

**No. 6**

**WEDNESDAY**

**Second Session**

**17<sup>th</sup> April 2002**

**Seventh Parliament**

**SAINT VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES**

**THE**

**PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES  
(HANSARD)**

**ADVANCE COPY**

**OFFICIAL REPORT**

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**THE**

**THE PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES**

**OFFICIAL REPORT**

**PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE SIXTH MEETING, SECOND SESSION OF THE SEVENTH PARLIAMENT OF SAINT VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES CONSTITUTED AS SET OUT IN SCHEDULE 2 TO THE SAINT VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES ORDER, 1979.**

**THIRTEENTH SITTING**

**17<sup>th</sup> April 2002**

**HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY**

The Honourable House of Assembly met at 10.15 a.m. in the Assembly Chamber, Court House, Kingstown.

**PRAYERS**

**MR. SPEAKER IN THE CHAIR**

Honourable Hendrick Alexander

**Present**

**MEMBERS OF CABINET**

Prime Minister, Minister of Finance, Planning,  
Economic Development, Labour, Information,  
Grenadines and Legal Affairs.

Dr. The Honourable Ralph Gonsalves

Member for North Central Windward

Attorney General  
Honourable Judith Jones-Morgan

Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Foreign  
Affairs, Commerce and Trade.

Honourable Louis Straker

Member for Central Leeward

Minister of National Security, the Public Service  
and Airport Development  
Honourable Vincent Beache

Member for South Windward

Minister of Education, Youth and Sports  
Honourable Michael Browne

Member for West St. George

Minister of Social Development, Co-operatives,  
The Family, Gender and Ecclesiastical Affairs  
Honourable Girlyn Miguel

Member for Marriaqua

Minister of Agriculture, Lands and Fisheries  
Honourable Selmon Walters

Member for South Central  
Windward

Minister of Telecommunications, Science  
Technology and Industry  
Honourable Dr. Jerrol Thompson

Member for North Leeward

Minister of Tourism and Culture  
Honourable Rene Baptist

Member for West Kingstown

Minister of State in the Ministry  
of Education, Youth and Sports  
Honourable Clayton Burgin

Member for East St. George

Minister of State in the Ministry  
of Agriculture, Lands and Fisheries  
Honourable Montgomery Daniel

Member for North Windward

Minister of State in the Ministry  
of Foreign Affairs, Commerce and Trade  
Honourable Conrad Sayers

Member for Central Kingstown

Minister of Transport, Works and Housing  
Honourable Julian Francis

Government Senator

## **OTHER MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE**

Honourable Arnhim Eustace	Member for East Kingstown/ Leader of the Opposition
Dr. the Honourable Godwin Friday	Member for Northern Grenadines
Honourable Juliet George	Government Senator
Honourable Andrea Young	Government Senator/Deputy Speaker
Honourable Gerard Shallow	Opposition Senator
Honourable Major St. Claire Leacock	Opposition Senator

## **ABSENT**

Minister of Health and the Environment Honourable Dr. Douglas Slater	Member for South Leeward
Honourable Edwin Snagg	Government Senator, Parliamentary Prime Minister's Office, Special Responsibility for Labour and Grenadines Affairs
Honourable Terrance Ollivierre	Member for Southern Grenadines

# **SAINT VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES**

## **HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY**

**17<sup>TH</sup> APRIL, 2002**

### **PRAYERS**

The Honourable Speaker, Hendrick Alexander read the prayers of the House.

### **OBITUARIES**

**DR. THE HONOURABLE RALPH GONSALVES:** Mr. Speaker, the Government of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines paid its profound respects to the Queen's Mother and we have expressed our condolences to Her Majesty the Queen, the Royal family and to the British people and the people of the Commonwealth for the passing of the Queen's Mother.

A book of condolences was opened at the British representatives office here in Kingstown and a number of citizens including the Parliamentarians on both sides of the House signed that book of condolences.

I was present Mr. Speaker, Honourable Members, in the United Kingdom for the funeral in Westminster Abbey just a week or so ago and I also had the opportunity along with our High Commissioner to London and my wife to attend the viewing in state at Westminster Hall. As Honourable Members may know that it's a very distinguished hall, where among other things the late Sir Winston Churchill was laid in state and where Nelson Mandela delivered his speech to the joint Houses of Parliament in the United Kingdom. Some may say the Hall with some notoriety, because I believe that one or two incidents happened to a couple of the Stewarts, I believe Charles 1<sup>st</sup> and Charles 2<sup>nd</sup> in the Westminster Hall in the seventeenth century.

I was privileged along with the High Commissioner and my wife to Westminster Abbey, which was attended by four other Prime Minister from the Commonwealth. The Prime Ministers, of the United Kingdom, Australia, New Zealand, Canada and other countries in the Caribbean were represented by Governors General that is to say Saint Kitts Nevis, Barbados and Grenada. Our Governor General, Sir Charles Antrobus, was unable to be present because he was in Canada undergoing a medical review. You would have heard on the News Media, BBC World,

about the distinguished life led by the Queen's Mother, and we are particularly pleased in this part of the world of the important and heroic role which she played during the war with her husband, the then King, in their fight against Nazism. I am quite sure that the Leader of the Opposition and Honourable Members of the Opposition would join me in conveying in this House to Her Majesty, the Royal Family and British people our profound sadness on the passing of the Queen's Mother.

Mr. Speaker, if by some remarkable coincidents another person struck with nobility as the Queen's Mother, but among those individual passed away too in the constituency of East Kingstown at the age of one hundred and two. It is as though across the ocean the Gods contrive the pact between the Queen's Mother and Conrad Bute for them to go to make their maker at around the same time at the same age, remarkable coincidence.

Mr. Bute had lived a very fulsome and productive life. A man of Christian strength, fortitude, who was an example to his family and to the people in his community. I am sure that the Leader of the Opposition who knew him well, from the time Mr. Bute was a boy, he was a close friend of the Leader of the Opposition's father. For that the Leader of the Opposition would wish to join me I am sure in expressing to the Bute's family, friends, all the relatives the communities in which Mr. Bute resided and to express to all of them our real genuine sadness at his passing.

I believe the last occasion that I met Mr. Bute was when the Leader of the Opposition and I were at the lighting up of Sion Hill at the Christmas time and we embraced each other and spoke for a while. He was a gentleman and the country is worse for his passing I am obliged.

**HONOURABLE ARNHIM EUSTACE:** Mr. Speaker, I join the Prime Minister in paying tribute to the Queen's Mother and also to Conrad Berisford Bute. Mr. Speaker, the Queen's Mother is well known to all of us and those who would have seen some of the activities on television associated with her funeral and her lying in state could clearly see she was well beloved by the people of the United Kingdom. The hundreds, of thousands who took the time to line the streets and to pay homage as her cortege pass along the various streets in London. Attests to their bereavement and also to their love for that lady who passed on at the age of one hundred and two. It is obvious from the comments made by the members of the Royal Family and those who also make their living through the fortunes of the Royal family. It is very obvious that she was indeed beloved and Mr. Speaker may her soul rest in peace.

I agree with the Prime Minister that it is a remarkable coincidence that Conrad Bute died a couple days after Her Majesty, but he was buried before her. Mr. Conrad Bute was a remarkable man. I have never met an individual who displayed a level of humility. To my mind he was a man incapable of guile, very honest, very straightforward, very kind, but also extremely industrious. I had the occasion in 1999 when I asked my constituency to provide a name for a bridge that is being built in one part of my constituency, not to far away from Mr.

Bute residence, without failure everyone suggested that the bridge be named after Conrad Bute and that bridge is now known as Bute Bridge.

When I asked the reason for naming this bridge after him I was told that the land in the area in which the bridge was passing, was owned by the family, which shall be nameless, and each year to assert their claim they tied a chain across the area so that people would not pass and also erected a wooden barricade and each year Mr. Bute would come down and destroy that barricade. It was the only pathway for persons out of that area unless they went the long way around.

