
THE

House of Assembly Debates

(OFFICIAL REPORT)

FIRST SESSION 1999 – 2004

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, October 10, 2000

Pursuant to the adjournment, the House of Assembly met at 11.25 a.m. on Tuesday, October 10, 2000.

PRESENT

His Honour I. A. ROETT, B.A., Dip. Ed., (Speaker)

His Honour J. M. EDGHILL, J.P., (Deputy Speaker)

Hon. Sir HENRY FORDE, K.A., Q.C., M.A., LL.M.
(Cantab.)

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR, M.Sc. (Econ.) (Prime Minister, Minister of Finance and Economic Affairs) (Minister of the Civil Service)

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS, Q.C., LL.M. (Attorney General and Minister of Home Affairs) (Leader of the House)

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON, LL.B. (Hons.) (Leader of the Opposition)

Sir HAROLD St. JOHN, K.A., Q.C., LL.B.

Mr. L. R. TULL, Q.C., M.A. (Oxon.)

Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM, Q.C., M.A., M.Sc.
(Econ.)

Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER (Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade)

Hon. R. C. EASTMOND, J.P., B.A. (Hons.), Dip. Ed., LL.B. (Hons.), L.E.C. (Minister of the Environment, Energy and Natural Resources)

Mr. D. CARTER (Chairman of Committees)

Hon. R. N. GREENIDGE, B.A., LL.B. (Minister of Labour, Sports and Public Sector Reform)

Hon. G. A. CLARKE, J.P., B.Sc., Dip. Ed., (Minister of Housing and Lands)

Hon. R. D. MARSHALL (Minister of Public Works and Transport)

Hon. H. F. LASHLEY (Minister of Social Transformation)

Hon. R. St. C. TOPPIN, LL.B. (Minister of Commerce, Consumer Affairs and Business Development)

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN

Miss H. E. THOMPSON, LL.B.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY, LL.B. (Minister of Education, Youth Affairs and Culture)

Mr. M. Z. WILLIAMS

Mr. T. A. PRESCOD, B.A.

Rev. J. J. S. ATHERLEY, B.A., B.Sc. (Parliamentary Secretary to the Attorney General and Minister of Home Affairs)

Mr. D. T. GILL, B.Sc.

Hon. A. P. WOOD, J.P., B.Sc., M.Sc., M.Phil.
(Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development)

Hon. R. R. FARLEY, B.Sc. (Minister of Industry and International Business)

Prayers were taken by Canon Father Ivan Harewood.

Mr. SPEAKER: The House is now in session.

MINUTES

Mr. SPEAKER: The Minutes of Tuesday, August 15, 2000.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that the Minutes for the Honourable the House of Assembly for its meeting of Tuesday, August 15, 2000, which Minutes have been circulated, be taken as read.

Hon. R. C. EASTMOND: I beg to second that, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: If there are no corrections or observations, then let these Minutes stand confirmed.

ANNOUNCEMENTS BY HIS HONOUR
THE SPEAKER

Mr. SPEAKER: To the Honourable the House of Assembly a letter from the Leader of the Opposition dated 9th October, 2000.

“The Speaker,
House of Assembly,
Parliament,
Bridgetown.

Dear Sir,

I hereby tender my resignation from the Joint Select Committee on Law and Order.

Yours faithfully,
Leader of the Opposition

cc: The Clerk
Hon. D. A. C. Simmons, M.P.”

MESSAGES FROM THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL

Mr. SPEAKER: A Message from His Excellency the Governor-General dated 5th October, 2000.

“Dear Mr. Speaker,

I shall be away from the island during the period the 8th to 13th October, 2000 to attend the Sixth Conference of Heads of State of CARICOM countries in Saint Lucia.

In accordance with the provisions of section 29(1)(b) of the Constitution, the Chief Justice, the Hon. Sir Denys A. Williams, KCMG, GCM, will perform the functions of the office of Governor-General during my absence.

As the Honourable the House of Assembly will not be meeting prior to my departure, it will not be possible for the usual formal Message to be sent down to your Chamber. Will you, therefore, please bring my absence formally to the attention of the Honourable the House of Assembly when next it meets.

I have the honour to be,

Yours faithfully,

C. Husbands
Governor-General.”

PAPERS

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, I am commanded to lay the following:

1. Report of the (Sugar Workers’ Provident Fund) under the Sugar Industry Act for the year 1999.
2. Sugar Industry (Sugar Workers’ Provident Fund) Order, 2000.
3. Report of the Public Enterprises Investment Fund for the Quarter ended June 30, 2000.
4. Report of the Social Investment Fund for the Quarter ended June 30, 2000.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, I am commanded to lay the following:

1. Report of the Family Law Council for the year 1997 to 1998.
2. Annual Reports of the Barbados Broadcasting Authority for the Years ended October 1996 to September 1997 and October 1997 to September 1998.
3. Annual Report of the Sanitation Service Authority for the year 1998 to 1999.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am commanded to lay the following:

Education for all in the Caribbean – Plan of Action 2000 to 2015.

GOVERNMENT NOTICES

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, I beg to give notice of the following:

1. Pierhead Development Bill, 2000.
2. Police Complaints Authority Bill, 2000.

FIRST READING OF BILLS

On the motion of Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS, seconded by Hon. R. C. EASTMOND, the following Bills were read a first time:

1. Pierhead Development Bill, 2000
2. Police Complaints Authority Bill, 2000

- 3
3. Bill to amend Police Order Act.
 4. Referendum Bill, 2000.
 - 5.

STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for the City.

Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, Sir, in keeping with my undertaking to keep this Honourable House fully informed of important developments within the country's diplomatic service, I am pleased to provide information on a number of ambassadorial appointments.

First, Ambassador Michael King has assumed duties as Ambassador of Barbados to the United States of America and the Organisation of American States with effect from the 1st October, 2000.

Ambassador Erskine Griffith will take up office as Permanent Representative of Barbados to the United Nations and its specialised agencies in Geneva and to the World Trade Organisation on the 1st November, 2000. Ambassador Griffith will, of course, be the first Ambassador that Barbados will have to these specialised agencies in Geneva and the United Nations where it is represented there.

I am also to announce, Mr. Speaker, Sir, that Mr. Errol Humphrey will become Barbados' new Ambassador to the Kingdom of Belgium and the Community of the European Union, effective 1st January, 2001.

Mr. Michael King, Mr. Speaker, Sir, I believe is well known to all Sides of the House. He is a career diplomat of the past 23 years and he brings to the post at Washington a wealth of experience in the fields of negotiations at both the regional and international levels. This would include his work as Executive Director in the past, of the Caribbean Conservation Commission. He has also been a director of the Office of the General Secretariat of the Organisation of American States in the Bahamas and, of course, most recently as Ambassador of Barbados to the Kingdom of Belgium and the European Community and UNESCO. From his Brussels location, he also served as the non-resident Permanent Representative of Barbados to the United Nations and its specialised agencies in Geneva and was accredited on a bilateral basis to the Member Countries of the European Union.

Ambassador King's considerable expertise and knowledge of the Washington environment, I think, will be invaluable to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade as it seeks to build on the work already started by Sir Courtney Blackman, the outgoing Ambassador, to strengthen the bilateral relationship between Barbados and the United States. He will also have a critical role to play in the ongoing process of repositioning Barbados within the hemisphere of the Americas, to enable it to take full

advantage of the Free Trade Area of the Americas when it comes into effect, we hope and believe in the year 2005. There is also much work to be done in the parallel process now known as the Summit of Americas, to prepare for the next hemispheric summit which is going to take place in Quebec City, Canada in April 2001.

Mr. Speaker, the Barbados Embassy at Washington under Ambassador King's leadership we believe, will play a key coordinating role in the preparations which the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade will be putting in place to ensure that the positions of Barbados and the Caribbean are well represented in the final mandate that emerges from the Quebec Summit.

The Mission will also be concerned with the renewal of the Inter-American system, strengthening the system of justice in this hemisphere, deepening cooperation in the Americas and reviewing the work carried out by the OAS and its specialised agencies.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am equally pleased to acknowledge at this juncture the recent accreditation of His Excellency Mr. James Daly, as Ambassador of the United States of America to Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean. As you are aware, Sir, the post has been vacant for almost a year following the illness and subsequent death in office of his predecessor. Ambassador Daly's appointment holds the promise of a resumption of meaningful and fruitful dialogue between our two countries. I have already had initial discussions with Ambassador Daly and look forward to working closely with him in various sub mutual interests and concerns. I am confident that his appointment, together with that of Ambassador King will serve to enhance the constructive dialogue which has traditionally characterised United States/Barbados' relations.

With regard to the Caribbean region as a whole, we now have an established process of dialogue institutionalised through the Bridgetown accord and there is much follow-up to be done on the mandates agreed upon by that process.

Likewise, Sir, I would wish to make mention of the recent accreditation of High Commissioner Scrimshaw as Commissioner for Canada and the Eastern Caribbean, Canada being, Sir, an old and Honoured ally. Ambassador designate, Erskine Griffith, retired head of the Civil Service of Barbados and former Director of Finance and Economic Affairs, is an outstanding Barbadian holding such National Honours as Justice of the Peace and the Gold Crown of Merit. Ambassador Griffith's challenging public service career as Chief Financial Advisor to the Government of Barbados has included service as alternate Governor at the Inter-American Development Bank, the World Bank, a group of institutions and the Caribbean Development Bank. He has also served with considerable acumen as the lead negotiator for CARICOM in the FTAA negotiations on Government procurement and, indeed, will continue to serve in that regard. He has been closely involved in the emerging

issue of small states in the global economy, an issue whose current international champion, Mr. Speaker, is of course, our own Right Honourable Prime Minister.

Ambassador Griffith's wide ranging public sector experience as well as his expertise in finance, economic and trade issues will be put to immediate – indeed I should say, is already put to immediate and effective use for Barbados as he undertakes the challenging and complex task as serving as resident Head of Mission at the recently established Permanent Mission of Barbados to the United Nations in Geneva.

11.35 a.m.

Mr. Speaker, this Government is acutely aware of the growing importance of the World Trade Organisation as the regulator and arbiter of international trading relations in the new era of globalisation and trade liberalisation and of the far-reaching impact of its policies and decisions on the economic future of Barbados. Ambassador Griffith's leadership at the helm of the Mission in Geneva at this time will be crucial in strengthening the negotiating capability of the Barbados delegation in the post-Seattle phase of World Trade Organisation activity.

Ambassador designate Errol Humphrey, on completion of his current assignment as Chief Executive Officer at the Barbados Investment and Development Corporation (BIDC), will join the Foreign Service Ambassadorial team as he takes up his post in Brussels, Belgium, at the beginning of January 2001. Mr. Humphrey is certainly no stranger to the Barbados Foreign Service, having previously served in the BIDC's office in New York in the capacity as Director for North America and as Commercial Counsellor at the Embassy at Brussels. More recently, he serves with distinction as Consul General for Barbados at Toronto.

Mr. Humphrey is a Statistician and an Economic Analyst by training. He has a wealth of experience in foreign direct investment and offshore services specialising in the Informatics Sector. In recent years, he has worked fervently in promoting Barbados as a leading domicile for internationally traded services particularly, in the areas of information technology and financial services. His accreditation as Ambassador to Belgium and the Community of the European Union, comes at a time when a new and substantially different partnership agreement between the European Union and the African, Caribbean and Pacific States has just been concluded. Ambassador Humphrey's previous experience with the ACP and the EU, and his expertise in trade, business and financial services, will serve him in good stead in his new assignment.

Mr. Speaker, these three new envoys will join the team of Heads of Missions already in place and working in the best strategic interest of Barbados. There are:

His Excellency, Mr. Peter Simmons, High Commissioner to the United Kingdom since November 1996;

Her Excellency, Miss Sonja Welch, Ambassador to Venezuela since September 1998;

Her Excellency, Miss June Clarke, Permanent Representative to the United Nations since August 1999;

His Excellency, Mr. Victor Johnson, High Commissioner to Canada since October 1999;

Mr. Benjamin Martinez, Consul General at Miami since January 1997;

Miss Kay McConney-Barrington, Consul General at Toronto since April 1998; and

Mr. George Griffith, Consul General at New York since September 1999.

I take this opportunity, Mr. Speaker, to recognise them all for their efforts and commitment to promoting the interest of Barbados and Barbadians in their respective locations.

Mr. Speaker, at this time, I also wish to express the Government of Barbados appreciation to Sir Courtney Blackman for his distinguished and valuable service to Barbados during his tour of duty as Ambassador at Washington. I am certain that he will continue to utilise his skills and considerable expertise to the benefit of the Government and the people of Barbados.

Asides.

Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER: The Prime Minister informs me that Sir Courtney is now a consultant who is helping to advise on the strategic planning process.

Mr. Speaker, on the matter of Special Envoys, as you are aware, this Government has from time to time been appointing Special Envoys to speak and be spokespersons internationally, regionally and nationally for that matter, on specific areas. Sir Harold St. John, sometimes known as the Honourable Member for Christ Church South, is our national negotiator in respect of external negotiations. Mr. Louis Tull, sometimes known as the Honourable Member for St. George South, as a Special Envoy, from time to time, embarks upon special assignments coming either from the Right Honourable Prime Minister or from myself.

We have also appointed as a Special Envoy in respect of matters environmental, the head of the Coastal Conservation Unit, Dr. Leonard Nurse. Miss Alissandra Cummins is the Special Envoy in respect of cultural

matters, she presently sits on the board of UNESCO and is the Director of the Barbados Museum. Mr. David Comissiong is our Special Envoy in respect of Africa and matters concerning Africa. Sir Garfield Sobers has from time to time, as we are all aware, been our Special Envoy in matters particularly to do with sports tourism and indeed has been a special consultant to the Barbados Tourism Authority and does sterling work for Barbados in that regard over the years.

The most recent of the Special Envoys, is Ambassador Obadele Thompson who is now appointed our Special Envoy in respect of youth. These Special Envoys, it needs to be known, are people who work for Barbados for love of country. It is very much an honourary honour that we confer on those who are made Special Envoys. They bring their special skills and their special expertise to this.

I am very pleased at the most recent appointment and at a very early point, Ambassador Obadele Thompson will be invited into the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade to be briefed as to what his responsibilities may be and to what small special privileges and immunities would attend him.

I have to say that yesterday the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was inundated with telephone calls. I believe that in excess of 90 per cent of them were from young ladies enquiring as to which Mission abroad, by telephone number and address, they might be able to contact the new Ambassador Obadele Thompson. This is not necessarily a bad beginning but it just serves to show how misinformed people are about the work, the role and the functions of Special Envoys. It is clear to us that this is a very popular and well-received appointment and it is quite fitting and not at all out of place to offer on behalf of us all, special congratulations to Barbados newest and youngest Special Envoy, Ambassador Obadele Thompson.

Mr. Speaker, I am much obliged to you.

CONGRATULATORY AND/OR OBITUARY SPEECHES

Hon. R. N. GREENIDGE: Mr. Speaker, ever since we became an independent nation, this small but proud country of ours has yearned to make its presence felt at the Olympic Games, the world's premier sporting event.
11.45 a.m.

As destiny would have it, Sir, on September 23, 2000, every Barbadian's dream came true. At the Olympic Games in Sydney, Australia a son of the soil, Obadele Thompson, won the bronze medal in the 100 metres dash, thereby earning for himself the title of "Third Fastest Human Being in the World".

Today, Mr. Speaker, this has been Barbados' most unforgettable achievement in athletics. It is an achievement which defies the size of Barbados. Let me point out, as I have done already, that all gold medals are not the same and all bronze medals are not the same and, in fact, when the 800 metres was won by M. Matola of Mozambique, the President immediately declared a holiday in that country whereas in the United States it would not have happened because, as I said, all gold medals are not the same. That was the very first for Mozambique. I also have to point out, Sir, that in Kuwait where they, for the first time, also won a bronze medal in shooting that they had about three days of celebration for their first ever Olympic medal.

I recall, Sir, the words of Obadele Thompson in Sydney when he won that bronze medal. His words were: "This bronze medal feels like a gold medal to me." Sir, his victory came as a total relief to this nation. Barbados had won an Olympic medal at last and it was as though a heavy burden had been lifted off this country's back. We have now stepped up leaving dozens of bigger, wealthier and more powerful countries still looking to win their first medal.

I have to say, Sir, that of the 199 countries at the Olympic Games more than 125 did not win a single medal. I recall the President of the Barbados Olympic Association, Mr. Steve Stoute, who was sitting beside me – in fact, at that stage, I did not even know whether I wanted to be there or wanted to be home because I believe there was more rejoicing going on here – He turned to me and said, "I have been waiting for this day for thirty-two years." What he was actually saying, Sir, is that since we became independent we went to Mexico in 1968 to the Olympic Games, our first Olympic Games as an independent country, 1972 to Munich, 1976 to Montreal, 1980 was in Moscow but I do not think we took part because of the United States boycott, 1984 in Los Angeles, 1988 in Seoul, 1992 in Barcelona, 1996 in Atlanta and we came home empty-handed but, thankfully, Sir, through Obadele Thompson, we did it in Sydney.

Mr. Speaker, Obadele Thompson has already been a wonderful ambassador for Barbados. In spite of obvious temptations he has remained 'squeaky clean' and he has this reputation on the world circuit. All the sprinters will tell you that Oba is 'squeaky clean'. He is a sports personality who Barbados loves and of whom we can be proud. His ability to stay true must be emphasised. He represents the finest of human values and is in no way associated with that rotten side of sports which is fuelled by greed and cheating.

His achievement, Mr. Speaker, is a definite inspiration to this country, particularly to the youth. He has instilled hope in the hearts of our young athletes and, believe me, Sir, we have in Barbados a lot of very promising athletes. No doubt they will try to emulate Oba and, like him, they must never give up and like him they must tackle every job

with their whole being. No one any part of the world can now tell our young Barbadian athletes that winning an Olympic medal is beyond their reach, thanks to Obadele.

Sir, we should not forget where Oba's achievement began. He has two of the most supportive parents for which any young athlete could wish. They have been present at every major meet at which he has participated. In their hearts, they have run every race with him. They have consoled and encouraged him when he lost and it is only fitting that they should rejoice in his victory.

We must not forget Banks (B'dos) Breweries Ltd., the local company which invested in him. The company which saw him as excellent material, which took him under its wings and polished him to the point where he has now become an ornament and a national treasure. Obadele won in Sydney; but here in Barbados he made us all winners.

Mr. Speaker, I think it would be in order for this Honourable House to forward the appropriate Resolution of congratulations to Ambassador Obadele Thompson on his most historic and laudable achievement. Thank you.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, I rise to support this Resolution. I honestly believe that anybody in a country the size of Barbados who can contribute and who can deliver a medal, whether it is silver, gold, bronze or any colour, once it is acknowledged, should not be seen only as getting a bronze medal but should be acknowledged for putting a country like this on the map of the world.

