
THE SENATE DEBATES

(UNOFFICIAL REPORT)

PARLIAMENT 2008 – 2013

THE SENATE

Wednesday, March 24, 2010

Estimates - Senate A28B, Sequence 01, 10.00 a.m.

RESUMPTION

Mr. PRESIDENT: The Senate is resumed.

Senator Holder you have the Floor.

SENATOR A. E. HOLDER: Mr. President, I rise to contribute to the Appropriation Bill that has been laid before this Honourable Chamber. I do so from the context of a poor person, born from the origins of the working class so that I fully appreciate and understand what it is to be poor. Therefore, I speak from the perspective of a working class person. I therefore have a commitment to speak to issues which affect ordinary Barbadians in this society.

Mr. President, much has been said about Barbados being seen as a society and that the motto from the Other Side appears to be that Barbados should be viewed within the context of a society, rather than the context of an economy. However, one must fully understand and recognise that the economy and society are not discrete and disparate wholes, that is discrete and disparate entities. They must be viewed as part and parcel of the same system. They are inextricably linked together as one.

This Appropriation Bill has been laid before this Chamber, at a time when this country is in an economic recession, which we admit its genesis lies in exogenous factors. However, there is a need for domestic policies to guide this country out of that recession.

It is therefore incumbent on that Administration to chart a path, utilising domestic policies out of this recession, given the fact that this country had marginal growth in 2008, negative growth in 2009 and it is

anticipated that there will be similar negative growth in 2010. It is therefore imperative that in examining any analysis of this Appropriation Bill, a careful understanding of the macroeconomic framework ought to be explored and analysed.

It is therefore essential to understand the concept of development and likewise to understand the concept of growth because in a small open economy like ours, there is a linkage between development and growth. It cannot be denied that there is a linkage between development and growth. They are part and parcel of the same symbiotic relationship.

Mr. President, within these Estimates laid before you, it is important to understand what these figures mean not only to the economy but to the society. In economic parlance, Mr. President, growth is measured in terms of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) or Gross National Product (GNP). There are integral components which make up the GNP or the GDP of the country. These consist of consumption expenditure, investment expenditure, Government expenditure, exports and imports. Those are the normal components that give the formula for GNP. We ought to examine those components critically, with these Estimates that have been laid before this Honourable Chamber. It is important to determine if there is growth in any of those components, if there is a likelihood of growth being recorded in the economy so it is important to examine consumption. This consumption would consist of consumption by households, for example.

In tabling these Estimates in this Chamber, it is noted that the Emoluments, as it relates to the Public Sector, display what is being termed now a moratorium, for want of a better word on them. I think in truth and in fact, part of the medium-term fiscal strategy, the (MTFS,) speaks to a containment of these Emoluments from 2010--2014. The question must therefore be asked: "What impact would this have on consumption expenditure in the economy?"

Mr. President, we have, for example, an Environmental Health Officer whose salary scale is from Z13-Z8, so he will take a maximum of five years to reach the apex of his profession as it relates to the position. Mr. President, based on these Estimates, if he has reached that apex, say for example, in 2007, there is no increment for him. In addition to that, there is no wage increase for him either based on the MTFS, which has been laid before this Honourable Chamber, so that he obtains no increase in his disposable income. Additionally, nothing has been done relative to the cost of living so there is no increase either in his nominal income or in his real income. He therefore must be in a worse off position.

Mr. President, coupled with that, he has witnessed an increase of 60 per cent in his water rates and an increase in his electricity bill. Chances are that with the element of user fees, either hidden indirectly in the medium term fiscal strategy or placed overtly in it, he has an additional outlay. This therefore means he has less to spend and will spend less, therefore, his consumption pattern is altered.

Mr. President, he is but one example. If we quantify the households, we will witness a significant decline in consumption, which is a key component in the matrix.

Mr. President, we could next consider investment expenditure. If he has less disposable and real incomes, he has also less to invest because he is not going to save more out of less, unless he is very thrifty. Mr. President, there is nothing laid in these Estimates, which would indicate that there are incentives for an increase in investment expenditure.

Mr. President, we come to Government's expenditure. These Estimates are pellucidly clear to the ninth, which is a mathematical formula, that there is a significant reduction in Government's expenditure spread across the board. That is obviously also one of the priorities of the Administration, a reduction in expenditure. Mr. President, so far in the equation, we have had a reduction in consumption, a reduction in investment and a reduction in Government's expenditure.

These Estimates speak to the fact, based on forecasting and what has transpired before, that there is a significant reduction in tourism revenue. I think that the revenue for last year was to the tune of \$170 million. We must also understand that tourism's contribution to GNP is predicated on bed nights. Mr. President, even if we have an increase in arrivals, in order to constitute any growth to GNP, it must constitute an increase in bed nights. It makes no sense having more tourists come and you cannot see it equated in bed nights.

Mr. President, we know for a fact that we are coming to the end of the winter season. Nothing has shown that there will be an increase and/or improvement in the figures.

Sir, we now come to the two exogenous variables, exports and imports. Exports are also in a decline. We then come to imports whose values fluctuate on the price of oil, over which we have no control, none whatsoever. There is a stark and distinct possibility that there might be an increase in the value of imports. Sir, all of the elements so far point to negative values.

Mr. President, there is a stark and distinct possibility that there might be an increase in the value of imports. Sir, in all of the elements so far, they all point to negative values. Therefore, when one compiles the equation, one sees negative Gross Domestic Product (GDP) or negative Gross National Product. It is therefore incumbent on the Administration to explain the level of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and Gross National Product from your macroeconomic perspectives in relation to these Estimates.

Mr. President, we need to compile and configure these numbers as to how they affect society, which is a composition of individuals. Sir, we need to understand. Mr. President, it is all right to speak about development and about society but they must be explained within the context of all the negative figures so far.

Sir, the question remains, what does that hold forth for the ordinary citizen? Sir, I have not even begun to speak on the cuts as they relate to the social welfare programmes that were so well-thought about by That Side. How these impact on the individual Sir, that is what the public wants to know. It is all right to speak glowingly about society, at the end of the day, the normal man in the street wants to know how does the computation of these figures assist him in a positive way.

Asides.

SENATOR A. E. HOLDER: We will get to the bus fares, of course, we will.

Mr. PRESIDENT: I have to confess, I do not travel on the bus.

SENATOR A. E. HOLDER: Mr. President, I do sometimes.

Asides.

SENATOR A. E. HOLDER: Yes, in Barbados. Sir, that is what the public wants to know. The public wants to know how, in these compilation of figures, are they better or worse off. Would these figures put more money in their pockets and allow them to buy more goods and services?

At the end of the day, that is what the public wants to know. Sir, I say so unashamedly that to date, having been here throughout the debate, I have not heard anything from That Side as to the benefits that would accrue from these Estimates to the ordinary man and woman in the street.

Mr. President, there was a very old saying about good old Robin Hood who used to steal from the rich and give to the poor. Unfortunately from these Estimates nothing is being put into the hands or the pockets of the poor. Mr. President, what is even worse is that based on these Estimates, the ordinary man in the street is going to see hell. How is he going to be able to buy more goods and services? Sir, I would wish the good Senator Boyce to speak to these issues to the public. He has an hour and he could address these issues.

Mr. President, with regard to the cuts in expenditure, Government needs to tell the public on whom would these cuts impact. These cuts will not affect the upper class nor the rich in this country. Sir, I am at a lost to know that the rich and famous are the persons who utilise the Queen Elizabeth Hospital or the Drug Service of this country. I would loathe to know that the rich in this country utilises the welfare system or that they utilise the National Assistance Board. Sir, these are where the cuts have taken place therefore the rhetorical question must be asked: "Whom do these cuts intend to benefit and whom do they intend to make suffer?"

Mr. President, I noticed that there are no points of order and I must wonder why there are not any.

Asides.

SENATOR A. E. HOLDER: Mr. President, if we can examine these Estimates from an economic perspective, which has not yet been done by This Side. Sir, we now come to this document which was laid before this Honourable Chamber, the Medium Term Fiscal Strategy, 2010-2014, which is part and parcel of the document laid before this Honourable Chamber, and the Medium-Term Development Strategy for Barbados, 2001-2014.

Sir, it is strikingly strange that the contents of these two documents are so reflective of the International Monetary Fund Article IV Consultation. Sir, we say in legal parlance, both documents appear to be in *pari materia*, they appear to be the same in this document here.

Mr. President, what is also strikingly strange is that when this International Monetary Fund document was made public, there was a debate. I had the honour to participate in a debate in relation to the measures and suggestions of the International Monetary Fund to the authorities in Barbados. I had the honour to participate in a debate with Senator Boyce on "Brass Tacks" one Sunday.

The issue was raised as to what would Government say to these suggestions. Sir, it was said then that the International Monetary Fund is free to make any suggestions, that the International Monetary Fund had before made suggestions and they will continue to make suggestions all the time but that it does not necessarily mean that the Government has to adopt those suggestions.

Mr. President, this International Monetary Fund Document was in September 2009 and the Medium-term Fiscal Strategy Document (MTFS) has January 2010 and the Medium-Term Development Strategy (MTDS) has 2010 to 2014. If one examines page 14 of the MTFS Document, it compares so favourably with page 8 of the same said IMF document. Sir, I wonder if it is coincidental. Yet, there was a large outburst and a hue and cry about the Barbados Labour Party ridiculing persons from the Ministry in the preparation of these documents.

Mr. President, there was a large hue and cry that we were most unpatriotic and for persons who went to the University of the West Indies who had distinguished careers, et cetera, that we are saying they are incompetent, et cetera. Sir, that is what was said or even suggested.

Mr. President, it is strikingly strange that if one examines page 14 of the Barbados document contains the same things as the IMF document.

Mr. President, I will read it:

"Contains Personal Emoluments caused by allowing total growth to be equivalent of the sum that would normally be paid to... This would depend on containing the growth in public sector employment."

Mr. President, it is the same document. Sir, when I used to go to primary school and secondary school, which is a long time ago, I used to be chastised for copying.

Asides.

SENATOR A.E. HOLDER: We used to be chastised for copying, so that what is concerned in these two Barbados documents is the same said thing here. Sir, I am just wondering who wrote what. Is it that the IMF dictated what had to be contained in these two policy documents for the Barbados Government or vice versa? Sir, one must ask that question.

Mr. President, it does not even finish there. This is but just the beginning. Sir, if one examines with scrutiny the Letter of Intent laid in this Honourable Chamber in 1991, the standby arrangement, to the International Monetary Fund written October 25, 1991, signed by the Right Honourable Erskine Sandiford, it is the content as it relates to MTFS. The strategies are the same as what is

contained in his 2009 IMF document. Sir, there is a famous saying that the more things change, the more they remain the same.

Mr. President, with all respect to you, there is no departure from the strategies and/or policies of the then Democratic Labour Party Administration and the now Democratic Labour Party Administration. Sir, I need to go even further to show the relationship that has existed with the IMF and the Democratic Labour Party Administration before and now this Democratic Labour Party Administration.

Sir, I think it is imperative and important that we understand the context of the relationship between the Democratic Labour Party administration of the past and present and their relationship. It cannot even be deemed and termed, with all respect, symbiotic because symbiotic means there is benefit to both but I cannot say that, with all respect. Sir, symbiotic entails that there is a benefit to both, so there is no symbiotic relationship between the IMF and the Democratic Labour Party Administration of the past.

Mr. President, I wish to speak to the 1994 Financial Statement and Budgetary Proposals. It is most important to really put in the correct context the relationship between this current Administration and the IMF. Sir, it was delivered by the Honourable David D. J. H. Thompson, Minister of Finance on Monday, March 28, 1994. Sir, it just shows the co-existence of both of them. Sir, at page 27 of the document, the third paragraph, this is what he said:

“In that regard, we have a mutually satisfactory relationship with the International Monetary Fund. They understand us and we understand them. They know clearly what we are prepared to do and when, and we know what they want us to do, and when.”

Mr. President, it is as though this is being repeated right here in 2010. Sir, it is the same said thing, there is no deviation from then and now.

SENATOR J. INCE: Mr. President, on a point of order. Senator Holder is misleading this Chamber when he is dealing with the IMF. Mr. President, I have stated then, and I will state now, that Barbados became a member of the IMF in December 1970.

I have before me, and I would make it a document of this Senate. In 1982, J.M.G.M Adams, entered the first standby arrangement, arranged with the IMF. It was done under the Barbados Labour Party. I am going to read it.

Asides.

SENATOR J. INCE: Sir, it was done by the Barbados Labour Party in 1982, so if he wants to read a

document, let him, but I have the information, 1982, a standby arrangement of US\$90 million.

SENATOR A.E. HOLDER: Mr. President, I will continue to read from the document to show the existing relationship. That is all I am seeking to do; to show that there was a relationship, a close relationship, which apparently has developed even more.

Sir, I can even go back to the Financial Statement and Budgetary Proposals laid on March 15, 1993, by the then Right Honourable Erskine L. Sandiford. At Page 25 of that document:

“We will continue to value very highly the surveillance policies and procedures of the Fund. We therefore wish for the future to deepen our consultations with the International Monetary Fund on our external payment position, current account balances, capital flows, the management of our international reserves and our exchange rate system.

Equally, we wish to deepen our consultations with the Fund on the many aspects of our domestic policies, in particular, the areas of Government spending aggregate demand management which interact with the external position.

In addition, we welcome the technical assistance support offered by the Fund. It is against this background that we will continue to work in close cooperation with the Fund in an attempt to maintain an appropriate, prudent and sound macroeconomic framework.

To this end, we will be seeking within the framework of the Fund’s Articles of Agreement to invoke an enhanced surveillance policy and procedures of the Fund.”

Sir, it was once said by the Right Excellent Errol Walton Barrow that after Independence we ought not to be seen loitering on the steps of the Colonial Office. The Right Excellent Errol Walton Barrow said that. We ought not to be seen loitering on the steps of the Colonial Office.

It seems apparent from the relationship with the Democratic Labour Party Administration and the International Monetary Fund that they want to continue to loiter in Washington. It seems apparent that, having and continuing to invoke the policies of the International Monetary Fund, it is as if we have changed one colonial master for another.

Sir, it is as if you go to town, and being very supportive of our manufacturing industry, you purchase a T-Shirt from a manufacturer, hoping that for all intents and purposes it is something made in this beautiful country.

Having bought the T-Shirt, you turn the collar, you see “Made in Taiwan”. Any policies being enunciated by this Administration do not emanate from Bay Street. They come from Washington, dictated to Bay Street, and then foisted on the people of this country. That is what it is.

Sir, these two documents, the Medium-Term Fiscal Strategy and this Medium-Term Developmental Strategy prepared in Barbados, on the outside, is apparent to all and sundry manufactured other than in Barbados. How else does one explain the correlation between them and what is in Article IV, International Monetary Fund document and that from 1991? How else?

SENATOR J. INCE: On a point of order. Sir, Senator Holder is misleading the House. Sir, on February 21, 2003, the Barbados Labour Party, the former Government, concluded consultations with the IMF, Article IV, 2002. All of the Articles state the same thing. I would like him to go and bring Articles from 2003, 2004 and 2005, and read to this Honourable Chamber what those Articles stated.

SENATOR A. E. HOLDER: Mr. President, if I can read from the Article IV Consultation Report of the IMF, 2009, The possible fiscal measures.

“ The large expansion of goods and services; prioritise and reduce capital outlays across the public sector; streamline the operation of State-owned enterprises and adjust prices for utilities and other public services; improve tax administration and broaden the tax base; raise the VAT by one to two percentage points, and sell Government assets.”

Sir, that is contained in the Article IV document.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator, I do not want to interrupt you. You need to quote for the purposes of the Reporters which document you are reading from and quote the Page for the accuracy which the Reporter will have when they report what you are saying. Thank you.

SENATOR A. E. HOLDER: I am obliged, Mr. President, Mr. President, the Barbados 2009 Article IV Consultation Staff Report on Public Information Notice on its Considerations by the Executive Board, page 8 speaks to the possible measures, which are in line and congruent with pages 14 and 15 of the Medium Term Fiscal Strategy 2010 to 2014, January 2010 and the Medium Term Development Strategy of Barbados, 2010 to 2014 at pages 14 and 15. Sir, both documents are in *pari materia* to the IMF Consultation document. They all say the same thing.

Sir, page 14 of the Medium Term Development Strategy speaks of the same: “Broaden the back base, eliminate transfers to the National Housing Corporation

and the Barbados Water Authority, place caps on the Queen Elizabeth Hospital and the Transport Board, the Barbados Agricultural Development and Marketing Corporation, and the University of the West Indies Cave Hill Campus.” If one examines carefully and scrutinises page 8 of the IMF document, paragraph 13 of that document states and I read:

“The Mission encourages the authorities to consider a number of possible fiscal measures including continued wage moderation, prioritising of capital projects, improvements in the tax regime and streamlining the operations of state-owned enterprises, in particular, the Transport Board and the Barbados Agricultural Management Company.”

Sir, the more we change, the more we remain the same, so that, Mr. President, what is being tabled and laid in this Honourable Chamber, represents nothing else but the policies of the International Monetary Fund, enunciated by and through the Democratic Labour Party administration.

Mr. President, I would wish to spend a couple of minutes on the financing of this expenditure as can be gleaned from the Estimates. If one examines Table VIII of the Estimates, I would honestly wish That Side to explain the domestic financing of this expenditure and, I think the public ought to know that, not only this Chamber, but the ordinary man in the street.

Sir, there is a column here being referred to as, “Other” and I would be most appreciative, Mr. President, if the Honourable Senator Boyce would speak to this issue, to the component that makes up this “Other”, in the sum of \$465 997, which has been somewhat amended by \$200 million. I would wish Senator Boyce to speak about what is the composition of this “Other”, which has never ever been tabled before in this Chamber or heard of before. It is incumbent on that Administration to speak to that, but that is not all.

Mr. President, I would also wish the Honourable Senator to speak to the origin of that deficit, which does not compare with the contents of Appendix II, in the Medium Term Fiscal Strategy, relative to the funding by the Inter-American Development Bank, the World Bank and the Caribbean Development Bank.

The figures presented in these Estimates are at variance with those in this document laid before this Chamber. Perhaps for the purpose of clarity, the good Senator Boyce will explain, not only to this Chamber, but to the ordinary man in the street the composition and constitution of this financing. Sir, that is what this country ought to know and must know because this variance is

irreconcilable, based on what is here and they need an explanation.

No wonder, Mr. President, it was said by Honourable Members in the Other Place that this Appropriation Bill is but a hoax, for this cannot be compared, variances unexplained and the public deserve to know. It is as if, Mr. President, the umbilical cord of that Administration is tied to the IMF, based on all that has been presented here so that when we believe or are led to believe that there is an Administration, which is promoting policy, on behalf of the people. We are but left in dismay to realise in the end that these policies emanate from another place, in another country. It is indeed, a sad day in the history not of politics, but in the laying of Estimates, and two purported independent documents whose genesis lies somewhere else.

Mr. President, I think that this country deserves better. It is no wonder that when we took over the reigns of Government in 1994 the then Prime Minister had no choice but to ask the officers of the International Monetary Fund to politely leave Bay Street to enable our Administration to get on with the work of the people.

In closing, Mr. President, I would wish to say that this Administration has done nothing in over two years for the ordinary man and woman in this country. All they have done to the ordinary man and woman in this country is to increase taxes, water rates, et cetera, but one day coming soon there will be an end to that.

I am obliged to you, Mr. President.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Marville.

SENATOR R. O. MARVILLE: Mr. President, I rise in support of the Appropriation Bill, 2010. I propose to exercise my rights and privilege on commenting on some of the items in the Estimates. I do not intend to enter the debate on the International Monetary Fund simply because it is totally absurd to suggest that an institution of which we are a member is a bogeyman. The International Monetary Fund was set at the Bretton Woods meeting for a specific purpose, which may or may not suit our purposes.

Some of the recommendations of the International Monetary Fund are not appropriate and some of them are totally appropriate. If we follow some of them and ignore others, it means that we are making a judgment. If that judgment is sound, it is, if it is not, is not, but deal with that issue.

I should like also to comment on a point made by Senator Husbands earlier with respect to the International Monetary Fund and the notion that we may have changed their position. In point of fact, that had happened a little bit

earlier by a man who is now a Professor of Economics at Yale or Harvard, I cannot remember which one, Professor Kofi Botchway, who was the Minister of Finance of Ghana until 1990. When the International Monetary Fund come, they usually do their own investigations, but Kofi Botchway insisted that they go to one woman who was responsible for dealing with the International Monetary Fund and she went to the various ministries or segments of the society and determined what they heard and what they would do. That was set in stone from there, and Ghana has, in fact, offered to help other developing countries in this respect.