At his funeral Bassy Alexander give the eulogy on Mr. Bute and he made reference to the same coincidence of the death of the Queen's Mother and Mr. Bute both at a one hundred and two. He recounted the ceremony when the Queen recognised Mr. Bute's one hundredth birthday and the night before he checked on Mr. Bute to see whether he was ready Mr. Bute said he has got a new suit for the occasion, but he was not happy. When asked why he was not happy he said I told them to make a switch tail coat and they present to me one of these ordinary coat and he wasn't very happy with that. Mr. Bute as Bassy put it was a real gentleman and he suspects in true Bassy style he suspects the Queen's Mother and Mr. Bute discuss their passing and Mr. Bute gentleman as he was asked her to go on ahead a couple days and he would follow. So that was the man, a man without guile, a really good human being of sound Christian principles. Saint Vincent and the Grenadines is poorer for his passing.

I also wish at this time Mr. Speaker, to pay tribute to Dr. Kenton Emmanuel Richards, also of my constituency. Who died a few days ago at the age of twenty-four. Kenton Richards, also, despite his tender years was a remarkable young man. A person whom I think was a shining example for the youth of our country. Kenton Richards was a sportsman, basketball, football, cricket, even captain for the under nineteen team at one time in cricket. Kenton Richards on Government scholarship then preceded to St. Georges University, at the Medical school which has a branch here in Grenada and for the four years of his pre-medicals he had the distinction of having a 4.0 grade average. He got an A in every single course that he attempted and sat in those four years.

He obviously made a big impression on the University community and this can be attested to by the fact that quiet a large number of faculty and students came from Grenada to attend his funeral here in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines. The funeral was a remarkable one Mr. Speaker. Kenton was a Seventh Day Adventist. The funeral was a remarkable one because it is the first time I have seen a funeral where there were four tributes and a eulogy. Three of those tributes were delivered by, the University personnel, two professors and the secretary of the University. It was obvious to me that this young man had made a tremendous impression on the entire University community. I saw a number of young students from the United States in the back of the church there and they were crying almost throughout the entire service. I was told that Kenton, because of his brilliance kept classes in the nights for other students even in his own class and I think that is why we saw such an out pouring from those who attended.

The Chancellor of the University sent a statement to the funeral in which he indicated how highly the University community thought of this young Vincentian. In the statement the chancellor informed us at the funeral by that statement that the Board of Trustees at the University met and had taken the decision to confer on Kenton the Honorary degree of doctor of medicine. There was applause in the church because the university realise that here was a young man who had made his mark and should be recognised. The hundreds who attended this funeral service who were all very sad. Kenton was a big Christian and a couple of days before he died he catered that his transplant had failed and when asked what he was going to do he said that is the decision for Almighty God. I am sure he rests in the arms of that God he so diligently served and may his soul rest in peace.

**HONOURABLE ST. CLAIRE LEACOCK:** Mr. Speaker, I wish to identify with the condolences by the Honourable Prime Minister and Leader of the Opposition with respect to the passing of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the 1<sup>st</sup> the Queen's Mother and Mr. Conrad Bute. I think there is no need for me to elaborate on the sentiments that the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition has indicated.

I therefore wish Mr. Speaker, to say my little piece about Dr. Kenton Richards because it's a death that hit hard at home in my own household. Where for very many years during his school careers through the goodhearted nature of my wife as the senior teacher at the school at Glen I got to knew Kenton, in that she recognised his substantial outstanding academic ability which coincided with his own lack of meals in his household to take care of himself. She had my support to take Kenton home daily to provide him with his meals and also to facilitate Kenton living at our home during his exam period and to give him material assistance we could offer to him. Kenton in respects came between my first and second son and was a friend of them both but I think in some ways he began to mentor my second son who was two years senior and so my wife virtually saw Kenton as her adopted son. She was in constant contact with him and you must understand when he in fact passed away it was great grief for her personally and for my sons who were very devastated.

But I do agree with the Honourable Leader of the Opposition, that God always knows best in these circumstances. That there is much in Kenton's passing for our young people to learn which respect to humility and dedication and Christian principles, tenacity of purpose and commitment to ones community. It is the first in my memory one so young at the age of twenty-four could have been recognised by a university in Saint Vincent at least and to be posthumously being awarded a doctorate and it must be it must be in great volumes of his tremendous talent and the expectation the institution had for him. I therefore wish to identify and to express my own condolence and to encourage his parents and his sister who is also an island scholar from a very poor home as well to be of good faith.

Mr. Speaker, finally I just want in passing that the Honourable Member for Central Kingstown to join with me. Also I want to express my condolence to Miss. Morris, Neil Laborde of

Central Kingstown who pass on a week or two ago as well. I know the junior Minister was there at the funeral dually recognised, because although I knew her and did not know sufficient about her work it is my understanding that she was very community spirited and very often in her community give all that she had in a very like Christian manner and in particular to attend to the poor, aged and dispossessed and I simply want to salute her and her family for her contribution on her short stay here, much obliged Mr. Speaker.

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE SPEAKER**

**HONOURABLE MR. SPEAKER:** Before, you go with the congratulatory remarks I just want to make an apology for the absence of Senator, Parliamentary Secretary Edwin Snagg who is unable to be here with us this morning as a result of a fact that he was involved in an accident over the weekend. He was detained for a few days at the Hospital, but I understand now that he is out and is at home recuperating. I am sure that on behalf of this entire House want to wish Senator Snagg on a speedy recovery. Thank you very much.

### **CONGRATULATORY REMARKS**

**DR. THE HONOURABLE RALPH GONSALVES:** Mr. Speaker, Honourable Members first before I congratulate the Honourable Member for the Southern Grenadines on his recent marriage, who is not here. I would like for us to acknowledge the presence of two very distinguished persons from the Commonwealth Secretariat who are here with us today in the gallery. They are Miss. Diane Stafford who is the Director of Legal and Constitutional Affairs and Mr. Anthony Griffith Deputy Director and head of the Conference Unit of the Commonwealth Secretariat. I met with them a couple days ago that was Monday and they have been in discussion with the Attorney General and the Minister of Tourism and Culture and their teams who also kindly consented to be here today and they have met with the Members of Parliament and not unnaturally Diane Stafford is very happy to see a female Clerk of the House.

They are here really to do an assessment of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, whether we are a suitable place to host the Commonwealth Law Minister Conference, which this Government has put a debate for. We have offered to host and I had indicated to them that we might not have modern day conference facilities. We have enough to do well and we have very good small hotels here on the mainland but what we are lacking in is advance conference facilities. We more than make up with the quality of our people and our warmth and the friendliness of our embrace and I think it would be right and proper to state they have concord with our view and that they are satisfied that the Government and the people of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines are well pleased to host this very and important to host the Commonwealth Law Ministers' Conference and I want to thank them very much.

I hope that they stay around a little bit. I jokingly told, Mr. Speaker, Honourable Members, the Leader of the Opposition that he had to put on a very good and rambunctious show today so that

they can see that our parliamentary democracy is very robust and I am quite sure that he would not disappoint them. So I want to thank them very much for being here with us and we welcome them must warmly.

Mr. Speaker, I would like really in the absence of the Honourable Member of the Southern Grenadines Terrance Ollivierre, I would like to congratulate him and his dear wife formally Felicia Badenock. They got married on Saturday. Unfortunately I was unable to come there, but I had conveyed to him that we on this side of the House we had a two days retreat to discuss our first year in office and that we were not able to attend. But I expect that when he comes back from his honeymoon that my wife and I would be able to host him and his dear wife to a dinner and for us to show our appreciation that he has joined the ranks of the married men in this Honourable House.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that there are maybe one or two who are still outstanding and I am quite sure that he would set them the most wonderful example. The Honourable Member of Education says that there is some standing out. But, I really want to wish the Honourable Member for Southern Grenadines all the best he and his dear wife and I do congratulate them on this very important step.