As you are aware, Sir, every year we vote millions of dollars to promote Barbados but in less than 11 seconds, Sir, the world knew about Barbados in a different light and I think that a contribution like that should be rewarded at its highest level.

I have already stated in no uncertain words that I honestly felt that he is deserving of the highest honour and that the people and Government of Barbados should have rewarded him in a tangible way. I want this House to understand that this is not opposition politics, this is something in which I honestly believe in. When you have such a fine young man who can deliver at a time when everybody believes that the young people of this country cannot deliver anything good, I believe that this young man should be used as a proper example to the other young people in this country.

11.55 a.m.

Mr. Speaker, we also have to acknowledge that the sportsmen of Barbados have an opportunity now to continue to deliver the glory to Barbados that no amount of money can. I honestly believe that this House should respect this particular view and do everything necessary to make sure that we do not continue to have any burden on the sports

people of Barbados. We must recognise that sportsmen and their families spend large sums of money to promote Barbados and at the same time they are burdened in trying to do good for our country.

I would like to see the day when this House acknowledges what is necessary and that this House respects sportsmen the way they should be respected. I do not believe that sportsmen should only be rewarded when they get gold medals. To me, the medal is worth more than ten golds because it is that medal that allows the rest of the world to know that Barbados is some place to be reckoned with.

It is no minor achievement when someone from a country the size of Barbados can be regarded as the third fastest person in the world. If you ask me, maybe he could be regarded as many other things if we had done the right things in this Parliament. We as a Parliament need some time to reflect on whether we are not sometimes keeping back the progress of youngsters in this country.

Asides.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Yes, we need to ask ourselves this because there are some people who believe that you should go down a particular path when you are dealing with these topics but in order for Barbados to progress we must be prepared to say things at the appropriate time. The cosmetics that people would want to use, I do not believe in that, Sir. Do not expect me to come in here today and just go down a particular line just because it is tradition. If that is so, I want to apologise to the House but we need to do the things that we need to do to benefit our young people.

Sir, I thank you very much.

Hon. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. Speaker, I rise to associate myself with the remarks and to extend congratulations on behalf of the constituents of Christ Church East, in particular the young people of that community, particularly the schools St. Patricks, St. Bartholomew and St. Christopher, who because of their location, were obviously quite privileged to show their tangible appreciation of this performance by way of their participation in the celebrated activities.

I want to congratulate the entire Barbados Olympic Team. The team, Sir, the largest that we have had by way of an Olympic squad over the years, some 19 persons. If we consider that one needs to qualify in order to make it to the Olympics, you can understand the magnitude of the achievement recognising that excellence is the hallmark of the Olympics. We need to be, and we can afford to be, extremely proud of our young men and women of their contribution to the development and upliftment of the reputation of Barbados.

involvement in performance enhancing drugs and other acts of illegality, we have also to be very proud that the Barbados team was not in any way involved in these occurrences. We have entire teams in particular disciplines in some countries disqualified because not one or two but several more persons have been so involved.

The medal won by Obadele Thompson really reinforces something which we in this Parliament and indeed in this country have said for a long time. We have always made the point to the international community that small size is not a barrier to the attainment of excellence. Barbados performed substantially better than many large countries in the world. India, which has a population of one billion people has not been able to match the performance of Barbados. Countries which have access to oil wealth and other substantial resources where they are able to pay the best coaches, build the best physical facilities and pay for their athletes to go to all of the premier events have not been able to match Barbados.

Sir, this reinforces the fundamental point that we continue to demand, not just by talk but by our actions, we demand to be treated with respect and to be accorded equality amongst the nations of the world in all our international matters.

Sir, small size is not a barrier to achieving excellence in sports because we have achieved excellence a long time ago. We have achieved excellence in the governance of our affairs, we have achieved excellence in cultural and artistic pursuits and we have achieved excellence in the administration of our financial affairs including the administration of our international business and financial services sector. We have achieved excellence, Sir, in many spheres and we hope that the message would resonate across the globe that small countries are countries too, that their voices need to be heard and respected in international matters.

Therefore, Sir, it is very fitting that the mechanisms by which countries tend to make their voices heard internationally, the mechanism of the diplomatic service and our Ambassadors that we place around the world have been combined with the excellence as displayed in the area of sports in the person of Ambassador Obadele Thompson. Without even having to say a single word, without having to perform a single official function, Ambassador Obadele Thompson has already spoken volumes as Special Envoy for the Youth.

There can be no clearer message, no brighter or better example for the youth of this country than the example of Obadele Thompson. He has, from the very beginning, insisted that he wants to pursue his international sporting career, pursue it to the point of the achievement of excellence, but do it without harm to his spirit, without damage to his convictions and without damage to his body through the introduction of potentially harmful performance

enhancing substances.
12.05 p.m.

In a culture today where there is an excessive concentration, Sir, on attainment at any means, whether it is attainment of wealth or status, but the concept of by any means necessary seems to be all too prevalent in our society. Obadele Thompson is a beacon to whom we should all turn and on whom we should all remain focused in recognising, yes, we want to attain our objective but we do not have to sink to the adoption of at any means which maybe necessary.

I stand here today, Sir, a very proud Barbadian but also very humbled by the fact that even at this height of attainment, even with the amount of praise which is richly and lavishly showered on Obadele Thompson, that he remains so humble, that he remains such a gentleman. Notwithstanding his international star status, the way of his deportment and demeanor he is one that could easily be lost in a crowd. I pray, Sir, that he will continue to display those qualities which have made him both a superior athlete and a gentleman.

Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to associate myself with the congratulatory remarks of this the Honourable House of Assembly.

I thank you.

Mr. D. CARTER: Mr. Speaker, I too would like to offer my congratulation to Mr. Obadele Thompson who has performed very well for this country and for himself. I remember, some four years ago when I first met Obadele, I was at the Olympic Centre in Atlanta and I had to go to the airport to meet him coming from another part of the United States. On leaving the Olympic Village, I saw some muscular people who were supposed to participate. When I saw him at that time...

Asides.

Mr. D. CARTER: When I saw him I was a bit worried. Unfortunately for him on that occasion he had just suffered an injury and he was not at his best in 1996.

I am happy today to see that Mr. Thompson has worked hard, with all the pressures in this world and certainly in that sport he has now done Barbados proud. I would like to endorse all the sentiments which the Honourable Member for St. Philip North has echoed. It is only fitting that Mr. Thompson has now put Barbados on the map internationally.

In Barbados and certainly in the West Indies, our cricketers have done us proud but it is only a Commonwealth gesture. Now today it is fitting that Barbados is known throughout the world.

Sir, when we reflect on the unfortunate record of some top performers in sports in terms of the unfortunate

In 1996 in Atlanta, I remember when young Leah Martindale was to swim in the finals. I remember a group of people sitting behind asking where is Barbados. I tried, as a Barbadian, with a little map to show the people where Barbados is. In showing the little dot on the map they laughed. I am saying this because Leah on that occasion had promoted Barbados in her own way by making the finals, and now Obadele in the year 2000 has really put Barbados on the map by running third, he is noted as the third fastest man in the world.

As we all know, the 100 metres is the race that every person likes to see being run. I am happy to say that in the future with more help from the various agencies such as the Government and the private sector, I believe that Mr. Thompson would make Barbados proud in the future.

We must also look at the people who are coming behind him. I am quite sure that the young athletes in this country would like to emulate Obadele. I am quite sure that they now realise the monetary gains that could be had from reaching these high standards. I believe that every young Barbadian would try his best to reach those heights.

Mr. Thompson is really a role model in the true sense. I can say that Barbados is truly proud to consider him as a role model. There were some people who were considered role models before and they were certain question marks. I am happy to say that with his religious background and certainly strong moral ethics, Barbados has a person of whom we are really proud.

This year at the Sports Council we will have no difficulty in naming a sportsman of the year. I do not want to pre-empt anything but it is basic common sense that if a person has reached his height, come December when we are deciding who should be Sportsman of the Year, I think any Barbadian would point in one direction. I am quite sure that the committee would point in the direction of Obadele Thompson.

Let me thank the sponsors who have worked over a period of years to help sports in Barbados. I am glad to see that the Prime Minister would be in the forefront in making money available to sports in general in Barbados.

I have the daunting task every year to distribute some quarter million dollars among 44 associations. I am happy to hear that the Prime Minister has made it known that he will make more money available and I believe that the private sector will follow suit by making some more money available so that we can help the young sportsmen and the various association.

Lastly, speaking about my grand daughter who is only three years old, she brought joy to my heart two nights ago

when she saw Obadele on television and said that she would like to be like Obadele Thompson. Today I can say that he is a real role model and I hope that he continues to make Barbados proud.

I thank you.

Hon. R. C. EASTMOND: Mr. Speaker, during the period 1972 to 1974, I had the privilege to sit at the feet of Mr. Alvin Thompson at the Cave Hill Campus of the University of the West Indies. Mr. Thompson not only excelled as a great teacher but also had a reputation of being a former athlete in this region. In turn Mr. Alvin Thompson was to see his offspring, Ambassador Obadele Thompson, who followed in his footsteps as a formidable intellect and as a sportsman. As fate would have it, Mr. Speaker, Ambassador Obadele has now gone past his distinguished father as an athlete but like his father he has been a tremendous role model, a very decent person and a person who is always willing to work for humanity.

I am not unaware, Mr. Speaker, that Ambassador Obadele Thompson while being a youth, literally grew up in the parish of St. James. As far as his Church is concerned, he went and still goes to the Prospect Pentecost Church. At one time that Pentecost Church loudly displayed a banner: "Children brought up in Sunday School are never brought up before the law courts," and its message was clear. Its message was that those who are properly socialised in morality and religion would hardly practice deviant conduct.

Like other Honourable Members, Mr. Speaker, I am very proud that Ambassador Obadele Thompson, whose names, I believe, suggest something in the realm of royalty has been able to distinguish himself on behalf of this country in a way that is the envy of many. I am also heartened, Mr. Speaker, that on a day like this there are those, both in the VIP and the wider gallery, who have not only expressed pride and pleasure at Ambassador Thompson's achievement but who in a direct way contributed significantly to celebrating his success.

I reject, Mr. Speaker, those cynics who have been proclaiming that much of what we have done by way of honouring this hero of Barbados have been done with the wrong motive or at the wrong time.

12.15 p.m.

I am heartened that all Barbados, Mr. Speaker, stood proudly behind a young man who has made no bones about the fact that he is a fundamentalist Christian who practises genuine humility and who, in his new role as Ambassador for the Youth, is definitely fit and proper to be the type of role model that the youth of this island, the youth of this region and indeed the youth of this world will do well to emulate. The choice of him as Ambassador is a happy and a welcome choice.

I am therefore, on behalf of all the good people of the parish of St. James, the geographical unit called St. James...

Asides.

Hon. R. C. EASTMOND: On behalf of the St. James' folk, I am extending congratulations to Ambassador Obadele Thompson for his recent achievement. I am also extending congratulations to him, not just for having won the medal which he can now so proudly display but also having been promoted to a rank which even though to some it may be honorary, it is certainly a rank that bears honour and suggests the type of encomium that this island is prepared to confer on such a fine role model.

Mr. Speaker, it would have been remiss of me, as a former student of his distinguished father, if I were to have sat in my chair and just applaud and cheer my colleagues without rising to my feet on this most happy occasion to congratulate Ambassador Obadele Thompson and to thank all of Barbados, especially those who in a direct self-sacrificing way ensured that his achievement has been richly rewarded.

With these few humble remarks, Mr. Speaker, and on your behalf as well – they tell me you are a speaker but you do not speak – I, therefore, give a clear signal of my intention to support any motion of congratulations that this Honourable House might feel inclined to bring today.

I thank you.

Asides.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, we can debate the amendment to the Public Service Act later today and there will be another opportunity for Members to speak about sports generally but like the Honourable Member for St. James North, I could not let this item on the agenda pass without tendering my personal congratulations to Mr. Obadele Thompson on his outstanding achievement at the Sydney Olympic Games, just concluded.

Mr. Speaker, the Caribbean region has had a long and outstanding history and left an indelible legacy in sprinting at the international level. Any one of my age who has been following sports for as long as I have been, will recall that it was a Trinidadian, McDonald Bailey in 1948, at the London City Olympic Games who first gave recognition to Caribbean sprinting by winning a medal in the 100 yards at those games. He may have represented Great Britain thereafter but he was, in fact, a Trinidadian.

Subsequent to that, one will recall the exploits of Herb McKinley at the 1952 Olympic Games. One will also recall the exploits of the great Jamaican quartet in the 4 x 400 with Rhoden, McKinley and the Beach Brothers. One will remember Arthur Went; George Kerr – one of my favorite

quarter milers and half milers – a great Jamaican athlete; Jim Wedderburn, Wendell Mottley, a Trinidadian Silver Medalist, in the 400 and Edwin Roberts as pure sprinters. Following Bailey and McKinley were Tom Robinson of the Bahamas, Don Quarrie, Lennox Miller, Hasely Crawford and more recently Ato Boldon.

This small region of the world has produced a long line of outstanding international athletes and Olympic stars but it was never the fortune of Barbados as an independent nation to proudly rejoice in the achievements of a Barbadian since 1966. My school colleague Jim Wedderburn, known to us at school as “Lolly”, of course, did win the first Bronze Medal by a Barbadian, not as representing the independent nation of Barbados but rather, the Federation of the West Indies at the Rome Olympic Games in 1960. It has taken 40 years for Barbados to produce another athlete of that world-class eminence.

Mr. Thompson's achievements at Sydney three weeks ago, seem to have pressed itself forever in our subconsciousness. The outpouring last Thursday was not only an outpouring of admiration but it was a kind of spontaneous ecstatic applause by the people of Barbados for one in whom they would feel justly proud. I am sure that it touched the hearts of all us who were close to that event last week on the streets or in the Esplanade, when we saw the way in which Barbadians turned out to recognise and acknowledge our latest sporting hero.

The Government has suitably rewarded and honoured him by the conferment of the honour of Ambassador for the Youth. In 1996 it was my distinct pleasure to give Obadele Thompson an official passport which is a passport of limited distribution and it was given to him to allow him to move more freely through the world, pursue his exploits and achieve his dreams.

12.25 p.m.

I wish to congratulate him on what he has obtained in Sydney but those heights of achievements could not have been obtained without the strong moral support of his parents and the financial backing of the private sector.

I think the records of this House should also record the gratitude of all Barbadians who bashed in Mr. Thompson's achievement and the substantial financial contributions made by the private sector to his preparation. That contribution of the private sector, some made before the glorious event but much made since, is a matter of which this House ought to take careful note and be aware that the private sector is playing its part in partnership with Government as a responsible element in civil society.

Sir, two things, before I sit down. The Honourable Member for St. James North spoke of his sitting at the

feet of Dr. Alvin Thompson. I think it would be appropriate, and I say this with some abiding modesty, if *Hansard* would record it, that on the first Monday of August 1960, it was a holiday, there was a triangular tournament in Trinidad at the Queen's Royal College between Queen's Royal College, the Lodge School and Queen's College, Guyana.

Wendell Mottley represented Queen's Royal College. Alvin Thompson, a Guyanese by birth, the father of Obadele represented Queen's College Guyana and David Simmons represented the Lodge School. On a very, very wet grass track at Queen's Royal College, the Trinidadian *Guardian* will show in its report of two events that day, that the 100 yards was won by Wendell Mottley in 9.7 seconds, David Simmons was second and Alvin Thompson was third. In the 200 yards – it was then called the 220 – which we ran later in the afternoon, the track was still wet, Wendell Mottley did not compete, David Simmons won the 220 yards and Alvin Thompson ran second. So that Obadele Thompson has in his bloodline as we would say in horse racing terms, some sprinting blood from his father's day.

I went to England within a month and his father went on to be an outstanding sprinter at Mona competing favourably with people like Lennox Miller.

Asides.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: The Honourable Member asked me if I was on weights. Do I look to you like I ever lifted weights in my life?

Asides.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Sir, one never knows in life how fate determines one's ultimate desserts. Although Alvin did not make it to the Olympics in 1964, I am sure that he is very very proud today that his son, in a kind of reflective glory, has given him the satisfaction of what it means to participate in the Olympics and better yet to win a medal.

Obadele Thompson's contribution to Barbados, to projecting the image of Barbados and proliferating the attributes of Barbados, cannot be measured monetary but I have every confidence that as he continues his athletics career he will bring further glory to this country. I sincerely wish that for all of us. I trust that he remains free from any serious injury and that in the World Championships and in the succeeding Commonwealth Games in Manchester – I think that is where they are to be held in 2002 – that we will see the full flower of Thompson's prowess and that we will once again rejoice in his wonderful achievements.

All who have spoken have referred to him in terms of a role model. It was very, very uncanny that the celebrations for him finished on Thursday evening and last Saturday

morning between 10.00 a.m. and 12.00 noon, I was in Bonnetts and there were about ten little boys all practising starts and running up and down the gap in Bonnetts. I am sure that was the inspiration of what Obadele Thompson had achieved at Sydney. I hope that inspiration will be extenuated throughout Barbados and that his example will encourage more young people to channel their energy in productive and wholesome activities which would ultimately redound to their personal as well as national glory.

I am obliged to you Sir.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I rise to associate myself with the comments that have been offered so far and with all he did because I believe that there is a tremendous sense of pride that all of us feel at the accomplishments of Obadele and generally the Barbados Olympic Team that has just returned from the Sydney 2000 Games.

In another place, Sir, just after Obadele won the Bronze Medal in the 100 metres, I indicated then that I offered my congratulations to him because in less than 50 strides, Obadele carried this nation past nearly 50 years of dreams of Olympic glory. I also offer my appreciation to him because in just over 10 seconds he had given physical expression at the highest stage of human endeavour to the Ministry's consistent message to students and young people, that essentially they now live in a world where the only boundaries to their potential are those that they impose on themselves.

I believe, Sir, and I have said in this Chamber on many an occasion that Barbados has an interesting role to play in the early 21st century as a small island state. As one who knows what it is to put people at the centre of its development, I have also said on previous occasions that the affairs of men have to be so fashioned at the turn of the century that those areas of human endeavour that require creative expression or require physical expression are those that would, in fact, not only be useful in the reinforcement of national identity but would be those that would lay an economic foundation for the improvement of the quality of life for each and every Barbadian.