I intend, in fact, to deal with other issues. My views differ somewhat from the traditional Bajan affluent businessman or common citizen in that I do not believe that Government is there to solve all of the problems; that the Public Service should observe promotions on seniority rather than on performance; that our education system is unalterable; or that we should work or pretend to work until age 60 and then live for the next 30 or 40 years on earned or granted pensions.

Mr. President, I think that we are not in a position to continue to make these assumptions especially in these times of global and local downturn. We need, as my father would have said, to get up and get. We need to see what we as individuals can do and how we can shape the future of our country. Regrettably, unlike other developing countries like Brazil, China or Singapore, most of our economies rely on foreign exchange gained from tourism and offshore services. We do not possess enough of our self-sustaining internal economy unlike the countries cited, to be able to forego for the time being our reliance on our external partners.

Mr. President, I therefore have to accept the notion that we have to cut back on our expenditures and use whatever resources we have wisely. I find it strange therefore that some of our local economists are screaming for more input in the form of subsidies in our Estimates. This would mean immediately a greater deficit. I think at the present rate, the future is going to have higher interest rates rather than lower, so that we would have to pay for our superior efforts at stimulating the economy with a higher GDP to debt ratio. The end result would be that in the short run and possibly the long run, we would be worse off even for trying to stimulate the economy in this way.

The areas that I would wish to touch on are largely education, foreign affairs and to some extent the environment. I wish to touch initially on a few areas like agriculture, energy and tourism. I will try to combine energy and the environment. It was very interesting to hear the report of the Minister of Agriculture on a visit to Suriname. He touched on one of the issues that I find passing strange. We have from colonial times a Law that

allows us to import meats from five countries; New Zealand, Australia, Canada, the United Kingdom and the United States of America.

As I recall, three of those countries have had incidences of Mad Cow Disease and in at least one of them, it seems to have been transferred as Jacob-Creutzfeld Syndrome to the population. The point is we are not allowed to import sometimes cheaper and better products from, let us say, the Netherlands and we certainly are not allowed to import meats from our CARICOM colleagues.

I am glad to hear that we are setting up this institution, which would determine what is suitable or not largely because from my own experience in Suriname they produced some exceptionally good paté and meats which you could enjoy there but you cannot bring out of Suriname into Barbados. I think the Minister himself would confirm that.

I am most pleased too, that the Ministry has taken to looking to the issue of lands that are unused, underused or just left there hoping that some day they can be transferred from agriculture to some other thing. I noticed that the Ministry is intent on putting up some incentives for people to use land well.

I approve of the carrot but I would like to see a stick attached as well because although the incentives are there, there is no guarantee as such that owners of this land would necessarily go into the type of production which would be profitable to them and Barbados in general, if they are holding out for something better.

I would like to see an increase in special tax on lands that have been left idle for more than two years, with no clear intention of doing anything with it. I think that would help considerably.

Mr. President, I heard the matter of breadfruit being mentioned and that we have someone who now produces breadfruit flour. I think the Minister would recall that a number of years ago, Senator Chandler and I went to see him and that one of the subjects of conversation was the question of a breadfruit orchard, with the notion of producing sufficient flour to replace wheat, which is sometimes an allegiant. It is probably quite an expensive allegiant among the population.

The fact of the matter is that at the University of the West Indies in Jamaica, we have all the possible cultivars of breadfruit so we could probably come up with a tree that is shorter and therefore easier to reach. It would possibly be shorter in the time that it would take for those breadfruits to bear, but the breadfruit is an incredible food material.

I think in Barbados, interestingly, since it was part of the normal food in slavery, it is looked down upon, even in Haiti. The amazing thing is that we all eat breadfruit, probably in more different ways in Barbados than anywhere else I can think of. In Trinidad and Tobago, it is one of the most expensive food items. The equivalent of Bds\$6 for one breadfruit in Trinidad and Tobago and they only use it in a "boil-down".

Mr. President, apart from the obvious way of eating it - baked, boiled, cou-cou - it can be converted into a flour which can be made into bread. There is nothing in the fruit that is wasted. If the fruit is allowed to ripen beyond normal conditions, it can be converted into a sorbet, ice cream or drink. What is left over from what is not edible is beautiful animal feed. We have therefore the potential of internally feeding ourselves and cutting our export, and this ought to be looked at.

Mr. President, I am sorry but I intend to point to things of the sort. It is one thing to say that we are doing this or we are doing that bad or well, but it is probably helpful to put new ideas into the mix so that we can see where we are going.

Mr. President, I am pleased at the efforts of the Minister to get youngsters involved in agriculture in the 4-H programme. There is also an area where the individual can become directly involved in growing his or her own tomatoes, cucumbers in the backyard or even grapes. We can produce a lot more, either in the way of vegetables or fruits, and even if we do not really get any fruits or vegetables we are just providing an opportunity for plants to suck up more carbon dioxide and produce more oxygen for us. It is a good thing in itself.

Mr. President, there are a number of youngsters out there with some excellent ideas who need some assistance. One is a young vintner who is at the moment producing some pretty good wines, usually both pulped from regional and local fruits and imported in pulp. He proposes to introduce into Barbados five or six types of grapes, including one variety of table grapes, to be able to produce a totally local wine.

Incidentally, when this was tried in the United Kingdom, everybody thought it was a stupid idea but nowadays the United Kingdom produces some wines from small vineyards which are excellent wines. The same is true incidentally when we talk about Australian or California wines. Almost invariably the best wines come from little vintners and they never get outside of the country, unless you are lucky. Sir, this is something with which I think both the Ministry of Agriculture and the Barbados Investment and Development Corporation should assist this young man.

Mr. President, since we are talking about this, perhaps we should talk about innovation and the need to support innovation in a new society. Sir, that young man is only one of the innovators who need encouragement in the production of unique local products.

Mr. President, the Minister mentioned a couple who I have met and know, who produce flying fish pate'. There is also a woman who produces a herbal spread, which is somewhat like a pepper sauce but not that hot, which can be put on bread in the same way we used to put marmite to make sandwiches.

We also need to encourage those who make bio-gas, bio-diesel, construct solar-driven buses, et cetera. We need to do these things and not sit back and wait for Government to do everything. We need to be able to push these things ourselves and help in whatever way possible. It is interesting that we have been able to keep afloat, to a large extent, the quality of local input of ordinary people who serve in the tourism industry, including those who direct visitors, who invariably get lost on our winding roads, to places of interest.

I mention this because recently I paid a visit to the newly- reconstructed cave. Anyone who has not gone to see it should do so as soon as possible. It is an incredibly beautifully outfitted place. It is probably the place to go to at the moment in Barbados. There are two things I noted I would have like changed, one is that the signs giving directions to the cave are horrible. The last sign suggests that you go straight up, when you are actually turning right. What is worse is that the sign is black and white and is situated among another set of black and white sign posts.

Sir, incidentally, I was on a tour with a gentleman, I believe, from Israel, who said that he has been to a number of caves, including the ones in Israel but that he has never seen anything like this one. It does say something for our cave and it is not yet totally developed.

Asides.

SENATOR R. O. MARVILLE: Mr. President, the second thing was that we maintain the usual myth about the origin of the name Barbados. I think about 1790, a British historian writing a history of Barbados, a man called Richard Ligon, said that he thought the Portugese might have named it Barbados because of the bearded fig tree. As I recall, the Portugese named an island called "Barbuda" because of the bearded fig tree. A tree in Portugese is "uma arlole," which is feminine "Os Barbados" meant the bearded males. Sir, the fact of the matter, which we never want to look at, is that Barbados was a multi-cultural settlement long before the Europeans got here. The Amerindian name Ichirouganiam is a mixture of three different languages: "Lokono," which we call the Arawaks;

"Kalina," which we call the Carib, and an African language element.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Honourable Member, please bear this in mind that the reporters have to transcribe what you say. If you could spell out every now and again when you use a foreign language.

SENATOR R. O. MARVILLE: Mr. President, I am sorry, I do not consider the language here a foreign language.

Mr. PRESIDENT: I draw to your attention that Rule 5 of the Standing Orders which says that debates shall be conducted in the English language.

SENATOR R. O. MARVILLE: Mr. President, thank you and I do believe that is the language I am speaking. However, as you are aware, English is a rather eclectic language in the sense that it gathers words from all sorts of other languages and uses them sometimes indiscriminately.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Honourable Senator, you were just about to explain to the President, and I assume you are addressing the Chair.

SENATOR R. O. MARVILLE: I am, Sir.

Mr. PRESIDENT: That you were going to teach us the language that was used by the people who were here recently.

SENATOR R.O. MARVILLE: Sir, quite the contrary, I do not know where you got that impression from. I do not know that language and, therefore, I cannot possibly teach it. Sir, I am sorry but I have given up teaching languages a long time ago.

Mr. President, as I was explaining, "itse" is a Lokono word, the people we call the Arawak. Sir, "ru" is a Kalino word, the people we call Caribs, "Ghanaian" is a West African word and it would seem that when the Portugese got here they met a mixture of males with beards. Sir, as you know very well, Amerindians do not have beards, so to continue with a suggestion by Ligon, which is inappropriate is also inappropriate now. Sir, that is the only point I want to make.

Mr. President, with respect to tourism - at a meeting of a business group to which Senator Chandler and myself was invited, we put together a project based on the ancient method called "Ayurveda" which is particularly useful in cases of arthritis and similar diseases, with which you may be familiar at the St. Joseph Hospital. I believe that this project was later costed and it is a project which would have great viability for several reasons. There are thousands of Americans who travel all the way to India for

Ayurvedic treatment and if they could travel here, it would be a lot better for them and for us.

Mr. President, energy and the environment. Sir, I am particularly pleased that the Government is moving towards a gas economy as distinct from heavier burning fossil fuels. There are other possibilities which exist and I would hope that we get down to them rather soon. Sir, bio-gas technology using fecal waste is common even in rural China where they use the feces of human beings and pigs to produce bio-gas with which you cook.

Mr. President, German technology now makes it possible to mix that faecal matter and we have endless quantities of it. We dump 20 tonnes a month in a field somewhere in Christ Church.

Asides.

SENATOR R.O. MARVILLE: Sir, grass, bagasse, other vegetable waste, which then becomes bio-gas on which we could run probably the Barbados Light & Power Company, and it also produces, Mr. President, a non-pathogenic fertilizer. Sir, both products could save us a lot of money on imports. Incidentally, the bio-gas that I am talking about is, at the moment, and for a very long time, used by one gentleman in St. Andrew.

Mr. President, the other technology that we could look at is a new recovery system for converting salt water into drinking water. The present desalination system that we use, either requires a lot of energy, pumping the water up, converting it to steam, which becomes denatured water, then re-mixing that water for drinking purposes or it is pushed through membranes. I am not quite sure which technology we use but, Sir, those are the two that exists.

Sir, there is a recovery system which is used, for instance, when you need water to cool plants, as we do at the "Hot Pot", which I am sure you are aware of. You bring in cold sea water...

Asides.

SENATOR R.O. MARVILLE: Sir, the "Hot Pot" is place where you go to swim in the water.

Mr. PRESIDENT: I do not wish to participate in the debate because I am not entitled to, but there is no swimming at the "Hot Pot".

SENATOR R.O. MARVILLE: Oh, there is bathing or you sit. I see, it is for older gentlemen who want to sit and not swim.

Mr. PRESIDENT: With beards. You may or may not have a beard.

SENATOR R.O. MARVILLE: Sir, when I go to the beach, I swim out to the boats and back and I do not think that is sitting in a "pot". Sir, the point I am trying to make is that we can produce a lot of our own energy locally from waste.

Sir, we need too, to look at the question of garbage disposal. It is really about time that we sort our garbage and have it in different segments. Sir, as I have explained, if you take the waste matter that could be converted, that could go straight in with the faecal matter, et cetera and you would have bio-gas and fertilizer but bits and pieces like plastic, which can be recycled or sold.

Sir, things like batteries, old television sets, poisonous issues should not be dumped in our gullies or left all over the place because, in fact, what they are doing is attempting, ultimately, to get into our water resources.

Mr. President, with respect to water, I think we can do a lot more than we are doing at the moment. We can construct dams all over the place because there are several areas in the country which are susceptible to that and put fish in the dams so that you do not have an infestation of mosquitoes, et cetera, and that water would then slowly drift back into the reserves, rather than rushing down and causing floods elsewhere on the coast.

Mr. President, I really wanted most of all to talk about education. I noticed that in spite of the cut backs, education has not really been cut. My own view is that education cuts do not heal. Sir, I would like to look at some of the shifts that I think really necessary. I think everybody knows my views on the 11-plus. I call it the 11-plus and not the Common Entrance Examination because I think it is a much more appropriate nomenclature. It still divides the country into 30 per cent who go to good school and 70 per cent who go to schools where you are lucky physically to survive. We cannot continue to do this.

Sir, we cannot continue to ignore the various forms of intelligence of the human being and decide that all we will do is tackle the academic area of what is called English Grammar and Mathematics.

I am not quite sure what the difference between the two of them is because most kids do not seem to come out of school knowing the difference. They write incredibly bad English and they are not particularly good at simple Mathematics either.

Mr. President, there have been experiments all over the place at teaching children languages, which is one of the forms of intelligence, I think you would recognise that. We have a great propensity to sports and music, both of which should have a lot more attention earlier on. Sports, at least for the simple reason that we do not then get into the

problem of children with obesity, Type II diabetes, et cetera, and music because the only music that is really available to children, automatically, is precisely the music we do not want them to hear.

Mr. President, if you look at what the Venezuelans have done in this respect, one man decided that he would try to teach all Venezuelan kids European classical music and out of this has sprung a series of youth orchestras, a series of people who make musical instruments, almost a revolution in children who would otherwise probably have strayed out of the slums into crime.

It is so much simpler to focus on these educational systems than to wait later and pay in another institution, which cost a hell of a lot to build, and which cost a lot to maintain under any circumstances. I am referring to the institution of Dodds. Sir, when our young people get there, they are practically lost already. We need to do all the things that make for better young people.

I think that we ought to begin earlier than we have been doing at the moment. Practically every young woman who is going to have a child goes to the Polyclinic to ensure the health of her baby and herself. I think to that visit we ought to add a Counsellor on parenting. A Counselor on parenting would give the young woman who is probably too young to know about parenting anyway, ideas of how to raise a child, ideas on how to foster the creativity of children, and to bring out the best of the child's intelligence.

Sir, I would also like to look at early childhood education through elementary, because I think that is where we are going to make a real difference. If we continue as we are doing, the problems that we now face will continue. Let us face it. We have some very bad parents and some very bad teachers. If we give the parents this element of counselling, at least some of it will rub off. The teachers, I think we have to look at it in two ways.

We have to set up standards for them and ensure that they are monitored. We have to treat them a little bit better than teachers generally are treated. It does not have to be of necessity an increase in their salaries. I think that most businesses recognise that hygiene is a particularly important factor. If teachers had access to certain other things, it would be particularly useful.

Let us say, teachers, policemen and nurses who are, to my mind, people who would take a lot of the strain of the society without the necessary rewards for doing so, could be offered special regimes of housing, like no down payment for their mortgages. Special ideas need to be put in place to meet special needs.

If we had children coming out of primary school who could genuinely read and write, I think that some of the problems we encounter at the university are people graduating without being able to understand the language in which they have graduated, would disappear.

If we abandoned the notion of the 11-Plus Examination, had continuous assessment and had children streamed gradually - I have heard teachers say, "He has no academic ability." This is a host of nonsense. People who have great special intelligence can become architects and engineers, but they, sure as anything, are not going to be great scholars in Latin, Greek, Mathematics or English. We ought to be catering for all of this. In that way our society becomes internally more dependent on itself.

I would like to see, therefore, some serious changes within the education system. I know what the problem is. We all seem to be scared of our shadows. I remember when Lloyd Erskine Sandiford, as he was then, introduced the idea of a Community College, there was no end of complaints. He was trying to replace Harrison College because he came to Harrison College from some country school. That is nonsense.

The fact of the matter is, what we really need now is either another relatively large Community College or more Sixth Forms. I think we could get more Sixth Forms more readily than we can get a Community College in terms of cost. Children who go to the university at age 16 or 17, even if they have the academic requirements, do not have the maturity that is necessary.

I think, basically, most of them on arrival are bewildered, and do not understand how you take notes from a Lecturer, do not really understand what they are doing, research is an alien concept because it has not been done, and it is never done before you are in Sixth Form, et cetera. Interestingly, people who have left at Fifth Form work for five, 10, or 15 years and can handle it much better.

Sir, I would propose, and this is again a radical proposal, that we look at the system and if children leave at Fifth Form, we should have a national service which they perform for one year. The national service should be geared at creating some discipline as well as some possibility for them to continue.

I think we need to have a teaching element as well as the military. We could also let them do things like helping to repair houses, helping to clean up places, the notion being that they would be putting back something into a society that has given them something. We do not much understand the concept of putting back.

A long time ago, Barbados Scholars, as Senator Chandler had pointed out, were made to come back and work for a number of years. Some of us have returned and worked forever, but that is neither here nor there. That is what the case should be. All graduates ought to be in a position where after school or before school, they put something back into the economy.

The notion that education is free is a little bit one-sided. It is free for those who receive it, but not free for those who pay the taxes that provide for their education. I think we need to stimulate that idea by one means or another a lot more.

I think Senator Newton spoke ably on the University and I really do not want to go into the details of the University education too much, other than to say that I think that even the cut of the University budget of \$4 million, I think it is, does not necessarily hurt if certain adjustments can be made.

One adjustment is, a number of those precisely young immature students, I talked about, gayly rush into registering for courses and then drop out after two weeks. Any such student should pay the commercial value of that course when it is redone, because it is a waste of monies. It is a waste of the Lecturer's time. It is a waste of the system's time.

At the moment what happens, you get a lower grade as a result of your failure, but I think all failure of the sort ought to result in having to pay for it. There is absolutely no good reason why the taxpayer has to pay twice, because some kid decides, I am not going to take this thing too seriously.

In fact, I had a niece who recently, not so recently, a couple years ago, finished university. The first year she was doing badly. I noticed she had about three cell phones. I said, "Get rid of the phones and buckle down." She rather liked me, so she took the message seriously. She is now a qualified Pharmacist and she is out there doing whatever she needs to do. I am sorry. She is a qualified accountant and she is out there working with an accounting firm.

Sir, excuse me, since I do have a degree in Business Administration, I do believe that I know that pharmacy does not come into accounting. Thank you, Sir.

Asides.

SENATOR R.O. MARVILLE: Sir, what I was trying to say is, we could make up by measures like this for some of the cost of education.

I think too that the numbers which add to the viability of the university, could be made up by foreign

students, as was indicated. Our university is way up there, in international circles and we can bring in students who, for a year or two, if we put in place national service - would fill those gaps. In fact, we probably do not even need to do that because there are so many students wanting to get in, several of whom cannot make it, that the gap would be filled anyway.

I really would like though, Sir, to compliment the great work done by a man who is a giant of an academic, a phenomenal administrator and a playwright to boot.

Asides.

SENATOR R.O. MARVILLE: Professor. Hillary Beckles is so good that I do not know if we deserve him. We deserve the best when we work for it. He has come up with some incredible ideas including student exchanges. We now have an exchange with us, out of the way if you like, the University of Chrusenstat, which is in middle Sweden, where students would be coming here from this summer and some of our students going there to do high-level computer technology. This is the sort of thing, Sir, that I would like to see continued and I will therefore, in whatever way I can, assist.

Finally, Sir, I was rather pleased that the Leader of Government Business brought up the matter of foreign affairs, the new Missions to be established. I am reminded once when a young Foreign Service Officer asked me what I thought was my greatest achievement in foreign affairs. I said, getting rum duty-free into the United States of America. He said, "What? How is that foreign affairs?" Sir, I know that you were in the business and you would understand.

Mr. PRESIDENT: To the uninitiated, they might think that I was in the rum business.

SENATOR R.O. MARVILLE: Oh, I see. Sir, no. I actually did not mean that. I do not know that part of you, so I cannot say anything about it, Sir.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Thank you very much, Senator.

Senator R.O. MARVILLE: I do not make any bones about my association with rum, I was born down wind from Mount Gay and when they slapped my bottom and I breathed, I said, "I think I like it, I will stay". I grew up with people who knew about rum and therefore it was a natural thing to take on when I was at Washington.