**HONOURABLE CLAYTON BURGIN:** Mr. Speaker, Honourable Members I want to take this opportunity to congratulate the Saint Vincent and the Grenadines under nineteen cricket team for winning the recently concluded Windward Island tournament which took place in Dominica. Mr. Speaker, our team did well; we had victory over Grenada by 64 runs, over St. Lucia by 72 runs in a rather close scoring game and we got first inning lead from Dominica in a match that was severely affected by rain; we ended up with 30 points 13 ahead of our nearest rivals St. Lucia and Grenada.

In an eighteen man team that was made by the Windward Island selectors to represent the Windward Island in the under nineteen in the West Indies tournament we gain six places. Those selected were Alston Bobb and he is the captain of the Windward Island team and he also was the captain of the Saint Vincent and the Grenadines team. Other members are Emil Anthony, Lyndon James, Darryl Johnson, Marlon John, and Myiles Bascomb.

Mr. Speaker, the success of our under nineteen team was mainly through the contribution and the performances of the players and also their coach Mr. Warrican and their manager Mr. Dougal James. It was my understanding when talking with the coach and the manager and other members that the team displayed a very high level of professionalism in terms of behaviour and also the attitude towards, the on and off of the field.

I also want to congratulate three individual in that same team for example, Alston Bobb, who received five awards, he was man of the match against Grenada, scoring a century. Man of the match against St. Lucia, he had the most runs in the tournament 240, he was the most valuable player for the tournament and apart from his 240 runs, Mr. Speaker, he had 14 wickets and he

showed excellent leadership skills on and off the field. Mr. Lyndon James he was seen as the Best Wicket Keeper on show and we have been best for a very long time in producing good Wicket Keepers in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines. Mr. Marlon John was voted as the Best Off Spinner in the tournament he took 21 wickets for 180 runs off 72 overs with an average of 8.57 per wicket. It is saying that if he keeps that up he would reach very far in cricket not only representing us in the under nineteen but also in the senior team and go on to the West Indies team down the road and those are some of the things we are hoping for from our cricketers and our young people.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to congratulate once again Mr. Warrican he is the coach of the under nineteen team and he has been a national player not only for Saint Vincent and the Grenadines but also for the Windward island team and he continues to do very well in terms of coaching, ensuring that our young cricketers are being given the necessary skills and technique and for them to see the kind of commitment that is necessary for them to reach the top. Also while I am on cricket I would like to congratulate the Calder primary school for winning the under fifteen recently concluded primary school tournament. I understand that, that school is in South Windward.

Also, Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate the Saint Vincent and the Grenadines tennis association for successfully hosting the Davis Cup VMB Caribbean tournaments of the Americas, which took place here between the 1<sup>st</sup> and the 6<sup>th</sup> April. Mr. Speaker, the feed back from the various teams and coaches, and also personnel who were at the tournament was very, very encouraging indeed. The association came into high praise from all those persons, teams, organisations, and individual for the way they conducted the tournament. Their whole organizational skills, throughout the tournament and this augurs well for tennis in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and also for the future development of our country.

High praises went in to Hotels that accommodated those persons as well, so we have to congratulate all those persons in the Hotel Industry for doing a very wonderful job and making visitors from overseas happy, showing them that we are hospitable people and we can do just as those in developed and developing countries.

Also I want to congratulate one Corey Huggins he just recently participated in the under 14 division of the ITF tournament which took place in Trinidad and Tobago and also in Barbados. In Trinidad we reach the quarterfinals. In Barbados we reach the finals unfortunately he took the second place, but we want to congratulate him warmly for his efforts.

I want to thank his coach Mr. Nigel Liverpool for doing such a wonderful job and I do hope that the youngsters within our country, follow the example of these young sportsmen and women and try to improve upon their games and try to be dedicated towards whatever they are doing, it's only so we can have a very beautiful country, a country that would prosper, a country where persons would want to come to because they see that we have a people who are resolute and who want to move forward. Mr. Speaker I am obliged.

**HONOURABLE ARNHIM EUSTACE:** Mr. Speaker, I would like to extend on behalf of the members of this side of the House, congratulations to our colleague, representative for Southern Grenadines Honourable Terrance Ollivierre on his recent marriage, who got married last Saturday to Felicia Badenock. It was a very good wedding in many respects Mr. Ollivierre and his wife whom received numerous congratulations and gifts but there is a particular aspect of the wedding, which I found most interesting it was the first time in my life that attended a wedding that had seventy-six (76) bridesmaid and Groomsman. I believe Mr. Speaker that is probably associated with his career one in politics. He lived in a constituency which is made up of several islands and those who view this matter with a political eye would recognise that there is a certain bonding taken place marrying a woman from Union Island and I found that aspect of the wedding most interesting. Well time will tell that. Mr. Speaker, all in all I must say that it was an enjoyable event and I wish him and his new bride all that is best in the future.

I also would like to extend congratulations to the under nineteen team on their victory and particularly Alston Bobb who met some time ago strikes me as a serious and dedicated young cricketer and when you listen to the result he has obtained I know he has a great future in the game. I would also like to extend congratulations to tennis association for hosting the Davis cup tournament the reports I have had indicate that it was very well organised and I think they really deserve our congratulations. Thank you very much. Much obliged.

**DR. THE HONOURABLE RALPH GONSALVES:** Mr. Speaker may I crave your indulgence on a matter which I have already indicated to the Minister of Sports in relation to Alston Bobb. As you know the Government of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines has established its public policy, that anyone who has distinguished himself or herself in the field of sports, with culture, community activities in a leadership capacity and who has qualifications for university will be given a scholarship by the Government of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines. We have done so to Halema Deshong and we have established this as an important criterion among those, which we consider by the Public Service commissions.

Alston Bobb is not only an outstanding cricketer, a leader, a young man of nineteen, his CXC result equivalent of the old O Level has been very good and he is currently perusing his A' level education in Barbados, where he appears to be a foreign language specialist. This matter is at hand in the highest levels of the Government that is to say in my own hands and once Alston Bobb has the entry qualifications for the University of the West Indies for the academic year 2002, 2003 he will be given a scholarship from the Government of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines.

**HONOURABLE RENE BAPTISTE:** Thank you Mr. Speaker. I rise to congratulate the members of the National Heritage Month Committee who did an excellent job in executing the programmes established by the Government and NGO's to celebrate the first ever National Heritage month.

The members of the committee are Lennox Bowman of the NCF, Anthony Theobalds from the Ministry of Culture, Mr. Cecil Ryan chairman of the National Trust, Michael Peters research officer from the Ministry of Culture, Asram Soleyn from the National Youth Council, Mrs Vincent Stewart from the Ministry of Education, Miss. Pat Frasier NGO community of the North Windward, a representative from the archeology and Friendly Society, Mr. Martin Laborde of the Chamber of Industry and Commerce, Mr. Howie Prince from Marketing and Disaster Preparedness and Mr. Jimmy Prince from API.

Mr. Speaker, the program spanned an entire month and started on the 1<sup>st</sup> March with the declaration of the Heritage Square in Kingstown. Followed by several other programs including a workshop for trainer of writers, for oral history, living history a celebration with our Caribbean brother in culture called Caribbean roots, several school programs including those by the Evesham Methodist School, which has hosted an exhibition, the Saint Vincent Grammar school and the Richmond Hill Government School, the Ministry of Education hosted the first ever history symposium on the writing of our national history of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines the official launching of the history teachers association, the cycling classic the road relay, which is a usual road relay and then on the night of the 13<sup>th</sup> March the official declaration conferring the honour of National Heroes of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines on the Right Excellent Paramount Chief of the Calinargo people Joseph Chatoyer.