We have, Sir, by reason of the improvements in technology and transportation, the opportunity to compete not among ourselves but to compete among a global population and to show as the Honourable Minister of Sports has said so eloquently so many times in the last week, that size cannot be any determinant of our capacity to attain excellence but it is the innate commitment, the discipline, the requisite training and the commensurate moral, parental and community support buttressed by financial commitment that will determine our levels of success in this world.

12.35 p.m.

I believe, Sir, when we add all of this to the fact that the one thing that occupies the global political community is no longer who is communist or who is capitalist but how persons of different ethnic backgrounds can live together in small geographical spaces, our experience here in the Caribbean as a region has relatively managed our social and class relationships reasonably well without resort to the kind of genocide that we see in other regions. We have a perfect opportunity as a small country to have some form of impact on global civilization in the early 21st century.

When I first uttered those words, there were some who felt that I was being too idealistic and that it was a function of my age and lack of experience. I stand today buttressed by the fact that Obadele's achievement as now being termed the third fastest man in the world complemented also by the previous historic achievements of our national hero, the Right Excellency Sir Garfield Sobers who by some journals has been dubbed either the sportsman of the century or among the top ten sportsmen of the century, that this is a clear testimony to the fact that we can and will have the kind of impact that I have dreamed that is possible from this very small country.

I believe, Sir, that our investments require us to make opportunities available to all at the level of the community, recognizing however that there will be a pyramid structure in terms of those who will be able to attain that type of global excellence, that all who are first exposed to the basic rudiments of sports or cultural endeavour will not necessarily make it to the top of the hill. When they do not make it to the top of the hill, they have learned the basic rudiments that allow them to be an appreciative audience and to lay the framework for the economic development of those sports and cultural activities and to recognize excellence when excellence is attained.

I also believe, Sir, the programme that the Ministry of Youth Affairs has embarked upon since 1995, where we have trained over 1500 young people in sporting activities at the community level and 1500 young people in cultural activities every year, allows us to let people determine whether they have an inclination and, if so, whether they can go on to the other levels that are provided across the community. We have seen out of that programme alone already youngsters who never played volleyball but who now play on the national volleyball team. They were one of the teams that was saluted, in fact, on Thursday evening because of their glorious achievements during this year 2000.

We have also, Mr. Speaker, committed ourselves to embarking upon the establishment of an Academy of Excellence for Sports and Arts at the secondary level. Indeed, Sir, I have also indicated elsewhere that we in fact have formed a committee which submitted its preliminary report since May 20, 2000 long before Obadele's achievement, confident that there is an abundance of talent among Barbadian youths that needs to be honed at a

particular stage. We believe that stage should come at the end of the third form giving them instead of the two years when they leave school at fifth form and putting them in a three or four-year programme depending on the particular discipline that they are involved in.

The preliminary report of that committee, Sir, suggested to the Ministry that the areas of endeavour which the Academy of Excellence should focus on should be cricket, football, athletics, volleyball, swimming and basketball on the sporting side with women being involved in everything except cricket at the moment and in the cultural side the visual and performing arts in their entirety.

We have now, Sir, to further take this report and to put costings and implementation programmes to it in the hope that within the next 18 months we can have this academy up and running and being able to take on average 200 students out of the secondary school system. These students have shown by their proficiency in a particular endeavour that they have merited the additional training and specialized coaching while still not ignoring their academic needs while recognizing that the fostering of the correct attitudes are critical to their development as national champions in their pursuit of excellence.

I believe, Sir, that this is a programme that is worthy of all of our support. I also feel, Sir, that if there is one area that our tertiary institutions have perhaps lacked focus on would be in the area of the development of sports. Traditionally, the University of the West Indies has not moved beyond campus gains in its interaction with the sporting community. The Barbados Community College has done perhaps a little more in the establishment of an Associate Degree in Physical Education.

The time has perhaps come, Mr. Speaker, for the talks to start as to what kind of institution do we need for our sportsmen at the post-secondary level in the same way that over the last four years we have been able to institute at the Barbados Community College an Associate Degree in Finance, an Associate Degree in Performing Arts, a Bachelor of Finance, and an expansion now of certificate and diploma programmes which will take place in the technical theatre. With that development at the post-secondary level in the cultural industry, we need to see a similar development at the post-secondary level in the sporting areas. That should perhaps be the subject of discussion between the Barbados Community College, University of the West Indies and the Ministry of Sports along with the Ministry of Education. There should be an Institute of Sports which would seek to research in the areas of activities. It should also seek to give the sportsmen of Barbados an opportunity to be able to expose them to higher levels of training in the same way that Obadele and many of the other members of the Barbados Olympic Team has been exposed. They have been

exposed by having to leave their homeland to go to other countries to receive that level of training.

Sir, I believe that it is critical even in congratulating Obadele that we recognize that we have a greater chance of developing more Obadeles if that level of expertise is available within this country rather than us having to find opportunities to send Barbadians out for development all of the time.

I want also, Sir, to say how proud I am in the announcement by the Prime Minister to designate Obadele Thompson as Ambassador and Special Envoy for Youth Matters. There is no other Barbadian who by their achievement, discipline, and their moral and spiritual commitment that is as deserving for that designation than Obadele Thompson. I believe, Sir, that to call him a role model is really not to fully understand the full impact that Obadele Thompson will have on the young people of this country.

12.45 p.m.

Perhaps the words of the last speaker, the Honourable Member for St. Thomas, come a little closer in declaring him as an inspiration to many young people. I feel very strongly, Sir, that the capacity to attain excellence is not determined by how technically correct you are but more often it is determined by the 'fire in the belly' that you feel that causes you to want to reach where no other person has reached before. Persons like Obadele, persons like the Right Excellent Sir Garfield Sobers, persons like Kamau Brathwaite, provide that level of inspiration to our young people. They give them a dream when they are still in their formative years, when they have not yet been coloured by the cynicism of life. That dream becomes their abiding guide for what they are prepared to do in their lives, the decisions that they are prepared to make, the sacrifices that they are prepared to make. That dream, that hunger, then determines whether that excellence can be attained.

I, therefore, feel proud that Obadele Thompson has been designated as ambassador and special envoy. I want to salute his parents as well as his family and, indeed, his school and the athletic clubs to which he belongs, because I believe that cumulative support, as he indicated to us when he spoke on Thursday evening at the Esplanade on Bay Street, was the fundamental difference in terms of the level of support that he received. Yes, money is important but, as we are learning more and more in this society, the capacity to give of our time and our experience very often means more than even access to money.

I, therefore, Sir, am very proud to associate myself with the congratulatory remarks that have been made in respect to Obadele Thompson and the Barbados Olympic team. I did not have an opportunity to speak on the other sports teams who have also attained glory this year and there is nothing else on the Order Paper which would allow us to do that, but

it is significant that we have been attaining that level of excellence at the regional and hemispheric level. It is perhaps a clear and distinct message that while we have done well by sports and cultural endeavours as a Government over the last six years, we need to do far more if we are to realise the true potential that these two sectors can bring, not only to the individual development of the people involved but to the reinforcement of a strong, national, cultural identity, irrespective of race and class and, equally, to the economic prosperity of this nation because these two industries must rank among the top five industries in any part of the global economy.

Thank you.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, this item has two parts: Congratulations and Obituaries. On the last occasion that we met the Honourable Member for St. Michael South, the Minister of Social Transformation, lost his mother and it was not possible to pay tribute to her. I take the opportunity now to let the records of this House reflect the sincere condolences of all of us here in this House and on this Side and I express our commiseration with the Honourable Member on the passing of his mother.

Those of us who attended the funeral service were afforded the opportunity to learn about a lady of humble beginnings, of very modest circumstances, who had been able to raise an outstanding set of children who have contributed in several and different ways to this country. Hers was an object lesson for us that humble origins are no barrier to ultimate quality of an effort that any human being can put out in his own development and that of his country's.

Over the years, Mr. Lashley's mother took the opportunity, perhaps a little late in life, to be self-employed and brought all the skills, the techniques and the genius which she had garnered over the years by working for others to her own successful small business. We regret the passing of Mrs. Lashley and trust the Honourable Member will feel buoyed by the sentiments expressed in respect of the passing of his mother.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member spoke for members on his Side but he also could have spoken for members of the Opposition in this instance. Both privately and in this Resolution we extend our sympathy to the Honourable Member for St. Michael South East and members of his family, his brothers and sisters and all those on whose lives his mother would have impacted.

There is not much that I would add to what the Honourable Member for St. Thomas has said, I found the eulogy presented by the Honourable Member for St. Michael South East to be a very complete appreciation and statement of her life and values. I know that she had a very

profound impact on him. I remember when he was first coming into politics, and I know many people in that position did tell me they had to speak to their girlfriends, brothers or anybody else, he told me to speak to his mother. It is clear that major choices that were made by him were very much influenced by his mother, particularly at the early stages of his political career. It is an experience that I share and, therefore, although I cannot say that I know what such a loss is like, I know what it is like to have a political soul mate to whom you can turn to influence you particularly when you are making dramatic and serious choices.

On this Side, we extend our sympathy to the Honourable Member for St. Michael South East and join in seconding this Resolution.

Mr. SPEAKER: I would like to associate this Honourable Chair with the sentiments expressed. My family and myself join in expressing our sincerest condolences to the Honourable Member for St. Michael South East and his family. This House with acclaim accepts the Resolution of sympathy and directs that the appropriate Resolution be sent to the relatives of the deceased as a mark of respect I now invite all Honourable Members and all present to stand with me and observe one minute's silence.

Honourable Members stood for one minute's silence.

ORAL REPLIES TO QUESTIONS

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR: I beg to give notice that Parliamentary Questions 11, 12, 13 and 15 asked by the Honourable Member for St. John are ready.
12.55 p.m.

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I beg to move that Standing Orders Nos. 6, 16, 18, 20, 42(5), 43 and 44 be suspended for the rest of the day's Sitting.

Hon. Miss. B. A. MILLER: I beg to second that.

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

SUSPENSION

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this House be suspended until 2.30 p.m. this afternoon.

Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER: I beg to second that.

The question that this Honourable House be now suspended until 2.30 p.m. was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. Speaker suspended the Sitting accordingly.

RESUMPTION

Mr. SPEAKER: This Honourable House is now resumed.

QUESTION TIME

QUESTION NO. 11

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: To ask the Minister of Finance and Economic Planning:

Will the Minister state the amounts, if any, which have been paid by the Poverty Alleviation Fund to organisations and any specific activities which are being or have been funded from those amounts?

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, the reply to Question 11 is as follows:

Up to the November 2, 1999, the sum of \$10 670 785.60 has been expended on the Poverty Alleviation Fund. For the period November to January a further \$2 295 155.70 were expended on housing programmes for welfare recipients, the elderly and others in need, training and community education programmes for welfare recipients, community groups and those in need of such assistance.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Have any of those funds been paid to organisations? If so, will the Minister state the organisations?

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR: The organisations are:

Urban Development Commission	April 22, 1998
Rural Development Commission	May 17, 1998
National Assistance Board	June 16, 1998
Urban Development Commission	August 6, 1998
National Assistance Board	August 13, 1998
National Assistance Board	August 24, 1998
The Welfare Department	August 9, 1998
Urban Development Commission	October 13, 1998
Soroptimist	December 18, 1998
Urban Development Commission	December 18, 1998

National Assistance Board December 18, 1998 as well as to University of the West Indies School of Continuing Studies, the Hospitality Training Programme, the Moravian Church, the Barbados Association for the Blind and the Deaf, the Pinelands Creative Workshop, St. Martin's Youth Ministry and again, Sir, the Welfare Department.

QUESTION NO. 12

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: To ask the Prime Minister:

Will the Prime Minister state whether Government has hosted or financed the costs of any seminars, conferences, symposia or other regional activities associated with Barbados/OECS integration and/or discussions held in Barbados by non-governmental organisations, associations, societies, political parties or movements in relation to such integration and, if so, the amounts contributed by Government and the nature of the expenditure to which such sums have been applied?

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, the answer to Question 12 is as follows:

No. The Government has not hosted or financed the cost of any seminars, conferences, symposiums or any regional activities associated with Barbados OECD in an integration Organisation. The Government has contributed \$2 013.02 to the conference on Caribbean Political and Economic Union sponsored by the Clement Payne Labour Movement on April 24, 1998.

QUESTION NO. 13

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: To ask the Prime Minister:

1. Will the Prime Minister state whether it is the policy of Government to pursue political union with the Eastern Caribbean States and, if so, whether any decision has been reached with the Heads of Government of the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States on the question of such a union?
2. Will the Prime Minister also state whether Government has a specific programme of action in relation to the matter of political union with the OECS and, if so, what is that programme?

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR: The answer to the Question is no, Sir. Since the answer to the first part is no, the second part does not arise.

QUESTION NO. 15

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: To ask the Minister of Finance and Economic Affairs:

Will the Government state the policy for the operation of the Barbados Agricultural Credit Trust (BACT) and whether any such policy provides for the indebted plantations or other assets, including any assets of Barbados Sugar Industry Ltd. (BSIL)?

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR: Sir, in relation to Question No. 15. The first part says:

Will the Government state the policy for the operation of the Barbados Agricultural Credit Trust (BACT) and whether any such policy provides for the indebted plantations or other assets including any assets of Barbados Sugar Industry Ltd. (BSIL)?

The answer is as follows, Sir: The policy of the Barbados Agricultural Credit Trust was set in 1992 and is as follows:

The Barbados Agricultural Credit Trust is designed to liquidate the outstanding debt of the heavily indebted plantations and the Barbados Sugar Industry Limited. Yes, such policy provides for the indebted plantation or other assets including any, assets of the Barbados Sugar Industry Limited.
2.10 p.m.

In relation to part 2 of the question: Will the Minister state: (a) whether BACT has contracted for the sale/purchase of any plantations or plantation lands, houses or other assets, including those of BSIL?

Answer: The answer is yes and the details are as follows, Sir:

BACT has accepted a bid by public auction and, thereafter, has entered into contract for sale with the successive bidders for the following plantations and entail a sale price of \$3 513 000, net proceeds of the settlement, Sir, \$2 652 000. Friendship, Baxters \$420 000, Mangrove, Sir, sale price of \$1 860 000; net proceeds of sale \$1 669 804; Sunrise Dairy Farms sale price \$895 000; net proceeds of settlement, that is after debt, \$549 694.

The following, Mr. Speaker, are details of plantations with voluntary settlements of the owners of their BACT accounts. These are the settlements with the owners and I am quoting first the amount that was owed and then the amount for which they were settled.

Castle Grant: the amount due on the date of settlement \$1 236 187, the proceeds of settlement, \$1 218 507.

Edgecumbe: the amount due at the date of settlement, \$105 526, the proceeds of settlement, \$109 297.

Ashbury: amount due at settlement, \$300 000, the amount the proceeds of settlement on a voluntary basis \$300,000.

Sunbury/Hampden, \$1 359 666 was the amount due. The amount settled for, \$1 359 666.

Ebworth: the amount due at settlement, \$251 739. The amount settled for \$251 739.

Plum Tree: \$1 369 474, the amount due at settlement. The amount settled for \$1 369 474.

Sion Hill: \$1 327 382, the amount due at settlement. The amount settled for \$1 327 382.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, that was up to December 1999. Subsequent to that, Sir, the settlement for the full amount of the debt on the following properties has been arrived at:

Staple Grove: \$3 138 576.
Halton: \$117 879.
Bridge Field: \$103 092.
Yorkshire Plantation: \$465 710.
Congo Road Plantation: \$161 518.
Pleasant Vale: \$99 057.

Sir, plantations disposed of by BACT were done, therefore, either through the process of public auctions as described or through voluntary settlement with the owners to the debt outstanding as provided for under the arrangements established with BACT. In every instance, Mr. Speaker, the amount is either for the full amount of the debt or for a substantial profit.

Question:

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Will the Minister state whether any of the assets which he identified, were assets owned by BSIL?

Answer:

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR: The factory assets of the BSIL, Mr. Speaker, as the House is aware, are now in the process of being transferred from the BSIL to the BAMC. All of those transactions that would be involved in the transfer, the factory buildings, houses and all of the other real assets, those transactions have not yet been completed. I have not got a clear designation of which of these plantations were BSIL plantations or those under voluntary basis, Mr. Speaker.

Question:

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Can the Minister state whether Four Square Factory was an asset sold by the BSIL under either of the two arrangements?

Answer:

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, Four Square Factory was not an asset sold by the BACT. As I understand it, and I can only speak on the basis of information reported to me, Four Square Factory was sold by the BSIL, on the basis of a Notice for Tender put into the Press, to the highest bidder. It was not sold by the BACT, as I understand it. I cannot speak on behalf of BSIL because it is not a Government institution, Sir.

Question:

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Will the Minister state whether under the terms of the arrangement between BACT and BSIL, if it was necessary for BACT to give permission for the sale of Four Square Factory?

Answer:

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am not aware of any such arrangements but I will check with the Minister and provide the answer in due course.

Question:

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, I was talking to my colleague on my right and I might have missed it. Could the Minister give any information concerning Bushy Park Plantation and if so could he tell us if Bushy Park Plantation was subject to this arrangement and details as to what it was sold for and when?

Asides.

Question:

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I do not want to ask the Minister something that he spoke about. I am asking if the Minister gave in that list any information about Bushy Park Plantation in St. Philip and if so what was sale price of Bushy Park Plantation, which I believe was a highly indebted plantation. What was the nature of the transaction?

Answer:

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, Sir, Bushy Park Estate was sold in 1994 just prior to the election for \$1 492 000. The debt to the BNB on the estate was \$2.9 million and a loss on the transaction amounted to \$1.6 million, which had to be written-off by the BACT. Unlike all of the other transactions entered into by the BACT since 1994, that were by way of public auction, this transaction was by way of a private arrangement to a company in London. A loss of \$1.6 million was sustained on a sale that was in the nature of a private transaction. Every other transaction by the BACT subsequent to that has been on the basis of full recovery of the debt, plus a profit or in instances involving settlement with the owners, for the full amount of the debt.

Asides.

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR: Bushy Park was sold by the Government for \$1.4 million, when it had a debt on it of \$2.9 million, by a private arrangement. There was no tendering, no public auction, there was no attempt at public transparency.

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, please. Let us hear the Honourable Member, please.

Question:

Hon. Sir HAROLD St. JOHN: Could the Minister state whether the policy as established in 1992, provided for forgiveness of either debt or interest by BACT and if so what was the policy in respect of either?

Answer:

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, as I understand it, and I am speaking without having the arrangement before me, the understanding was that the BACT would take over the debt from the BNB and try to dispose of the assets for the best possible value, subject to the constraint that the owners of the property would have to agree to the disposal of their property or agree to pay

off debt in full. There was no implicit or explicit commitment to forgiveness of debt or interest *per se*.
2.20 p.m.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. Lucy.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, will the Minister tell the House whether or not the Government will make a profit when they take over the assets of BSIL?