In fact, I am a little disappointed that not more use of it is made in tourism. When the Minister of Agriculture was talking about agricultural products in tourism, rum happens to be one of our two vertically integrated products.

We make an old rum. I will give you a story, so that you understand what I am talking about.

Sir, when I was in Brussels, I happened to have gotten some flying fish brought up and I invited some of my colleagues, including a very senior French Ambassador, to the residence to cook them a Bajan meal.

Asides.

SENATOR R.O. MARVILLE: Incidentally, Sir, to address the murmurs I heard from the left, they all complimented my housekeeper on the meal and she had to say that she really did not have anything to do with it and I had done it myself.

Asides.

SENATOR R.O. MARVILLE: Sir, some of us have bragging rights in a number of areas. We only brag in one or two, give us a break.

Asides.

Senator R.O. MARVILLE: The French Ambassador after dinner, was looking around for something or the other and I said, look, you are accustomed to these cognacs and armagnacs but I will tell you what, try one of our rums. It is over there in that bottle. He picked it up, looked at it, he said, “hmmm”. Then he opened it and said, “This does not smell like rum”, I said, “No not your rum, that is our rum”, and he had two glasses of it, on that occasion. The point I am making is this is a man who came from the place which produces cognacs, fine wines, et cetera, but he on that occasion was quite happy to have an old Bajan rum.

In those days, of course, because of my involvement with rum, I had endless quantities of it. Now that I am no longer in that area, nobody talks to me. I suppose that is normal but that is par for the course.

Anyway, the point that I am making is if in our hotels, we have waiters or waitresses who say, “look, after dinner, we have an excellent Barbadian Old Rum here, you should try that”, instead of offering them these cheap brandies that taste like nothing anyway, I think we would do a lot better. Internal export is an incredible process. You get the returns for exports without even moving away from the country. This is one of the things that we ought to look at, Sir.

I mentioned that I was pleased that the Minister brought up the new Missions. I would really like to see at least one Mission in West Africa and I will explain to you why. We have appropriate technologies that would be very useful for franchising in those areas, apart from which, of

course, there are things from those countries that we can use here.

I would not go into details because I sat with people who talked about them and intend to do them, so we leave it at that, but we have a country, let us say, like Ghana where we could produce our hot sauce for export to Europe. We could sell them our solar technology as it is but we also have solar technology for water purification, which is something they need in rural areas. They are interested but we have to make some sort of situation where it is possible to have this commerce going. They both should come every six weeks or something like that.

There is this possibility of the conversion of PET bottles into tiling roofs. Ghana happens to be an economy that is working evidently quite well at the moment. It is therefore something we can get into. That apart, Ghana welcomes any of us with open arms whenever we have any business proposition to make. I therefore think that there would be a very good idea to have us go there.

One other point is the training of Foreign Service Officers. We have a situation where Foreign Service Officers, insofar as they are trained, are trained very much like other Public Service Officers and the Foreign Service is a completely different place for all sorts of reasons. You need skills that are not normally needed within the Public Service. I am not talking only about language skills, I am talking also about negotiating skills and abilities to deal with people who come from completely different backgrounds and cultures so that you have some appreciation of what drives them.

There are at least four of us who are quite happy to give back to the Foreign Service. We headed Missions and we are quite prepared to go back and help in particular areas, if required. This is a free service so there you go.

Mr. President, there is just one point I wish to reiterate and it is that we really all need to pitch in. We really all need to do what is necessary to get things moving. It does not help harping and arguing back and forth. What really helps is when we get up and decide that we are going to do things and do them.

Leonardo DaVinci, a multi-talented man, whom you would not have expected to be a practical philosopher, once said: “Thinking is great but the really great thing is doing.” Let us do it, Mr. President, let us do. The time for thinking is passed.

I thank you, Sir.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Crichlow.

SENATOR the Very Reverend H. E. CRICHLAW: Mr. President, I rise to support the Appropriation Bill. The particular section that I thought of speaking on was education. My colleague Senator Marville, along with the Leader of Government Business in the Senate, Senator the Honourable Maxine McClean, and also Senator the Honourable Velma Newton, have done so much of a job for me that I wonder whether I should really add anything to it.

First, let me deal with what is troubling all of us, the economy. I think that everybody in the world knows that we are in a global economic depression and that it is going to affect us all. There are consequences that we cannot avoid. It has come on us very suddenly. Many of the most brilliant economists did not foresee it. We all remember the American Presidential campaigns.

We remember that the Republican candidate made quite a fuss that the economic foundations of America were sound and solid and immediately after they were found to be very shaky. President Obama had, and still has, the very difficult job of shoring up those foundations. This is spread across the world.

Barbados is a very tiny country and we depend so much on the bigger countries that we are bound to suffer as a result, so I really did not see the point about all this business about tourism is down, that is to be expected.

All over the world, millions of jobs have been lost. Our new Government has tried to safeguard jobs to cushion the shock of this recession for us and I really think that all of us ought to give the Honourable Prime Minister support in this respect. We have to be one Barbados in this recession, we cannot be two. In any case, we are really one people.

We have inherited the democratic system of Government, the two party state, and by now we should have got accustomed to thinking of the Opposition as the Government in waiting. There are only two Parties really that we can consider. A third was on the horizon but because it started at the top and not the bottom, it ended very quickly. It takes a long time to develop a party and so on because people have to get to know the leaders and they have to trust them and so on. At least there is a lot of work that has to be done on the ground, so we are both Labour Parties in Barbados.

There are no radical Parties. All of the radicals that came back from England, the students who did well in England. Barbadian students going to England always get their eyes open and they become very dissatisfied with the things at home. They want to change them and to change them fast but Barbados is a society that works very slowly.

It takes about between 20 or 30 years to get something moving.

In the 1970s, I think it was 1973 or 1974, I sat on a Commission chaired by Dr. Leonard Shorey that the Government set up to review the transfers from primary to secondary school. At that time, we found that the real problem was even before the children got to the primary school. Most children between the ages of 2 and 5, and those would have been the poorer ones, because then Barbados was much poorer, did not get any kind of intellectual food so we thought that we should start by having universal nursery education.

We started to be serious about nursery school education at the Government level in the 1990s, so it was about 20 or 25 years before we could get that done. Then when we went to the primary schools, we saw that as the pupils entered, they were streamed off and one class was chosen to do the Common Entrance Examination or the Screening Test in five or so years' time and they were given the best teachers and the rest were given the poorer teachers.

The important thing was to get this class ready for the 11-plus Examination so that they could get into certain schools and that their primary school would be honoured by doing that. Mr. President, many were selected and you could have imagined that most of the children who were selected for this particular class were middle-class children whose parents were exposed to secondary and tertiary education.

We thought, too, that the three sixth forms at the time should be removed, and that all schools should be brought up to the fifth form level and that sixth form colleges be built so that we would not have the problem of people who were not at the three older sixth form schools having the advantage. That fell by the wayside and years later, I think it happened in the 1950s, I know that in the 1950s a fourth sixth form school started and that was Combermere.

Sir, that started because the Ministry of Education changed the examination from the Senior Cambridge School Certificate to the "O" Level. The Headmaster of that school at this time fought the Ministry of Education on this matter, making the point that students at fifth form schools sitting the Senior Cambridge Examinations could receive matriculation requirements from that certificate, that is to say if you did very well in the Cambridge School Certificate, you were exempted, that is, you could enter university on the strength of the Senior Cambridge Certificate if you did very well.

Some of you may know people, not many, who did very well on these examinations. Major Nook made the

point that if you are replacing some of the Senior Cambridge examination, you would have to replace it with something equivalent, that meant that if you could get matriculation requirements from the Senior Cambridge, you must be able to get from the CXC's. Sir, that meant that you had to do at least two "A" Level subjects, along with the "O" levels, that is why Combermere was allowed to have a sixth form.

Mr. President, I think that all the second grade schools at the time: St. Michael, Foundation, Alexandra, Coleridge and Parry, the Alleyne, the older grammar schools, should have been allowed to have sixth forms. This was in 1951 or 1952. Mr. President, as the Honourable Leader of Government Business has stated in her opening speech, we are now having a problem with finding enough sixth form places.

Sir, it could have been said in the 1950s that there were not enough graduates at the various schools to do sixth form work. The three first-grade schools, Harrison College, Lodge and Queens College, had far more graduates than the other schools. Sir, that cannot be said today. Certainly all the secondary schools would have approximately 90 per cent graduates. There is also no difference between the salaries of teachers at first-grade and second-grade schools.

Mr. President, it used to be different in those days. When I was on the Board of the Governing Body of Harrison College as ex officio, we advertised for a science graduate. We advertised throughout the Caribbean and we did not get anyone. There were many science graduates here in Barbados at the other schools and not one of them had applied for that job. In the end, we had to get an English graduate to fill the post. Sir, education has now changed. There was no rush to teach at Harrison College. People were quite happy. They were getting the same salary at all the other schools.

Mr. President, I am glad to hear that St. Michael and Foundation will be soon getting a sixth form, but I think that it would be a pity if we miss this opportunity, certainly, for the older fifth form schools. We should take this opportunity to give those schools sixth forms as well. It is simply to say that at the 22 secondary schools, the important thing about a school is its staff and its equipment, therefore, there is no reason why we could not have had sixth forms at all the schools.

Sir, I would have to exclude the Alma Parris Memorial Secondary School, but there is no reason why most of the secondary schools in Barbados today should not have sixth forms. We do not have to start with science and the expense of laboratories. We started with French and History but sixth form education, in any subject,

produces the same result, that is, it is an approach to studying, it is a quality of thinking that you get.

You will notice that there is no difference now between the sixth form schools. Senator McClean was quite right when she spoke of the differences of fifth forms and sixth forms.

We were told by our history master, Mr. Ronnie Hughes, the first time he came into the sixth form to forget all the history that we have done so far and that was correct. Sir, there was no text book for history in sixth form. He gave us a list of over 100 very serious text books. Sir, we took turns in writing these special assignments and you would have to use, maybe, about 20 books in the sixth form. Sir, that is how you prepare an assignment at the sixth form level.

Mr. President, that is really the first year in the old university setup. When people came from sixth form in Barbados, they had started on their university career, that is, they were shown how to study research. I am glad that idea of research has now gone to the primary school as well, but it was not so before.

Mr. President, in those days there was not a University of the West Indies or it had just started at the Harbour site in 1948, I think, but it was new. I am sure that we would not have all this bother about people getting into sixth forms schools or going into the university with less than "A" Levels or CAPE if we allowed all our students who wanted to go to the university to have this sixth form exposure.

Mr. President, we have taken in a lot of students, especially in the Social Sciences Department. Sir, we took them on a four-year basis, that is to say, instead of doing three years at the university they did four years instead because of the low entry qualification.

Mr. President, when I was Chaplain at Mona, I did some part-time teaching at Jamaica College and Kingston College. We had this problem there too. People would choose to go to the university from the fifth form because they would get one year's jump on those who had gone to the sixth form, that is to say, if you went to the sixth form, you would spend two years and then you go to the university and spend three years, which is five years. If you went in on an "O" Level entry, that is four years, you got your degree at the end of four years whereas the ones who had gone to sixth form got their after five years, so they had one year's jump as far as salaries were concerned and so on.

Mr. President, they certainly did not have the kind of development of mind and so on that the sixth-formers had.

I think that now we have reached about 8 000 at Cave Hill, we can revert to the old sixth form entry.

Mr. President, Senator McClean pointed out that the vast difference there is in the cost of a student going to the sixth form school, or the Barbados Community College and the university is a gap of almost \$20 000 a year. I am sure that it would be better to go for this all out sixth form system throughout the whole secondary school system. Sir, it would save a lot of money and also, we will get a better university.

Mr. President, the university is not a place where you go to make money. I was very sorry to read recently that someone who was in a position to make decisions touching this kind of matter, that the university is being thought of as somewhere you go to escape poverty. That you climb out of poverty by being at the university. Sir, this business of climbing out of poverty has nothing to do with university education.

You do not have to climb out of poverty by going to a university. You do not even have to go to a secondary school nor you do not even have to go to a primary school to climb out of poverty.

I am sure all of us know of people who cannot read or write but through hard work, careful planning and through the experience of life have made good for themselves without being bright even at secondary school. Sir, to give people the impression that you have to go to the university in order to get rid of poverty, I think is saying something very wrong about any university.

Mr. President, in one of my adult confirmation classes, one of the members came to me and asked me not to call on him to read because he could not read. I told him he would not be called upon to read anything. This is a man who had a small trucking business and he did not have any formal education. Sir, that same man after one of the confirmation classes said he found it difficult to say the Lord's Prayer. He said that whenever he got to, "Lead us not into temptation", he could not say it. I told him that I have been wrestling with the same for over 25 years and that I have not yet found the answer to it. Sir, Christian scholars all over the world are wrestling with that problem.

Whenever there is a new translation of the Bible, I always go to that passage to find out how they translated, "Lead us not into temptation." The two that some of you may have come across, is, "Do not bring us to the test," or "Save us from the time of trial." There are better translations than, "Lead us not into temptation," but most people would not be able to understand them.

Most people, I think, when they say, "Lead us not into temptation," they mean give us enough strength or

grace to overcome the temptation, or the French says, ne nous induis pas en tentation. Do not allow us to succumb to the fall of temptation, but the Greek is, "kai me eisenenkes emas eis peirasmon". A good earthly father would not lead his child into temptation. If a good earthly father would not do that, do you think a Heavenly Father would do that? That is the problem out of that passage.

Some Clergy persons who would not see it yet and they may be teaching the Gospel for 20, 30 or 40 years. I know who said, "I will never say the new Lord's Prayer". I came across a child some years, "I will never say the new Lord's Prayer." I asked, "Why would you not do that?" She said, "Because my Priest said that he would not do it." He was not the Rector of a parish, he assisted a very senior Priest, and that child picked it up from him, so she would never say the new Lord's Prayer.

Sir, the difficulty there is, in the word "peirasmon", meaning temptation. It will take a lot of work and a lot of years before we understand what it means.

I was at a Service at one of the Cathedrals in Dublin, some years ago, and after the Service, before the business session dinner, I sat next to the Archbishop of Dublin, who had invited me to spend the whole Season of Lent in his Parish Diocese, and the Archdeacon was on the other side. I said, "I see that you do not use the international text here." The Archdeacon said, "Oh! Yes we do." I said, "I am sorry, but you do not. You still say, Lead us not into temptation." He said, "Is that not international?" I said, "No." So the Archbishop was silent all the time, then he said, "As you know, I was Chairman of the Liturgical Commission that decided on the Lord's Prayer, and I thought that the Irish who were attached to the word "temptation", gave it up."

Asides.

SENATOR the Very Rev. H.E. CRICHLAW: So they kept the word "temptation". It almost divided the English Church who tried the other "Do not bring us to the test", or "Save us from the time of trial." That was splitting the Irish Church and they had to revert to temptation.

I said all of that to show you that one of the most difficult theological questions was asked by someone who did not even have a good primary school education. It would do people a lot of good to hear that Barbados has been built on the Seventh Standard education that we had here. That old Seventh Standard education, you could go anywhere with it.

Sir, in the Civil Service at that time, most of the people had a Seventh Standard education, but it was a good education. I think nowadays it would be Third or Fourth Form standard in the secondary schools. You do not have

to go to the university to climb out of poverty. I hope people understand that the university is not for that reason.

We are a young university. We have done very well for the time. I support all that Senator Marville has said about hard work and the response of the Vice Chancellor, and Pro Vice Chancellor, and what the Principal of the University of the West Indies, Cave Hill, Sir Hillary Beckles has done.

However, I think in terms of the response that we have gotten from corporate Barbados, and I am very happy about it, we have to be very careful. It is good that corporate Barbados should be helping the university, because in the end, the work of the university will be enhanced by the result of the research. It is the corporate society in any country that will use the findings of the research in the university. I hope as the Motto of our University says, "Light Rising from the West", "Oriens Ex Occidente Lux". That is what the motto is.

I believe that we have talent in the Caribbean that can be developed and we could get some very good research being done. We are not to feel that we are the best in the world.

Sir, I have heard graduates here in the Senate say that we have the best teachers in the world and so on.

Asides.

SENATOR the Very Rev. H.E. CRICHLLOW: Well, we are learning. Most of the books in the University's Library will be written by Europeans or Americans. I do not think there is anything to be ashamed about that. We are now building the written knowledge. We have a lot that we talk about and carry in our minds, but it is not on paper. I am sure we are going to do very well.

I think we have to be careful how we use certain titles and so on, because you hear of a lot of people getting First Class Honours and if you are educated in Britain, you would think that those words mean something else, because a First Class Honours Degree in Britain, it is extremely difficult to get a First. We use the title here to mean something else. I say this because I was asked by an English Professor in one of the universities, "I have a student here with a First Class Honours Degree, but he is weak. I do not understand it". At the time I did not know that we had changed here. I said, "He would have to be from a very weak lot if he has a First and is weak".

I learnt, when I came back, that our marking system is really more on the American side.

We have shifted from the English to the American. I am not saying anything against the American system. I

have a daughter who was educated at an American university, Georgetown and another daughter who was educated at the University of the West Indies Cave Hill Campus, she did Law. The Americans have different ways of saying that, I think it is magna cum laude. Now, we have not taken that naming system from them. I wonder whether, since we are now adopting the American system of credits and so on, we should not take their labels as well.

Mr. President, an Honours Degree in Britain is a completely different thing. After your first year in the Honours School, if you do not pass the first year - in my day - they sent you into Two-General. You had an Honours Degree and a General Degree. An Honours Degree was when you were going in-depth into one subject with a second that you bring up to degree level. If you were doing General, you did a few subjects but not in that kind of depth, and you got classes to distinguish the results.

Whereas, in the Honours School, there were First Class Honours, Second Class Honours and Two Divisions in Third Class Honours and there was no comparison between the Honours Degree and the General Degree. Nowadays, they call them Special Honours and General Honours but anyone who had a First Class Honours Degree would have done a lot, maybe 10 times more work than someone who had done General.

As a matter of fact, at one of the oldest Universities there, you could be sure that some people would jump into the river, would kill themselves because as Finals approached, they would feel that they do not know anything at all and they just could not write Finals and these were the brightest students. This is what at the end of an Honours Degree course that is how you would feel. You would feel that you do not know anything. Some people think that when you get a Degree you feel you know a lot. If you are really doing a Degree in-depth, you feel that you do not know anything. Some people get Degrees and never read a book after.

Sir, you cannot have studied an area in depth, and not gain a love for knowledge. The Honours Degrees were meant to. These were people who were going to go on to research and broaden the field of knowledge and it is not something that you can take likely. There is a lot of suffering in the university.

Study is not an easy thing. Those who give themselves to lifetime study, most of them have no thought about money. Money does not come into the question of university at all, except for the administrators and so on, but when it comes to seeking knowledge and pushing back the hunches of knowledge. Money has nothing to do with it and at that level, you become more concerned with the feelings of others.

Sir, you are seeking truth, you do not play around with truth. You follow the evidence wherever it leads, that is, if you are interested in knowledge, so that it is a lot of suffering. People here think that you are working hard, if you are doing something with your hands. If I am in the Cathedral before, helping to clean the grounds and so on, "Dean, you are working". If I am in my study, I am not working. And of course, if I am praying, I am doing nothing. I am just relaxing, and prayer is even tougher than studying but people do not know that, Sir.

Mr. President, when you are talking about university, and I hope you do not get it wrong from the beginning, forget this idea of going to university in order to get a big job to make money. Everybody cannot be exposed to university education simply because they do not have that kind of thinking. Some people cannot do any abstracting at all and some people can only carry one idea in their minds at a time.

At the university level, you have to be able to carry as many ideas as have been expressed, not one. Different people will come up with different theories and you have to look at them. You have to analyse them and then weigh them and so on and you may choose, you do not have to, but most people who have not gone into that kind of study think that there is only one way of looking at things, and if you do not look at it as they look at it, they think you are an idiot.

As you grow in knowledge, you become more sympathetic to others, you become more sensitive to their feelings and wants and so on. You become a different person, because you transfer these principles into your own personal life. You do not deal in lies, for example. You cannot, if you are interested in finding truth. All of this is involved in university work. Most of all, it is the service that you are prepared to give to the society when you leave the university. That is the most important thing about university education. The service you are willing to provide to the community after you leave.

I remember when I was Chaplain at Mona, I used to visit in halls and so on and came across a very bright man and I asked him what work he was going to do after he left. He said, "Work Rev, you are making fun. I am working so hard for this degree now and you expect me, when I leave to work again, you cannot work twice for the same thing."