It was attended by the World's Representative of the Garifuna World organisation Mr. Oswald Robinson, and the Honorary Council from Belize Miss. Zoyla Elis-Browne. It was also seen as the launch of three written works the launch of People On The Move by Dr. Edgar Adams, the launch of "Our first National Hero" by Dr. Adrian Fraser and also the readings from Marcia Harold Hines of "the saga Hairouna," rallies in Sandy Bay. Four booklets sponsored by the UNESCO and the Ministry of Culture and our Cultural Heritage and the grand finale was the pilgrimage to Balliceau spiritual journey from Washergon Bay to Mount of Stones for the beginning of spiritual journey and pilgrimage and the building of the national monument in memory of the thousands who perished there of the Calinargo peoples on there way to exile.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to congratulate all those who participated or assisted in any way or another to help to make the first ever, first national Christian heritage month a success and I also would wish to crave the indulgence, to lay on this table of this Honourable House, a copy of the official declaration conferring the honour of National Hero in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines on the Right Excellent Paramount chief of the Calinargo people Joseph Chatoyer which was penned by our own historian Mr. Keith Scott of New Montrose at the Faculty of Arts history department as post graduate student.

**HONOURABLE VINCENT BEACHE:** Mr. Speaker, I would like to associate with all the remarks that have been made, but particularly so, the passing that has been handed out by the Calder Government school from the Windward side to another school on the Leeward side. The headmaster called me today and said that they were planning to celebrate towards the end of this week and therefore I am hoping to be here so that we can give more encouragement to the

youngsters in the community and so that they can stand out as beacons in the rest of the country. Thank you Mr. Speaker.

**HONOURABLE CONRAD SAYERS:** Mr. Speaker, I rise to make congratulatory remarks firstly to endorse observation and the remarks of the Honourable Minister for Culture and Tourism and to congratulate her and the Ministry for the leadership and the initiative given in that particular area. I would like at this time however Mr. Speaker, to particular congratulate the National History and Heritage month committee under the leadership of Mr. Cecil Ryan and the entire committee for successfully concluded history on natural heritage month Mr. Speaker, culture is indeed on the rise and from the congratulation of the junior Minister of Sports in the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports it is clear that sports in Saint Vincent is again on the ascendancy in this region. Mr. Speaker, this is no accident this is a clear indication of the policy of this Government to put emphasis on sports as the Honourable Prime Minister has alluded to the installation of floodlights.

The first time ever we have had floodlight installed permanently in this country to facilitate footballers. Congratulations are in order for that initiative two hundred and fifty three thousand dollars \$253,000, over a quarter of million dollars for the installation for lights. That just to ensure Mr. Speaker, that our people, after a hard days work can go to the Victoria Park at evenings and enjoy a good soccer match, hence cheering our players to higher heights of excellence.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to add the congratulations extended to the under nineteen cricket team of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines having just won, concluding the Windward Island cricket competition in Dominica. I am looking seriously, curiously, at the spread and the addresses of the players and I have made an observation that has challenged me personally comparing to what obtained years ago. However Mr. Speaker, the sports in this country and cricket in particular has taken deep roots throughout the rural areas of the country and hence I would like to particularly congratulate Mr. Alston Bobb for proving himself not just to be a batsman but an outstanding all rounder having taken a number of wickets and we know that West Indian cricket is scarce of all rounder we have a long tail as they said, and hope that people like Alston Bobb would shorten that tail, in fact cause it to disappear completely as we have all rounder throughout the team.

I would like also to congratulate Emil Anthony he has been the most outstanding player in the matches, Mr. Lyndon James best wickets keeper for the tournament hopefully following the heels of our own outstanding Michael Findlay and Mr. Marlon John best spin boller. Mr. Speaker all seem to be well in cricket for the future and I wish that all young people will continue in this vain. I want to challenge the footballer to take a page out of the books of our cricketers and regain the excellence we once had in this region as sports team. Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate Saint Vincent Lawn Tennis Association for successfully hosting the just concluded Davis Cup tournament of the Americas. I had the privilege of being present at two of those matches and I am pleased with the facilities, which are excellent, but with the level

of skills displayed by our players, it tells me we have a future in Lawn Tennis and I would like to see this encouraged.

I trust however that we would see the wisdom of covering those bleachers it is unbearable and this would indeed encourage play during sunlight and a large audience to admire and appreciate that game. Mr. Speaker, as I conclude I would like to congratulate the Member of Southern Grenadines on his recent marriage, I wish him long and successful marriage life, harmony on this Mr. Speaker, I am much obliged.

**DR. THE HONOURABLE GODWIN FRIDAY:** Mr. Speaker, it would be remiss of me not to rise in this House to join with the Honourable Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition and the other Members of this House to extend congratulations and best wishes to the Honourable Member of Southern Grenadines and his wife Felicia. Last weekend as the Honourable Leader of the Opposition said we had a great time in Union Island at the wedding. It was a festive occasion where socializing, building, simple human bonds, strengthening personal relationships, to presidents over politics. Mr. Speaker, I wish personally on behalf of the Members of the Opposition and constituency of Northern Grenadines to extend our best wishes to the Honourable Member and his wife and God's blessing on them in the future.

## **MINUTES**

**DR. THE HONOURABLE RALPH GONSALVES:** Mr. Speaker, I beg to move the confirmation of the Minutes of the Twelfth Sitting of the Second Session of the Seventh Parliament of the House of Assembly held here on the 28<sup>th</sup> March 2002.

**HONOURABLE LOUIS STRAKER:** Mr. Speaker, before I second the motion I would like to bring to your attention to the fact that the front page of those present, my name was I suppose inadvertently omitted. Since this was such an important meeting of the House, the occasion of the first anniversary of the election of the Government it is very important that my name being inscribed on the first page unless there is someone who would hamper the thought that I was away hiding in the cage of Gor-Gor in Afghanistan and had to be flushed out to come here this morning. I want it to be known that I was here last Sitting and I am here today so I didn't have to be flushed out I am always here. I therefore second the motion with the amendment.

*Questions put and agreed to.  
Minutes confirmed with amendments.*

## **STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS**

**DR. THE HONOURABLE RALPH GONSALVES:** Mr. Speaker, Honourable Members, I crave your indulgence to make two statements to this Honourable House. One - a brief one and second a somewhat longer one. The second relates Mr. Speaker, Honourable Members, to a summary or a review of this Government's performance over the last year. As is well known today April 17<sup>th</sup> is the 1<sup>st</sup> anniversary of this current Parliament. We were elected on 28<sup>th</sup> March and we first came to this Honourable House, after the Election as required constitutionally, we came here, within the month, on April 17<sup>th</sup>. So this too is a very historic day.

I want to welcome too, Members of the Opposition for returning on this day and to end their protest. It is an appropriate day upon which they have returned to end their protest. I always knew that they would have wanted to be here to celebrate with us on this very auspicious occasion.

But Mr. Speaker, I shall first address a matter which has exercised some members of the public, in fact many members of the public and the news media. And I make this particular statement as the Minister responsible for Legal Affairs. I should explain to those who are listening Mr. Speaker, that had the Attorney General been a Minister she would have been the one responsible for making this statement but she is a public servant and holds the Office of Attorney General as a Public Service Attorney General and holds no ministerial portfolio.

The Ministry of Legal Affairs has to be held by someone who is not a public servant, and His Excellency had appointed me as the Minister of Legal Affairs. And it is in that capacity that I now make this statement. It concerns the issue of the death penalty in St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

There are four cases Mr. Speaker, in which this matter arose. In the case of Newton Spence from St. Vincent and the Grenadines, the case of Peter Hughes of St. Lucia, that of Burtill Fox of St. Christopher, Nevis, and that of Patrick Reeves of Belize. And as Honourable Members would no doubt recall, the Court of Appeal in the Newton Spence case here in St. Vincent and the Grenadines by a majority of 2-1 ruled that the death penalty in its mandatory aspect was unconstitutional and that at the end of a trial where there was a guilty verdict there has to be sentencing procedure as in fact we see happens in the United States, and that it would be for the Jury to decide whether in that particular case, the death penalty should be applied.