Mr. SPEAKER: I do not think I will allow that question, please.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, my memory of some of this is hazy. Sir, I would like to know who managed the BACT, BSIL, now the BAMC and if they were managers, how were they appointed?

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR: Sir, the BACT is a company owned entirely by the Government. It functions under the Companies Act of Barbados and the Government of Barbados is the sole shareholder. The appointment of persons to the employment is on the basis of the procedures that would apply to a private company and the company is responsible for the appointment of its own officers. It was established in 1992, as a company under the Ministry of Finance and it functions under the Ministry of Finance.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for the City.

Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, Sir, can the Minister state whether persons were engaged by the BACT upon the recommendation of any Minister of Government and whether such person or indeed persons, would have been qualified for the post?

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR: Sir, in 1993, a gentleman was employed at the BACT carrying with him as one of his referees, the then Minister of Finance, the Honourable Member for St. John. He was employed to hold a position of Financial Officer but he had no qualifications in accountancy.

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: If there are no further questions, submissions and explanations, could we revert to Government Business now please.

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

ORDER NO. 6 – BILL TO AMEND THE PUBLIC ORDER ACT

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, the Bill before the House is concerned with the control of crowd

behaviour at sporting events. In particular, the reasons for this amendment to the Public Order Act have their genesis in the approaches made to the office of the Attorney General through the late Sir Conrad Hunte.

When Sir Conrad was President of the Barbados Cricket Association he asked my Ministry if we could enact legislation to assist with crowd control at Kensington during cricket matches. We had a general discussion about it and he was to get back to us but unfortunately he died.

Subsequent to his death, the succeeding President Mr. Nicholls, whom I think is a member of the Board of Management, wrote to me on the 1st March this year asking that we implement legislation to enhance the security of players and officials during the course of international matches at Kensington. Sir, along with that letter on the 1st of March, they sent a copy of a letter to the West Indies Cricket Board from the International Cricket Council. That letter was dated 2nd November, 1999 and I quote from it.

Sir, the ICC to the WICB wrote as follows:

“The safety of players and umpires at international matches is of paramount importance to the ICC. A recent increase in the number of the incidences of spectator encroachment on the field of play has caused concern for the players and has led to a thorough review of safety measures by the ICC in conjunction with each full member on board.

The Executive Board agreed to adopt the following policy: No spectator has a right to enter the field during play and until the players and spectators have left the field after play, no spectator has the right to throw any object at anyone, be they players, umpires or fellow spectators.

Further considerations of safety measures were discussed at the Executive Board and the ICC meetings in October last year and a number of additional steps were taken. The ICC requires all international venues to publicise the above policies as widely as possible and to make them clear and visible to all spectators at all grounds.”

Then, there was this requirement. The ICC required the West Indies Cricket Board to ensure that each ground staging an international match must implement the following safety measures and I will read them.

- “1. An effective alcohol management plan.
2. Government legislation to deal effectively with spectator encroachment on the field of play and spectators throwing missiles.
3. Players and umpires should not feel under threat from spectators at close of play. The emphasis is that spectator encroachment should be prevented.”

Sir, the ICC then added these words:

“The ICC will adopt strict penalties for those grounds that fail to implement adequate safety measures. Penalties will include heavy fines and/or removal of international status.”

2.30 p.m.

An essential point of that correspondence from the International Cricket Council in so far as it is germane to today’s legislation – which is the second requirement of the ICC – is that Government should enact legislation to deal with spectator encroachments and spectators throwing missiles. That was requirement number two in their letter of November 02, 1999. On March 10, 2000, we met with the Barbados Cricket Association, the members of the Law Reform Committee and the Chief Parliamentary Counsel and looked at the content of the proposed legislation.

Now, I must say that we found some assistance in England. England enacted a specific piece of football legislation in 1991, the Football (Offences) Act, 1991, creating an offence of throwing missiles at or on a playing area and penalising people who make unauthorised entries upon a playing area. We, therefore, used the English legislation as a precedent to guide us in the drafting of what is now before the House as an amendment to the Public Order Act. This legislation is a response to the requirements of the International Cricket Council supported and requested as a matter of urgency by the West Indies Cricket Board and by the Barbados Cricket Association.

Sir, before, I deal with the content of the Bill, I think it is useful perhaps to set some of this in a historical context.

Asides.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Sir, for as long as any of us have been watching cricket, I think it would be fairly clear that crowds running onto playing fields do not represent any new behavioural pattern. I think there have been cases where entries onto playing areas have been for the purpose of congratulation or celebration. One could think back as far as Lords in 1950, when the West Indies won that test at Lords and Lord Beginner composed a tune, “Cricket Lovely Cricket”. You can still see in libraries around the world photographs of Beginner and Kitchener with the guitar singing that across the hallowed turf of Lords but that was not the first. It happened in Australia 20 years before that. If you check your Benson and Hedges cricket film on great batsmen and so on you will see so I say there have been instances where the crowd or members of the crowd go onto the field to celebrate.

We can think of every time a West Indian batsman scored a century in England, somebody used to run onto the field. I remember a West Indian running onto the field in 1966, and trying to lift up Milburn when he scored a century. I will tell my friends what happened with that fellow when

he tried to lift up Milburn, there was an emission of gas. You can ask the players.

Sir, some of these situations have also been negative. We are getting accustomed now to streakers, people who run onto the field naked for whatever purpose but I think that where we have greater cause for concern is with the throwing of missiles.

Now, again, historically, in this area there are cases where ... I think it was in 1954 in the Test Match at Bourda, the West Indies versus Australia when McWatt got run out, people threw bottles on the field and disrupted play. They threatened the Umpire Badge Menzies and tried to burn down his house and he had to be given police protection.

In 1967/68 with the tour of England to the West Indies, at Trinidad, the West Indies were 98 for 8, when Charan Singh got run out and bottles were thrown. I think it was Lord Brynner who composed the calypso which said that Learie Constantine was right in place to catch a bottle and prevent it from hitting the Governor in his face. That is a fact. A beer bottle was thrown, it was going straight for the Governor and Constantine then probably in his 50s or 60s, dived across and caught the bottle; it was going straight for the Governor’s face.

More recently here in Barbados, of course, the last series against Australia, we all recall what happened after Campbell was given out. Somebody at some time will do an analysis as to what sparks and prompts this kind of violent crowd reaction. They used to say that in certain parts of the Caribbean particularly in Trinidad, it was the amount of alcohol and gambling and the betting on whether somebody would make 50 or 100 or whatever and when bets were lost the frustrations were acted out by the throwing of missiles.

For whatever reason, disorderly behaviour among crowds at cricket has often, however, been the result of umpiring decisions which have inflamed crowds. In the days before you had television replays, you had to rely on the naked eye and I do not know what happened with the McWatt situation but it was a run out. With Charan Singh, again in Trinidad, that was a run out and with Campbell, down here, that was also a run out after a push.

Players have taken a lot from spectators. I know that some players welcome the congratulations, especially the batsmen. You do not see them running onto the field to congratulate bowlers very often but when they do it to the batsmen it breaks the concentration of the batsmen and it is an unwelcome feature in modern-day cricket. But the players have themselves been the recipient of missiles thrown at them. You will remember in Pakistan, I think it was around 1978, people threw fire crackers from the

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Courtney Walsh and the late Sylvester Clarke and they had to retaliate, so that provocation can be stirred by the crowd themselves.

Now internationally, the problem seems to be of such proportions that the International Cricket Council is calling for Government legislation and that is why we have brought this legislation. Let me just deal now with the contents of the Bill before I wind up on this matter.
2.40 p.m.

Sir, the Bill amends the Public Order Act, Cap. 168A by inserting a new Part VC to provide that the Minister responsible for public order may designate certain sporting events to which this law will apply. By Clause 27J, it will become an offence to throw a missile at an area where there are spectators or towards a playing area. If you throw a bottle on the field or if you throw something from the field into the stand or where spectators are gathered, you are liable to a fine of up to \$10 000 or two years or to both.

Clause 27K penalises unauthorised entry onto a playing area and that carries a penalty similar to 27J \$10 000 or two years or both and 27L restrains the carrying of glass bottles at a designated sporting event and also empowers the police to search for glass bottles on reasonable suspicion.

Let me pause here, Sir. When we were developing this legislation, we were careful to discuss with the Barbados Cricket Association as the agent of the West Indies Board that what we were doing was changing the pattern of cultural behaviour to which cricket boards had become accustomed. It is commonplace to see people going to cricket with coolers in which there is ice and liquor. In future, you can carry your liquor, but you cannot carry it in a glass bottle and it cannot be served to you in a glass bottle. Plastic cups will become the order of the day. The proprietor, of course, will be allowed to bring his beers and whatever else in bottles to keep them cool but when you go to be served he will have to pour it in a cup for you to reduce the potentiality for using bottles as missiles.

I happened to be away during the international match that was played here this year, but I know that the BCA was trying to start upon the implementation of these new policies and programmes and it was suggested that they should not only print these prohibitions on the back of the tickets so that they become terms of the contract of entry but that they should display prominently at the point of entry and elsewhere throughout the stands notices drawing to the public's attention that they were changes and glass bottles would not be allowed.

For the next international season this law will be in effect and, therefore, the Cricket Association will have to intensify the necessary publicity that brings the strictures of this legislation to the attention of the general and sporting public.

Clause 27L also allows a police officer where he has reasonable cause to suspect that a person has concealed in his possession a bottle or other articles made of glass in contravention of subsection (1), he may search that person and such action deemed necessary at the time may be taken. One would expect the police to have some discretion in this. It does not mean that automatically you will be taken before the courts. They may ask you to put down the bottle or give them the bottle. There are a variety of discretions in the exercise of police power which will apply in this situation.

Where a person is prosecuted the court is now given additional powers. They can fine and confine but they can also ban you and section 27O gives the court the discretion to make an order prohibiting a person from entering any premises for the purpose of attending a designated sporting event. It is an additional power on which again the court will have to use its discretion having regard to all the facts as to whether it wishes to ban the person or just be content to impose the fine. In fact, now that the Penal System Reform Act is in place any of the non-custodial penalties provided for in that legislation can apply in these circumstances also. That is what this Bill is about. It is to assist in the control of crowd behaviour at sporting events to try and prevent unsavoury conduct, disruptive behaviour from attending sporting events.

We have tended to focus on cricket but as I pointed out any designated sporting event. If there was a big football game at the Stadium and the authorities felt that they wanted this legislation to apply they would just write to the Minister and ask for that event to be designated and the Attorney General would make an Order designating that particular event and the law would automatically apply.

I wish to say, Sir, that I thank the Ministry of Labour and Sports for their support for the legislation. The Ministry said that this legislation is absolutely necessary if Barbados is to comply with the stipulated requirements of international sporting bodies such as IAAF and the ICC. Any delay or refusal to enact the legislation would mean that our prospects for hosting international sporting events would be considerably diminished. They pointed out that the legislation is aimed at bringing us in line with international standards and requirements. I endorse those words and with respect, adopt them as my own. I think it gets to the heart of this matter.

Sir, I wish to commend the legislation to Parliament, to remind them that this again is part of the international process and legislation responding to contemporary international events and requirements. It is asked for by those who are administering the cricket. It is demanded by the ICC to which WICB is affiliated and I think that it is absolutely necessary.

Having said that, Sir, I just wish to close by saying that I have many concerns with the state of West Indies cricket, the administration of West Indies cricket. I have tried not to speak too much about cricket and West Indies cricket in my capacity as Attorney General, but for seven years, I was legal advisor to the West Indies Players' Association from 1987 to 1994. I have tried not to speak too much about West Indies cricket publicly because when you speak people will not feel that you have a personal point of view but will say the Attorney General said this and that. I have to say that I am very distressed that the West Indies Cricket Board has decided to take about six of our young players – I believe Marlon Samuels is one too – whom we all recognise need coaching, training and assistance, two months before we are to go to play Australia and send them to Australia to be coached in the academy by Australians who will identify their weaknesses and when the test match comes up in December they will know how to get them out.
2.50 p.m.

I really cannot support that, Sir, as I have not been able to support a lot in West Indies cricket in the last four years. I am not going to dwell about that now but I will write about that in due course.

Asides.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: It has nothing to do with the Board moving from Barbados and going to Antigua. There are a lot of other things that upset me about the current administration of West Indies cricket. I have said that I am going to be guarded in what I say because then you will hear that the Attorney General said this and the Attorney General said that. As far as sending Sarwan, Gale, Powell and Samuels to Australia at this time or at all, some would say, immediately before we play the Australians, ostensibly to be coached by Australians, I think it is wrong.

I believe there is a coaching facility in Antigua and there is one in Grenada. You have Richards, Greenidge, Haynes and somebody who is not remembered at all, the best batting coach that we had in Barbados, Seymour Nurse, now retired. You have all of them available. You could take up any of them and send to Antigua or Grenada to work with these players in our own cultural setting but yet they were sent to Australia. Well, I just want to say that I do not support that and a lot more.

Sir, this is a very short Bill. The English Football Offences Act is about two Sections but we have to do some more with this to deal with our particular situation and I trust that it will receive the support of Members. The Association has been sent copies of it and they are very happy for it. Once it passes this House, they will be able to send to the ICC, copies of the legislation to show that Barbados has been compliant with the international requirements.

With those words I beg to move that this Bill be read a second time.

Hon. R. N. GREENIDGE: I beg to second that.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker, I believe that by and large the Opposition has been supportive of the initiatives that the Government has taken from time to time to deal with violence and indiscipline in Barbados.

I think we revisited the Public Order Act on previous occasions. This is probably the second significant amendment to that Act since this Government came to office. There have been amendments to the Vagrancy Act. There have been amendments to a variety of pieces of legislation. We have also had brand new legislation introducing new crimes and offences, new forms of punishment, new rules for bail and introducing new approaches to justice in Barbados. All of that, the Opposition has cooperated with because by and large, on the previous occasions, the Attorney General has been able to establish beyond reasonable doubt that the legislation is necessary and desirable and that it is keeping with the culture of the society and our approach to life. Therefore, we supported those pieces of legislation against that background.

Of course, we would have supported that legislation on the assurances of the Honourable Member for St. Thomas that he had crime under control, that he had violence under control, that he had achieved over fifty or how many promises in the Labour Party's Manifesto despite evidence on the street, which went contrary, and overwhelmingly so, to all of the boasts which the Honourable Member for St. Thomas regaled the House with since 1994.

Mr. Speaker, the fact of the matter is that this piece of legislation is overkilled. It is extremely reactionary.

Asides.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: I do not mind who called for it. There are people in Barbados who will call for all kinds of legislation. We have all kinds of special interest groups that are ignored every day by the Government and there is nothing unique or special about the supplication of the group that has asked for this legislation to be brought to the fore.

There is no new major offence that has been created by this legislation that could not have been dealt with if our police had high morale and if they were not suffering from being underpaid and ill-treated by the present Administration. There is nothing new created in here despite all the song and dance that I have heard.

It was a short speech. The Honourable Member likes the law but he did not find much law to deal with

because there is nothing new or unique about this. All over Europe, because you had serious riots which have engulfed towns and where people have set fires and killed people, they have had not only to introduce legislation but it is so bad in Europe that they say that any day you are walking around in a European city you can be photographed by a close circuit camera at least 400 times, just by leaving your home to go to work and carrying out your daily rounds. They were able to trace the pictures of the two young men who took the little five-year old boy and killed him. Every night on the United States network television you can see close circuit cameras dealing with unsolved mysteries.

We do not have a fraction, to my mind, of that technology available to us and the ICC must understand that. We are not the kind of country where people run rampaging from Kensington Oval to burn down Bridgetown or to loot the shops in the area of Kensington.

Asides.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: This is nonsense, that is my view. I feel very strongly about it. It is an unnecessary piece of legislation. Even the act that took place at Kensington Oval, as reprehensible as it was, was a spontaneous act arising from what people said was injustice, not revenge. They felt that an act of injustice had taken place. Even some responsible people felt that it was an act of injustice but within minutes, it was over and a national hero in this country was able to go out on the field and tell the people to calm down. Tempers that were flaring were calmed and now this country which cannot solve some of the basis problems of crime, violence and indiscipline in Barbados, brings this non-sensical reactionary piece of legislation to waste Parliament's time today.

The basis of it is that the BCA, obviously, extremely influential in this country, is able to get this Government to pass legislation in less than one year of an act taking place and there are citizens in this country who have been asking Government to update, extend and improve on all kinds of legislation; not only that but to put resources behind the persons who are charged with the responsibility of carrying out the investigation of crime, the prosecution of offenders and the ultimate punishment of those offenders. This is really a waste of Parliament's time, Mr. Speaker.

Is the Honourable Member for St. Thomas able to tell us, other than having a meeting, what the BCA is doing? Are they buying metal detectors? Are they going to employ security guards to search people to see if they have bottles? All of this is going to rest now on the shoulders of the overworked and underpaid Royal Barbados Police Force because the Honourable Member has not yet indicated what steps the BCA is going to take.
3.00 p.m.

There are people who own businesses all over this country suffering daily from robberies. I am talking about gas stations, boutiques, vendors, postmen all of whom on a daily basis, not once a year, not one day a year at a cricket match but on a daily basis, are in fear of their lives in carrying out their legitimate activity. They have no power under any law to stop somebody from walking up to them with a glass bottle in his hand and chopping them up. They have no power, even though laws exist to stop a man from chopping them up with a cutlass despite the fact that we have changed the legislation.

Therefore, this could be comfort to a fool. It would be comfort to fools, Mr. Speaker, Sir, if we pass this legislation and believe that it is going to have some tremendous impact. If this is just like primary school children bringing up their sums to a school teacher and saying well we have done it, and the school teacher corrects it and say since you have done it you could move on to the next exercise in your book.

The Honourable Member for St. Thomas could have saved us the platitudes about the BCA and the work they have done and having to search around for legislation and all that kind of thing. If this is what the Attorney General's office is wasting time doing, then we will never start to deal with the problem of violence and indiscipline in Barbados. As I said, it would be the comfort of a fool to accept.

I know what is going to follow from this. A prepared speech from the Minister of Sports, I can anticipate the House, in which he is going to laud the Attorney General for the speed with which he has brought this legislation down here and say how we are complying with international regulation. I can save the House from that too and I can deliver it for the Honourable Member if he wants it.

Yet, tonight when you turn on the news, you will see that the number of road fatalities in Barbados is on the verge of doubling; that somebody has been gunned down in some village in our country; that some small shopkeeper who has had a business for 25 years has been robbed and the House has time every time somebody makes some supplication to Government to amend the Public Order Act, to give comfort or to give the impression that as a result of this legislation something is going to change dramatically at any of these events.