Mr. President, a number of bosses or managers would tell you that is how students come out nowadays. They are not interested in working. They think that people have to provide them with a living because they have worked very hard for that degree, Sir, that is nonsense.

All those who speak of paying back, that is what they mean. Nowadays they get this knowledge for free, the

taxpayers pay, but they are not prepared to give back anything. I do not think that is the kind of society we are trying to have. That is why the lawyers and the medics at one time had a tough time getting free university education because if the taxpayers have to spend all that money in educating lawyers and doctors and then they leave and make as much money as possible for themselves that is not repaying the community. Anyhow, I am going to stop now.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator, I do not like to interrupt you, but your time has now expired.

SENATOR the Very Reverend H. E. CRICHLLOW: I must finish by saying that recently we buried one of the greatest West Indians, Professor Rex Nettleford, who was Vice Chancellor of the University of the West Indies. When Professor Rex Nettleford gave one of the Sir Winston Scott Memorial Lectures, he was introduced as an Oxford man because he had done a post-graduate degree at Oxford, the person who introduced him was himself an Oxford man, and when Professor Nettleford got up to speak, he said, I am not an Oxford man, I am a West Indian man. Mr. President, he was right. His university was the University of the West Indies, that is where he did his first degree. Where you do your first degree is your university. He did not want to pretend that he had been to Oxford. He did his university education at the University of the West Indies Mona and went on to excel in many fields.

Mr. President, I want to finish by saying that when you see people's degrees and you see M. A. (Oxon), meaning Oxford, that is a B. A. You do not have to do an exam to get an M. A. at Oxford. You send up a few pounds, it is called supplicating, and you supplicate for the Masters and they send you the Masters, so it is not a separate degree.

As a matter of fact, most of the Scottish universities have their first degree as an M. A. Mr. President, young ladies are told by their peers that when they come up here, they come for two things, a M. A. and a M. A. N. That M. A. N is pronounced husband, so that we in the Caribbean have a problem. A lot of the girls at the university think that they could give themselves and so on and when they leave they leave without husbands. It is very difficult for them to get husbands after they leave university because a lot of West Indian men do not like the idea of their wives getting more salary than they do. That is why there is a calypso that talks about a "No Bajan" where the fellow wife is not a Bajan.

Asides.

SENATOR the Very Reverend H. E. CRICHLLOW: That is because if you study in Jamaica, you would meet your wife or husband there. This is a normal thing, so I will advise the young girls who go to university to remember

that they are supposed to look for a MAN at the same time as they look for the M. A.

Thank you, Mr. President.

SUSPENSION

SENATOR the Hon. Miss M. P. O. McCLEAN: Mr. President, I beg to move that this Sitting do now suspend until 2.00 p.m. today.

The question that this Sitting do now suspend until 2.00 p.m. today was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. PRESIDENT suspended the Sitting accordingly.

12.50 p.m.

RESUMPTION

Mr. PRESIDENT: This Sitting is resumed. Madam Deputy President.

Her Honour SENATOR Miss K. F. IFILL: Mr. President, I rise this afternoon to make a brief but hopefully not a rambling submission on these Estimates and to lend my support to the deliberations of this Government, with whom I am very pleased to be associated.

Mr. President, we have had three days of intense debate and discussion, where some of us have sought to explain to the country some of the challenges we are experiencing and how we as a Government intend to handle them, while others have tried to muddy up the waters somewhat. Sir, I am sure that persons out there are not confused as to the importance of the situation with which we are dealing.

Mr. President, I do not propose to extend this debate by reiterating the challenges that we face. We as Barbadians and as an educated people understand the challenges that are out there. This Government has been dealt, as the Prime Minister said in his Budget speech of 2009, a bad hand. We have had some difficulties, some extreme challenges that nobody could have foreseen nor foretold. We have all heard of the economic recession.

Sir, even the drought has come upon us and has given us even more things to be concerned about. Therefore, it has been somewhat a difficult and in other instances an unpleasant task to cut some things in our budget. Sir, there have been cuts that a lot of us do regret but cuts that we as intelligent people recognised are necessary, and Barbadians recognised the importance of.

Mr. President, you, like myself, are a student of the English language and I am sure that you, like I, enjoy the

writings of Charles Dickens. Sir, you would remember in one of his very good stories he told us if you have £20, you cannot spend £21. You spend £19.99 and therefore you remain satisfied. If you spend more than you have, you end up in trouble. Mr. President, this Government has sought to ensure that we do not spend more than we have. We will continue to ensure that we run our country prudently.

Mr. President, today I would like to pay attention to three specific areas within our Estimates. I will start with the Ministry of Health. Sir, the Ministry of Health, as we all know, receives the largest portion of our Estimates. It is one of the most critical part of any Government's work. Sir, as you go through the numbers and the figures, which frankly sometimes do leave me somewhat staggered at the amounts with which we have to deal and cope with, we recognised the importance of paying better attention to our healthcare.

Mr. President, in one of the earlier speeches in this Session, we were told that the Queen Elizabeth Hospital has buried many a Minister of Health and that it also would bury the present Minister. I am pleased to report that our Minister of Health is alive and kicking and is doing an extremely good job. Asides.

Her Honour SENATOR Miss K. F. IFILL: Mr. President, it did not bury you either. I think you did an excellent job while in your stead. Sir, one of the areas that the Ministry of Health is very concerned about is our primary care situation. We in Barbados have had the dubious honour of being identified as the amputation capital of the world. I am told I should use that phrase with some caution but the truth is, the rate at which we are forced to amputate is alarming, in many instances.

Sir, this is primarily because we do not pay enough attention to our small health situations. We eat too much sometimes, we drink too much in other cases. Therefore, during the coming financial year, the Ministry of Health will be apportioning a large part of the work towards improving primary care. We will be spending a lot of time on preventative health, that is why the "Get Fit Barbados" programme is of great satisfaction to us all within this Government. This programme demonstrates how important we feel it is for all of us to play our part in ensuring that our country continues to be a centre of excellence.

Mr. President, another area which I am pleased to see in the Ministry of Health is its commitment to work with society. Among the population of persons with disabilities, of whom I am a proud member, we have a statement: "Nothing about us without us." Sir, that extends not only to the disabled community but to all people. Therefore, the Ministry of Health seeks to ensure that it works closely with non-governmental organisations (NGOs).

It is less frustrating for the community and it is far better for the officers to be able to track one person straight through the systems. Sir, that is where some of the cuts have come to provide a much more efficient programme.

Sir, another area that will be started, hopefully soon, would be the allocation of the welfare grants for certain services through the electronic card system.

Mr. President, it is one of the most uncomfortable systems to have to ask people for something. It is even worse when you have to let others know this was something given to you because you could not provide it for yourself. Our Government seeks to remove the stigma and discomfort that many of our people have to face and this is a project, again, that is to be lauded and one with which we must give our full support.

Mr. President, this is my third time as part of this Estimates debate. As I reflect over the two years that I have been part of this Honourable Chamber, I have to say I am extremely contented with the level of work we have been able to produce. Some say we have not met often and they question whether we are doing enough work. I say that it is not the quantity but the quality of the work and it is indicated in services that we continue to deliver to our society.

Mr. President, I agree that Barbadians are experiencing hardships. Yes, there have been increases in the water rates but nine out of ten people would tell they understand why. There have been increases in electricity, another hardship, but we are seeking to ensure through the delivery of these Estimates, and our budget, and the prudent fiscal management, which this Government is engaged in...

Asides.

Her Honour SENATOR Miss K. F. IFILL: Sir, this is not a Government that will continue to squander money. We are not engaged in a project of cost overruns, we are engaged in a project of delivering a society to meet its needs.

Asides.

Her Honour SENATOR Miss K. F. IFILL: Yes, we may be in the flotsam and the jetsam but I always notice that the flotsam and the jetsam float on top of the water, so something has to be good.

Mr. President, as I wrap-up my brief submission to this discussion today, I would like to join with the Prime Minister to say, I know where we are going and all Barbadians who are reasonable-minded, understanding and realistic also know where we are going. Sir, we are going

forward and we are going forward in difficult times. Yes, the tunnel is long, yes, the tunnel is dark but it has been my observation that whenever things are darkest and longest, the right person is put in front to ensure that the path is clear.

Mr. President, as a blind person, I have to put my hand in the hand of others to lead me. I have to make sure that I trust that person to take me where I need to go. I also believe that we, as a country, have placed our trust in the right path. We know that path will be cleared of the challenges. We have no difficulty in making the uphill climb because we know that when we get to the top, we will find the benefits of a long, hard struggle.

Mr. President, I am obliged.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Boyce.

SENATOR the Hon. D.W. BOYCE: Thank you, Mr. President. I also support wholeheartedly this Appropriation Bill, 2010. Sir, I want to give my perspective of the situation in which this country and, indeed, much of the world find themselves. Sir, when this crisis struck us in the second half of 2008, we, in the Ministry of Finance, caucused with our colleagues in the Ministry of Economic Affairs and with the Central Bank of Barbados and we developed a number of likely scenarios that we might expect would unfold over the length of this crisis.

Mr. President, as you would know, countries and financial systems declined in economic growth in, most of the world. We caucused and developed a number of scenarios because we were of the view then, and we are still of the view now, that no one knew how deep this crisis would be and that no one knew how long this crisis would last. Sir, after we spoke to several people here and elsewhere, we came to the view that the crisis would last at least two years and probably go into a third year. We were, at that time, of the view, which was not very popular with many other people at the time because most of them thought the crisis would have been one year. Our planning always took into account that we should look for a two-year to three-year crisis. Since then many people have come around to the same view that it is a two-year to three-year crisis.

Mr. President, when we ran our scenarios, we felt the crisis would have limited growth in 2008, caused a decline in 2009 and show a return to a small level of growth in 2010.

Mr. President, our detection of the future was not wrong in terms of its direction. We had detected a decline of about 2 per cent in 2009 but the decline was like 5 per cent. Sir, we were generally on the right path. Sir, because of our judgment this crisis would be one where we have to

pace ourselves for a relatively long time. Our approach to managing the crisis was a measured one and, Sir, we started quite early.

You would recall that as early as the Budget in 2008, we began to make arrangements for the poor in this society, those who we felt would have borne the brunt of the recessionary effects and so. Mr. President, in the Budget of 2008, the first of the Honourable Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, increased the reversed tax credit and that affected several thousand people.

Mr. President, an increase in the reversed tax credit is not something that would happen this year, next year and then disappear, it would continue year after year. The increase in the reversed tax credit was estimated to have caused \$7.5 million per year. In that same Budget, the Ministry of Finance also increased pensions for disabled persons and that cost us \$3 million a year.

14:30

We recognise the importance of engaging all the stakeholders in delivering the services that we cannot do all by ourselves. In one of the earlier speeches today, one of my noble colleagues stated that a Government cannot be responsible for everything. It is true. We all have a part to play. It is extremely important that as we make these steps, we are given the right support.

Over the years we have had contributions from many of the non-governmental organisations, not just in health care but across the spectrum of Barbados. Many organisations, for example the Barbados Children's Trust, the Barbados Council for the Disabled. The Salvation Army and of others for a long time have given yeoman service to this country, and our Government continues to ensure that we work these sectors of our community to show that we deliver the best service possible.

Sir, one area of extreme interest is that of wellness tourism, which brings me to the other section that I would like to pay some small attention to, our tourism sector.

In these times we have to look beyond the regular. I am not very fond of the clichés, fancy terms and all the other things that some of us seem to enjoy tossing from hither to dither. Some say we have to think outside of the box. I prefer that we have to think in realistic terms. Realistically we need to expand our markets.

The Ministry of Tourism has recognised the importance of this. Some say that we are concentrating too heavily on certain markets and they do not recognise the importance of these markets. We should be working in the traditional areas, they say, to ensure that we continue our market share in those areas. True, you must not leave out

the old for the new, but if you concentrate only on the old and what is comfortable, you will unfortunately miss the opportunity to take advantage of that which is emerging.

Our Minister of Tourism, our Ministry of Tourism and our civil servants in that area have recognised this, and they are putting their estimates towards expanding this area and exploring the options. The area of Wellness and Health Tourism is one such area with which we are extremely pleased to be associated.

Last week we had a Symposium looking at Health and Wellness Tourism. The dialogue, debate, discussions and presentations demonstrated how much there is out there for us. What Barbados has to offer. More than one person has told us what excellent service they received in terms of medical care when they come here.

We as Barbadians know that there are challenges, yes, but others tell us that it is a pin prick in comparison to some of the difficulties that they face.

Another area that is part and parcel of the Health and Wellness Tourism is that of inclusive tourism. As the Caribbean Tourism Organisation prepares for the resumption of its annual conferences, they are looking at sustainable tourism. We in the field of disabilities argued that inclusive tourism is one such area that we can pay attention to.

In May 2009, the Barbados Council for the Disabled, an institution with which I am pleased to be associated, demonstrated that we have a contribution to make in this area. We launched the Fully Accessible Barbados Awards, and the Government saw it fit to lend its support to that enterprise. The Ministry of Tourism is going to ensure that the work in this area continues to thrive.

We recognise that our country must and will provide for all of its citizens and visitors. Therefore, it is in this area that we intend to put some effort as well.

Sir, tourism figures are down. There is no gainsaying that. Anyone who says different is either myopic or fooling themselves, but we are ensuring that we work towards promoting ourselves in as many fields and areas as possible.

Sir, the area with which I am most concerned is the area handled by the Ministry of Social Care, Constituency Empowerment, Urban and Rural Development.

Sir, when the Government declared that it would institute the Constituency Councils there was a hue and cry across the country telling us how unnecessary, how unimportant, what a triviality, what a difficulty and all

other kinds of negativities were put in our way, telling us why this would not work.

I am sure that you, Mr. President, like myself, are pleased to find that we were able to demonstrate that this negative attitude was unnecessary and contrary to that, the pilot programme started is one to be proud. It has done good work in the few months in which it has been set up, and as it goes forward, I am sure that we can look to more exceptional work to come out of this area.

Sir, sometimes we make decisions and put plans in place without consulting the people which it most concerns. The Constituency Councils afford us an opportunity not to repeat the mistakes that others have made. People sit in their offices sometimes and they make arbitrary decisions and decide what is best for those people out there. They do not recognise that those people out there are us. We are all members of this community and we all have a responsibility to play. That is why I have no difficulty in supporting the allocation in the Estimates for the work of the Constituency Councils.

As you look across the construction of these Committees you can see a proper representation of all aspects of our community, people with a vested interest in what is to be done.

Sir, homework programmes have been started and sporting activities. It has afforded people an opportunity to speak out on issues that are near and dear to them. That I think is something to be commended.

Another area with which the Minister of Social Care has worked over the past months and will continue to work is the Country Assessment of Living Conditions. Again, this is an area that is of extreme pride to me. As we make our plans, sometimes we like to fool ourselves that our community is made up of affluent people, of people with few challenges, but the Country Assessment of Living Conditions will give us a true understanding and representation of all the challenges that we need to cope with. It is well-organised and well-conducted, and I am sure we could look forward to learning quite a bit more of what our society is dealing with.

Sir, some have raised concerns about the cuts. They say that we cut things in the social services that will be of detriment to our people, but as you look through the Estimates of this year and of past years, you will recognise that some of these cuts were done in areas to reduce duplication. It makes absolutely no sense to have three departments working on the exact same project, when those officers can work closer together to effect a far better delivery of service.

The Universal Intake Form which will come through the Ministry of Social Care is another such area that the Ministry has demonstrated, and will increase their profitability and their work schedule. I have many friends and acquaintances who have to deal with Government departments under this Ministry. One of the most frustrating factors for them is having to call department A to be told that they have to call department B, and when they get to department B they have to bypass and go to department C, and those are the lucky ones. If they start at the wrong end of the spectrum, they have to end up going through the painful experience once again.

We seek to eliminate such wasteful activities. It is less frustrating for the community.

14.20 p.m.

Mr. President, the old age pensions were increased and that cost us \$8 million a year. Mr. President, I am not finished yet, but all this by an Administration that is supposed to be uncaring. An Administration that they said does not care about people, does not care about poor people.

Mr. President, in that first budget we also increased the Welfare grants by \$200 000, and we introduced the Summer Vacation Camps, which cost us then \$5 million and more recently, \$6 million. We introduced the free travel on the Transport Board buses for our school children. I believe that benefit has been used primarily by those of us with less means. Mr. President, when I add those up, I am already at about \$30 million a year, just to give benefits to poor people, the more vulnerable ones in the society and we tried to enhance the social net for them.

Mr. President, I am not finished yet. What did we do for business? We gave, immediately in 2008, an additional \$10 million of funds to the Barbados Tourism Authority to promote our tourism some more. Mr. President, out of that came the efforts in western Canada, which has seen some increase in our arrivals out of Canada and western Canada.

Asides.

SENATOR the Hon. D.W. BOYCE: Mr. President, we also provided the Tourism Industry Relief Fund to assist the tourism industry, as they tried to keep their workers employed and that cost us, \$25 million over a period of two years.

Mr. President, we restored the tax allowance to persons in the credit Union Movement and that cost us \$2.5 million. Sir, that was not for the big, wealthy and rich people because I do not believe that they put their monies in the credit unions, so those are for the people. *Asides.*

SENATOR the Hon. D.W. BOYCE: Mr. President, we did a number of things for the agricultural sector and our main centres for the agricultural sector and we provided \$1 million a year for the Seed Capital Fund and the Venture Capital Fund so that we can encourage some more innovation and some more entrepreneurship, particularly among our young people.

Asides.

SENATOR the Hon. D.W. BOYCE: Mr. President, all this by an Administration that they said is uncaring and unresponsive to the needs of the country.

Mr. President, I am not finished yet.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator, take your time.

SENATOR the Hon. D.W. BOYCE: Thank you, Sir. I intend to take my time, Mr. President, the good Lord is up there and He will guide me through.

Asides.

SENATOR the Hon. D.W. BOYCE: Mr. President, when we realised that we did not have any projects that were shelved already in Government that we could go and put some money into and get going, we looked around and searched within the private sector to find some projects that were shelved already. Mr. President, we found two of them, both in Warrens, both office buildings, both for the improved accommodation of our loyal and hardworking public servants.

Asides.

SENATOR the Hon. D.W. BOYCE: Sir, we went to the NIS, the National Insurance Scheme, which was looking for projects of that nature, so that they could increase the return on the assets that they have to invest in our pensions. They went and they entered into building those buildings.

Asides.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Order please.

SENATOR the Hon. D.W. BOYCE: That will be the subject in time.

Mr. President, those two buildings will cost the NIS about \$100 million to put in place, \$50 million a year.

Asides.

SENATOR the Hon. D.W. BOYCE: I am not going to deal with that one because that one happened under

somebody else's watch. In the fullness of time, all things will be known.

Mr. President, I have not finished yet. We are about \$130 million a year as stimulus in this economy. Mr. President, we did something which some people did not seem to like us to do either. We increased the Civil Servants' salaries last year. We felt that the economy had something and we gave something back and that injection of the increase in the Civil Servants' salaries in my view, helped to keep the economy from going further down because there was permanent spending in the economy, which would occur year after year after year and it helped to keep our distribution system going and keep our economy going. Mr. President, that was about \$75 million, a year.

Mr. President, it would have been lovely if we could have done more and I will come back later and say why we could not do more and did not do more. People understand that there are limits to how much a Government and small economy can do within a limited period of time.

Mr. President, you know, we are talking about something in the vicinity of \$200 million a year in additional Government sponsored spending that we have put into the economy. The results of the economy are not what we would have liked. We would have loved the economy to be roaring along, but the fact is that no economy has roared along at the same rate as it did previously. During 2008/2009, nobody roared at the same rate as before.

Mr. President, this has been the worst recession that we have had in more than 75 years. It is the only recession in modern times where we have had both a financial crisis and an economic crisis rolled into one leading to a loss of confidence.

How did we do? Our unemployment averaged 10 per cent in 2009. The Second Quarter it was 10.7 per cent I think it was. The Third Quarter it was 10.2 per cent Fourth Quarter it was 9.4 per cent. And it was on the way down. Mr. President, people would have us believe that 9.4 per cent unemployment or an average of 10 per cent unemployment in Barbados is something never before achieved. I am no historian but I sometimes like to dabble in a little history. In 1981, the unemployment rate was 10.8 per cent. In 1982, the unemployment rate was 13.7 per cent and the Democratic Labour Party was not the Government of the day.

Let me come closer, Mr. President, to this time. In 1998, the unemployment rate was 12.2 per cent. There was no recession.