The Newton Spence case went up to the Privy Council but the matter of the constitutional nature of the death penalty did not arise. There was another issue on which the case was sent back to the Court of Appeal. And these three cases emerged; Peter Hughes case, Bertill Fox case and the Patrick Reeves case, respectively from St. Lucia, St. Christopher/Nevis and Belize. But because of the constitutional importance of this matter we in St. Vincent and the Grenadines intervened in the Peter Hughes case as we could do at the Privy Council, and I had

asked and advised the Prime Minister of Grenada to do likewise; to intervene in the case so that the arguments of the Governments interested in the issue of the penalty could be put to the Privy Council because I didn't want it to be said as Minister of Legal Affairs that an issue of this moment was being determined at the Privy Council and the Government of St. Vincent and the Grenadines did not intervene. So even though it was not a Vincentian case because St. Lucia is part of our jurisdiction, the OECS Supreme Court that whatever decision was taken in the Peter Hughes case would apply to us. Whatever decision taken in the Burtill Fox case from St. Kitts and Nevis would apply to us; whatever decision in the Patrick Reeves case from Belize would apply to us because the Privy Council is our highest Court. I have to say that by way of preamble, and to make the following statement. That the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council delivered a Judgment on 11<sup>th</sup> March 2002 in respect of Peter Hughes and others a St. Lucian case to the effect that the mandatory sentence of death in cases of murder is unconstitutional. The ruling involves three cases.

1. The Peter Hughes case of St. Lucia. On 24<sup>th</sup> July 2001, the Crown in St. Lucia was granted special leave to appeal against the decision of the Court of Appeal squashing the sentence imposed on Hughes who was convicted of the murder of Jason Jean.
2. Burtill Fox, St. Kitts Nevis. Fox had been convicted of the murders of his fiancé and her mother. On 4<sup>th</sup> October 1999 Lewis was granted special leave to appeal against both his conviction and sentence; the basis of his appeal against the sentence being that the mandatory death penalty was unconstitutional.
3. Patrick Reeves of Belize he had shot and killed Wayne Garburt and his wife Evelyn. He was also granted special leave to raise two constitutional arguments not advanced in the Courts below. The first argument challenges the constitutionality of the mandatory death penalty which is said to infringe both the protection against subjection to inhumane or degrading punishment or other treatment under the Constitution of Belize and the right to live protection under the said Constitution.

The detailed arguments in these cases are encapsulated in the decision of Lord Bayhum in the Reeves case where the Board, that is to say, the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council allowed the appellants appeal against sentence and quash the sentence of death. The case should be remitted to the Supreme Court of Belize in order that a Judge of that Court may pass appropriate sentence on their appellant having heard or receive such evidence and submissions as may be presented and made. The Privy Council decided that the decision has to be appropriate penalty to impose on the case of murder, should be taken by the Judge after submissions and where there is appropriate evidence on the matter. In reaching and articulating such decisions the judge will enunciate the relevant factors to be considered and it to be given to them having regard to the sentence in the case of St. Lucia or Saint Vincent and the Grenadines or any of there other countries.

So the law as it now stands after the Privy Council decision is that there is no longer mandatory death sentence for murder, or life imprisonment that's one of the two sentences and after you have been convicted for murder, there will be a decision by the judge not the jury, because the Court of Appeal here had said to leave it to the jury, let the jury hear the evidence and sentences and to call evidence even need be on sentencing. The Privy Council says no, don't leave it to the jury leave it to the judge, after the jury decision of bringing you guilty for the murder and the judge would here the evidence and the judge will then decide whether that person should be sentence to death or should that person be subject to life imprisonment. I think that this is a very critical issue in our system of justice and that it is proper to be brought the attention of the Honourable House. There has been some commentary on it in I think two newspapers. Those newspapers were alerted to this particular matter but I think I should bring it formally to the attention of the nation.

Mr. Speaker, I should point out that if Honourable Members wish to read the judgment they can contact the Attorney General chambers who would make copies available for those who have access to the internet would find it there or those who may wish to await the publication of the relevant reports.

Mr. Speaker, the issue of the statement on the performance of the Unity Labour Party Government over the past twelve months. Mr. Speaker, this will be an abbreviated statement. I have here in my hand two notebooks filled with achievement of the Unity Labour Party Government and I think it would be proper to have it published sometime by the Government, perhaps before maybe within another couple of weeks so that everybody can be reminded in print about the formal achievements of this Government over the twelve months.

Mr. Speaker, in giving the summary of our achievements it is important to recollect that when we came to office on the, effectively on the 2<sup>nd</sup> April, because we were sojourning, on the 29<sup>th</sup>, I was sojourning on the 29<sup>th</sup> as Prime Minister, so was the Attorney General and then on the 1<sup>st</sup> April all the other Ministers were sojourning and then we got into office Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> April.

We met a public debt of \$650 million dollars, we met house-keeping debt in the order of about \$50 million dollars, we met at the end of the first the preceding Government had left us 2001 a deficit on the current account of \$10Million dollars. The drought had commenced shortly when we came into office and it continued after we were in office, the longest drought in forty years, four months.

Just when we are beginning to recover, September 11<sup>th</sup> struck, and against the back drop of a world recession. Mr. Speaker, we have to be very faithful to our manifesto and to our 100days program and we hit the ground running, and I am pleased to report that despite all the difficulties and the inheritance, which was awful it was a classic bad hand. In addition Mr. Speaker, there was very limited institution capacity in many areas of the Government. For example a critical area such as the Ministry of Works, which spare-head the public investment program at least the implementation of the program.

Mr. speaker, despite all the difficulties at a macro level we were able to record a very modest economic growth; not the deep negative growth implemented by the Opposition because they were going up and down the country saying that Oh negative growth is there for every body to see. Of course there has not been negative growth; it is estimated that the growth, and there are two sets of Estimates Mr. Speaker, one that we have grown 0.2% and the other we have grown 0.9%. As you know with the economist you are not as tight as accountants where the figures can be very precise and we ended the year with a surplus on the current account of some \$15 million dollars. So we had growth, we had a surplus on the current account despite all those difficulties. The bad inheritance, the drought, the September the 11<sup>th</sup> and Mr. Speaker in the year in the year we have been able to use creative policies to target certain areas for the creation of jobs that we created in excess of 1500 jobs which we have promised the people of Saint Vincent to create the first year and I shall name them shortly.

Mr. Speaker in comparative terms, St. Lucia, which has a more diversified economy than ours, which is a wealthier country than ours. St. Lucia had last year negative growth of minus 3.8% estimated, Grenada a economy richer than ours, more diversified than ours, had negative growth of minus 1.9% and Dominica which has a higher per capita income than we have, but which is more or less at the same level of diversification they had negative growth of minus 4.5%.

So your Government, the people's Government despite, all the difficulties, we have been able to hold the strain, have some modest growth, have a surplus on the current account and we are able to create in excess of 1500 jobs and I am talking here at the macro level. As I go into some of the other details, Mr. Speaker, Honourable Members, by thinking, why persons would be wondering, God's hands is guiding this Government and miracle has descended upon this nation effecting the transformation never before seen in this country. Mr. Speaker, we must not forget that in addition to the difficulties, which I have mentioned, we had inherited this country on an OECD black list. After one year, we are no longer on the OECD black list.

It was predicted in this House and in public meetings up and down this country by the Opposition, that we will not get off the OECD black list, and I said let them talk and I will do. I will have my time to talk later. We are not on the OECD black list, what they are saying now Mr. Speaker is that the operation is successful but the patient is dead. They say we couldn't do it but when we have done it they said that the operation is successful and the patient is dead. But, the fact about it, is Mr. Speaker, the OECD had to shift its position and we have secured a level playing field. Commitment from the OECD and our letter of commitment encapsulates the level playing field argument and where we have given a commitment on two matters that is to say, transparency and the sharing of information.

The issues of OECD dictating to us our tax regime. That does not enter into our letter of commitment, not entering also in our letter of commitment is anything to do with the OECD's principle of ring fencing. That is to say you can't put a ring fence around your offshore sector, and charging different types of rates of taxes for the onshore sector and the offshore sector. We

alone did not win that battle Mr. Speaker, which was a coordinated battle through out the Caribbean intensifies since we've got into office and supported I must say in some measure by the secretary of the treasury in the United States and the President Bush. So we got off the OECD black list.