If you all were really interested in some of these matters, you would even be looking beyond this, Mr. Speaker, Sir. You have events taking place in Barbados in which the security is so inadequate that they close off all the doors except one. We do not have the modern Health and Safety legislation that the Minister of Sports in another capacity has constantly promised, at least we are getting this but we have not gotten that yet. If there was a fire or some kind of tragedy, as recently happened at a factory in one

of those locations, and God forbid there is ever any kind of calamity, it will take nearly an hour for those people to get out of the building. I can refer to activities taking place at the Gymnasium at which I have been present, and these are profit making activities where very often only two doors are opened. Doors are locked off when you go into an intermission, you have to stand in a long line to get outside because people are not investing in the security.

Likewise, what arrangement is the Government requiring of the Barbados Cricket Association to provide adequate security to police, not putting more burden on the police officers in this country who are underpaid, overworked and ill-treated by this Government and by making their own arrangements to ensure that all of these new offences – look what Barbados has come to. Walking around with a bottle at cricket.

I cannot have a beer now unless it is a plastic glass. What are we coming to? It tells you something about the state of the Barbadian society – you do not get beers in plastic bottles, you do not get them in aluminum. It tells you about the state of the Barbadian society that the average beer drinker in Barbados, who uses a bottle, at Kensington Oval is now by the act of this Government pandering to reactionary force and special interest groups in Barbados, you have to have a plastic glass. If you come in with anything in glass, they are going to take it from you.

I went to Windward Cricket Club the other day when the South African team was playing and a fellow was there from St. Philip, from the Honourable Member's constituency, with a pint and a half bottle which had something brown in it. I thought it was mauby and I tasted it and it tasted quite nice. When I finished drinking he told me this is cerasee bush that his wife makes into a sweet drink and he was offering everybody this cerasee bush. He cannot carry this into cricket anymore. This is an assault, a direct assault to my mind, on our culture and there is no justification for it.

The Honourable Member for Christ Church West, if he were in his seat, could tell about the thousands of young people who go to the stadium to watch Family First, St. John Sonics and all of the other first division teams and other football teams without having those kinds of complications. Every now and again you may have a scuffle, and regrettably so, these things are to be expected. When you had inter-school sports in the 70s, when I was a youngster and the Honourable Member for St. Michael South was running and weight training, there were fights between Coleridge and Parry School and Combermere School in Stand "C". There were fights between Foundation School and other schools, there were taunts – this is all part of it. The ICC, which has never been able to point, other than what happened at Kensington Oval recently in a match, to any history or series of events that have taken place in Barbados, is able to force

the Government of Barbados to bring to this House like this. This is unbelievable.

As I said there are so many other priorities in the area of the improvement of justice, the detection of crime, the improvement of the terms and conditions of service of police officers and others. The last time on the 6th July, 1999, the Honourable Member brought an amendment to the Public Order Act, we then debated another Public Order Bill. What were we doing then? The band leaders decided they wanted Government to come up with a piece of legislation that would permit the designation of persons to control crowds when the bands were traveling down to the location where the revelry was taking place, and we had to make the point once again that you can pass all the laws in the world that 90 per cent of the time that there are either skirmishes or altercations taking place, it is spontaneity and in a sense it is mob rule. Thank goodness that so far in Barbados it has not led to people running in Bridgetown, starting fires, throwing Molotov cocktails and doing of the other things that you have seen happening at the football events across Europe. 3.10 p.m.

There are some cultures where we have seen cricket taking place and at a certain hour they start to light bomb fires in the stand. There is no ICC that could force them to pass legislation like this because that is part of their culture. I say that it is not instinctively part of our culture to engage in violence at sporting events in Barbados. I do not think that this is necessary and I do not know what it is that could be going through the mind of the Honourable Member for St. Thomas in giving this priority over all of the other concerns that citizens of Barbados have in relation to acts of violence, problems of crime in communities and so on in Barbados.

Mr. Speaker, I say again that this piece of legislation is overkilled, it is reactionary and in my view, is entirely unnecessary. It has not created any new or special offences that were not known under other designations for the law before and it is not going to work unless the Honourable Member for St. Thomas is able to give us certain guarantees. No event should be designated as 'a designated sporting event', unless the Government is assured that the promoter of that event is also going to provide the kind of security support which could make this kind of legislation a reality. At the end of the day, I am still saying that even if that were so, it is an unnecessary piece of legislation.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, despite what has been happening in Barbados and people craving for justice on that famous day at Kensington Oval, violence at sporting events in this country is not at such a level as to require this kind of overkill. This piece of legislation is a piece of legislation you can draft and put aside and if at some time you have to refer to it, fine but this cannot be Barbados' time in history to pass a piece of legislation like this.

Mr. Speaker, in my view it tarnishes the whole element of the celebration that Barbadians should be feeling at this time about the achievements of sporting heroes generally. I am not making a specific plea but the many teams which were honoured the other evening and the many teams which have done well in Barbados, none of which have ever fell under threat as a result of carrying out their sporting activities in this country, whether it was volleyball, basketball, cricket or football, none of those events have been attended to by serious levels of violence. Yet, a reactionary element, as I say, can find its way straight to the office of the Attorney-General in this country and have him respond in quick time to bring a piece of legislation like this which creates no new offences and which, at the end of the day is overkilled, unnecessary and as I say, reactionary.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I have predicted what the Honourable Member for St. Philip North is going to say. I do not think it will change my mind one way or the other but I think this Government owes the people of this country some sort of explanation other than the fact that the ICC had essentially dictated that it should pass legislation such as this.

Sir, I was not aware that the ICC had powers to dictate to a sovereign Government in Barbados. This Government has made a lot of 'hullabaloo' and 'pampalam' about the IMF and putting them out, the World Bank, Ship-rider and the OECD. It keeps noise about any act by any international organisation, which seeks to meddle in or require a country that it should do certain things. Yet, the Honourable Member for St. Thomas can come to this Parliament today and use as his excuse for bringing legislation which is unnecessary and reactionary, the fact that the ICC, FIFA and other international bodies have essentially dictated to Barbados that if it does not pass this kind of legislation, despite the fact that we do not have a history of violence at sporting events, that we will not be considered as locations for sporting activities. This is absolute nonsense and it flies in the face of everything that has been spouted by Members on that Side, both on the international stage and in Barbados for the past six years.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, it just cannot add up and I have my serious and grave doubts about this piece of legislation.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. Philip North.

Hon. R. N. GREENIDGE: Mr. Speaker, the world we live in, Sir, is moving towards order. It is moving towards uniformity and those of us who live in this world are being asked almost daily to adhere to the same set of rules and regulations. We are being asked to adhere to the same set of human rights, the same WTO rules, the same OECD rules, the same drug testing rules and in this regard, the same crowd control rules.

Mr. Speaker, it is, therefore, pointless for Barbados to walk a mile behind and out of step with all of the other countries. The point I want to make upfront in this presentation is that this is not reactionary law or panic law as the Honourable Member for St. John would want us to believe. Invariably, like him, I believe that panic law is bad law.

Sir, this is not panic law and from time to time I will refer to two incidences, one involving Steve Waugh's Australian Team in Barbados and the other involving the Cuban Football Team that played here a couple of months ago. I want to make the point upfront that this is really and truly an answer to an international call. Primarily, that is what it is and even as I said that I will highlight those two incidences, we are not panicking because of those incidences and rushing to bring this law to Parliament. We are doing it because we have to be part of international sports.

Mr. Speaker, I agree with him that it is tough legislation but I think too that it also sends the right signal which is opening a new chapter in crowd behaviour in Barbados. If we want to play international cricket or international football, we have to abide by the international rules and regulations which those international organisations set for all of their members. We have to realise that we are not playing sports on our own terms, we are playing sports on international terms.

3.20 p.m.

The Honourable Member for St. Thomas has quoted from the request of the letter from the ICC. I have the request from FIFA. It is a long document in which they have actually set out how every Stadium that play FIFA football has to be built. The emphasis has to be on players and spectators safety. There have to be separate rooms for referees and when the players appear at the tunnel they should be out of reach of missiles and so on, first aid rules for the public.

This is the entire thing that is sent to Barbados Football Association saying that this is what you had to adhere to, so it is not a matter of what we feel like doing or what we want to do. It is not done like that, Mr. Speaker. We have been contacted by those international organisations like FIFA and the ICC and they have questioned our support and our seriousness to the safety of players and spectators.

This law, as I said, is a prerequisite to our staging world cup cricket. Let me say, Sir, that it is my understanding that Jamaica is already in line, Trinidad has already taken steps and I do not see why Barbados should try to say that we are the stubborn ones and we are not going to do it the way they asked us to do it.

Mr. Speaker, I think that to be banned from staging international competitions would be a really awful price

to pay for non-compliance. I think that to criticize and not support what we are doing is in a way to wish that sanctions be imposed on Barbados for rendering this country ineligible for staging international matches.

As a Government, we have been blamed for not having this legislation in place. This is legislation that we were asked to bring about three years ago, and as I said, FIFA has actually written to us in Barbados asking us to get in line. We were cruising, Mr. Speaker. We were cool. We were saying that it could never, never happen here and we have been slow with all this because I believe like the Honourable Member for St. John, we were in denial, it could not happen here, it would not happen in Barbados.

I witnessed with my very eyes the incident at the Stadium where in a flash we had bottles being thrown from the stands onto the field and some were coming from the other direction as well. At every international match like that they always have a match referee. I think the one there that night was from Nicaragua. I had to go to him myself and I had to beg him not to give Barbados a bad report because believe it or not, with a bad report like that, you will never be able to stage another match in Barbados again, at least not in about five years. People had to go and beg him not to give Barbados a bad report. It cannot happen here because that is our attitude.

I think that this law will send a strong message to those international organisations that we are indeed serious about sports and that we are serious in ensuring that kind of thing does not occur in Barbados again. This is going to be the cornerstone of our prevention strategy.

Mr. Speaker, we have to realize that in a crowd you are going to find about three different sets of persons watching sports. You are going to have the majority of them, maybe persons like you and I, Mr. Speaker, a very peaceful law-abiding group that will go there for the right reasons. We go to watch and enjoy, that is what you and I and quite a few others will be there for, then there is going to be a small minority that is going to be there to create trouble and in between there is a very sizable group and that sizable group is the one we have to be very careful with because that is the one when things begin to happen who join in. That is the group that would say they look odd if they are not following the crowd. They did not intend originally to be part and parcel of what is happening but they could not resist the temptation and that is the psychology of the crowd. We have to understand how it is, that whole thing about the psychology of the crowd and how often they get themselves caught up with the unruly crowd and how easily they can become drawn into it. Sometimes you do not set out for these things to happen but they happen.

Sir, I do not want anyone to leave this Chamber thinking that we are passing legislation because we want to put the lid on the emotions or on the passions of Barbadians.

No, Sir, we want our fans to continue to support their team with every emotion. We want our fans to cry when we win and to cry when we lose but we want them to do it minus any ungentlemanly conduct.

Those of us who were at Kensington, the incident which the Honourable Member for St. John referred to, and at the Stadium, I am sure that we were embarrassed as Barbadians and we have to put a lid on that kind of behaviour. I do not think that we would want again to descend to that level. I would not want to see Barbadian spectators behaving as though they were listening to a funeral sermon. This is not the intention of the law. We want them to be natural and spontaneous, yes, exuberant, yes, but violent, no.

I believe that the body language – we can address this – of a lot of our sportsmen is what causes the reaction of the crowd. The body language of the batsman who said he did not edge the ball, he is not LBW, he is not out. The body language of the footballer who says that is not a foul, why are you blowing for me. In fact, Sir, it is now a rule in English football that when the referee blows the whistle on you for a foul and you show any dissent at all, he has the power now to go and take up that ball from where you show the dissent and walk with it – I think it is 5 or 10 yards – towards your goal bar and then put it down so that the opposition could kick it.

That is what we are trying to curb all over the world. I do not see why Barbados should resist it and be stubborn and not be a part of it.

We hold ourselves, Mr. Speaker, I believe as an educated people. Barbadians are not that fanatic that they will do some of the nonsense which other nations do. I agree with all of that. They will not do a lot of the things which people from other nations do. In Brazil when they lose a football match you can count that at least a dozen persons are going to commit suicide, when Brazil loses a match at the world cup.

Mr. Speaker, in Colombia there was a chap who scored an Own goal in the World Cup and you know, Mr. Speaker, that when he got home he was killed. Barbadians are not like this, they are sensible people. Mr. Speaker, we defeated Costa Rico a couple of weeks ago and there was a particular fellow on whom they blamed the defeat and when he got home wherever he went he had about six bodyguards around him. Barbadians are not that fanatic.

I believe that those two incidents to which I referred, might have pushed the button but as I said this is in answer to... and we realize now that it can happen here and we cannot walk about telling people that it cannot happen here and it does not happen here. I feel that we can curb that

kind of behaviour from within Barbados and that is what we are trying to do, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to see some massive signs at some sporting venues that would say, "Sports, Yes, Violence, No", that kind of thing, so that it becomes part of the thinking and part of the psyche when you see it. I would love to see that kind of thing here.

Mr. Speaker, we have to realize that sponsors nowadays are becoming more and more attached to their sports and they have been known to withdraw their support for bad behaviour in sports.

3.30 p.m.

I believe that all the national associations should support this kind of legislation because no sport is immuned from the crowd and no sport is immuned from spontaneous outbreak of bad behaviour. This is why I believe that.

Mr. Speaker, I took the liberty to copy word for word if you allow me, Sir, from Steve Ward's book. It is a book called "No Regrets" that he wrote after the incident in Barbados. He was speaking, Sir, on what happened in Guyana when the spectators ran onto the pitch. He said,

"In Guyana, there were physical threats from angry spectators who trailed us back to the dressing room after the inquiry."

They had an inquiry after the running onto the field and so on.

"The game's inquiry left everyone with a bitter taste in their mouths but the circumstances that led to it emphasized the complete lack of concern shown by officials towards players safety in these circumstances not for the first time. I commented that it was only a matter of time before a Monica Seles scenario occurred."

Remember, Sir, that Monica Seles was stabbed by a spectator who ran onto the side of the court. He went on to say:

"We did not have to wait long for this prediction to nearly come true. An accidental collision between Brendan Julian and local hero, Sherwin Campbell, in Barbados led to the batsman falling over and being run out. This was the signal for anarchy to take over with bottles covering the entire out-field and chance for the batsman to be reinstated, singing out a chorus of booing against us. We had no option but to leave the field and it was here that a bottle..."

Aside.

Hon. R. N. GREENIDGE: He wrote it. This is what I am telling you.

"...it was here that a bottle thrown by a popular local identity from the top deck of a stand missed my head by centimeters."

Aside.

Hon. R. N. GREENIDGE: He went on to say that he could not say anymore because of the defamation suit against him for comments that he had made about the security and that type of thing. I am showing you, Sir, by quoting the kind of reputation which we now have because of that incident. It is there in his book I believe forever and forever. That incident would have shamed us, Mr. Speaker, and I do not think that we should do anything to allow our name to be further smeared. One thing we would not want obviously is for this country to have a reputation similar to what the English footballers have given to England.

I believe, Sir, that we have to be uncompromising in our approach to bad behaviour and we must show a zero tolerance to it. There are some in our midst, Mr. Speaker, who may feel that bad behaviour and violence at sport venues should go unpunished. I do not agree with that, Sir. This law at first may appear to be harsh but that is because we are preparing, Sir, for a worse case scenario. In England, they continue to find something to change in their law almost by the month and they have had it now where they have an all seating stadium. There should be no standing in any stadium. They have a lot of various crime fighting measures and so on at sport and the result of that obviously now is that the bad behaviour has moved now from the stadium to the bars and the streets. It just goes to show you that especially the crowd will do that, Sir, even if you have the law there or not. They will still find somewhere to vent that kind of hooliganism.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, over the past decade the law internationally has developed a more specific and a more visible role in regulating sports. The law is into regulating sports in a way that it was not before. The law is now into things like soccer transfers. There are so many sporting disputes now in court that the law is ever present now where sports are concerned. Mr. Speaker, no one can deny the need to control those sporting activities which are seen as morally reprehensible and a threat to social order. The law must keep sports like anything else in line. The law will not permit sports or anything else to decivilize the society.

As I already said, Sir, I know that there are those who would want the law to stop at the boundary line. Once it is sports that you are dealing with the law should not touch it. The people in ice hockey, Mr. Speaker, have said that they believe that violence sells their sport and that violence is an integral part of their sport of ice hockey. If you try to regulate violence in their sport, it will detract from the sport and ice hockey, in particular, would fail as a business. They want the crowds and the spectators to behave how they

wish and they say that kind of behaviour is good advertising for them.

Where this piece of legislation is concerned, Sir, I do not think that the law should be so badly drawn that the provisions in it are useless. This law as you can see, Sir, from the provisions is applicable four hours before the start of play and two hours after. I think, Sir, that is quite reasonable else the police could arrest you six hours after a game has ended if you still had a bottle in your hand. You have a cut off point. Again, Sir, we could have gone overboard and we could have banned the perpetrators and those who were guilty of bad behaviour from attending that venue for five years, for life. The way in which the law is shaped the prohibition relates to sporting event after sporting event. You can ban a fellow let us say for the next match against Guatemala. He is not to be there and that kind of thing. We have done that just to make it useful and to make it workable.

In England, Sir, I have to let you know that there are lots of English fans who have had their passports taken away to prohibit them from traveling to watch football whether it is in Holland or Turkey or wherever. The point is, Sir, that we are trying to make this law as reasonable and as workable as possible. If we have it on the statute book, Sir, I believe that we must use it. I hope that at the end of the day it will enable Barbados to meet those international requirements that I have spoken about and at the same time that it would act as a deterrent to future lawless behaviour.

I am obliged to you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. Michael North West.

Mr. M. Z. WILLIAMS: Mr. Speaker, I would like at this time to support the amendment to the Public Order Act brought before this House in relation not only to the present situation in Barbados but what is likely to happen down the road in a couple of years as far as sports and sports tourism are concerned and as far as Barbados' involvement at an international level in relation to inviting various teams from across the world to take part in events in Barbados.
3.40 p.m.

I am quite surprised that the Opposition has taken objection to this debate, based on the fact that only today the Leader of the Opposition resigned from the Joint Select Committee on Law and Order. I understand, in my elementary way of thinking, the word "order" means to be peaceful and comfortable. Here it is we have a situation that the Leader of the Opposition over the last couple of months has been extremely critical of this Government in relation to providing the necessary laws and the necessary protection for not only the people of Barbados but for the visitors to this Island.