Mr. President, we do not deny what happened when we were in office, but we do not wish other people to deny what happened when they were in office. In 1999, the unemployment rate was 10.4 per cent. In 2000, it was 9.4 per cent, in 2001, when they had a little recession, it was 9.9 per cent, the same as what we have now. In 2002, it was 10.3 per cent, more than it was in 2010, and in 2003, it was 11 per cent.

Mr. President, I would love the rate to be no more than five per cent or even 4 per cent. We should not give the people the impression that this is the worse it has ever happened in this country. In the meantime, Mr. President, the United States of America is at 9.4 per cent.

The United Kingdom is probably near to that as well. Spain was at 18 or 20 per cent; Portugal has gone past that, and only God knows where Greece has gone to, and we are doing real bad?

In the meantime, the Government of Barbados has not laid off anybody. The Government of Barbados has kept on its payroll all of the people that were on its payroll including all the institutional members who were there.

Mr. President, where are our reserves? I am told by the Central Bank in one of its Reports that we have 21 weeks of reserves. Mr. President, I do not think that is a bad figure. Our international reserves are not what we would like them to be, but they are not bad.

Mr. President, our growth has not been good. We had a decline of 5.4 per cent. We also had a decline in that nature back in 1982 when the decline was 4.9 per cent. Yes, we are much lower than what we would like to be, but in the circumstances, we are not off the scale.

Where is our fiscal deficit? It is high, we admit it. It was as high as 8.2 per cent in 2009-2010 and that is what it is expected to be. That is a high figure as compared with the 5.4 per cent that we had in 2002-2003. Mr. President, that deficit was incurred because we felt that it was important to keep our people employed. We made a choice that it was better to run a deficit of that magnitude during the course of the last year and keep all of our people employed rather than to run a deficit of a much smaller amount and send home people. That is not what we are about. We committed to keeping people employed, we kept them employed and we ran the deficit.

Mr. President, we also had to run a deficit of that order because we also had to take on some expenses which we had not been expecting initially. The expenditure in 2007-2008 of the Government, I believe, is \$3.154 billion. Even if there has not been a single cent more spent in that period of time, we would still be running a deficit because of the fall in revenues.

Mr. President, the fall in revenues came primarily in two areas, our VAT and our customs. Those revenues fell by more than the economy declined. It has been explained to me that it fell because our business people chose to keep people employed rather than to buy stock. They ran down their inventories much further than they would have normally in order to keep their people employed. Mr. President, I thank the private sector for doing that. They showed that they are full partners in this coalition with us in Barbados.

Mr. President, part of our expenditure, part of our deficit and part of our debt went up because when we came into office we had to pay an overdraft of \$33 million that was incurred by the National Housing Corporation. Mr. President, it would have been lovely if the National Housing Corporation had been in a position to pay that overdraft themselves but we had to pay it. I do not know how the money was spent but we had that overdraft and we had to deal with it.

Mr. President, we also had to honour the commitment that was made to the Barbados Defence Force for the pensions of its officers. It cost us \$26.5 million or thereabout to deal with that. Part of that money has become a recurring factor because each year we had to pay the current pensions and provide the pension contributions for the future service cost incurred.

Mr. President, we also had to make provision for the Barbados Water Authority, to pay the Barbados Agricultural Development and Marketing Corporation debt, for the Electoral Office expenses and for roads that were being done on contract by Rayside construction. Mr. President, that is another \$15 to \$16 million.

Mr. President, we have inherited a large amount of spending. We have had some instances to add to that because of what we have had to honour. Sir, the Government of Barbados is a continuum, and I hope it would always be so. If the previous Government commits to something, the incoming Government honours it, and that is how it should be and that is how it always will be in our country.

Mr. President, we met those things and that has pushed up our costs. We have also done some things to help the poor people of this country, which I mentioned before. If we have incurred \$100 million more in expenditure a year to help those poor people, I think it is worthwhile. It has increased our safety net and has kept our society more stable and has kept the demand going in this economy. Therefore, it has kept us from falling further than we would otherwise have fallen.

Mr. President, I have mentioned the expenditure that we had to take on board. We also, as you know, had to take

on board some debt because what might have been possible before we had accrual accounting is no longer possible under accrual accounting. Mr. President, even before you got to that stage, the accounting profession had been moving to the point that where once a liability was known and it was long term, you had to begin to recognise it on your balance sheet as a debt. We had to do that with the Prison, with Tamarind Hall, the ABC Highway and the Judicial Centre.

2.50 p.m.

Mr. President, when that is done, we would have spoken to close to \$450 million or between six or seven per cent Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in additional debt going on to our books. Sir, if we have to do it, let us do it and move on. Sir, this has been part of what we had to deal with.

Mr. President, we are not alone in the Caribbean in facing hard times. Our neighbours to the south have had difficult times. Our neighbours to the north have even had even more difficult times. Antigua, particularly, has been hard hit, including the Cayman Islands and so on. Mr. President, we in the Caribbean have to expect that, when the United States of America has had a decline in its economy as it has had, and the numbers of unemployed that it has had. When, particularly, the United Kingdom has had the kind of unemployment and decline in its economy that it has had, including the decline in the value of its currency; when the United Kingdom is our primary source of tourists, when it is our primary source of real estate investments, Sir, with all of these things, we have to expect that we would have a major decline in our tourism industry and in our economy.

Sir, it was not always that we had so much of our tourism in one tourism market. Over the last 15 years the diversification of our tourism earnings has been very little. Sir, we still have a situation where, for several years, 40 per cent or more of our tourism earnings have come out of the United Kingdom. Sir, while we do not wish to lessen the numbers coming out of the United Kingdom, what it says is that we have begun to grow the numbers coming out of other destinations.

It is important for us not only to grow the industry but to diversify the industry and to make it less risky. Sir, that approach has been started by my colleague in the Ministry of Tourism. Mr. President, we are not alone, we have been buffeted. The United Kingdom has also been buffeting. Sir, the United States of America has been buffeting and their fiscal deficit is in double digits. They are well over 10 per cent, both for the United Kingdom and the United States of America.

Mr. President, why have we not done any more stimulus packages? Why have we not put anymore money into the economy? Sir, in order to do that, we would have to borrow it and already we have a high debt so we have to be careful how much we borrow and for what reason we borrow. Sir, when you spend in an economy you have to be keeping an eye on how much of that money is going to go into imports. Sir, more than half that money is going to go in imports and we would lose foreign reserves to that extent.

Mr. President, while we would get some growth from the stimulation, we would get some taxes back, we would still end up borrowing a whole lot more than we would get back in taxes. Mr. President, we have made the judgment that given what we can afford we would do enough to keep the economy going until growth in the rest of the world comes back.

Sir, I will talk about how else we expect to grow the economy in ways that would make sure that the capacity of this country to deliver goods and services in the future is enhanced and is enhanced quickly. Mr. President, how do we go forward? These Estimates fit very much within the Medium Term Fiscal Strategy. I know that people have said that the Medium Term Fiscal Strategy and the Medium Term Economic Framework have been handed to us by the International Monetary Fund, and the World Bank, or whomsoever else they choose to call. Sir, I think that is to insult the hardworking officials in the Ministries of Economic Affairs and Finance. They may insult me, that is par for this course, but they are not to insult our loyal Public Servants.

They must not insult those young men and women who have worked hard on this matter, some of whom went to that place on top of the hill where you also went. I did not have the pleasure of going to that place on top of the hill at Cave Hill, I went to the other place at Mona. I am sorry to say that I did not have the opportunity to enjoying the company of my colleagues at Cave Hill.

Sir, the University of the West Indies is a wonderful place, it has produced some wonderful people with some wonderful minds and it is those minds that have crafted this strategy. Sir, when you have to recommend what to do, it is a lot different from when you just criticise. They have weighed matters and have made recommendations. I have agreed with them and recommended that this is the way we should go.

Mr. President, we have estimated that in the Medium Term Fiscal Strategy we would have a deficit of about 7.5 per cent and that is what we are intent on forecasting for this first year, we will then gradually work it down. Sir, we will seek to cut out inefficiencies where those inefficiencies exist. We will seek to make people accountable to deliver

results. We will seek to make sure that we run Government institutions as carefully as they can be and as they ought to be run.

Sir, at the same token, we have not said that we are going to cut expenditure down to the bone, we are going to make sure that expenditure does not grow as quickly as the rest of the economy nor as quickly as revenue. Sir, the only way we can bring down our debts is if we have to sell sufficient assets or if we earn a surplus eventually. Sir, that is a recognition of the practical fact of life.

Mr. President, the Honourable Senator Cave, in his comments, mentioned that we were still spending more money than last year and he is right. We have made cuts in some areas but in others we have kept spending. Sir, as a matter of fact, we have increased the spending on personal emoluments, those personal emoluments and to pay the wages and salaries of the people employed in Government services.

We have increased those areas because we have made provision for established posts that are vacant and provision for increments. Sir, we have done what every Administration has done in terms of making the appropriate provision for the Public Service that exists in this country. We have solved the problem of people who were paid willy-nilly out of professional services.

3.00 p.m.

Mr. President, we have increased personal emolument by 11.4 per cent. We have increased the Statutory personal emoluments by 10.4 per cent, over what was actually spent in this current fiscal year. We have projected an increase of a spend on goods and services by 7.7 per cent, recognising that if people are employed there must be tools for them to work with.

Sir, wherever we can, we have squeezed out waste. There should be no excuse for not squeezing out waste, squeezing out duplication, or looking to see where the same programme occurs in several different departments in our ministries, cutting out that waste, that duplication.

Sir, we also have to pay additional debt this year, additional amortization, that is debt payment, \$262 million. We have to pay it. We cannot fail to pay our debt. Barbados has always prided itself on honouring its debt commitments and always will honour its debt commitments, so we have made provision for it.

Sir, we have also increased the proposed spending on capital assets and capital transfers as compared to the revised Estimates for this year 2009/2010.

Sir, for persons to forecast that we have actually cut willy nilly, or cut overall just does not reflect facts. The facts state very differently. We have trimmed where we have had to trim.

Sir, there are Government corporations with assets that are sitting idle. We have asked the taxpayers before to acquire those assets, to sit idle, then ask taxpayers to pay more taxes to subsidise those institutions again. It is unreasonable. It is unfair. It makes no sense.

Sir, we have increased the water rates. We increased them because we felt that the increase is sufficient for the Barbados Water Authority to pay its own way. To pay the debt service on its existing debt, to pay the debt service on new debt which it will have to incur in order to repair the mains, to lay fresh mains, to lay bigger mains, to fix the reservoirs, and so on.

Sir, you cannot increase the water rates and then give the people a subsidy on top of that. They must manage it, and they have to do it right. That is why we are going to make sure that it is done right, by putting the right person there to make it happen the way it ought to happen.

Sir, you cannot pay for the same thing twice. You should not pay for the same thing twice. I hope that is a satisfactory explanation with regard to the reduction.

Sir, we have reduced the amount of funding available to the hospital. The Chairman has gone through, sat down and seen where there are instances of inefficiency which can be cut out. We know how little of the fees that the hospital is not legally entitled to charge, they are actually charging, and even less than they are collecting.

Sir, you cannot ask the people of Barbados to put in place a regime where people are supposed to pay for certain services, the hospital does not charge for it, the hospital does not collect it, then turn and ask the people to pay for it again. Mr. President, it is unfair to our taxpayers and we will not do it. The hospital will have to come up to scratch and do what needs to be done. I am very pleased with the Prime Minister's decision and movements in that regard to make sure that we do things the right way.

Mr. President, I hope that puts to rest this notion that these are draconian Estimates designed to kill the people of Barbados. They are not. They are designed to give the people of Barbados a fair deal for the taxes they are paying.

Asides.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Order, please.

SENATOR the Hon. D.W. BOYCE: Mr. President, I will come back to the Estimates later, and will deal with

some of the issues that were raised by one or two of the other Senators.

Sir, how do we achieve growth generated from inside this coming year? From the outset we provided adequately for the Barbados Tourism Authority, and we have told them. Sir, because they are the Barbados Tourism Authority, it does not mean that there is no room for them to be efficient too. You have to be efficient as well, so let us start with the efficiencies. Stop encouraging people to discount all of Barbados hotel rooms, the good, bad or indifferent. Stop it and run a proper marketing campaign, a greater marketing campaign to make sure that we bring business here.

Sir, we are not providing funds for the Tourism Industry Relief Fund. Sir, it is better for us to get the visitors here and let them spend here, than to just provide subsidies for the people in the industry. That is what we have done.

Let us go to make sure that we get people to come here, rather than just give them handouts. You cannot live on handouts all your life. You have to teach them to fend for themselves. That is what we have done with the Barbados Tourism Authority and they received \$92 million. That is a lot of money and they have to spend it wisely. We have provided for Invest Barbados to do their job.

Sir, we have gone to the Inter-American Development Bank and agreed to a loan for US\$50 million for the The Barbados Water Authority. The Barbados Water Authority has presented a programme that has been approved for mains replacement, mains enhancement, capacity enhancement, reservoir improvement, augmentation of the water resources and chlorination and better treatment of our water. They proposed a programme for the West Coast Sewerage Project to be done. Sir, they proposed a programme, which I think is close to BDS\$1 billion over 10 years, that is \$100 million a year in capital expenditure that ordinarily must come under the budget, and they were able to handle that themselves.

Sir, that will create jobs, that will create growth, and that will stop the problem we are having where the developers cannot get permission for developments, and where there is no permission for housing developments, we cannot guarantee water. That should have been fixed a long time ago, and we are fixing it.

Sir, the National Housing Corporation - I do not know how many houses they said were built so far. I have never associated the Honourable Senator as a mathematician.

Asides.

SENATOR the Hon. D.W. BOYCE: Sorry, Sir. I just did not associate her with mathematics.

Sir, we have under construction - I believe the National Housing Corporation has made arrangements for, I believe, in one area about 300 houses a year. I very well believe that we will see those 300 houses this year in that area. Sir, I believe there are other arrangements similar to that one, where the National Housing Corporation is not taking the risk. The National Housing Corporation is not getting involved in doing things that they have not done well before.

15.10 p.m.

The National Housing Corporation is letting people who can take the risk, take the risk and build their properties and make sure that in all of this there are large numbers of small and medium-size contractors engaged in this work.

Mr. President, quite apart from those ones where the National Housing Corporation is not taking the risk and where we expect to generate the level of housing that we are looking for, we are currently negotiating for a loan of \$40 million to be a revolving loan, so that we can engage more of our small and medium-size contractors to build houses for our low-income persons.

Sir, let us be conservative and say that it takes six months to get it built, to get the mortgage closed and get the money paid out and that \$40 million will give us 400 houses. Sir, you can double that because it will happen twice a year and we will have 800 houses. Mr. President, that is under negotiation and those houses will be for sale or rent-to-own.

Mr. President, we are also negotiating with the Caribbean Development Bank for another BDS\$75 million for the construction of rental units and rent-to-own units in ways that will provide for our low-income persons who are at the stage where they cannot afford to buy a house. Mr. President, we will get the growth from the Barbados Water Authority programme. We will get the growth from the Housing Programme and, I think, that will keep us going.

Mr. President, the Sanitation Services Authority Programme for the leachate plant in the Vacluse area has been started. Their work on the waste energy plant is proceeding very well and very shortly we suspect we will be able to put out request for qualifications for the waste energy plant to come. We have also been told that the Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC) building is going on very nicely and we should hopefully get a start to that construction during the course of this year.

Sir, the CXC building is financed by the National Insurance Board. Sir, that is the Government sponsored infrastructure work that will create the growth and the employment that we need. We are making sure that we have it funded before we go forward.

Mr. President, I am told that there are a number of private developments, and I have heard questions asked about it here, that are ready to go again. I am hopeful that I can meet with some of them tomorrow to get an update from them on those projects. Sir, I have not mentioned the project around the Warrens Highway because that project is now under study. We are studying very carefully how we can expand the accesses around the Warrens area to make sure the congestion is relieved and to ensure that people can get to and from work and their homes faster in the Warrens area.

Mr. President, some of these projects will be done by private financing initiatives. They will be done by the private sector with their financing and then we will take over the project when it is done, so that we can get away from some of the risks of construction and let them take those risks, and then we will take it over. Mr. President, not along the BOLT route, the straight PFI, where they build the project and we take it over one time rather than making it into a BOLT, which it cannot really be.

Mr. President, that is how we will keep the growth growing locally and we expect that these programmes will put on the side of Government and quasi-Government, will probably put into the economy another \$200 million or \$250 million a year in capital expenditure which will help to keep the economy pushing along until the world gets back to the stage where the traded sectors are sufficiently strong.

Mr. President, in the Estimates, we have made sure that we made due allowance for our social sectors. We have kept education, despite the need to reduce expenditure, we have kept them pretty much where they should be. We have treated the University of the West Indies no different from how we have treated the University of the West Indies over the years.

Mr. President, we have spoken to the University of the West Indies about what they need to do. They have agreed with us about what they are going to do and we will treat them in the way they have been treated over time. Mr. President, the University of the West Indies will not be put in the position where it cannot continue the wonderful job that it is doing for our young people.

I have heard the comments being made here in this Honourable Chamber about the university, its graduates and what is its contribution and, Mr. President, I think the university is doing a great job and once it continues to

adjust to the dynamics of the situation, our university will go from strength to strength and we will support them wholeheartedly.

Mr. President, we have provided for the welfare services. We have required the welfare services to be run efficiently. The Minister has indicated how he intends to run them more efficiency and, therefore, he is happy with the appropriation which he has for the welfare services, for the Urban Development Commission and the Rural Development Commission and for constituency empowerment.

Mr. President, we have tried to provide for the staff of the Ministry of Home Affairs and we have tried in these Estimates to find some room for repair and construction of some police stations. We have tried to find room for repair and construction of post offices. Once again, Mr. President, so that our public servants have recent accommodation and reasonable places to work. We have made sure that we dealt fairly with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade. The Ministry is entering into some ventures and going into some new countries. They have had to increase their expenses because of going to those place and we have tried to help them make sure they can do it. Sir, while we have agreed to help them, we have said to them that they have to show us too how they will help themselves and I must say that my colleague, Senator McClean has cooperated wonderfully well and show us how they can do it.

Mr. President, we have had to spend more money on security as you would have realised in the Estimates and we must not compromise on our security services. We have to spend the money on security, we have spent the money on security and there is it, Mr. President.

Mr. President, in the Estimates, we have also provide adequate funding for the programmes we have going on with IDB for our statistics improvement, for our competitiveness programme, for entrepreneurship and for our standards improvement. We have also continue the programme for the Central revenue agencies for the Financial Services Commission for the improvement of our procurement systems to make sure that we get pricing and better sourcing of our goods and services in the Government sector.

15:20

Mr. President, I mentioned the corporations with some idle assets that need to begin to come up to scratch and have to fund themselves. One such corporation is the Barbados Investment Development Corporation (BIDC). Another such corporation is the Barbados Agricultural Development and Marketing Corporation (BADMC). Mr. President, it does not make sense for us to have paid to give

them the assets and have those assets sit there. The BIDC is currently working on a programme as is the BADMC, to show how those assets can be put to good use to make sure that the corporations are funded and still achieve their goals.

Asides.

SENATOR the Hon. D.W. BOYCE: Mr. President, in the context of where we are, I feel comfortable that what we have produced is a workable document that will not cause any hardship to our people here.

Mr. President, there is a concern about how the deficit will be funded. When we produced the Estimates, we had under discussion a number of financial initiatives. One such initiative, Mr. President, is the raising of a foreign commercial bond, which we have decided since these Estimates were done, would be moved from \$100 million to \$200 million.

Mr. President, we have also accumulated Sinking Funds against this bond that is due to mature and I think that those Sinking Funds are in the nature of \$50 million to \$60 million and they are there for the purpose of redeeming some of the debt. They are available, Mr. President.

Mr. President, we had also agreed with the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) for an energy sector policy loan, which we expect will get concluded some time by mid year and therefore these funds would be available and that would also give us another \$40 million or \$50 million.

We have in front of the Caribbean Development Bank, Mr. President, an application for a policy loan. We have in front of the World Bank, an application for a policy loan if the World Bank is prepared to go the route of "relaxing graduation for a while" but, Mr. President, we have told the World Bank very clearly that any time that they wish to deal with that matter of giving us a loan, we are not going the route of Hungary or Latvia, they are coming to us on our terms. We are not entering any programme with the IMF or anybody else.

Asides.