Mr. Speaker, we were on an impending black list with the International Maritime Organisation. Where at the end of May we were going to be Black listed. The previous NDP Administration had entered certain treaty arrangement in 1995 and they were unable to put themselves in order 1995, 1996, 1997, 1998, 1999, 2000 lets forget the first three months in 2001 because they were under too much pressure to do anything. So for six years they couldn't address this issue of International Maritime Organisation impending black list. The second day, on 3<sup>rd</sup> April, Sir James had called me on the Friday 30<sup>th</sup> March to offer congratulation and he said that he would very much like to see me and I said why not Tuesday morning and when he came, he said I have a couple of things I want to talk to you about. He said Ralph, they may not draw it to your attention immediately, the Public Servants, but I want you to send for the file on the International Maritime Organisation, because at the end of May they are going to black list us, if we don't put our house in order. So I said, half jokingly you couldn't do it in six years and you want me to do it in two months but it was done, and before the end of May the International Maritime Organisation was putting us on the white list and in the process saving us four million dollars which we get annually from registration through our merchant shipping legislation. So the OECD black list we get off, impending IMO black list we got off. Then there was the ICAT impending black list International Convention for the conservation of the Atlantic Tuna that was coming into place June 30<sup>th</sup>. That one is very difficult. We are not completely out of the woods yet, but I communicated as Prime Minister with over twenty heads of Government through out the world including the Canadian Prime Minister, the British Prime Minister the president of South Africa, I even wrote Qaddafi because he is involved in ICAT too, the International Convention for the conservation of Atlantic Tuna, and Mr. Speaker, we have been able to stay the hammer falling on us.

Then, when we came to office we were also on the black list for the FATF, the Financial Action Task Force, because we were deemed to be a money-laundering jurisdiction. The FATF has twenty-five criteria in accessing you as a money-laundering destination jurisdiction and we have progress on the 22 of the 25 criteria and we have been commended for the work done so far with the new set of laws particularly Proceeds of Crime and Money-Laundering Prevention Act, and the Financial Intelligence Unit Act. Incidentally the British authorities and the scholars in Britain who write about Proceeds of Crime and Money-Laundering have written and an authoritative journal that Saint Vincent and the Grenadines has passed a model piece of legislation to address the question of money-laundering. Mr. Speaker, as I speak, on my desk there are pieces of legislation drafted through the office of the Attorney General on the International Banks Act and also on the Confidentiality Act. We want to bring an Exchange of Information Act.

The head of the Offshore Finance Authority, Mr. Colin Williams, the inspector, we went to Tobago recently for a CAFATS meeting and progress was reported on what we have been doing. Why is this important? It is important to clean up the offshore sector for the offshore sector itself but when we got in, and if you think I am not speaking truth ask any body in the leadership of the National Commercial Bank they would tell you that there were serious treats by the International Banking community to cut off corresponding banking arrangements first with the National Commercial Bank and they were thinking for doing so for the whole of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines. That would mean that it would essentially lock down, can't deal with any international trade or banking transaction, you wouldn't have been able to get your cheque from overseas change, the pension cheque, remittance cheque, you couldn't pay for goods brought from overseas. We had to act very swiftly to save all that and because of the work we have been doing, no defensive measure have been taken against us and I said that, while some looking at June as the target for an assessment that we can get off the CAFATS list, I repeated it so many times in this House that it may take us six months, a year after that, because what ever we do they constantly want to assess what we are doing, to see what we are actually doing, if what we are doing is sustainable. But the point is this they have put down the hammer, the defensive measures which were threatened against our financial sector, against our country that threat has been lifted.

Mr. Speaker, when we came to office we couldn't even vote at the United Nations, the NDP hadn't paid their dues. That is the hand that we were left, I can go into more details, but that is the bad hand. It is against all that back drop that you look at the performance, we are not blaming them, we are stating the facts as they are and we are showing the remarkable work which we had done, given the facts, the situations as we have met them.

The job creation Mr. Speaker, one hundred and sixty jobs (160) at the call centre. The call center, as Minister of Telecommunications had indicated having some difficulties but I have been advised that all who are involved, there is program to get us out of the difficulties but the one hundred and sixty jobs (160) persons working there, who were not working before that. In the micro-enterprises project through the National Commercial Bank three hundred and thirty-four (334) persons the special mortgage program, Public Servants over three hundred and fifty (350) persons I should say regard of the micro-enterprise loans 75 has been granted. Three in the mortgage which we instituted, the special mortgage program for Public Servants; teachers, and the like; sixty-two (62) loans have been granted employing houses which have started employing over three hundred and fifty (350) persons.

Mr. Speaker, let me say this, I will give two antidotes. There was a teacher who was an NDP supporter she was speaking to two other teachers, the other two teachers being ULP supporters and she went to the bank and she got the mortgage where 100%, you don't have to pay any down payment at all. You can borrow up to one hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$150,000) over a period of thirty years at 7¾% there is no deal in the region better than that in mortgages. No, the Honourable Minister of National Security is asking me if it is available to Minister, it not available to Ministers, we are not Public Servants and teachers, not available.

Mr. Speaker, this teacher, a lady, a mature woman, she said all my life I am working and supporting NDP, I haven't got anything, it take Ralph to give me house. Those are facts; let that ring in their ears. For those who want to bad mouth the ULP Government. Is Ralph; after all the years of work and renting house I supporting NDP, is Ralph who gives me house. That is a profound statement of truth. Last week Mr. Speaker, another teacher came to me with tears of gratitude in her eyes, to say to me I told her no, not I alone am a God sent, I am a child of God there are other God sends who were involved in this, she said I am a God sent, tears of gratitude in her eyes those are facts.

Mr. Speaker, there is the youth empowerment service, the state itself through a grant from the Government of the Republic of China, employing four hundred and forty (440) young people in the youth empowerment service. We want to carry it even higher and last year in the Budget I announced that any individual, any company that gets involved in the youth empowerment service and paid for say a volunteer, whatever their contribution, they will get a tax allowance of one hundred twenty-five percent (125%) of whatever contribution they put in which it means, in an essential arithmetic term that if they pay four thousand and eight hundred dollars (\$4,800) a year for a volunteer they will get back a tax rebate of two thousand four hundred dollars (\$2,400) that is in lay month terms of what it would be.

Then Mr. Speaker, you know we have been linking with the Diaspora and asking for Vincentians investors to come back home. Allan's bakery invested over a million dollars (\$1M). They employed twenty-two (22) persons currently, and they intend to move to thirty-five (35). Gumb's furniture at Bele View, in my constituency, when they get into production for office furniture, they will be employing twenty-five persons, they have about fifteen persons there. Minister of Industry can remind me, Alwin Lewis who is involved also in another production enterprise. Then we have given Vincentian from overseas approval under the Hotel Aids Act; there are four or five of them to build small hotels, guest houses, and there are other manufacturing enterprise in the pipe-line, am talking about what is creating jobs.

Then we have about eighty new police officers net, because we had to deal with the question of law and order and crime and also net twenty prison officers, then at an on going basis, any time, at any period you will have thousand persons working in the public works program, the public sector investment program, let us talk about them.

During the two-month period, remember I say all the time; you'll have about a thousand persons and new persons, because you didn't have them under any NDP program. Thirteen hundred persons working in the eight-week period under school repair program in August and September last year, seventy on the Murray road rehabilitation, twenty-five on Peace Memorial, twenty-five on the Multi-purpose centre in South Rivers, we had a number for the new tennis courts, on which we spent five hundred thousand dollars (\$500,000), two hundred plus on road rehabilitation nation wide. I should point here Mr. Speaker, that we have doubled the road maintenance monies every quarter, that's why they are singing the praises of the Minister of

Works like that and I hear that the Member of East Kingstown, anytime the praises are sung for the Minister of Works, he gets very worried, and I don't know why, all he is, is a Senator and Minister of Works; I don't understand why he gets worried. "Ah" you had your eyes closed when you heard about that, now about the Minister of Works you came awake. If I were in your position depending upon the majority of forty where you have a popular Government and an excellent Minister of Works, I would be worried. Not saying that the Minister of Works is running against you, I am not saying that, I am not saying that at all, you know, I am not calling his name but I know that you are having sleepless nights, you sleeping very well.