I am quite surprised that this course has been taken by the Leader of the Opposition in relation to the position of Barbados in this day and age. I am quite surprised that the Leader of the Opposition who goes to a lot of fetes, we know that he is one of those people that you can see here and there and I am surprised to think that he has not been aware of some of the things that have happened in Barbados over the last couple of weeks and months.

Let us think of the Dover incident and put it before the House. You had a situation where a game was taking place at Dover and the spectators and the referees were held up to ridicule by a certain group of people, it is now being investigated. That was within the last couple of months. You have a situation where people go to the National Stadium and for the love of what is going on take pep bottles and throw pep bottles across the field at different people. Chances are, Mr. Speaker, that the wrong person may get hit with a pep bottle.

I am quite surprised in this Act that it says, missiles of "glass bottles". We must adapt to the fact that in this country we have started to move away from missiles of bottles and glass and we have started to use what we consider to be pot shots. People are shooting now. They are not using bottles as missiles. They are not using those things anymore. I will have to agree with this bit of legislation but I am quite concerned that this bit of legislation does not embrace cultural events in Barbados. I think this bit of legislation should truly involve cultural events in Barbados because the same things are likely to happen as at sporting events.

We have seen some of these things happen at cultural events in Barbados. We have seen situations at fetes in Barbados where youngsters enjoying the music of the night seem to take pot shots in the air as a part of enjoying the night's atmosphere, which can be dangerous. Men take out their weapons and salute at certain fetes across this country. So I am quite surprised that this bit of legislation has not embraced the situation in terms of cultural events.

I would like to compliment the members of the Royal Barbados Police Force and also the Attorney-General and the Legal Department for some of the laws which they brought in previous years in terms of the Entertainment Act in Barbados. We know for a fact that with good policing at some of the events where people try to hide certain weapons under the big clothes that they wear, that the police have been able to use not only the scanners that they go to events with but they have been able to use what we consider to be the shakedown and some of those people were held and at least placed before the courts for attempting to take offensive weapons into places of entertainment. If Kensington is registered as a place of entertainment, which I believe it should be, as a promoter, if you rent Kensington to have an event all of that would fall under the Entertainment Act so that somewhere along the line the person who enters

that venue trying to at least hide a weapon and take it in would be subject to prosecution.

What I am also happy about is that the fines are very serious in terms of somebody who has committed an offence by throwing a bottle or going onto the field and molesting the referee or molesting the umpire, the fines are extremely high.

There is one area that I am concerned about and I hope that this would be looked at, it is the area of ticket scalpers. We have known for a fact that several events in Barbados have suffered as a result of ticket scalpers. In relation to that, before there was such modern technology you had a situation where ticket scalpers would operate at the basis of either buying a ticket the morning, taking it to a printery and copying the identical ticket and by the time the event comes around that scalper is outside the gate selling more tickets than the actual promoter or the organisers.

It has happened at Kensington Oval on more than one occasion with cricket. Now that we have got modern technology where you could scan anything on the computer and it becomes identical, chances are that these tickets scalpers would be around the various venues where thousands of people are likely to attend. That innocent person who buys that ticket does not relate to the fact that that ticket is not genuine. So who loses, the organisers lose. The ticket scalper gains. He does not pay value added tax. All he does is just collect a bunch of tickets.

The other system is that at certain venues where you have people who work the gates, collect some of those tickets, send those old tickets outside and those tickets make two rounds. I am saying that I do not feel that the fine of \$1 000 is adequate in relation to ticket scalping in Barbados. Ticket scalping in Barbados, if some of you Honourable Members in this House are not aware has devastated lots of organisers in Barbados. When you look at the other things like taking a bottle onto a field or throwing a bottle onto a field and you have a situation of a \$10 000 fine, I believe it should be \$10 000 if someone is caught selling tickets...

Aside.

Mr. M. Z. WILLIAMS: Perhaps one of these days it may be adequate to hang them but today we just want to put a fine on them.

Mr. Speaker, we are dealing with law and order in this country. If one would remember the English cricket tour sometime back, we saw thousands of English fans here watching cricket. We also saw on our television cameras for the first time in Barbados an attempt to streak by one of those English cricket fans. Who would know if at a later date, Mr. Speaker, that there would be another English tour and that another 10 000 English visitors come to Barbados and because things do not go right with them the hooliganism that takes place in England at various football matches, because there is no law in place in Barbados, would be likely to happen here in this country?

I have to accept the fact that as the old people say, "a stitch in time saves nine." At this time we are looking at positioning our football team at the international level. We have seen the behaviour of the American football team on television playing the Barbados team. What is likely to happen at a later date when we have a situation when Barbados plays a team like that and we have several people on the island and things take place? We saw it with the Cuban match and I am quite surprised that the Leader of the Opposition and the Opposition can try to impress upon us that this amendment to this legislation is not necessary.
3.50 p.m.

I am surprised but perhaps at a later date he would support one when the political meetings of this country are bombarded with missiles. The day will come when he will support a piece of legislation under the Public Order Act that says that anybody who throws a missile at a speaker on a political platform is likely to be fined and imprisoned. The same way that we could think of protection for ourselves as Parliamentary Representatives, we have to protect people as well. Barbados is not the same Barbados as it was in the 40s or 50s, Barbados is a changing Barbados.

We had seen situations in this country like Mack and Chico in St. Lawrence Gap where people took over the place and there were all types of behaviour. I think the time has come in this country that bits of legislation like what is before this Chamber today is extremely important so that people will understand that when they enter places of sporting events that their behaviour has to be up to a standard.

Some may be offended with the fact that the big coolers that people take in bottles and drinks may be questionable. We have seen situations where some of those coolers came into play. People seem to think that a pep bottle does not hit hard but if you want to know how hard a pep bottle can hit you, just have a full pep bottle land in your chest.

Asides.

Mr. M. Z. WILLIAMS: Yes, a pep bottle is just as dangerous. I would like to ask that that part be also looked at and that as well as glass that plastic be also included. If you do not include plastic the time will come when pep bottles will be filled with water and they are just as dangerous missiles as anything else.

I am quite impressed to hear the Leader of the Opposition say he attended a cricket match at Windward and that he was offered a drink from a pep bottle. Perhaps

one of these days he would know that herb wines are also in pep bottles so he should be careful of drinking from those pep bottles because they hold the real stuff.

Mr. Speaker, I must commend the office of the Attorney-General for this bit of legislation. I am going to say that it should be the responsibility of the organisers to see that these things are put in place. I believe that when there is cricket that the West Indies Cricket Board and small promoters should employ reputable security agents. It should be the duty of those security people to police those things more so than the members of the Royal Barbados Police Force who could be dealing with law and order.

I also believe, Mr. Speaker, that in relation to entertainment venues in Barbados that it should be the responsibility of the owners or the organisers to place at strategic points on the venue, a copy of this Act so that patrons when they approach venues would know that this place is governed by law and order. Mr. Speaker, we have a system in this country that is better organised than it was years ago because we know that no tickets for any events should go on sale unless they are authorised by the VAT office. The VAT office monitors and controls the sale of tickets so that they can be paid for the sale of tickets. It should be the duty of the organisers to place at the back of the ticket what is involved in terms of the amendment to this Public Order Act, so that any patron who buys a ticket knows that he has purchased a ticket under the laws of Barbados.

Mr. Speaker, that ticket which is purchased should carry on the back of it sections of the amendment of the Public Order Act, 2000. There should be signs posted across the various venues allowing those patrons to understand the danger of attempting to break the laws of Barbados as far as sporting and cultural events are concerned.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to say at this point that there is a thing creeping in called a 'no-exit' system where you buy a ticket and you cannot come back outside unless you do so at your own risk. Mr. Speaker, that 'no-exit' system is causing a problem in relation to certain people attending these venues. For example, you might leave your car with your lights on but to get back outside....

Asides.

Mr. M. Z. WILLIAMS: Certain Members of this Honourable Chamber might not have that problem because they are well-known but how about people who are not well known because I have seen people embarrassed. I have seen people held at the gate and told that they cannot back inside when they have a valid ticket to show that they had entered the venue before but are told that there is a 'no-exit' system in place.

This is something that needs to be looked at and studied before organisers and promoters can introduce that system. I would like to see it stamped out based on the fact that what is likely to take place, if people could not get back into the venue, is that they then stay outside, throw stones inside the venue and cause the event to be cancelled.

Mr. Speaker, it happened down Spring Garden a couple of years back when the same 'no-exit' system was introduced and because people could not get back inside, they did exactly what this Act said they should not do, they stayed outside and threw missiles on the inside.
4.00 p.m.

In closing I support this Act. I support it wholeheartedly. I would like to see it embrace cultural events as well so that they would be some protection for those people who attend cultural events. I would also like to see that tickets carry the notice regarding the law and I would like to know that signs are placed at various points to let "John Public" know that they are entering a licenced place of entertainment.

Mr. Speaker, this is a stitch in time. This can save Barbados serious embarrassment in years to come. It can save Barbados, when we consider as what Oba has just done for us in 11 seconds, as said by the Honourable Member for St. Lucy.

I am closing on the grounds that I will feel better in a few years to attend an event where I know that I am protected by this Act and I do not have to worry because people would abide by the law and order. Also, this Chamber has to study the "no exit" system that is imposed in this country which is going to create a serious problem. If this system is not studied, this Act, Mr. Speaker, will revoke it at some point and people will want to take revenge and throw bottles and missiles. So I want that no-exit system that is being introduced by various organisers and people to be thought out carefully before it is introduced.

I thank you.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, Barbados seems to be practicing the philosophy and the practices of the big nations. It is rather strange that sometimes we criticise our young people when they implement systems that come out of the United States. We used to say United States for everything but it seems to me, Sir, that the same thing that we have criticised our youngsters for, we as senior politicians are now falling into the same trap.

It is clear to me that the ICC has now found another system to command cricket. As you would recognise, Sir, that the drums and music used to be played at the cricket fields throughout England and that has been taken away from the West Indian spectators. It now appears that

the merriment, by the bottle, no matter how you want to describe it, will also be taken out from cricket.

We must ask ourselves if it is really bottle throwing that they are after or whether they want to dominate cricket to such a stage that they are prepared to change laws of land, that they do not control, so that they can get the unfair advantage of our cricket.

It brings me to a very interesting point. All of a sudden we feel that everything that is being said outside is now law. There are some people in the Caribbean who seem, all of a sudden, not able to use their brains and they are more caught up with the commercial aspect of everything without recognising that by getting involved in these situations that they are destroying the things that we once clamoured for.

That brings me to the point, Sir, that not only are they sending laws to us but they are now sending their youngsters to learn how our youngsters play cricket so that they could then go back to the drawing board and make the videos, along with the practical aspect of the game, to have the unfair advantage.

I want to say that this Parliament cannot make the same error that the West Indies Cricket Board is about to make by allowing people to come and dictate to us how we are supposed to play our game and how we are supposed to control our game.

In Jamaica, there is one man who feels that he can dictate everything for the whole Caribbean and we are supposed to send representatives to speak on behalf of our local boards but at the end of the day it is a man in Jamaica who will decide whether the regional cricket tournament will include people from elsewhere. For the last two or three years we have been hearing about how people were able to beat us using video tapes. Yet, instead of using video tapes, we are now putting a system in place where people can actually watch our bowlers bowl without even having to watch a video tape.

Am I to believe that we are so caught up in the commercial world that everything that is given to us from outside we are quite prepared to accept. Yet, these same politicians would tell you that they do not want to be controlled by anybody. Yet, whenever you look, whatever they do and say is controlled by outside. They say they do not want to be controlled by the Queen but yet still they go to the IMF, the World Bank and now the ICC to take directions and bring back home and give to their people. What type of double standards are we getting in this Parliament? We need to know as politicians how we are thinking and to be consistent in our thoughts. Sir, no wonder organisations like the OECD can feel that they can push whatever they like down our throats because they know that

the Caribbean politician will criticise it but at the end of the day he will sign on the dotted line.

4.10 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, tell me what is the difference of the demand now by the ICC from the demand of the OECD organisation and I wait for my Comrades on the Other Side to tell me the difference. It appears now that we are a bunch of politicians within the Caribbean where we are prepared to speak through two corners of our mouths. From whom are we prepared to take the dictates? We do not want to listen to our constituents but yet people somewhere else can dictate to us. We walk and brag and say we are independent, nobody dictates to us but everything that is given to us we bring to our Parliaments and beg our Parliaments to accept them as law.

Sir, are we going forward and are we caught up in the globalization without even recognising what we are doing? Are we selling the birthright that our foreparents fought for or are we giving it up by ourselves without recognising that we are giving it up? This is a serious situation and no quotation from Steve Waugh's book can convince me that we should change our laws to suit that because he admitted that they cheated. In his book he said that there was a collision between the batsman and another player and because of the interference, the man was given out wrongfully – in his own book. Sir, yet still we are going to come to Parliament and use that as an example to change a law. I am told, I was not there, that the throwing of missiles at the Stadium was not started by Barbadians. It was started by somebody somewhere else and now we are going to use that as an example to cry down our own Barbadians.

Sir, I am saying, if you had said to me that we need to have a law to deal with cricketers who come here and behave badly along with the spectators, I might be prepared to listen to you. If you are saying to me that if we were to have a law that will deal with the persons sitting on the bench that threw the missiles in the Stadium that provoked the action, I might be prepared to listen. When you are going to tell me that a spectator is supposed to sit down and accept foolishness and he is wrong and the person who starts the action is right, something will have to be wrong with my brain. I know that there is nothing wrong with my brain so it has to be wrong with somebody else's brain.

Sir, I want to know what is the logic behind this particular Bill when you are prepared to penalise your own people who responded to the action and you are not prepared to put the law to deal with those who started the action. We always say that massa days are done but is this a case that massa is still speaking, because it seems like we are still being dictated to even though we walk and brag that we are free and liberated. Politicians got up in here today and if you were to hear them, you would believe that a lot of them were not aware of the facts.

Sir, I am saying that if the British want to deal with their subjects, let them deal with them but we in Barbados have to decide what we are going to do to control our problems. I do not expect any Attorney-General to come to this Parliament and tell me that he is doing something because the ICC is asking or requiring to do it. I expect the Attorney-General to come to this Parliament to tell me he wants it done because this is what is right for Barbados. Do not use the example of somebody else because it is telling me that you are probably doing it under duress and you know in law that is not right so the law will have to be wrong and the amendment will have to be wrong based on the law and I am no lawyer.

Sir, I am saying the case has been placed badly before this Parliament and I am saying that we have no case to answer and that this document should not even be here being discussed because it is clear to me that we are either under attack or under a case of duress.

Mr. Speaker, we cannot ignore the fact, Sir, that these countries have always used certain laws to get what they want and it is a matter of controlling cricket and they want to control cricket. What I would also like to find out is what is the position of our representative on the BCA who sits on the West Indies Cricket Board. I would know his opinion on the inclusion of the English team in the Regional Cricket Tournament. I have nothing against the English.

What is amazing, Sir, is that at a time when the English are getting rid of our cricketers, we are bringing theirs in and I want to know what is the logic in it. I want to know if there was a free vote, if every cricket Board within the West Indies voted to agree that this is going to be the position or whether we have some big dictator in Jamaica who feels that he can demand and commit West Indies cricket to whatever he feels like, like how he has placed the one-day matches to support a particular interest.

Sir, I want to know if the West Indies cricket is about the West Indies anymore or if it is about a particular country or a particular person. I also want to know from our people in Barbados how can they feel every year to know that we cannot tell anybody when we are going to get a knock-out match in Barbados. Do you mean that we are not interested in knock-out matches anymore? I thought that there would have been a system where you rotate the knock-out matches. It is clear to me that all of a sudden we have representatives who are prepared to go and sit down and accept all sorts of foolishness but then we would blame our spectators within our various territories.

Sir, I am saying that I find it rather difficult that at a time when we recognise the evils of globalization that we will allow globalization to come into our cricket and we will pass laws to make it legal. Also, that we as a people will come to Parliament and pass laws to behave as if our

spectators are vagabonds and rogues. I am telling you, Mr. Speaker, that what went on at Kensington Oval could not be matched by what goes on at a football match elsewhere or what went on at the Stadium could not be matched by a football match in other countries. As I was told, this was a response to something but in the other country it appears that when you turn up at a football match that is something you will expect. Now we are bringing laws as if there was a cricket match and for five days this thing was occurring and nothing provoked it. Nobody is interested in what happened. The point is we must get a law to deal with it. What is needed in this country, Sir, is an educational system to defeat these problems instead of having a law to solve everything.

I thank you.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. James North.

Hon. R. C. EASTMOND: Mr. Speaker, when I listened carefully to the Honourable Member for St. Lucy, I smiled somewhat, not intent on laughing at the Honourable Member for St. Lucy or disregarding anything that he said, or not casting aside or spurning anything that he said but I smiled because when the original Public Order Act of Barbados was brought before this Honourable House many years ago, the Party of which I am a member was in Opposition and the Party of which the Honourable Member for St. Lucy is a Member was in Government and somehow the Honourable Member for St. Lucy may very well have sounded today, how Members on my Side would have sounded then, when the Public Order Act was first passed between 1969 and 1970 – the original Public Order Act.

Mr. Speaker, to take you back, the period 1969-1971 was a period of restlessness in the Caribbean. In neighbouring Trinidad, Mankedel Doaga, Geddes Grainger, Dave Danbeau and others had virtually brought the Government of Trinidad and Tobago to its knees. In fact, they staged such a successful insurrection that if they had an alternate Government, they might very well have succeeded in staging a coup.

The Honourable Member who was in charge of the Government of Trinidad, the late Dr. Eric Williams responded by passing a Public Order Act to control that type of behaviour in neighbouring Trinidad and Tobago. In Barbados, as certain elements like the Clarkes of this world, with relatives in here, the Sealeys of this world, with friends in here, the Mottleys of this world, with relatives in here, were restlessly agitating out there, the Government in 1970 responded by producing a Public Order Act which we are seeking to amend today. That Public Order Act met with the almost identical response from the Opposition then that this particular amendment seems to be meeting from the Honourable Member for St. Lucy.

Sir, I smiled and said to myself that when we change sides, very often the stances that we take reflect our status whether as Government or Opposition but when I heard the Honourable Member for St. Lucy something provoked some reaction in my mind. I am not going to speak about the Honourable Member for St. Lucy pejoratively at all. One admirable thing about the Honourable Member for St. Lucy is that he can never be accused of not being in touch with the ground. He is always connected to what is going on. In fact, of all other Honourable Members, he seems to always have the issues at his fingertips but to articulate them, defend them and argue them is a totally different story.
4.20 p.m.

