. F. Ifill, took the Chair in the absence of the President. Message No. 2/2009 from the Governor-General informed the Senate that the seat of Mr. Derek MacDonald Alleyne had been declared vacant and that Mr. Jepter Ince had been appointed a Senator, both with effect from 1st August, 2009. Senator J. Ince was escorted to his seat and welcomed by the Deputy President, who then read a letter of thanks from Mr. Alleyne explaining that he had been offered the post of Director of the Urban Development Commission. The Leader of the Senate, Senator the Hon. Miss M. P. O. McClean, laid three papers, among them the Duties, Taxes and Other Payments (Exemptions) (Sir Garfield Sobers) Order, 2009, Standing Order 45(2) was suspended, and the Order of National Heroes (Amendment) Bill, 2009 and the Student Revolving Loan Fund (Amendment) Bill, 2009 were read a first time.

Under Order No. 1, Senator McClean moved the Resolution to approve the borrowing under the Special Loans Act, Cap. 105 of \$165 000 000 from the Barbados National Bank Inc. to finance the Barbados Road Network Infrastructure Improvement Project. She stressed that this

was not new money but the conversion of a bridging arrangement into a long-term loan for the ABC Highway project, whose cost had risen from US\$70 million to a revised US\$133 million, an increase of \$63 million or almost 100 per cent, and argued that it would be grossly unfair to blame public servants. The President took the Chair during her speech. Senator Ince supported the Resolution and was asked by the President to be more temperate in discussing Cabinets. Senator the Hon. H. LaV. Benn said that in 2006 the then Government had approved an amended scope of work including overpass bridges and questioned the selection of the contractor 3S. Senator Miss P. I. Inniss traced the Cabinet Papers and Supplementary Memoranda of Understanding behind the project. In reply, Senator McClean said that proper procedures and the advice of public servants must be respected, and the Resolution was agreed to.

Under Order No. 2, Senator McClean moved the Resolution to lease approximately 36 000 square feet at Lot B, Warrens, St. Michael to the trustees of the Barbados Diabetic Foundation, explaining that the Foundation was partnering with Medicorp Trust and the Government on services to prevent and manage diabetes, a programme on the cards since 2004; it was agreed to. She then moved the Resolution to lease 2.2 acres at Prince Road, Pine, St. Michael to the National Insurance Board for a new headquarters building for the Caribbean Examinations Council, which Senator Ince, Senator the Hon. A. B. Walters and Senator D. K. A. Griffith supported; it too was agreed to.

Under Order No. 4, Senator McClean moved the second reading of the Order of National Heroes (Amendment) Bill, 2009, which exempts from duties and taxes vehicles bought by National Heroes, noting that Sir Garfield Sobers was the only living National Hero. The Bill passed through Committee without amendment. After a suspension, she moved the second reading of the Student Revolving Loan Fund (Amendment) Bill, 2009, describing the Fund as an initiative of the 1970s to help Barbadians study overseas. Senator Griffith, speaking on International Youth Day, urged commercial banks to develop student loan products; Senator the Very Rev. H. E. Crichlow said a commercial bank would require collateral that most borrowers could not provide; and Senator Walters said that some professional Barbadians had used the Fund and ‘not repaid one blind cent’. In Committee, Clause 4 was amended on the advice of the Chief Parliamentary Counsel so that the Committee may deliver a demand for payment to a third party with a copy of the certificate, and the Bill was read a third time and passed.

Before the adjournment, Senator McClean, Senator Miss H. E. Thompson, Senator J. A. C. Hutson and the President paid tribute to former Senator Alleyne. Senator

McClean thanked the staff of Parliament as the Other Place had gone into recess, and the President wished Senators a refreshing recess. The Senate was adjourned sine die.

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