SENATOR the Hon. D.W. BOYCE: If they come, we would have them but they would come on our terms, Mr. President, and Senator Cave knows very well my view on that matter of IMF conditionality or World Bank conditionality, when we worked together in the early 1990s on that matter. He knows that I am as consistent today as I was then on that matter of how we treat with the IMF and the World Bank. They must come to us on our terms and not us go to them on their terms. I am very clear about that, Sir.

Mr. President, we also have looked at some of our assets which are no longer strategic and which the Prime Minister has announced that he will sell. He has talked to the Barbados National Bank and the Insurance Corporation of Barbados and he has said that a significant part of those sales will go to the hospital. He has not said all of those sales will go to the hospital. He has said a significant part, so part of that will be available to us, Mr. President, for meeting the deficit.

Mr. President, there are also some idle properties in Government, owned by the Crown, which we feel should be put out properly to bid and brought to Parliament and disposed of. They are idle assets and therefore we should not ask taxpayers to pay twice for them.

Mr. President, we are looking at these different sources of financing so that we do not crowd out the private sector from financing and so that we do not cause the Central Bank to have to extend its credit, any more than it actually has to do. Mr. President, I feel comfortable that we can achieve these Estimates. We can achieve this financing gap.

Mr. President, I am very, very pleased to support this Appropriation Bill and recommend them for the approval of this Senate at the appropriate time.

I thank you, Sir.

Asides.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator McClean.

SENATOR the Hon. Miss M.P.O. McCLEAN: Mr. President, I rise to wrap up the debate on the Appropriation Bill, 2010. Perhaps, Sir, I will start in a somewhat unusual manner but then again I do not know, I have heard several of these but I want to speak about the last speaker, the Honourable Senator Darcy W. Boyce.

Mr. President, from the time the Cabinet was named in January 2008, there was a lot of nonsensical talk, coming from a range of places. I would say, Sir, that thanks to technology, I just got a Text which says, Senator Boyce really bringing it home, from a Barbadian who was listening, who is not an economist but who understands these issues. I want to say that while you may be an economist by training, you can in fact make this thing capable of being understood by Barbadians.

Mr. President, I am happy to say that I have been associated with the Honourable Senator for a long time, going back to the early days of the establishment of Bridgetown Cruise Terminals and before that. I knew him when he was a Head Boy at Harrison College, but that might date me a little bit, but I do not mind.

Certainly, for those listeners out there who have been asking me and responding, because we often listen to certain figures in this community and we believe what they say. I often recall a comment made to me by a dear friend of mine who happens to have a different political persuasion to mine. I was saying difficult, maybe his persuasion makes it difficult for him but he often says, you know, you say something about you long enough that they would begin to believe it. He might be telling me what might be the strategy used to discredit myself or somebody else. He is a good friend. We were joking but in doing that, he revealed the strategy of his persuasion, so to speak.

There is this notion going around that Senator Boyce does not know anything about economics but as I looked at his curriculum vitae, I knew it before but I asked him to give me it in print so that I could look at it. He says that - and I know - he did go to Mona. He is part of the University of the West Indies Cave Hill Campus family, so do not apologise that you did not go to Cave Hill. You might have missed out on meeting certain people. I am not speaking about me. He would know whom I am talking about.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Please address the Chair.

SENATOR the Hon. Miss M.P.O. McCLEAN: Mr. President, sorry. You would know probably if I told you, Sir, who he was talking about but I will tell you after.

Sir, he did, in fact, do a Bachelors of Science and Economics at the University of the West Indies Jamaica. Around the time when I was going into the university was when he graduated. He also did, Sir, graduate work in Finance and Applied Economics. I know him as a professional Accountant, CMA, et cetera.

I just wanted to raise that to tell Barbadians that when there is this myth going around that there are no economists, and you know they call economics the dismal science, so I think that having done the dismal science, he saw the light by doing an MBA.

Asides.

SENATOR the Hon. Miss M.P.O. McCLEAN: The combination in all seriousness, Mr. President, of those technical competencies and the skills and experience that the Senator has brought to the Ministry of Finance, to the Cabinet of Barbados and to the service of Barbadians is something that I trust people would not seek to belittle, and for those who spread that nonsense, they will be dismissed out of hand.

Mr. President, now to the reply of some of what I heard. As I listened to the debate, I believe I should begin

close to the end. I must begin first by commenting on the contribution of the second speaker of the Opposition.

15:30

The Honourable Senator is relatively new to the Chamber but he is not new to some of the issues. Mr. President, I must commend him on the first 10 minutes of his contribution in which he offered an acceptable theoretical or conceptual overview of some of the basic concepts of macro, micro and monetary economics.

Sir, I believe that his continuous reference to the International Monetary Fund needs no response as the relationship of Barbados to the IMF was clearly articulated by several speakers. It is no bogeyman. We are part of an international economic community, therefore, as part of that community, we are bound by certain procedures. Mr. President, to suggest that they are some monster creeping in, in the night into this society and economy is nonsense.

Sir, if I could continue in respect of his colleague, the Honourable Senator Thompson, I am happy that she was able to catch the last part of Senator Boyce's comments. I know that we have a Members' Room, but we also have MultiChoice television which shows CNN and a computer in that room as well. Sir, the Honourable Senator Thompson ranged far and wide in her presentation. In local parlance, she was like "Poonka", all over de place", or in the style of some unskilled cricketers or bowlers coming in at the end of the batting line up, she was swiping. Mr. President, I will therefore attempt, notwithstanding the ranging far and wide, to respond to some of the matters raised.

Mr. President, I want to start in relation to the Fishing Agreement. The Honourable Senator very quickly and buoyantly said: "I want to know what is happening with the Fishing Agreement." Sir, I need to provide that information, and certainly because it falls under the portfolio of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade, I believe I should spend, if not a little time, some time providing some details.

Asides.

SENATOR the Hon. Miss M. P. O. McCLEAN: Asides are not to be heard, Mr. President. I am dealing with serious business and therefore, I will treat the business of this Senate seriously.

In 2006, there was an arbitral award which settled the maritime boundary delimitation between Barbados and Trinidad and Tobago. At that time, the tribunal recognised the importance of flying fish and fisheries to Barbados and indeed to Tobago and the sheer nature of this resource. They instructed the parties, at the conclusion of its ruling,

to reach an agreement allowing Barbados or Barbadian fishermen access to the Trinidad and Tobago Exclusive Economic Zone.

In pursuance of that objective to come to an agreement, a number of meetings were held between the parties. At a meeting in July 2007, it was agreed that a regional stock assessment exercise be undertaken to provide empirical evidence to inform any fishing agreement. The Food and Agricultural Organisation conducted that regional stock assessment, and this was completed in June 2008. Draft results were circulated in October 2008, and a meeting was convened to review the results of the assessment in my Ministry on February 10, 2009. At that time, Trinidad was yet to provide its national fisheries data and this served to hamper progress.

After discussing this with my colleague, the Honourable Paula Gopee-Scoon, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Trinidad and Tobago, she did her research and got back in touch with me. She sent me a letter dated December 17, 2009 saying that they were now in a position to talk about restarting the negotiations.

In that letter of December 17, 2009, the Honourable Minister of Foreign Affairs of Trinidad and Tobago signalled that the regional stock assessment had been completed and offered to begin the second round of negotiations in February 2010. Unfortunately, that was not suitable to our negotiating teams and we sought another date. When we looked at exploring March and April of this year, the Trinidad and Tobago officials signalled that the months of March and April were difficult for them and they proposed the first two weeks of May as the earliest time at which they can resume negotiations.

I trust, Mr. President, that without theatrics, on the basis of facts, I have put them out there, and people would understand, notwithstanding what people might have sought to do in their optimism to address this matter, that it is a two-sided process.

Mr. President, I stand as a serious Member of this Chamber, I do not engage in nonsense. I engage in serious business. We have big men and women at this Table and it is my intention at all times to treat the business of this Chamber with seriousness and to deal with facts. I do not play games.

Mr. President, while I am on that, I perhaps might digress a bit because I want to talk a little bit about my Ministry as well. I want to say something about how I like to link things because these things do not exist in a vacuum. There are a number of words which, if I had to speak of core values...

I spent years teaching a course which I introduced at the University of the West Indies called Strategic Management. Mr. President, when you develop a strategic plan, one of the things you talk about is core values. Some of the core values by which I live, and which attracted me to accept the offer to join this Cabinet, are integrity, trust, a statement, for example, that says that our word is our bond and reciprocity, if we are talking about foreign affairs. Those are the kinds of things I believe that should inform personal, organisational, national, regional and indeed international undertakings.

As I move around the world, Mr. President, representing this great country, one of the things I have often heard is that you are from a little island and that little island is one that is respected by large and small countries. Mr. President, I believe that when I sit and dialogue with anybody that I operate on the basis of those things. If I talk about something and give you my word, I give you my word but I believe in reciprocity. That is how I behave and that is how this country is viewed in the world's sphere.

I remember on several occasions having to sit in meetings with officials of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade and being asked to agree to support countries and when I say to them there is a process we go through as a member of CARICOM and that I will not make promises that we cannot keep, they say we appreciate that. Mr. President, it is a pleasure to hear people say that. We know that when Barbados speaks or when Barbadian officials speak on behalf of Barbados, their word is their bond. Sir, I just want to reiterate that.

Mr. President, as I work with my staff, I feel proud of the work that many of them do. We have heard this in relation to the Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs and the work that they do, so I also want to recognise the work that is done by the officials of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade.

The Honourable Senator Thompson asked what are the tangible returns of our Missions overseas. Part of the tangible, and the intangible because we have to speak about those, is that we are able to utilise the resources, financial and human, to ensure that those core values that I mentioned and more, because those are only a couple, are not only words on a wall, words in a booklet but words which represent how we do business out there, in order to attract investments, in order to make Barbadians who are part of the diaspora feel that they want to be remembered and be associated with this beautiful country Barbados, and that we do business in a way that says our word is our bond and that is how we do business.

3.40 p.m.

Mr. President, as we go out there into China, Brazil and most recently Cuba, as we utilise the resources and the people we have, whether in Washington D.C., Miami, New York, London, Ottawa or Toronto, those people are there saying to the people that Barbados is a place with which they would want to associate. Barbados is a place in which they would find a highly educated workforce. It is a place in which they would find business people. It is a place where they would find legal systems, Laws, rules and regulations which say that they can do business. Sir, that is what we stand for therefore any deviation from that is something that concerns any one of us.

Mr. President, I believe that the investment, which is no small investment. Sir, you would have heard an extensive, comprehensive, easily understood presentation of what informs our Estimates from the Minister of State in the Ministry of Finance. Sir, when we look at that, that is all intended to create the environment in which we say to people, come play with us as a tourist, come live here as an investor who wants to relocate here, come back to Barbados if you are a Barbadian who has lived outside of Barbados for 10 months, 10 years, 40 years, 50 years. Sir, it is a place they would want to be. We are small but we have been successful because we have built this society on some very important core values. I think that it is important.

Mr. President, when we sit here and talk about these things, I come from a place where I believe that we are not playing games. Yes, we have political differences. In a room like this the divide is not as evident as in the Other Place but we sit across the Table from each other. Sir, when we come here our vision, purpose and focus must be on building a better Barbados. Sir, the question is what are they doing for us. The Missions overseas are creating an awareness, a presence and a demonstration that even though we are 166 square miles in physical space, we are in a position to be a world leader, and that in many respects we have already started to do so.

Mr. President, I received a call from the Minister of Health, who happens to be in Brazil. He is already there, being assisted by a very new Ambassador to Brazil, who is now simply trying to locate herself physically, in terms of finding accommodation, et cetera, but she is already working. This is someone, who as a career Foreign Service Officer, has worked hard.

We have sent to China one of our former Prime Ministers as an Ambassador, a man who has built our initial relationship with China. In fact, a lot of what was done might have been pooh-poohed by the Other Side in previous years but again he has started to build a relationship. China is soon to be, if it continues on its current trajectory, the largest economy in the world.

SENATOR Miss H. E. THOMPSON: On a point of order. I hear the Honourable Senator speaking and I am loathed to interrupt since we are so close to closure but I cannot remember, at any time during the course of my speech, challenging our Foreign Missions. In fact, the Honourable Senator will note that in a recent conversation I was very careful to say that I believe we need to have a more strategic approach in relation to our Foreign Missions. Sir, I said that in a very positive way. I have no difficulty at all with Barbados having Foreign Missions across countries, I understand the strategic and other approaches and I did not object to those particular Missions.

SENATOR the Hon. Miss M. P. O. McCLEAN: Mr. President, as you would know, I sit at your right hand and I always - ALWAYS - take copious notes. I sit with a black pen, a red pen and a blue pen in terms of ink. Sir, on March 22, 2010, under some notes written "Opposition response - Liz Thompson."

Sir, if you want to make these a document of this Honourable Chamber, you can have my handwritten notes. It says: "Missions overseas - queried what these were." Sir, in my red pen, I wrote: "Respond about the initiatives and Team Barbados." I have these here, I did not write these as I sat down just now.

SENATOR Miss H. E. THOMPSON: On a point of order. Sir, Missions in this context has been defined by the Minister too narrowly. There was nowhere in my speech in which I spoke to any Foreign Missions, clearly that purpose is understood. I am talking about the numerous missions, travel trips and flying without restraint that Members of the Cabinet seem to be on. What are all these mission? Sir, every time you open the paper, you see this person is overseas, that person is overseas and you do not know what they are doing. Sir, I do not mean the Foreign Missions, I am very clear on what are their roles.

Mr. PRESIDENT: I am going to rule on this in such a way as not to create confusion, a mis-utterance must not be interpreted to mean what the speaker did not intend it to mean. I am going to accept that on the occasion when you talked about missions, you meant travel on the part of persons. I am sure the Minister would have no difficulty with that and we could move on.

SENATOR Miss H. E. THOMPSON: I thank your Honour for the ruling.

SENATOR the Hon. Miss M. P. O. McCLEAN: Mr. President, I will move on with pleasure but I do have my records and I am very clear about the language.

Senator Miss H. E. THOMPSON: No, Mr. President, has ruled, so do not think you could explain. Mr. President,

there could be no context. Sir, notes can be called for, the speech itself can be brought if, at all, it is going to be placed in the context. I have explained. I stand on my explanation. I thank Your Honour for the ruling. If there is any doubt, if the speaker wants to rely on her notes rather than the speech which can be brought, we can go there.

Mr. PRESIDENT: I am not sure I understood your intervention on this occasion.

SENATOR Miss H. E. THOMPSON: I am thanking you for the ruling, Sir.

Mr. PRESIDENT: You are very welcome. Proceed, Honourable Senator.

SENATOR the Hon. Miss M. P. O. McCLEAN: Mr. President, if I may proceed, and it is nice to know that the Honourable Senator is here to speak and is not in the Members' Room where we have CNN and a computer.

SENATOR Miss H. E. THOMPSON: On a point of order. The Honourable Senator should also indicate to the public in her seriousness and being a serious person with serious business, that in the Members' Room there is also an audio system from which one can monitor the Honourable Senate.

SENATOR the Hon. Miss M. P. O. McCLEAN: Mr. President, I am not going to waste too much time. Sir, the audio system is also audible and I will leave it there. In other words, it can be on or off.

Mr. President, I believe that I must use this time to respond to matters which went out there and which cannot be left unchallenged. Sir, there was a suggestion that meetings of Cabinet run for only half-days. Sir, this was perhaps made in ignorance of two facts: First, that is generally not the case but more important, since the Government of the Honourable Prime Minister came to office, there has been the establishment of four major Committees of Cabinet:

1. A Governance Committee;
2. An Economic Policy Committee;
3. A Social Policy Committee; and
4. An Infrastructure Committee.

Sir, I do not propose to go into any long detail in explaining these, I think the names of these Committees essentially spell the issues before them. Sir, there is a rationale for those committees and they will also help you to understand what thinking and the depth of thinking that went into the crafting of these Estimates.

Mr. President, tradition in terms of Cabinet and Cabinet decision-making was that on Wednesday afternoons, around this time or probably two or so hours at most, a stack of Cabinet papers would come to a Minister's Office, where he or she would have been expected to sit, read and digest all of those things and hopefully make decisions on them, or if that Minister were wise enough when he or she looks at the complexity or nature before them, he or she would defer some of those matters. These matters would then be put on the agenda, again and again.

3.50 p.m.

The Prime Minister said this is not the best way, that better use of the time would be to sit down and draw on your official as well. Where there are major issues, you can sit down and review those Papers as a Committee of a smaller group of the Cabinet, spend some time and deliberate on these and come to Cabinet with a set of recommendations, which could then guide the other members of Cabinet.

Mr. President, as a person trained in management, it allows you to better examine, evaluate, understand, make better decisions and, at the end of the day, the key Ministers involved in a particular Cabinet paper, et cetera, are in a position to spend some serious time on it and when a decision is made it is not made on the basis of somebody saying, this is not my Ministry or I paid glancing attention to this. Sir, it allows for an in-depth assessment. Sir, it also allows for matters to be brought to those Committees which can be then taken to Cabinet and, in that way, the intention is to make better decisions.

Mr. President, I have heard over the years that when you look to compare how certain companies and cultures made decisions that some western cultures tended to make - and perhaps this economic crisis might demonstrate this - tended to make decisions in a quick manner and then faced challenges with implementation, where others studied the process a bit more and then they ended up with a much smoother implementation.

Mr. President, basically, the notion that they are only half day meetings, again, is one of those fallacies that people like to throw around hoping that in doing so you would find yourself convincing Barbadians of things that are not necessarily true.

Mr. President, I believe that there were some concerns raised about assistance to small business. You would have seen, Sir, recent organising of the Cabinet and, Sir, that, in part, spoke to the need to focus on an important engine for the growth of this Barbadian economy.

It is important that serious attention be paid to business development. Over the years, because I have had a

personal professional interest in this area, I have paid major attention to the various initiatives that have been undertaken.

Mr. President, what I can say, from the time I was an academic studying and researching small business development, it was evident that while Barbados paid attention to the form of support, there was a lack of substance. Sir, I will explain what I mean in relation to small business development.

Mr. President, we have several agencies providing services to small business et cetera but, at the end of the day, the process by which any budding entrepreneur or small business owner tried to get assistance was a most cumbersome one. Therefore, the intention is to improve that process and to provide significant support to small business. Sir, I can tell you that I am seeing those kinds of initiatives. Mr. President, I think that is very important.

Mr. President, in the context of agriculture there were some concerns expressed by Senator Marville. He recommended that greater attention be paid to the sector. He identified several opportunities and I am happy to say that in terms of the whole issue of trade, importation, and exportation of certain products and services, the Minister of Agriculture would have reported in relation to CASA, which is a regional body, focussing on standards and food safety within the CARICOM arena, which is established in Suriname and should assist us because that is a critical area for us.

Mr. President, I also want to reiterate the point that was made by Minister Benn. He provided some very concrete statistics on the performance of the agriculture sector in Barbados in the last two years. Sir, the reality is that agriculture is an area that with some attention can be transformed in a rather short period of time, given the nature of what we are talking about. We are talking about crops that range from planting to reaping that could be short or substantially long.

Mr. President, I am happy to say that in relation to the sector, clearly, there have been a number of incentives. Some of them have been on the books for a long time and some of them have been difficult to assess. Several new incentives have been put on the books and people are taking advantage of them.

The Minister of Agriculture is partnering with several partners and I want to recognise now that in the context of our efforts as a Ministry of Foreign Affairs to facilitate the work of other Ministries, I would have mentioned in my opening comments the CXC Project in which we facilitate the efforts like the Minister of Agriculture to negotiate with partners.

Mr. President, if it was said before, I guess it bears repeating because mention was made by Senator Marville about sweet potatoes and currently, there are 42 varieties of sweet potatoes being researched and studied by the Ministry and CARDI. Sir, these are being researched not simply because somebody wants to try out several varieties but they are looking for varieties which can make things like potato chips, versus use for other crops that may be used, in part, for animal feeds and for other kinds of processings.

Mr. President, we heard about cassava and again, the Ministry is developing planting materials for farmers who are looking to go into cultivation. I know that they are currently negotiating with a business person in Barbados to partner with some entrepreneurs out of Suriname to produce products using the Barbados aloe vera. Sir, there is an aloe vera and ginger drink, I trust I can say these things because the information is out there and we are facilitating that process, the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade.

Mr. President, the Barbados aloe vera for those who do not know, has some very unique properties. It is a crop that can grow quite easily and the samples have been the drink, salad dressings and there are a whole range of products using aloe vera barbadensia, that is the right name, Sir.