However, the Honourable Member for St. Lucy is always connected with the ground and he made the rather interesting point which he could have developed to a high philosophical and metaphysical level. He made the interesting point that he objected to the use of fetters on our sovereignty based on our desire to tow the line with international agencies. That was basically the theme of what the Honourable Member for St. Lucy was saying. He was saying that he protested that we in Barbados could submit so supinely to the ICC that we might be accused of giving up some sovereignty just to tow the line.

Asides.

Hon. R. C. EASTMOND: The Honourable Member for St. Lucy could very well have been shadow boxing and I do not really see any need for a counter punch because he did not connect. I believe that the Honourable Member to whom he aimed his target feinted so well, I mean feinted in the ring, not fainted the other way, that the Honourable Member for St. Lucy did not score a point in that round.

Nonetheless, Mr. Speaker, I just want to remind the Honourable Member that in the world of international obligations whenever sovereign countries work with other sovereign countries in the interest of harmonious relations there is inevitably a cession of sovereignty. Whether it means being a participant in CARICOM, whether it means joining the World Trade Organisation, to which the Democratic Labour Party committed this country in April of 1993 or 1994, or by whatever means, once you occupy part of the stage in the international arena and you are going to be any party to any agreement, inevitably you surrender some of your sovereignty and you cede some of your nationalistic ego in the interest of international peace and international harmony.

Mr. Speaker, when I consider the purpose of this legislation, I go back to the old-fashioned days when law existed at its primary stage, to the whole question of law and order. Nowadays, if you look at the various functions and purposes of law, they have gone nowadays beyond the mere maintenance of law and order but this particular piece of legislation reminds me not so much of a piece of legislation

designed to make us fulfil international obligations, but at its core and with its thrust, it is really designed to preserve law and order.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I have it from my history books that you yourself played cricket or played at cricket.

Asides.

Hon. R. C. EASTMOND: Play at cricket, I believe is the English way of describing efforts.

Asides.

Hon. R. C. EASTMOND: I am sorry, Mr. Speaker, nonetheless, the point being made is that we go back, far back in historical times to prove the truth of these things.

Mr. Speaker, in your time playing cricket in 1959, 1960, 1961 and 1962, spectators in those days seem resigned to coming to enjoy themselves, invariably did not come as organised gangs and behaved themselves in a society that was rather quiescent. Mr. Speaker, I believe even in Jamaica where people often lamented the high amount of illiteracy in the 1960s and the early 1970s, even in Trinidad and other places, crowds of 40 years ago conducted themselves with a certain decorum.

Mr. Speaker, we are now living in an era of restiveness, restlessness and rage. Mr. Speaker, the very people who would have been tolerant at a given time 45 years ago, would today somehow be far more sanguine in the attack of faulty umpiring decisions.

Putting aside that, Mr. Speaker, the point that is being made here is that when spectators go to the National Stadium, to Kensington or to any other place that is enclosed where a game is going on, the spectators should be made to understand that there is a certain minimum level of conduct below which one should not go.

I sense that the purpose of this legislation is to dissuade over-exuberant spectators or aggrieved spectators, vexed with umpiring decisions, or other persons who might be or are acting under the influence of spirituous substances, from staging unnecessary and unauthorised invasions of the field.

Mr. Speaker, it was just 26 years ago that Lawrence George Rowe came down here, a Friday and produced a fantastic 48 and on the next day, the Saturday, almost all of Barbados descended on Kensington.

Asides.

Hon. R. C. EASTMOND: On the Saturday, he finished at 202.

Asides.

Hon. R. C. EASTMOND: ...and he was out the Sunday for 302, caught at mid-wicket off Tony Gregg's off-spin.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: On a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the House, Sir. It was not the Friday and the Saturday, Sir.

Asides.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: No, it was not. There was a break between the innings...

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member, please, do not prolong that, please, you would know from experience that a point of order is not a point of ...

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, he is misleading the House on

Hon. R. C. EASTMOND: Mr. Speaker, I started by saying that I had no intention to speak pejoratively of the Honourable Member for St. Lucy. I said quite clearly that I was not going to attack him. Now, in 1974, the Honourable Member for St. Lucy was very much a youth, he was scarcely half 'brought-up' and if he had got to Kensington that day, first of all he would have been playing truant from Coleridge and Parry. He would have been too young and Coleridge and Parry did not have an off-day that day to go to cricket, I am sure about that. Coleridge and Parry did not have an off-day that day to send the students to cricket.

The Honourable Member for St. Lucy must recognise those of us who speak in a historical context. When he is old enough to speak like old men, he should speak like old men but in his stage of being an innocent youth, he should either read the history books or take his place and keep his seat.

Mr. Speaker, the point I was making is that even when the people got very excited at Lawrence Rowe's 202 the Saturday afternoon and the 302 on the Sunday, they all celebrated but Lawrence Rowe, even though we would say that he was mobbed, was under no physical threat. Some of the spectators 'had in' liquor too, some were very excited, many had stowed away the Saturday because the gatekeepers just did not have what it took to open the gate, and many of the people who wanted to pay did not wait on them. Some Honourable Members in this House might have even got in there over the southern sight screen.

The point I was making is this. As times have changed, we seem to have entered an era where Barbadians do not tolerate, as we would say in the country, like one time. In other words, where Barbadians and where Caribbean people do not seem to exercise that level of tolerance and forbearance like before and where people who would

normally have kept their tempers in good check years ago, all of a sudden seem easily inflamed and even inflammatory in their speech and in their behaviour.

My support for this piece of legislation comes in a situation where increasingly more and more negative vibrations, if you want to call it that, are affecting our community and affecting our youth. I would rather think that several persons in Barbados under the influence of narcotic drugs, attend sports sometimes quite 'high'. I also believe that where the influence of narcotic drugs is linked with a lot of violent, deviant behaviour and such like and where in any event we are not as passive a people as we were 40 years ago.

I feel – whether or not the Honourable Member for St. Lucy feels that the ICC is imposing this on us – the time has come when law and order must assert itself in its original way with the same vigor. I believe that lawlessness must always be stamped out. I believe that lawlessness of any kind must be stamped out.
4.30 p.m.

I am not supporting the Bill because Pat Rousseau supported it because I do not even know the man. I am not supporting the Bill because I think that we are referring to the ICC in a supine way laying prostrate before them. I think that almost every civilized country is going to have to put legislation like this in place anyway whether they call it an amendment to the Public Order Act, whether they amend their Vagrancy Act or whether they produce legislation designed to control crowd disorder and such like.

In addition, Mr. Speaker, what is also noteworthy is that no Caribbean Government including the Barbados Government is going to suppress lawful sporting activity. Indeed, Governments might very well increase sporting activities and we might very well be on the threshold of an era where we see mini-stadia coming to Barbados enclosed and located strategically at different points in Barbados and where more and more people are going to come out. We are also going to embark on an era where sporting at night is going to increase at a greater level than before. Where there is darkness even though some light often does something to the darkness, people who have a flair for getting agitated at night especially if the light goes off or if beyond the boundary is dark might very well be tempted to do something wrong.

Mr. Speaker, I had not originally intended to speak but I respect the right of the Honourable Member for St. Lucy to caution us to be slow in following the Pat Rousseau's of this world. That was a sub-theme of his speech. I am not speaking pejoratively about Mr. Pat Rousseau. I am saying that the Honourable Member for St. Lucy is not at all objecting to the question of gun control. He wants to

make sure that we are in control of what we control. That is all that he is saying. He does not have a fundamental objection or exception to this piece of legislation. What he is cautioning us about is to beware of the gifts and I take the point.

Mr. Speaker, I think that the Honourable Member for St. Michael North West made a number of interesting and important points obviously from his perspective as a man on the ground, a man who is always on the ground and may be on the ground in St. Michael North West forever and forever. Okay, but his view is also from the perspective of a person who would have suffered from the frustration of organizing shows at night. Let us not forget, Mr. Speaker, that persons from other parts of the Caribbean have come to our national stadium not once, not twice, not three times who played some crazy music and bad behaviour, and the sub-culture going with the behaviour, namely the marijuana smoking and such like inflamed passions. We have had this happening in Barbados.

Indeed, I think the authorities at the national stadium may even have stopped permitting specialists in dub music from performing because of the degeneration of law and order when such persons came and performed there. As I conclude, Mr. Speaker, I see nothing in this legislation that is enabling or that is fundamentally developmental. It goes back to the old time days when the primary purpose of law was to control the base passions of mankind. Mr. Speaker, I am dealing in its historical context. When we were over there, we did not like it either. We are over here now and we are seeing the world from a different perspective as a Government than what we saw as an Opposition 34 years ago.

Mr. Speaker, I am going to commend this piece of legislation to this Honourable House. I think that we have to send clear signals to all concerned that we have no objection to people enjoying themselves. We have no objection to people pursuing certain forms of entertainment. We have no objection to people celebrating. I have seen school children from all schools at the stadium in recent times celebrating when they had reason to and there was no bad behaviour. There was no invading the field.

Indeed, I noticed that when watching the pictures at the Olympics the discipline that was demonstrated and, of course, there was security that not a fellow even dreamed of invading the field. Those Olympics were held in Australia. Do not tell me that there were not Australians in those stands who were without 21 beers or 18 beers and such like. The point about it is that, even though the Honourable Member for St. Lucy said that we should be slow to take away people's merriment and that we should do nothing to stop a man from enjoying himself, we feel that even when you go to cricket to 'fire one' and to drink from a glass or urn or whatever that you still have to obey law and order. Mr. Speaker, Sir, I believe that as time progresses and other

countries recognize what Barbados is doing it is reasonable to anticipate, Mr. Speaker, that those countries that have not yet put legislation like this in place will do so.

The Honourable Member for St. Michael North West made a most interesting point. He made the point out of a sense of statesmanship. He spoke very well and said that an incident like a crowd invasion blown out of proportion in the international Press can do damage to a country and tarnish its reputation. I remember there was a man called E. M. Wellings who used to be a sports writer. He was the antithesis of commonsense. He was the most biased, racist and prejudiced writer there was. Even when a schoolboy ate a piece of chicken or drank a Coke, E. M. Wellings always had some dirty thing to say about that boy if he was a West Indian and if the West Indies were beating England. E. M. Wellings was so prejudiced that he behaved as though West Indian fast bowlers should be before the law courts and as though West Indian batsmen were fellows with swords in their hands out to destroy humanity.

The point about people like E. M. Wellings is this, Mr. Speaker. Barbados is vulnerable. It is small. It is not rich. It is a country asserting itself but it is still vulnerable. As the words of my learned and distinguished colleague from St. Michael North West, a man on the ground, a man who is in touch with reality, I will respectfully submit, Mr. Speaker, that we are so vulnerable that when people with their own self seeking interest to serve go and tarnish our reputation, then people who do not know the truth will wrongly conclude that Barbados is a place of assassins, vagabonds and swordsmen and such like.

The Honourable Member for St. Michael North West was saying that once we are able to control our circumstances and ward off the possibility of any prejudice journalists from abroad who try to tarnish our reputation, then we can set an example. I will concede to the Honourable Member for St. Lucy that one should be cautious when accepting what Steve Waugh said, because Australia and England are no places where you get persons who are necessarily bestowed with the best of virtue. Indeed, somewhere in the English Law Reports there were at least two cases where there were stampedes and people died. They were caused either by agitation on the part of crowds and sometimes a flimsy stadium but often too, Mr. Speaker, that is the type of behaviour that will go to imperil the safety of law abiding people who go to enjoy a good spectator sport.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that I have attempted at the last minute, because I did not intend to speak and not even having had a chance yet to prepare a note, to justify the purpose of this legislation. I went back to its old historical days in talking about Geddes Grainger and Dave Darbean and those boys in the 'black power movement' in Trinidad and Tobago when they nearly brought down Eric Williams and how he was the first person in this part of the

Caribbean to produce a Public Order Act. I went back to the old Public Order Act of Barbados, 1970 designed to curb some militants from the City of Bridgetown. I traced, Mr. Speaker, the reasons why we are putting this legislation and I believe that all Honourable Members including the Honourable Member for St. Lucy would recognize notwithstanding the reservations he has that things like these are necessary because at the end of the day all of Barbados must be safe for all concerned.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

4.40 p.m.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, I rise to wind up the debate on this Bill and am grateful to all Honourable Members who have contributed. I must confess however that it was with a sense of dismay that I listened to the effusions of the Opposition especially those of the Leader of the Opposition. In essence, the Leader of the Opposition who opposes the Bill and has left the Chamber so that he does not have to vote on it says that the Bill is overkill, reactionary and unnecessary. The Leader of the Opposition in Barbados is therefore saying that he supports a continuation of circumstances where people should be free to invade a playing area free to 'pelt' bottles on the field of play. I want to repeat that. The implication of the Leader of the Opposition's opposition to this Bill is that he supports the continuation of circumstances under which people should be allowed to run onto the field of play as they like and 'pelt' bottles, hit players, endanger their limbs and so on. That is the implication of opposing this. That has come from a person who publicly has gone on record in this country saying that he supports a policy of zero tolerance for antisocial and criminal conduct.

He talks for the sake of talking without thinking through the implications of what he says. He does it all the time.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, Sir, it really is no different from the behaviour displayed by the Leader of the Opposition in relation to the incident last week where he complained that he was not given an opportunity to speak at the national event but today when given an opportunity to speak, like all other MPs on the matter, did not speak. He speaks from both sides of his mouth all the time.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, I have heard some foolishness in my time. Imagine, Sir, that the Barbados Cricket Association, three members first, including Sir Conrad, came and then later on, Mr. Owen Estwick ...

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. The Honourable Member in his speech is seeking to mislead the House and I am rising on a point of order because at no point in my presentation earlier today did I

indicate that I support or condone in any way the bad behaviour of spectators at sporting events.

The record must reflect that that is not what I said. Therefore, if the Honourable Member is drawing an inference from it, that is erroneous it is my right to stand up and correct that erroneous inference.

I made the point, Sir, which has not yet been challenged that none of the offences which this Act seeks to create are new. All of them could be dealt with under the existing Laws of Barbados and I stand by that position. This legislation is unnecessary and it has never been our intention to condone reckless behaviour. All the reckless behaviour that has taken place so far in Barbados at sporting events can be covered by existing legislation and if the police were properly remunerated and had the inclination because of that remuneration to undertake the tasks that are necessary to control that level of crime.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, I was reverting to the history of this legislation which is important. I have heard talk about imperialism and dictation from ICC and so on. The Honourable Member for St. James North put it well when he explained that a country has certain international obligations which from time to time are binding.

In the interest of international community countries have to comply. I was careful to read out the letter of November 2, 1999 from the ICC to the West Indies Cricket Board which called for three things, the second of which was that Government legislation to deal with precisely the matters that are here today. They put up signs, they printed on the backs of tickets prohibitions about the use of bottles, they ran a campaign on TV and in the Press and the Opposition never criticised what the BCA was doing in this past international season with Zimbabwe and Pakistan. There was no adverse comment.

4.50 p.m.

This matter of legislation was taken by the Board to the Association at its recent meeting and was unanimously supported by the Board and the Association.

Asides.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: The only two who have opposed are those two.

Sir, I wish to put on record, Sir, that the Board of the BCA and the Barbados Cricket Association are fully supportive of this legislation.

Sir, it is not a question of an international body dictating to a Government but an international body establishing norms and rules for the member organisations of

that international body to comply with. The fact that one of those requirements or norms calls upon the Government to introduce legislation is not a dictation to a Government especially where the legislation is not pertinent. This legislation is only regulating conduct amongst spectators who attend designated sporting events, that is the essence of this legislation.

Sir, I heard the comments of the Honourable Member for St. Michael North West about increasing the fine for touting. I am not at this stage going to accept that amendment. I will leave the law as it is.

I wish to remind Honourable Members that in preparing for this legislation the BCA also used their stewards, if I may designate them as such, to ensure that there was compliance with notices and the terms of the notices which they had put up. It is my understanding that that will continue. Police have been included in the Bill because I would have thought that it accords commonsense, not to create a situation where the average steward would have a right to search. I think you would find objections to that. We have vested the right to search only in police officers. They cannot search arbitrarily, they have to do it on the basis of reasonable suspicion otherwise, the stewards will be there to see what is going on. It is quite possible that a steward may see somebody with a bottle and the proper thing to do is to report it to the police for the police to follow up with the necessary action.

I am heartened, Sir, by the support which the legislation has got from Members on this Side, which I have got from the BCA and its broad membership.

The Government was asked to bring it for the last season but we were not able to bring it in terms of the parliamentary calendar and the other things we had to do. Sir, this will have effect certainly for the next cricket season and any other designated sporting events that the organisers require.

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

Hon. R. N. GREENIDGE: I beg to second that.

The question was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

On the motion of Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS seconded by Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER the House resolved itself into Committee, Mr. D. CARTER in the Chair.

COMMITTEE

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The House is now in Committee.

Clauses 1 & 2 were called and passed.

Clause 3 was called.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Sir, in Clause 3, Page 4 of the Bill, Clause 27L.(1), I beg to insert the following words after "a person who" and insert these words "without lawful authority or excuse and". It will now read:

"A person who without lawful authority or excuse and in contravention of a prohibition by the organisers of a designated sporting event, has in his possession a bottle or other article made of glass"

I beg to move that Clause 3 as so amended stand part.

Hon. R. N. GREENIDGE: I beg to second that.

The question was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

Clause 4 was called and passed.

On the motion of Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS, seconded by Hon. Miss B. A. Miller, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported to His Honour, the SPEAKER, the passing of one Bill in Committee, with One Amendment, and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

On the separate motions of Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS seconded by Hon. Miss B. A. Miller, the Bill was read a third time and passed and cited as the Public Order (Amendment) Act, 2000.
5.00 p.m.

ITEM NO. 5 – RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE VESTING IN THE NATIONAL HOUSING CORPORATION OF LANDS AT WORKMANS, IN THE PARISH OF SAINT GEORGE

Hon. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Deputy Speaker, This Resolution before this House seeks permission to vest 280.2 square metres of Crown land at Workmans in the parish of St. George to the National Housing Corporation. Mr. Deputy Speaker, Cabinet in 1997 agreed that lands adjoining the ABC Highway, lands that were not being used and also properties such as the one at Workmans, St. George, should be vested in the National Housing Corporation. Before this was done, we also sought permission to sell these lands. On numerous occasions, Mr. Deputy Speaker, these disused properties and the very close lands were sold to adjoining land owners.

This one in question, Mr. Deputy Speaker, was offered for sale but the person, a Ms. Jeffers of Hope Park,

St. George, did not finalise the sale. Therefore, we are asking that this property, disused bath, be vested in the National Housing Corporation so that the Corporation can use the funds from the sale of this bath to put into their housing programme.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Attorney-General has certified the Resolution and with those remarks, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I beg that this Resolution do now pass.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I believe that there should be a clear Government policy on the sale of land in Barbados. I have already spoken on this particular issue in this Parliament where we as a Parliament come and we agree to sell these baths as a matter of policy. If you were to drive through Barbados, Sir, you would recognise that even though we approve the sale of these baths to persons, the majority cannot gain their legal documents for these baths and most of them, Sir, have deteriorated to such a stage, that I am not sure that this Parliament could get the money that we agreed to sell these baths to the purchasers.