Mr. Speaker, there are many more on the Grenadines projects. The Wharf has been build down at Mayreau, the jetty has been built in Mayreau, Vinlec has been mobilised and started in Mayreau, to provide the electricity. The roads in Bequia, Canouan, Union Island had been done. At Christmas time we had three thousand six hundred persons on the special Christmas work road program and extra jobs in the private and public sector through the working of the economic system.

Mr. Speaker, last year alone, construction contributed an increase to the Gross Domestic Product in excess of 7% and that is in a top period. But, it has to do with manner in which the Government; when things are tight, you have to have the creativity, to target where to create the jobs and that is what the Unity Labour Party has been able to do.

Mr. Speaker, I am not adding up all of these and say that it is more than the thousand; I am averaging it so that at any one time, you have a thousand persons. The Leader of the Opposition is saying that jobs in construction are not jobs; they are not real jobs, because you will be employed for six months today and then you don't have any work next month. But if you have the Crews moving from job to job they are permanent. Let him go and tell the masons, and the carpenters, who buying new sketel car, putting on addition on their homes let him tell them that they not working. I listen to you, I heard what you said, I didn't hear you when you were speaking on a particular program; I heard you speaking on another one.

Mr. Speaker, let us talk about the preparation over the last year for the major public sector projects which will commence later this year, or early next year and project Mr. Speaker, which we are preparing for they take a certain amount of time. You have to get the projects going, you have to organise the money, let us look at them. The Modern National Library and Electorate at Richmond Hill, the construction of which would cost approximately ten million dollars (\$10 M). We have start up money of \$2.7 million dollars from the Republic of China. The State of the Art Learning resource center at the Community College, the construction at which would start later this year with European Union funds at the cost of \$4.2 million dollars. Mr. Speaker, we needed supplementary funds on that project. We sent to the European Union on June 18<sup>th</sup> last year and we got back the report that we have the extra money for the project. The National Stadium at Diamonds the first stage, which is estimated to cost fifteen million dollars (\$15M) we have a starter of four million dollars from Libya already. The correctional facility the prisoner at Boisdien will cost close to twenty-seven million dollars, phases one and two, which

will make the facility operational would cost twelve million dollars (\$12M). The start up money from bonds and other sources amount to four million dollars and they already available the prisoners are already cleaning the undergrowth, because we are using the prisoners to provide some work for clearing undergrowth before the contractors actually get in. The Windward rehabilitation first phase, costing thirteen million dollars from the European union. Mr. Speaker, let me say this the NDP says that is their project.

I want to say to you when we got into office the consultant had not started his work and the NDP was looking at the thirty-three million dollar project; they like to think theoretically and abstractly, they can't do things practically, for the Leader of the Opposition and then the former Prime Minister was always ringing his hand being overly concerned, you know I have a problem here, I have a problem there, twisting and can't make a decision.

Now you bring the things to me I make decision quickly because as soon as the fact are brought to my attention you just give me a moments reflection I give you my decision Mr. Speaker. The Windward high way is going to start from the bottom of Browne's town, we are going to do about 11miles, I have been advised 7or 8 kilometers. You can do the conversion; the other way around, Mr. Speaker, because the road so bad, from the bridge at Dassen Hole and the drainage terrible within Georgetown, as you come through Mount Bentick, Georgetown. We have organised monies to actually begin that separately, with a separate funding from the Chinese Government. So the people from Dassen Hole come right through Mount Bentick, right through Caratel, right through Georgetown to come to the bottom and that is starting some time later this year.

The Windward water project, which will cost twenty three million dollars (\$23M), we just sign the agreement this morning CWSA with the French Agency for Development, and I sign the guarantee on behalf of the Government of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines. Mr. Speaker, this project, in order for us to get the twenty-one million dollars from the French, which is eighty percent (80%) of the project. We have had Honourable Members to agree as a condition to getting the twenty-one million from the French who agree to a ten percent (10%) increase on the water bill on an average of two dollars EC (\$2.00 EC) a month, because the average consumption is nineteen dollars (\$19.00) a month. Two dollars; not one dollar ninety, I round it off to two dollars, a month on an average.

The Opposition is saying I'm wicked. I put up the water rate but none of them have said to me how must I provide water for people from Brighton, right up through Colonaire, through Byera, because the water is coming from up in Jennings Valley. Those who don't know the Geography when you go to Congo Valley and you look up in the mountain and it does back to seawater, on the left side, beautiful water coming down from Jennings Valley. It is going to link to the Dallaway project, so when you have four month of drought the water shortage would be eased and we providing quality water. At the peak you will employ about a one hundred and twenty persons new. A lot of people going to build their wall house, off of that project and it is going to last three years. Right now the project had actually started because in Park Hill the

pipes had been laid, we are not waiting till the end of the project to do Park Hill, because that is the Prime Minister's constituency and it is an obscenity to have the Prime Minister's constituency where you don't have water. And said to the people that I will get water for them in twelve months. I am getting it for them by fourteen months by Carnival they have their water right now the pipes are being laid there, building a fifteen thousand storage tank, one place, a five thousand else where, with a pump to pump it up. So the people in village Dr. Smith, Firebonn, Jungle Hole, Couilly Hill, and Mount Grennan. I give Selmon Walters a piece of the action from there.

Mr. Speaker, I want the country to tell me should I not provide proper water for twenty-two thousand people. The Member for the Northern Grenadines complaining about that selfishly, because the project is not yet extended to Bequia, but he should realise that Bequia is paying less for electricity, than it would have been the case, because we are paying a little bit more to ease the pressure on them, because we have to live as one between Bequia and the Grenadines and Saint Vincent, because we are all one people, one nation living in love.

So I want the French, Mr. Speaker, giving us this money at 2.5%, twenty-one million dollars at 2.5% for sixteen (16) years with a seven (7) years grace period, twenty-one million EC dollars. Mr. Speaker, if the French in Paris can say they want to give you their money at such low rate interest over such a long time is it hard for us to pay a little bit more, so that we can pay back the loan to provide us with such quality water. I say the right thinking people in this country will say no, that the Government is doing what is right and proper in the circumstances. Some of the same people who complain; whom some of the same people, the Leader of the Opposition mentioned, seeks to have persuaded that it shouldn't be like that, they are the same people who will go and buy a "big 6 Ju-c" for one dollar and twenty-five cents every day when the child coming from school but they don't want top pay two dollars a month increase in water. Mr. Speaker, even with that increase we will be providing the people of this country with water at the lowest price in the entire Caribbean, that is a fact.

Mr. Speaker, I should point out that we, because we have such foresight, thinking about this problem, we want to ease the pressure from the elderly, the elderly poor and we have taken off ten dollars a month, off the water bill for over four hundred,..... year old people who are poor.

Mr. Speaker, the National Insurance Scheme will be putting up a building near the former Arrowroot Headquarters at about eight million dollars (\$8M). The E.T Joshua will be improved largely with a twenty-two million dollars short loan from Kuwait. I heard it has been said that, that is their project. All the technical work and that have been done since we have been elected. At the end of January, I am the man who essential the agreement. Earlier this month, I am the man who went to Kuwait to hold the detail discussion on the project and it is this Government that has invited the Kuwaiti funds for Arabic-economic development to come here in June to put the final signature onto the eight point one million US dollars (\$8.1M US). I don't know why people want to claim which is not their own. Yes Mr. Speaker, they can claim the Cruise Ship Berth; they can claim that, but they also have to claim one million dollars (\$1M), which they left for us to pay, the Kuwaiti contractor and before the Kuwaiti contractor came here

January I had to get three million dollars (\$3M) to pay them to show that we have a good faith and ten days before I went to Kuwait I had to pay the other four million dollars (\$4M) and Mr. Speaker, when the Leader of the Opposition, left Government; his last Budget he did not make any provision in his Budget for the seven million dollars which they owed the Kuwaiti contractor Karafi. So if it is his project, where was he getting the money from seven million dollars to pay the contractor before he could even begin to talk seriously to the Kuwaiti fund for Arabic-economic development. That is the evidence to show that all which has been, uttered by the Leader of the Opposition, on that is propaganda.