Mr. President, I want to say that when we talk about collaboration and so on, that is how I see our Ministries working, not as silos but facilitating the work of each other. Mr. President, the issue of medical tourism falls squarely into that. I can tell you, Sir, that another project that is currently being facilitated by the CXC Project is some research which started at the Barbados Community College. There is a lecturer there who has been working with her students to research Barbadian plants and the medicinal qualities of those plants, and they have actually come up with a number of products which we are seeking now to facilitate the commercialisation of these projects. Sir, there is a very serious effort to link these things in and create opportunities for Barbadians in their several spheres.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that when we look at the issue of the Estimates of 2010, I do not propose to do over what Senator Boyce did, I think I would do an injustice if I try to go through but I want to emphasize a number of points that were made in summary rather than in repetition. The notion that there have been these major cuts because again sound bites sound good. The media likes to grab on to these things notwithstanding the facts but sound bites may sound good but they do not do justice to the facts and worse yet, they do damage and they misrepresent, mislead and misinform the public.

16:00

A misinformed public often can be affected, particularly in a time of economic crisis and uncertainty. When you are in a crisis situation, which by implication is a situation where people start to lose confidence, and they keep hearing over and over again a lot of negative untruths, lies, if you want to call them, and so on, misrepresentations of fact. It does a lot of damage. It damages people's interest in making their individual contribution to turn around the situation. It reduces confidence.

SENATOR Miss H.E. THOMPSON: On a point of order. The Honourable Senator has used the word lies and misrepresentations of the truth. I think that language is unparliamentary. A Member is entitled to put their perspective.

Mr. PRESIDENT: The Honourable Senator was not referring to anyone in particular. She was making a general statement. I am very sorry if you understood her to be addressing you. My understanding of what the Senator was saying is, people generally have a problem when there are lies and untruths. Therefore, there is no point of order.

SENATOR Miss H.E. THOMPSON: Thank you, Sir. I hope that she is not referring to her own, because I heard her saying Senator Thompson.

Mr. PRESIDENT: I wish to draw to your attention that your hoax has nothing to do with me.

SENATOR the Hon. M.P.O. McCLEAN: Mr. President, I thank you.

As I was saying in relation to the information, I spoke about the media. Maybe the Honourable Senator who rose on a point of order is the media. I thought she was a Member of this Chamber. Sir, as I was saying, the media...

Mr. PRESIDENT: I am not going to allow you to be insulting in your language either. The Honourable Senator is a Member of this Chamber. Therefore, there can be no question about it. She did not rise on a point of order relating to the media. She rose on a point of order. You may proceed.

SENATOR the Hon. M.P.O. McCLEAN: Sir, if I may repeat my point for the media, I was suggesting that in the media there has often been misrepresentation, suggesting that there have been cuts which have been willy nilly, et cetera. I said that some of those representations in the media have been downright lies. If I had said that about anyone here, Sir, I would have apologised for being unparliamentary, but I did not.

Sir, if I can continue.

Mr. PRESIDENT: You may.

SENATOR the Hon. M.P.O. McCLEAN: The reality is, as would have been set out by the Honourable Senator Boyce, that when you look across the Estimates there have been some reductions. There have been some cuts. Those have been explained. He has also pointed out that overall we have seen increased expenditures. We have explained over the last three days, today being the third day of the Estimates, that in the context of an international financial and economic crisis of proportions unknown to most citizens of this country and in fact, the world, if we look at the distribution of the population, people of a certain age, who certainly were born after the 1930s, we have experienced nothing like this.

For a small country like Barbados to have weathered the storm, so far, we have been able to do so not by chance, it has been done, as Senator Boyce pointed out, by an early comprehensive assessment of the circumstances internationally, the circumstances regionally and of the circumstances locally. We had to take into account what we inherited, and those were also spelt out for us, a couple hundred millions of dollars.

We also had to take into account that while under an old system of accounting for Government finances, the cash approach, where we moved to an accrual basis, we had to bring to book a number of debts and as such, when we saw the full picture on paper literally, because you had to put it on your balance sheet, et cetera, we found ourselves with some very significant debts.

Sir, we found ourselves with a number of unfinished projects, which is a norm, depending on the nature of them, I am going to create a word, the "unfinishedness", of the projects. When we looked at those things and we balanced that against the straight jacket that has been placed on policy makers, because of the world economy and because of what we inherited, I believe that some of the best brains in Barbados, contrary to what was said. I remember reading about a bunch of wild boys. Well, I am not a boy, neither am I wild. I may have picked dunks up by the University. We were allowed to walk, and we would ask. We did not steal. The dunks were free.

Sir, back to the point. When we looked at what some of the best brains have been able to do, most people who have analysed it, and I sat last week or week before at a meeting, along with the Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, the Honourable David Thompson, and some official of the Ministry, with a team from the World Bank, the President of the World Bank himself leading the team, and discussing the very things that were reported and the very decision, and I heard very complimentary things.

I have sat at the level of CARICOM meetings whether it is COTED Ministers of Trade, whether it is COFCORD Ministers of Foreign Affairs to discuss the challenges faced by Guyana, Trinidad and Tobago, Jamaica and the other members of CARICOM, again people are saying, what are you doing in Barbados, you seem to be managing quite well.

Sir, when I look at the media and I read and listen to some of the distortions of reality, it makes me very concerned. We have to ensure that all of this hard work is understood, so that Barbadians do not find themselves sinking into a mindset that is counter productive. I believe that we have worked hard as a new Administration.

It is interesting we started our term in office with three Estimates. This is the third one, at this point, in which we have had to quickly grapple with the financial state of Barbados, following closely on all that has unfolded since then. I believe that we have used our resources well. We will continue to use our resources well, and will ensure that we do the best for Barbados.

Sir, I started my contribution by saying that Barbados is not merely an economy. An economy exists to support a society of people of boys and girls, of young men and women, of the elderly who have sacrificed for this country, or whatever country wherever that economy may be, and whatever society it is, but in the context of Barbados we exist as a society in which, if you talk to any of the centenarians, we seem to produce them weekly, one by one, sometimes two and more, and what do they say? They said, "We worked hard. We believed in God, and therefore we believe that all of those things came together to help us to see 100-years-old."

Sir, I do not know if I will see 100 years, because we also face now another situation, when we look into the newspapers, and we look at the obituaries, we see very old people and very young people. Sir, it is the intention of this Government, by its very policies, social, economic and otherwise, to give Barbadians the best opportunities to live to a ripe old age, not one in which they have to look back in sadness and say, "I lived in a Barbados where there were haves and there were have nots, and the have nots were the people who built the country so the haves could have". We are going to provide through our social programmes, incentives to business as well, because those are economic programmes.

16.10 p.m.

Sir, some people talk about entitlements. We will certainly not create a mendicant mentality which had started to creep into this country but we will become our brother's keepers. Those who have will share in the tax burden to provide for those who did that one time and who

cannot do that anymore, or to provide for those who will take over the tax burden down the road.

Overall, Sir, I believe that this is very much a part of what this Democratic Labour Party Government and previous Governments have stood for and when I look around this Chamber, Sir, I believe it is what this Democratic Labour Party will stand for in Government for a long time, in Opposition when it becomes an Opposition again and when it becomes a Government.

I am talking like we will be in Government for a long time. Let me repeat, Sir, I am saying that we have maintained over the life of this Party a commitment and if you do not believe, Sir, you can go and read the words of the late Rt. Excellent Errol W. Barrow and those who followed him.

We were that way in the past, Sir, we are now, we will continue to be as we hold on to this Government, not for one term as the pundits of darkness and doom and gloom would want to suggest but again, it is the strategy. Say something long enough and you will start to believe it yourself and you might make other people believe it. But we do not believe it because we believe, strongly, Sir, that what we are saying in these Estimates will take this country forward. We will build on what we have to build, Sir, and I believe with all of the things, this country is the better for these Estimates and what they portend for Barbados.

Asides.

On the motion of SENATOR the Hon. Miss M.P.O. McCLEAN, the Bill was read a second and a third time and passed and cited as the Appropriation Act, 2010.

SUSPENSION

SENATOR the Hon. Miss M.P.O. McCLEAN: Mr. President, I beg to move that this Sitting be suspended for 20 minutes until 4.35 p.m.

The question that the Sitting be suspended for 20 minutes until 4.35 p.m. was put to the Senate and agreed to and Mr. PRESIDENT suspended the Sitting accordingly.

16:14

RESUMPTION

Mr. PRESIDENT: This Sitting is resumed.

Order No. 1

NATIONAL INSURANCE AND SOCIAL SECURITY (AMENDMENT)

BILL, 2010

SENATOR the Hon Miss M. P.O MCCLEAN: This National Insurance and Social Security (Amendment) Bill, 2010, is intended to bring the necessary legislation up-to-date to provide for the deferment of the payment of National Insurance contributions payable by employers with effect from July 1, 2009 to June 30, 2010.

As you are aware, Mr. President, this is one of several initiatives offered in the Budgetary provisions of 2009. In that Financial Statement and Budgetary Proposals, the Honourable David Thompson, Minister of Finance, sought to provide measures of relief to business owners in the context of the world economy and certainly the economic situation facing Barbadian enterprises.

I believe that as one of several possibilities, businesses would have been able to take advantage of this. Of course, it comes with certain conditions, employers need to be paid up in their payments. This initiative was targeted at employers who are experiencing cash flow problems, et cetera.

Mr. President, for some years, I ran a business as a small employer, where I employed directly two or three persons in an area that was seasonal. It was related to the tourism industry. Sir, as we know in that sector there is a level of seasonality. If we look across the sector, at land-based tourism, you would find that the seasons typically run almost parallel for land-based and cruise tourism. Sir, I am using this to illustrate how such a provision could have assisted small operators.

Mr. President, where a business experiences dips and peaks in its cash flows, any assistance with fixed expenses would assist that operation. Sir, I remember some persons querying the actual dollar value this might translate into for some people but for an employer of several small numbers, this would add up to a big number but for an employer of few persons, it could make a difference.

It is important, as we would have heard in discussion in previous occasions and certainly for the past three days as we were talking about the economic circumstances, that this administration, given the constraints within which it sought to bring relief to business persons, looked at mechanisms which were made available. Sir, National Insurance is a statutory obligation, it is a statutory obligation of a special type. Sir, unlike VAT, which is actual monies or cash transactions, National Insurance is an expense that you will incur, irrespective of whether or not you would have sold anything.

Sir, for example, if I employ somebody to work in a retail operation, in a store downtown, in a boutique, in a hotel, or in a gift shop catering to cruise passengers and that person worked for five days in the week, if they were catering to cruise passengers only and there were no cruise ships in a particular day or even in a particular week, you would still have to pay that person and you would still have to pay National Insurance contributions. The essential difference is that the expense is incurred even though you might not have made any revenue to match that expense and so you would find yourself with that expense.

Sir, I say that because oftentimes good, honest employers find themselves in grave or strapped financial circumstances where sometimes you would hear employees saying that the employer was taking out their National Insurance contributions but did not pay it into the National Insurance Scheme. Sir, the truth is, that National Insurance contribution becomes due even if the employer did not have a matching revenue.

Sir, I drew the distinction between that and VAT, with VAT if I sell a pencil for one dollar before VAT, I should be collecting \$1.15; if I have an employee for whom I have to pay \$20 in National Insurance on \$100, if I did not sell anything, I would still have to pay that \$20 contribution.

Mr. President, what I am saying is when such statutory obligations become due and the employer does not have the funds to pay, two things happen. The first thing is that the employer is incurring a bill and is running afoul of the National Insurance regulations. If an employee has to claim unemployment or sickness benefits and there is none paid in for that employee, then there is a problem.

Secondly, that employer would be incurring a penalty or what can be equated to interest charges for late payment. Mr. President, the employer's contribution is about 12 to 13 per cent of the wage bill and so at the end of the day it could be a significant figure. Sir, in essence, what this does is to provide another option to help the business person manage his or her cash flow. What is intended is to treat it as a loan so that the deferment of the contribution is really a loan, it is a mechanism to help.

Sir, essentially, I want to say that it is one of several mechanisms that are available. The facts are borne out in an earlier discussion in the Estimates where we looked at unemployment figures but the intention is that this, along with several other schemes, some of them targeted directly at certain sectors, have been able to contribute to the containment of unemployment, in other words, people have kept their employees.

Mr. President, some persons may argue - and I recall hearing this raised elsewhere - how many people have

taken advantage of the Scheme. Sir in contemplation of options of assistance, it is not expected that every option will elicit or generate the same response. The idea is that as you contemplate, as you plan ahead, as you operate not only being reactive but being proactive, there are some that will be directly beneficial. Sir, for example, if I am going to get a cash payment, of course, you are likely to see several persons lining up, some of them not necessarily qualifying.

Sir, as I have said before, it is one of several options being made available. Sir, as is often the case with Budgetary Proposals, the legislative process is sometimes slower than the administrative process. In other words, we seek to put these things in place and oftentimes we are slightly behind in terms of getting the legislative work out of the necessary agencies of Government, et cetera.

Mr. President, in essence, I believe that with all that we have discussed about Government support for the private sector in the context of the economic conditions... I do not believe I have to contextualise this piece of legislation, that has been done, over and over again, in our earlier discussion in this Honourable Chamber in this Sitting. The purpose of National Insurance and Social Security is evident to all of us who have had to utilise it at some point in time, in terms of our protection during illness.

While on the job it is important as we retire and therefore the protection of the system is important to the point, that as we try to protect the system we put mechanisms in place where when the possibility of default arises, we would understand the reason for the possible default and that we seek in special times to make special provisions.

Mr. President, essentially the Act spells out the terms and conditions under which a person qualifies. It also specifies the terms and conditions under which repayments of that loan would be made. It is a simple provision which is one of a basket of support mechanisms put in place for the business community in Barbados.

I think that it again demonstrates Government's understanding that where it cannot provide large sums of money in terms of direct subsidies, it certainly would seek, in whatever way, to facilitate or to ease the burden on the business community in Barbados. It will ease the burden on small or microenterprise operators, like I used to be, where while I only employed three or four people directly at the most any one time, I was in a position to ensure that those persons would have been able to contribute to the support of their families. Therefore, even though the numbers employed might have been small in terms of direct impact, you also had a multiplying effect, so to speak.

Mr. President, with those few words, against a background of a long discussion of Government's efforts to stimulate, to contribute to the stabilisation of this economy, to contribute to the sustainability of jobs across the many sectors of the economy, to minimise the fallout of this economic crisis, this Amendment seeks to

facilitate the implementation of this Budgetary Proposal.

4.50 p.m.

Mr. President, with those few words, I beg to move that this Bill be now read a second time.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Thompson, you have the floor.

SENATOR Miss H.E. THOMPSON: Mr. President, I am not going to be long either. I rise to support the Bill. I think that it is an excellent and necessary measure. I am pleased to see that mechanisms are being put in place to cushion those who might be adversely impacted by the present economic situation and this, certainly, is a very useful measure and support, particularly for the small business sector.

Mr. President, the small business sector is often overlooked as a major employer but research shows that the small business sector is not only a major employer but a lot of innovation and creativity comes out of small business. They make significant contribution to the economy and if, insofar as there is a challenge, out of which the small business sector needs support then that support should be extended.

Mr. President, I would urge that the matter be given significant publicity through the appropriate mechanisms so that those who might benefit will, in fact, come forward and claim the benefits.

Mr. President, I was very pleased to see Senator McClean speak to the issue of the fiction of taking money out of the National Insurance Scheme. I understand when you are an employee, there are certain deductions which have to be made and you know you are entitled to a statutory payment that your employers must contribute to. You feel aggrieved, and perhaps rightly so, when it has not been paid. Sir, I too have been an employer. When you are building a business, you have to pay the staff, you have to find that money and you also have to find the National Insurance money. Sir, you have not taken it out from anywhere, the business has to generate it.

Sir, I know you do not like to get into personal things but I say all the time that I am a child of small business. My parents have now had a small business in this

country for almost 50 years, therefore, I know what it is to try to keep on staff, to try to balance revenues against expenditure when times are difficult and revenues are dipping, particularly in a business like my parents' own, which is a large user of petroleum products and you have increases to deal with, in water and so on, which are then major inputs.

Mr. President, the fiction of employers holding on to the National Insurance Scheme benefits - there are some who do, who definitely have the resources and do not bother to pay but, for a lot of small businesses I think that is not the case. Sir, many small businesses are trying to keep people employed. They need a certain critical mass for their production base so they are trying to keep that critical mass to do their production, to earn revenues, to keep the business going, to pay the staff and very often, at the end of the month, they are juggling with all kinds of issues and have difficulty meeting the National Insurance payment.

Sir, sometimes, if they have four staff members and they can only afford two, they would say, let me put down the money until I find the money for all four, but next month is a little tighter and they cannot find the money for four rather than paying the two. Sir, it is not out of ill-will, in my view. I think it comes out of genuine difficulty and any support, therefore, to the business sector is welcomed and, Sir, I genuinely support it.

Mr. President, I would also say that at a time like this there is another support mechanism which equally needs to be extended to the small business sector. Sir, many people come to small business because of a desire to do something. I am interested in oil, gas, energy and the environment so I started an energy and environmental consultancy. The Honourable Senator said she was doing consultancy in another area and yesterday I heard Senator Husbands say that he too was doing some consultancy and worked in another field.

Mr. President, my father came to laundering because he had a dream that he wanted to do dry-cleaning so people come into businesses with various passions and with various interests but, particularly, for the small business sector and people who are black, you do not have a lot of examples in the family of people who have built businesses before you successfully.

Mr. President, you do not have business in black families that have transcended generations. You do not have the financial wherewithal within the extended family, that you can go, and ask Uncle Jeffrey, Uncle John or Uncle Peter for a soft loan to carry you for the next three months so these businesses are at a disadvantage.

Mr. President, I think that apart from extending this support, which is very important that we need to help small businesses and new entrepreneurs with some degree of training and support, which will help to extend and expand the success rate because often they have good ideas, they are very good at what their creative energies are generating but because they are so busy with trying to do all of the work for the consultancy, trying to write all the documents properly, interface with clients, travel and make pitches to other people who might be interested in the business, they simply do not have the time to be immersed completely in the mechanics of the management.

Sir, a lot of small businesses have bills outstanding for a long time. They have it written on a piece of paper somewhere and they cannot remember who they owe or how much it is and so on.

Mr. President, I am not saying that there is necessarily this level of disorganisation but the wider point to which I am attempting to allude is that there may be, within small business, a greater dearth of management structures than there are within bigger businesses and yet small businesses are the ones which most need these kinds of mechanisms. Therefore, I am imploring the Government, as its next step to help with such mechanisms which I think are of critical importance in the success of small businesses.

Mr. President, I am hearing and seeing here an attempt to support that sector and having been a child of it, I support it. I hope that it goes well. I trust that people will make use of the facility being extended by the Government because often we complain that the Government is making cuts, or the Government is doing nothing, or the Government is not doing enough, or the Government does not care. Equally, I feel that when they do something that is positive, you should get up and say it, as I am attempting to do now.

Mr. President, I would want to close with making just two small observations and, Sir, they are these. Sir, to date, the current Administration has borrowed \$449 million from the National Insurance Scheme over the last two years. Sir, that in itself is not wrong. A similar sum was borrowed by a Barbados Labour Party Government from the National Insurance Scheme over a nine-year period.

We are in a situation where demands may be made on the National Insurance Scheme which are legitimate but I am concerned that we must ensure that people's pensions are protected, that there is no risk to the pension fund, that whatever investments are being made are not of the high risk type and we can be sure, therefore, that there is a National Insurance Scheme down the road when people want to call on it and that the Scheme and the pension funds are not jeopardised. Sir, I am just throwing that out

as a caution, as it is my responsibility even in giving praise for this particular measure.

Mr. President, I am much obliged to you.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Boyce.

SENATOR the Hon. D.W. BOYCE: Thank you, Mr. President. I just want to say a few words in support of this Bill to amend the National Insurance Scheme Act. Sir, first of all, this measure comes after another measure which we introduced last year where we offered two businesses that were in arrears the opportunity to be exempted from the penalty which they had incurred, and to be forgiven part of the interest that would have accumulated. To that extent, we did not wish the businesses could not pay for whatever reason, to be penalised and to actually fork out more than the National Insurance Scheme would normally receive if they had paid on time. On the other hand, the National Insurance Scheme would not be short-changed on the income normally gained from investment of those funds. We have put that measure in place.

Sir, a number of businesses have used that measure to help them to become current, to come up-to-date, in good standing, with the National Insurance Scheme. With this measure, we are careful to make sure that those businesses in arrears and were seeking to bring themselves into good standing with the National Insurance Scheme would not be denied the opportunity to use this measure, if they needed it.