I know of a case, Sir, where the gentleman is quite prepared to start a project. He wanted to start the project about three years ago and up to now, Sir, the person cannot get the title to the property and the building is deteriorating every day. I am saying, Sir, that it is not fair for people to agree to buy property from Government, they cannot get possession of the property and you are still requesting those persons to pay the same amount of money as agreed to previously.

I am calling on the Minister to take charge of this particular issue and to make sure that something is done that those poor people who offered to purchase those baths, Sir, would get them at a reasonable price. I am not sure that it will be fair to continue to ask those persons to pay the same price that you have been asking them to pay for three years when they cannot even get the conveyance up to now. I think, Sir, that the Minister is obligated to tell this Parliament why it is that after three years that the persons wishing to purchase these properties cannot get their conveyances for these baths?

I thank you very much, Sir.

Hon. G. A. CLARKE: Sir, most of these old properties were properties of the vestry system and in most cases you cannot find the title. Whenever we cannot find the titles to the properties, we come to Parliament. The Crown will have to give the same title through an Act of Parliament. Whenever we find a case like this, this is what we do.

I want to assure the Member that in all cases we have to come to Parliament to get these baths and these properties into the public hands.

With those remarks, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I beg that this Resolution do now pass.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I beg to second that, Sir.

The question was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

ORDER NO. 3 – THE RESUMPTION OF THE
RESOLUTION TO TAKE NOTE OF THE
GREEN PAPER ON PERSONS WITH
DISABILITIES

Hon. H. F. LASHLEY: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Members of Both Sides of this House, today marks both a momentous and historic moment for this House in the lives of persons with disabilities.

The Green Paper on Persons with Disabilities was debated and we accept the thoroughness of preparation of the document in all areas of social development.

Now, Sir, we must advance from words to deeds. Let me commence by assuring and reassuring you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that I believe sincerely in the transformation process, that the lives of members of our communities can be transformed, given the right programmes, leadership and dedication.

My friend, the Honourable Member for St. Philip North, I must thank for his initiation of the disability agenda, especially when he alluded to the work of Mr. Errol Best, present Director of the National Disability Unit, when he was at The National Assistance Board.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I was indeed fortunate to be an integral part of that transformation of old people from being house-bound, passive and rocking chair candidates, to be participants in the widest range of social and recreational programmes ever developed for older persons anywhere in the Caribbean, and possibly the world.

Mr. Best and his team created the conducive environment which allowed older persons to improve the quality of their lives.

The transformation of older persons to active members of society looking forward to the next trip or outing including monthly picnics, Bajan Queen and Harbour Master cruises, holidays abroad, luncheons at various times of the year, weekends stay in Hotels, lunchtime concerts, senior citizens monthly awards, evening to remember programmes, monthly church services, Christmas Hamper programmes, visits to National Trust houses, visits to all places of interest, appearances on television programmes – their own theme song – “Don’t Abandon Them,”
a n d d r a m a t i c

performances by older persons drama group. These programmes made a difference and will continue forever to make a difference to older persons in Barbados.
5.10 p.m.

Sir, to add even further to that dimension they got together too and put together a series of dramatic productions recently highlighted with the last production which was directed by Winston Farrell called "Batting through a Century."

Mr. Deputy Speaker, this is certainly proof of our unshaken belief in the transformation process. We live through it and work with it so I can assure you that it is all possible. Sir, today I can assure you that this Green Paper may not change the world but I can assure you that it will form the basis of making Barbados a better place for all persons with disabilities. Indeed, a better place for all Barbadians able and disabled. Whenever we improve the supportive environments for persons with disabilities, older persons and mothers with younger children, we will also benefit and so will all other persons.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, for too long persons with disabilities have been invisible in this society. Today we have started a process on which future generations can reflect and say with pride that we have been true crafters of our fate and not social victims of our times. History will therefore record us, Sir, as charters of our destiny who built a secure future for these persons with disabilities.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, through this Green Paper, we have given persons with disabilities their rightful place in this country. We have brought hope where there was none before. The conclusion on this Green Paper is however the first phase in the process but we will leave here satisfied that our forefathers would have been proud of us, proud of the comprehensiveness of the Green Paper, proud of the considerable hard work that went into its preparation, proud of the conviction of Both Sides of this House that we are at last making a giant step forward in providing a better quality of life for persons living with disabilities.

Sir, I am extremely happy that in keeping with the mandate of the Ministry of Social Transformation to create an enabling environment for our older persons and persons with disabilities. We have not only laid a sustainable foundation that will empower persons with disabilities but we have paved the way for persons with disabilities to have a considerable say in matters that affect their lives and also that of their families.

Persons with disabilities can therefore look to the future, certainly with hope and a sense of pride knowing that this Parliament is in support of their integration and inclusion at all levels of this society. Furthermore, the creation of an

enabling environment for persons with disabilities cannot take place without the full participation of every single member of this society that we live in.

Sir, this Green Paper came from the National Disabilities Unit in the year 1999 as a completed document and hence it was forwarded to Cabinet in September only some five months later. For that, I want to extend my sincerest appreciation to the staff at the Ministry and also Mr. Tony Cave who acted as Permanent Secretary during the preparation of the document to be brought to Parliament.

Sir, the masses of people elected all of us to Government because they were confident that we are champions of their causes and have the skills and knowledge to make a difference. We must, therefore, be interested in the economic, scientific, spiritual, intellectual and social development of this country.

Sir, I honestly believe that men still have visions, much in the same way that some men still dream dreams. I, however, believe that central to the accomplishment of our visions and the realisation of our dreams, must be the creation of the right social and economic environment and opportunities for our people. Today, we have sought to do just that.

Our vision is for a Barbados where we need no slogans to explain the feelings of persons with disabilities and a Barbados where the rights of persons with disabilities are respected and observed and where persons with disabilities are accorded the respect they deserve as true members of this society that we live in.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, these rights of persons with disabilities include the right to adequate health care, education, housing, employment, a decent living wage, recreational and cultural activities, income support, transportation, a built environment, access to communication and information and to family life, as properly articulated in the Green Paper.

The vision of the National Disabilities Unit under the Ministry of Social Transformation is to provide dynamic leadership, advocacy and full utilisation of all services by persons with disabilities, certainly by the year 2010. Mr. Speaker, the year 2010 is only ten years away. Therefore, the support of everyone is needed if the vision is to be realised.

Sir, our mission is clearly to promote the advancement and empowerment of persons with disabilities in order to ensure equal opportunities for their integration and participation in all aspects of community living. In order to ensure the necessary progress, the Government of Barbados, through the Ministry of Social Transformation will ensure the following:

1. Act as an exemplary employer in the equality of employment of persons with disabilities.
2. Ensure that the programmes and operational policies of the National Disabilities Unit reflect the needs of persons with disabilities.
3. Promote public awareness of disability related issues.
4. Collaborate with international organisation and bodies that will advance the causes of persons with disabilities.
5. Provide guidance and support for private and public sector organisations in the development of their practices and policies with regard to persons with disabilities.
6. Systematically review the National Disabilities Unit's strategic action plan so as to ensure that programmes are adopted and initiated that address needs of persons with disabilities.

5.20 p.m.

Sir, also to ensure and encourage policies of accessibility for persons with disabilities as it relates to housing, transportation and the physical environment.

Sir, collate a national database of the full extent and types of disabilities, the respective skills, formal education, training and job experience for the disabled.

Provide support to an umbrella body which represents all organisations within the voluntary sector and to conduct and encourage research in all areas related to persons with disabilities.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I wish to reassure persons with disabilities that we on this Side have heard their cries for assistance. Simultaneously, Mr. Deputy Speaker, this Green Paper has raised the hopes of all persons with disabilities and it is the task of this Honourable Chamber, the Government, the Ministry of Social Transformation and the National Disabilities Unit to ensure that these hopes are not raised in vain, that the necessary resources are channelled to secure a future and not to allow despair ever to be their only companion again.

Indeed, Sir, the Ministry of Social Transformation plans to ensure that the Estimates for the year 2001-2002 reflects the resources necessary to ensure that persons with disabilities are gradually incorporated into all areas of daily living.

Sir, our ministry will seek the support of Cabinet and the Ministry of the Civil Service for adequate and varied high calibre persons to provide staffing support.

This Green Paper and subsequent consultations have identified clear areas of staffing needs. In the area of employment creation, it is necessary to provide an employment placement officer for each disability type. Let me give you some examples, Sir. Sir, an officer for the deaf and hearing impaired, an officer for the blind and visually impaired, an officer for wheelchair users and those with walking difficulties and an officer also for mentally challenged persons.

It is quite clear, Sir, that all the areas identified in the Green Paper – health, employment training, education and social training, supported environments – are so vast that there is a need for a coordinator in each area to work closely with the Ministry and departments to enable coordination of policy development.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, already that speaks to eight new staff positions. A further concern is the number of blind persons in Barbados, but there are seldom seen on our streets, out shopping, in place of work or travelling on our transport system.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is our intention to employ mobility officers to train blind persons to cope in their homes, to use public facilities and to be a part of mainstream Barbados. Mr. Deputy Speaker, the need for such staff is clear for all of us to see, if we are going to improve the living circumstances of the blind.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, further information confirms that large numbers of persons with disabilities, especially young, mentally challenged adults, remain in their homes on a daily basis with other members of their family confined to their homes to look after them. It is our intention to create day activity facilities to enable these persons to attend on a daily basis to be trained in social skills and other creative activities and simultaneously to allow their relatives to be free to work. Sir, these centres will be opened all year round.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, today we are saying that the implementation of this Green Paper will see a new range of programmes not previously evident, and that Barbados should take the lead in the Caribbean – and this is the second time that I am talking in the regional context, Sir, – in moving from rhetoric or from talk, Sir, to the reality of providing the necessary projects and programmes which will improve the quality of life of every person in this country with a disability and their families too, Sir. To do so, we need the infrastructure in place and persons with the right attitudes and the correct aptitudes as staff members to move the service forward.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the task is indeed very daunting. Today we are at the crossroads, we can follow the road that leads to a prosperous future for them all, but to do

so, we need your support for the necessary staffing and programmes, or we can remain as we are and allow frustration to build once again among our disabled community.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is the intention of the Ministry of Social Transformation to involve all persons with disabilities and their organisations in planning for their future. The Ministry of Social Transformation through the Disability Unit have provided subventions to all the organisations listed with the Unit and over the past two years have substantially increased the subvention to the Barbados Council for the Disabled as the coordinating body for all organisations and plans to increase this subvention further in the coming Estimates within our budgeting limits.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I must laud the contributions of all of our organisations to the development of this Green Paper and look forward to their involvement certainly in the future planning of asserting their services and programmes. Special thanks at this time must go to Mr. Clevedon Mayers, who is the third President of the Barbados Council of the Disabled, for all of his efforts.

Clearly, the task ahead requires the full efforts of our tripartite partnerships, for the Ministry of Social Transformation cannot achieve all the necessary changes on its own.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, while we are looking toward the future, we cannot wait for everything to be put in place, new staffing, new facilities to commence programme planning. To this end, I am sure that this House will join with me today in certainly commending the National Disability Unit for its effort in such a short period of time since the laying of the Green Paper and today for the number of initiatives which the Unit has brought forward to date.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, you will remember that I started by saying to this House that I believe certainly in the transformation process, that the lives of persons within our society can be transformed, because I too lived through such a period when I worked with the National Assistance Board.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the production and presentation of this Green Paper was certainly a monumental task for a very, very small Unit. They must be commended and I want to thank them by my colleagues in Cabinet and certainly by all Honourable Members present of this Honourable Chamber. Sir, I want to especially thank certain social workers, if you permit me to enter the names, like Dianne Sobers, Sue Brancker, Miss Maude White, Jacqueline Harris and Mr. Errol Best, the Director, for their hard work and preparation for this document.

In addition to that, Sir, I want to also commend several agencies and persons from outside the Unit who offered their support and I will also like to thank all the organisations, the presidents and to say a special thanks to the President of the Barbados Registered Nurses Association, Mrs. Angela Crawford for her advice on matters relating to health and to Senator Patrick Frost for his continuous support and again to Mr. Tony Cave.

5.30 p.m.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, you would have thought that after the presentation and the wide acclamation of this Green Paper that the National Disabilities Unit would quietly rest on their laurels and wait for appropriate staff to carry out the necessary programmes as a result of the Green Paper.

During the period, the Unit has submitted several projects and proposals for poverty funding and one for Cabinet's approval. For the first time, the Unit planned a summer camp which attempted to integrate children with disabilities into an ordinary summer camp. Although this was not totally successful, the lessons gained will enable the planning for future integrated summer camps to be well thought through and be of more benefit to the children with disabilities and their families.

Many persons in Barbados are in need of correctly fitting wheelchairs. The National Disabilities Unit has submitted proposals on the establishment of a national wheelchair and appliance bank, which should be operational by the end of the financial year.

Many of our persons with wheelchairs required adaptation to their bathrooms and outer ramps. A proposal for persons registered with the Unit has been submitted to the Poverty Committee and awaits the necessary funding to improve these persons' living facilities and the quality of their lives before Christmas 2000.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Bonnetts' community is a troubled area at the moment. The unit, however, with the help of a support group in the Brittons Hill/Bonnetts area, has identified over twenty adult persons with disabilities who remain at home during the day and often a caregiver is required to be with them throughout the day.

The Unit has sought permission to use the Bonnetts Resource Centre as the first activity centre for persons with disabilities in Barbados, and would certainly seek the support of the Honourable Member for Christ Church West in this venture and, indeed, the support of the entire House in this new initiative. The Ministry is seeking the temporary transfer of a staff member with the necessary training and background in working with mentally challenged persons to work with this programme in the formative stage and would hope that the transfer could be quickly expedited to enable those persons with disabilities to benefit from his knowledge and expertise.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, several persons with disabilities confirm that our greatest challenge is to provide them with gainful employment. Mr. Speaker, the Unit realises that not all the persons with disabilities who say they are ready to work are fully prepared and has presented a substantial programme to provide work experience for 100 persons with disabilities for a period of up to six months in the public and private sectors. This programme will cost \$500 000 per year and is to be presented to Cabinet by the end of October.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, this cost includes the four job-coaching officers which I alluded to earlier, but their roles extend well beyond simply placing persons in jobs.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, in preparation, the Unit has held sensitivity workshops for members of the public service and has plans for more such workshops for both the public and private services.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, with only one member of staff devoting a small part of her time to employment placement *per se*, another two persons have been placed in employment recently, with a possible third to be confirmed.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am positive, given the support of this House and my colleagues in Cabinet that with four officers, each being able to concentrate on the needs of a disability type, that employers can be convinced of the gains that can be had from employing persons with disabilities and we can change the employment landscape of Barbados for persons with disabilities forever.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, again, I must commend the Unit. The work experience programme is a new initiative. It is novel and is not experienced anywhere in the Caribbean and therefore, Barbados must take the lead in these issues on disability in the Caribbean.

My hope is that a year from now I can return to this House and tell you about those persons with disabilities who have benefited from the programme and about the committed work of those few staff with which we seek to make it a reality.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, if employment is the main issue for adult persons with disabilities, let me also share with this House that we have in this island of ours many families that have no break, no freedom from looking after their children who have severe disabilities. Sometime ago, unaware of these needs until the National Disabilities Unit pointed this out, I had discussions with the Chairman of the Child Care Board as to the need for a children's hospital – a type of respite care facility. This is obviously a long-term plan and the Child Care Board and the National Disabilities Unit will liaise on this development.

The National Disabilities Unit has provided a short-term plan for respite care in conjunction with the Challenor

School, which allows two children per week to benefit. These children will be rotated with stays at the Challenor Unit on a six-week basis. Admission to the programme will be through registration with the Unit. The Unit would wish to treble its funding in the next financial year to this programme but the needs are far greater. Proposals for day activity centres and an interim respite care facility will be of priority in the coming Estimates. In the meantime, we would encourage all those caregivers who need to have occasional breaks and know their children or adolescents are safe, to place their names on the list at the National Disabilities Unit.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the National Disabilities Unit realises that many parents, relatives and caregivers feel alone with their relatives who are disabled and often know no one else in similar circumstances to address the issue. I have, on behalf of the Unit and the Ministry of Social Transformation, attended the launching of a telephone support service for persons with disabilities.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, again I must in this House commend the Unit for this initiative, the first of its kind to the best of our knowledge, in the Caribbean. These initiatives, Mr. Speaker, must be supported and the resources must be found to ensure the viability.
5.40 p.m.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, these are some of the initiatives of this small unit which certainly have our full support. This is not to say that this unit did not have its early teething problems working directly and consistently with persons with disabilities. It is new, certainly, Sir, to staff in the civil service in Barbados. The unit now employs two persons who are deaf and in time would hope to employ the range of disability types that would help with the production capability.

Indeed, Sir, it was extremely reassuring to note the involvement of most of the staff in this programme. The Secretary, Margaret Pilgrim, who coordinated the formation of the telephone support group, Sir, must be mentioned. Sir, the Honourable Member for the City in her contribution alluded to the effect of technology on the life of persons with disabilities. Let me assure you, Sir, that the National Disabilities Unit with the appropriate advice and guidance will be during this financial year purchasing a quantity of assistive devices including technological.....

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable Member, could you please wind up?

Hon. H. F. LASHLEY: Yes Sir. We have already allocated \$110 000 towards these special assistive devices.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, let me prematurely conclude. I have already thanked the staff and all those who

contributed to the production of the Green Paper and the initiatives following the Green Paper. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would like to extend my sincere thanks to all Honourable Members of this Chamber who have spoken in this debate which I consider to be a historic debate for persons in Barbados with disabilities and their families. I want to thank the staff of Parliament who on that day, kindly assisted those persons with disabilities and I want to thank you, Sir, for your indulgence in letting me wind up this debate.

I want to conclude by saying, let there be no obstacle greater than the cause. As was said in the book of Exodus so it shall be written.

I thank you, Sir.

I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I beg to second that, Sir.

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I beg to move that this Honourable House be adjourned until Tuesday, October 17, 2000 at 11 o'clock in the morning.

Hon. R. C. EASTMOND: I beg to second that.

The question that the House be adjourned until Tuesday, October 17, 2000 at 11 o'clock in the morning was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. SPEAKER adjourned the House accordingly.
5.45 p.m.

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