It seemed to us reasonable and sensible if a person in arrears before made arrangements to come up-to-date, that person would need to avail himself of this particular measure, this deferment, of the payments of the employer's contributions of the payments. Sir, this is a second step to help employers manage their cashflow.

We are very appreciative of the private sector persons who are doing all they can to keep employees on their payroll. Therefore, we felt that we should offer them some assistance. Sir, they have until, I think, the end of June 2010, to apply to participate in the Scheme. There are still a few more months for them to participate. Even though they may not have seen the need before, they still have some time, if they see the need now, to come and get the deferment and go forward.

Sir, the loan they are getting is a soft loan. It is a 3 per cent loan, as I seem to recall. That is much less than what they would have paid on their overdraft if they went to the bank. To make sure that the Pension Fund of the National Insurance Scheme does not suffer, we had the Unemployment Fund pay the difference between that 3 per cent and what the National Insurance Scheme would

normally have earned on its investments over to the Pension Fund.

Sir, it seemed fair that if you were going to save employment, you might as well use the money that you normally paid out in unemployment benefits to fund something that was going to help to keep people employed, so the Pension Fund would not be compromised going forward.

Sir, in that regard, I wish to ensure the Honourable Senator that the National Insurance Scheme has an investment guide, where different percentages have been set out for the types of assets that they would hold, and I believe they have stuck faithfully to that guide, ensuring that the Pension Funds are well and truly looked after.

Sir, I therefore wish to support this Bill and recommend it to all my colleagues.

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

SENATOR R.A. HUNTE: Mr. President, I will be very brief. I wish to take the opportunity to support this National Insurance and Social Security (Amendment) Bill, 2010, and to extend my commendations to the staff of, I would think one of the best well-run Government institutions over the years. I have dealt with that institution on behalf of persons in the society, a Justice of the Peace, and of course a community person, in assisting a lot of persons to get benefits, their pensions and so on. They did not even know what was due to them, and how to go about it. I had to assist in that regard, any Government, it does not matter who was in power at the time. I found that persons for whom I worked, or assisted - It was not a job of mine, but as a community person I found there was very good assistance and cooperation from the staff.

I also wish to add, by now it is clear that it is an institution that is so well established and run by Government, introduced in 1967, by another Democratic Labour Party production.

I remember the hostility. I was a young insurance agent with British America when the National Insurance Scheme came on board. There was a lot of hostility in the Barbadian society. Whenever there is something new, there is always this kind of opposition to it. In some cases you can understand, but in some cases it is, out of ignorance.

Sir, since we have established this institution, a number of persons who came from other Caribbean islands to see how the institution was being run, how the Scheme was running, copied it.

I remember in 1983, I think it was, when the late Prime Minister Tom Adams linked the pensions, which was then referred to as the Old Age Pension, which was paid out of the Treasury, of course, that ended up coming out of the National Insurance. I remember his comments then, that today's young people have to pay for tomorrow's old people. I remember his comments in his Budget presentation. Of course, the pensions, instead of coming out of the Treasury, or the Consolidated Fund, so to speak, came out of the National Insurance.

I just gave that example to show the importance of the institution to supply funds for whatever sphere the Government may call on at the time in the Barbadian society and economy.

Sir, I just wish to add that, because it was something I wanted to say for a long time. I take this opportunity to commend those, all down through the years, under both Parties that have had the opportunity, established by the Democratic Labour Party, but of course functioned under the Barbados Labour Party as an Administration. I thought that the National Insurance was well-run and I look forward to the continuation of that good performance in the coming years.

I thank you.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Ince.

SENATOR J. INCE: Mr. President I rise to support the Amendment to the National Insurance Bill. In my opinion it is timely. The National Insurance Scheme started in 1967, one year after Independence, and in that period the benefits would have been limited based on the resources we had, based on the number of businesses that operated in Barbados at the time.

Sir, in 2010, we have seen expanded benefits, benefits have been added. We have seen an economic environment that is termed hostile to small businesses, and many small businesses are not financed as easily as large corporations, by banks and other financial institutions. That is why I have always supported small businesses and the financing of small businesses. Why? In recessionary times studies would show that small businesses normally keep the economy going when large corporations are under the hammer by banks and other financial institutions, because small businesses run on a cash basis, 90 per cent of small businesses run on a cash basis. They are able to maintain their staff. They are able to pay their bills, because it is a continuance.

I support this Amendment and it also gives them an arm in this recessionary time to look at financing. They could use this to finance any external or internal works.

They can also look at how best they can train their staff, or how best changes can be made.

Sir, many self-employed persons did not benefit from the National Insurance Scheme, except for a pension. Now the National Insurance Scheme has extended to help the self-employed to earn sickness benefits.

17.10 p.m.

There are two things that we face in life, we either die too early, or live too long. If we live too long, then systems have to be put in place to take care of us. I always say to persons that the young man and young woman that you are today, have to take care of that old man and that old woman that you are going to be in the future.

The NIS is part of that lifeline. It is a buffer. It can be used in time for unforeseen circumstances. Sir, for persons who suffer unforeseen circumstance through illness because you can retire early through illness, you can retire early, as I said, through critical illness, you can retire early through injury and accident, the NIS is there as that lifeline.

Mr. President, I support this Bill from the stance that it is another measure put in place to minimise social dislocation among the self-employed. It is also a means of stabilising the small business sector in these recessionary times and that is important.

I must extend congratulations, Sir, to the staff of the National Insurance Scheme. The NIS' staff work hard. They work diligently. If you look at the number of years of persons working in the NIS, as compared to other Government departments, they are employees who have spent 20 to 25 years. The NIS is a specialist area. Ask persons in the Public Service, do you want to get transferred to the NIS, most of them will say to you, no, because it is too hectic. The staffs at the NIS do understand and we need to give them our full support.

Asides.

SENATOR J. INCE: We need to allow them to have the resources available so that when they want to service the public of Barbados, they can do it in a professional and efficient manner.

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

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Crichlow.

SENATOR the Very Rev. H.E. CRICHLLOW: Thank you, Mr. President.

Sir, briefly, I rise to support the National Insurance and Social Security Bill. I served as a member of the

National Insurance Board for many years, and I see that we still have to try to get very small businesses, vendors to join the Scheme. I do not think that many of them see it as a help for them but they should. I hope that this measure will help more of them, especially the vendors to see - and their contribution is very small - that if they do join the Scheme, they will benefit from it years from now.

I do not really think they understand. I think they will say that it is too much trouble having to go and sign this and sign that but I am sure that they would benefit although after a certain age, they will receive non contributory pensions but they would receive more if they join.

Thank you very much, Sir, I support the Bill.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator McClean.

SENATOR the Hon. Miss M.P.O. McCLEAN: Mr. President, I made a very brief intervention at the beginning and wrapping up. I would say that I certainly endorse the comments of the other persons who rose in support of this Bill, recognising the major contribution that this National Insurance and Social Security Scheme has made to this society is something that must, indeed, be recognised.

It is important to understand that immediately upon becoming independent - it was said that it started in 1967 - Barbados sought to put in place, a very critical safety net. Today, we have seen that safety net not only provide benefits for workers who are unemployed or who have found themselves away from work because of illness, it has assisted this country through its investment portfolio, financing major capital works, et cetera.

Sir, it is a Scheme which is vital to a society such as this, which seeks to ensure that we provide for ourselves as a Nation and that we provide for ourselves as employees and employers over our lives, as employees and later into retirement.

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

The question was put to the Senate and agreed to.

On the motion of SENATOR the Hon. 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 in Committee.

Clauses 1 and 2 were called and passed.

On the motion of SENATOR the Hon. Miss M.P.O. McCLEAN, the Bill was read a second and a third time and passed and cited as the National Insurance and Social Security (Amendment) Act, 2010.

ADJOURNMENT

SENATOR the Hon. Miss M.P.O. McCLEAN: Mr. President, before I move the adjournment, I want to take this opportunity to thank my fellow Senators for what I saw to be an excellent debate on the Estimates 2010. I particularly want to express my deep appreciation of the contributions of our three new Senators and those who would have joined us recently, but who would have participated in their first debate of the Estimates.

It is one of those debates that requires quite a bit of work. It is a longer debate in terms of the time allocated. It is one that speaks to a very significant aspect of the Government and governance of the country.

17:20

It is one in which we are able to share with the people of Barbados and, nowadays with the technology, with the people of the world, what our thoughts, our perspectives and our concerns, et cetera are.

The process would not be possible without the very hard work of the many Public Officers who would have done the work to prepare these Estimates for us.

I also want to take time to thank those persons who would have been part of the Estimates process across the length and breath of the Civil Service.

I also want to thank the Presiding Officers of Parliament, the members of the Royal Barbados Police Force and other security personnel, the many staff of Parliament, those who are here with us in the Chamber and those who operate on the outside, and the caterers because we typically sit longer during this debate than we do for some of the other sessions.

Overall, I am quite happy that we have taken the time to prepare adequately for this debate. I also would want to thank the media. I trust that we would see, as we continue in the future, full coverage of the proceedings so that Barbadians are able to share in this exercise.

There was a time when we would have to rely on the print and electronic media after the fact but, as I said, technology allows us now not only to be heard in Barbados but across the world and, therefore, people are able to understand what obtains in this very distinguished Chamber, part of an institution that has historical significance.

To you as well, Mr. President, I want to say thank you. I also want to take this time to wish everybody a blessed Easter. I look forward to a refreshed Senate as we come to debate after we return. I trust that you would truly rest where possible and return recharged. Sir, I thank you.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Thompson.

SENATOR Miss H. E. THOMPSON: Thank you very much, Mr. President. Speaking on the adjournment, I would wish to join with Senator McClean in thanking all of the officers of this Honourable Senate who facilitated this debate and our work here over the course of this week. We think of the Parliament and the Senate and the work that they do but we do not often laud those who make that work possible and who facilitate all of the arrangements.

There is a certain amount of logistics involved in bringing it all together, so I join with Senator McClean in recognising the work of the staff of Parliament, and in fact those within the Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs and the other Ministries who would have gone through this Estimates exercise, which in itself is highly protracted and can be a very difficult exercise as you start the preparation process a long time prior to the actual presentation of the debate. I would want to thank again all those involved.

Equally, on Monday morning when the debate started I was not in my Chair and did not have the opportunity to personally welcome, on behalf of This Side, although I know that my colleague did, the new Senators who are joining us in this Chamber for the first time.

Mr. President, I do not regret that I was not here at the beginning because having heard them, I can now say that I think that the debate in the Chamber would be enriched by their presence. In fact, I sent a personal note to one of them to say how very much I enjoyed that particular presentation.

I have now been listening and coming into Parliament for some time. I have myself been associated with this Parliament since 1994, probably 16 or more years, and I can honestly say, except for a small bit of it, but I would not go there, that I really thought it was the best first presentation by any new person in either Chamber that I have ever heard outside of Prime Ministers. I say that without reservation. It was an excellent presentation. It was very measured, well-presented, perfectly articulated, points were well made in support of his Side, although I did not agree with the substance of what he was saying, the case was put very well.

It pleases me, Sir, because I think after you have been around the system for a long time that even when you speak in highly partisan ways, there is a part of you that is able to stand back and reflect because you have seen a lot

of debates over time and, like Senator Hunte is always saying, you see things change and change back. There are a lot of things that you understand very well and you smile at when you hear them because you know how it is going to turn out even when a certain particular thing is being projected, but I am not seeking to diminish the quality of the debate or the contributions of the new Senators.

Having not welcomed them at the beginning, let me say to them genuinely how delighted I am to have them join the Chamber and to hear the standard of debate at which they started. In your first speech, nobody challenges you but you have been warned, so I look forward to crossing swords with you as we go on. Of course, I never cross swords with men of God, so we will see how you and I fear.

In absolute conclusion, I want to extend to you, Mr. President, Honourable Senators, those who work in the Chamber, the police officers who would have supported us and all of those who work in preparation of the Estimates, in fact to all Barbados, a very blessed and joyous Easter. I know that there are a lot of people who overdo at Christmas but we do not celebrate as much at Easter but Easter really is a significant Christian festival and that is when we should really be out giving praise. I will be in Church, Sir, and I know that others will be as well. I trust that we would take time out, as I said not just for the merriment and the bank holiday season of it but really to reflect on what the season means and to reflect on God and his love.

I am obliged to you, Sir.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Cave.

SENATOR R. G. CAVE: Mr. President, I would like to add my few words on behalf of the Independent Senators to say that I very much enjoyed this debate. It is my first time participating in the Estimates debate. I have been very pleased. I have already in my presentation thanked those people who put together the Estimates. I did say how very pleased I was to see what great work they had done and how they brought it on time and how important it is to the running of this country.

I did mention the fact that the accounts of the Government are not always the same but I have noted that our December results have already been produced to this House and I think that this is very commendable, so I am very pleased to see how quickly that has happened. I would like to add my piece in welcoming the new Senators and to say how much I have enjoyed hearing them speak. I know that some of them were nervous but they did not show it when they spoke, so well done. I want to wish everyone a very peaceful Easter. I hope that it is a very enjoyable one and we look forward to meeting back later on.

I thank you.

5.30 p.m.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Honourable Senators, in associating myself with the comments made by the distinguished Honourable Senators who have spoken, as we come to the end of this debate and not having been here at the beginning to welcome those new Honourable Senators, may I take this opportunity to join in the approbations which have been manifested. May I say to the new Senators that I have been very impressed and that I have no doubt they will continue to make a contribution to this Honourable Senate and by extension a contribution to the development of this country.

I particularly would have wanted, had I been here, to welcome Senator Husbands, who had the distinction of being my constituent for many years. I have never discovered how he voted but I have no doubt that he has always acted responsibly. Therefore, it is a great pleasure for me to have been presiding over a Chamber in which he and the other colleagues are able to participate.

Senator Hunte has had the distinction of being a first-timer for some time and coming in at this stage, we would have relieved him of that problem of being the most junior Senator. I want to express my satisfaction at how Senator Hunte has acclimatised himself so easily and so comfortably. I know that when all Honourable Senators return after the Easter holiday, we are going to have an even more productive period of contribution to our beloved country.

May I take this opportunity to join with all who have spoken in wishing you all a blessed Easter. Those of us who are Christians will always celebrate Easter ahead and above the other holidays because Easter is the time when we see a manifestation of our real Christianity. I have no doubt that should the Dean be given the opportunity, he would agree with me 100 per cent, he having been my leader for so many years.

With those few words, I wish to thank you all.

SENATOR the Hon. Miss Maxine P. O. McCLEAN:
Mr. President, I beg to move that this Honourable Senate do now adjourn sine die.

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.

5.33 p.m.

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MARVILLE, Senator R.O.

McCLEAN, Senator the Hon. Miss M. P. O.

THOMPSON, Senator Miss H. E.

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EDITORIAL NOTES — NOT PART OF THE REPORT

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

EDITORIAL QUERIES

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

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

Q2. Opening. The source begins at a 'RESUMPTION' in the middle of the debate on the Appropriation Bill, 2010 (Senator Her Honour Miss K. F. Ifill refers to 'three days of intense debate'), with no PRESENT list, prayers, papers or Order heading for the Bill; the earlier part of the debate is not in this file. Printed as in the source.

Q3. Appropriation Bill, speech of Senator the Hon. D. W. Boyce. After the time stamp '14:30' and before the take-slip '14.20 p.m.', a passage of about 1,300 words (from 'We recognise the importance of engaging all the stakeholders...' to 'It is less frustrating for the community.') appears within Senator Boyce's speech. Its content (the Barbados Council for the Disabled, 'We in the field of disabilities', wellness and inclusive tourism, Constituency Councils, the Universal Intake Form) and its wording appear to belong to the earlier speech of Her Honour Senator Miss K. F. Ifill, between the paragraphs ending 'non-governmental organisations (NGOs),' and beginning 'It is less frustrating for the community and...'. It is printed where the source places it. Please confirm.

Q4. Appropriation Bill, 2010. No motion for the second reading or putting of the question is recorded at the end of the Leader's reply; the next line records that the Bill 'was read a second and a third time and passed'. Printed as in the source.

Q5. National Insurance and Social Security (Amendment) Bill, 2010. After 'Clauses 1 and 2 were called and passed' in Committee, the source records that the Bill 'was read a second and a third time and passed', with no report from Committee, although the second reading had already been agreed before the Senate went into Committee. The Bill's title is also split across two heading lines, and 'Order No. 1' is set as an ordinary paragraph. Printed as in the source.

Q6. Take-slips and time stamps. The first line of the source is a take-slip set as a paragraph ('Estimates - Senate A28B, Sequence 01, 10.00 a.m.');

several slips mix 24-hour times with 'p.m.' ('14.20 p.m.', '15.10 p.m.', '16.10 p.m.', '17.10 p.m.');

and bare time stamps ('14:30',

'15:20', '15:30', '16:00', '16:14', '17:20') appear as paragraphs within speeches. Printed as in the source.

Q7. Appropriation Bill, Leader's reply. Senator the Hon. Miss M. P. O. McClean once addresses 'Mr. Speaker' in the course of her reply in the Senate. Printed as in the source.

DEBATE SUMMARY

(Editorial summary — not part of the record.)

The record of the Senate for Wednesday, 24th March, 2010 opens at the resumption of the debate on the Appropriation Bill, 2010, with Mr. President in the Chair. Senator A. E. Holder, speaking for the Opposition from the perspective of the working class, argued that public servants who had reached the top of their scales received no increments while facing a 60 per cent rise in water rates, and that the Medium Term Fiscal Strategy 2010-2014 repeated the recommendations of the IMF's 2009 Article IV Consultation. Senator J. Ince rose on points of order, citing a 1982 standby arrangement of US\$90 million under the Barbados Labour Party, and Mr. President asked Senator Holder to identify the documents he was quoting for the reporters.

Senator R. O. Marville supported the Bill and ranged over education, energy, waste and foreign affairs, proposing among other things the abandonment of the 11-Plus Examination; Mr. President reminded him that debates must be in English. Senator the Very Rev. H. E. Crichlow spoke on education, recalling the sixth forms and the early University of the West Indies, the cost gap of almost \$20 000 a year between the sixth form and university, and the late Professor Rex Nettleford. The Senate was then suspended until 2.00 p.m.

After the luncheon suspension the Deputy President, Her Honour Senator Miss K. F. Ifill, supported the Estimates, speaking of the Ministry of Health's emphasis on primary care and the 'Get Fit Barbados' programme, of work with non-governmental organisations under the principle 'Nothing about us without us', and of welfare grants through an electronic card system. Senator the Hon. D. W. Boyce described the Government's response to the crisis: measures such as \$8 million a year for old age pensions, the Summer Vacation Camps, an extra \$10 million for the Barbados Tourism Authority and \$25 million for the Tourism Industry Relief Fund, which together came to about \$200 million a year in additional spending. He said unemployment averaged 10 per cent in 2009, reserves stood at 21 weeks, the decline in output had been about 5 per cent rather than the 2 per cent expected.

He outlined capital projects to drive growth, including a US\$50 million IDB loan for the Barbados Water Authority, a \$40 million revolving housing loan and BDS\$75 million sought from the CDB for rental units, and said the foreign bond would be raised from \$100 million to \$200 million.

The Leader of Government Business, Senator the Hon. Miss M. P. O. McClean, replied, defending Senator Boyce's qualifications, explaining the stage reached in the fishing agreement negotiations with Trinidad and Tobago, the work of the overseas Missions and the four Cabinet committees, and the Government's support for agriculture and small business. Senator Miss H. E. Thompson rose on several points of order, one objecting to the words 'lies and misrepresentations'; Mr. President ruled that the remark was general. The Appropriation Bill was read a second and third time and passed.

After a short suspension Senator McClean moved the National Insurance and Social Security (Amendment) Bill, 2010, which provides for deferring employers' National Insurance contributions due between 1st July, 2009 and 30th June, 2010. Senator Thompson supported it, drawing on her family's small business, but noted that the Government had borrowed \$449 million from the National Insurance Scheme in two years. Senator Boyce explained that the Unemployment Fund met the difference between the 3 per cent soft-loan rate and the Scheme's return, and Senators R. A. Hunte, Ince and Crichlow also supported the Bill, which passed.

On the adjournment Senator McClean thanked the staff for the Estimates debate, Senator Thompson and Senator R. G. Cave, for the Independent Senators, added their thanks, and Mr. President welcomed the new Senators. The Senate was adjourned sine die.