Mr. Speaker, later this year we are going to start to nice up E.T. Joshua Airport, and then there is the cross-country road work is going on that behind the scenes. We have fifty million dollars put aside to build the cross- country road. Before the middle of next year we expect to see the surveyors mapping out the road and work to begin later, in the second half of next year, actual physical work, but there is a lot of technical work has to be done. We have to map the whole place; we have to do environmental study, all sorts of things.

First of all they said that the Stadium wouldn't come off. Senator Leacock is a smart gentleman, he decide he will associate himself with success and he came to the opening and he said he want to be involved in seeing the Stadium get on its way, smart. Just like, we had to help with putting the two hundred and fifty-three thousands dollars (\$253,000) in Floodlights and fix up Victoria Park, so his league, the president of the football federation, can play down there. But, you give them a chance they will claim that, that is their project too. The two hundred and fifty-three thousand dollars spent on lights and the cleaning up of the park.

The thing is this, for the lights you would hear people say is Leacock who bring it about, it's not Major, is the Minor Leacock, the younger brother whom we employed at the Town Board. That is the one who deals with that project.

Mr. Speaker, the complete refurbishment of the old Ministerial building is going to begin within a month's time. We have to evacuate it, it's a hazard, it's going to take eighteen months (18) to be repaired, renovated, and restructured. Then the seventeen million dollar (\$17M) soft loan; its about six million dollars (\$6M) from the World Bank, for a series of projects under the management mitigation project.

Mr. Speaker, Honourable Members, let me tell you about this one. Just after the middle of May, just after one month when we got into office the head of the Caribbean division of the World Bank came to my office to talk about projects. She said Prime Minister the first thing I have to say to you; I am sorry that we cannot have the World Bank project for Disaster mitigation continue of six million dollars (\$6M). The World Bank had informed the previous Government which is a fact. So I said why are not leaving the six million dollars US open and available to us. She said, the previous Government did nothing. She said, we offer a similar loan to St Kitts, they have almost finished spending the money, and we offer a similar loan to Dominica.

You see when you leave Cane field in Dominica and you see all that pretty work which had been done by the seafront coming around there, that is the World Bank Disaster mitigation money. They said the same thing about, St. Lucia, and Grenada. The Government of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines fallen asleep, the NDP. Six million dollars is there you know, all you have to do is put together the project, they couldn't put together this project. So I persuaded the World Bank to reopen the loan, a very soft loan for us. Mr. Speaker, if I may say this, in my own little coax, when I had to joke with the lady, I said I believe that you from the Greek Orthodox church and I am a Roman Catholic and we are close and the bible said that the sins of the father visit the children unto the seventh generation. I say that is in a personal way, but you can't make me pay for the sins of some other former Government.

I said, let us begin and you give this Government deadlines on an ongoing basis for every single task for the preparation of the project. If we miss one deadline, if we fail in one preparatory task, you are at liberty to take away the offer of the money. She said you mean that. I said yes. She said, I would go back to the World Bank and tell them what you said. Within a week she sent me fax saying we have a deal. The first deadline she gives us was four weeks to do things. Mr. Speaker, I never like the former Prime Minister, the current Leader of the Opposition, he will sit down in his office and beg people to do things. I leave my office, go down to the Ministry of Works, go inside the office of an Engineer and say there is one more week for this dead line. If you don't complete the technical work; I say my brother I will send you to Balliceau without water. It became a joke down there. He did very good work and they complete all the preparatory work by January 15<sup>th</sup> 2002.

They had paper work to be done and on Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> last week, the agreement for the six million dollars was signed. Six million US dollars for this project and while they sleeping you know, what is going to be involved in this project starting later this year, the waterfront for the Honourable Deputy Prime Minister at Layou will be dealt with, six clinics will be dealt within other areas, like the seafront and rivers going to be dealt with and they saying that the Labour Party isn't doing nothing. These are facts, not fiction, not comes, not slander, not verbal abuse, not lies.

Mr. Speaker, Honourable Members the Feeder road rehabilitation program has started already in phases. We are doing some with our own monies and we are putting forward a proposal for a grant of close to fifty million dollars EC from the European Union and for a soft loan for twenty-five million dollars from the Kuwaiti fund. Next year we have to address that money from the Kuwaiti fund. Then rural clinic and rural police stations, the rehabilitation program that is to be financed by the European Union, all the preparatory work is done for that already, the papers have been sent off to the European Union. The close to nearly two million dollars for the computerisation program, Mr. Speaker, I must say that I am not satisfied with the pace of the work on the computerisation program and I am having a meeting next week with the consultants and the two Ministers involved and I am saying if we have to restructure certain things to get things going faster we have to do it, because I don't believe that this Government

must sit around have money to do things and things not proceeding at the pace at which they should proceed.

Then there are dozens of other smaller projects all over the country. Then we have several in the Grenadines, the lighting up of J.F. Mitchell Airport in Bequia, emergency lighting in Union Island Airport, the building of the Canouan Police Station, and the extensive rehabilitation of the Bequia Anglican School. Well I spoke about the Jetty and the Electricity Plant in Mayreau all those and then shortly you will start to see the houses going up under the one thousand low income housing program which the Minister of Works and Housing has very much at hand and all the preparatory works have been done for that and monies available.

Mr. Speaker, we have been doing so well in the Government and managing the affairs of the country so beautifully, that when we came to float the thirty million dollar Government saving bond issue for a number of capital project, you know what they were whispering, you know what they were saying on the platforms, what they were saying at their small, in house meetings, they saying they could never raise thirty million dollars, this Government in bonds by at seven percent (7%). So the only way they going to get that money they have to give people; you said so. Ah you see sometime when you talking the problem, sometime with the Leader of the Opposition he speaks and does not know what he says, because he hears it for the first time when he speaketh. I have reliable reports of what you have said, you were Prime Minister once you know the kind of reliable reports you get about certain things, you know that, I don't have to talk about those kind of reports. No, no, I am not checking them again, I read them, I could read and the people here and the people in the country know that the NDP has been saying that the Government has been running the country so badly you have to prepare for fresh election, they looking for bonds, but nobody going to buy the bonds, that's what they were saying. Mr. Speaker, their last bond issue was seven and a half percent (7½%) the NDP's. They had to get institutional monies from NIS, from the National Commercial Bank, from the Eastern Caribbean Central Bank. I am pleased to report we didn't have to get any institutional money from the Eastern Caribbean Central Bank for the bonds. The NCB and the NIS begging us for some of the bonds, we say no it is so over subscribed by nearly twenty million dollars (\$20M) it doesn't look like you can get an opportunity to buy any.

The people voted with their X for the ULP on the 28<sup>th</sup> March 2001 and the financial community voted with their cheque books one month ago by over subscribing the thirty million bonds issue. You see talk is cheap. It's easy to make up lie and talk comes. Easy. That Sims Martin resigns. You cut Sims Martin open, he more Labour than Ralph. Sims Martin resigned what wishful thinking.

Mr. Speaker, we in the Unity Labour Party, we saw it fit to appoint as High Commission of the United Kingdom His Excellency Mr. Cenio Lewis. Who was the architect under Carlyle Dougan administration in the United Kingdom? My friend Carlyle was here High Commissioner, Cenio Lewis is the one who organise for the Saint Vincent and the Grenadines to have people to go up and join the British Army that was the trial run. Of course the NDP

make claim credit for it and I didn't say anything because I didn't want to embarrass Cenio to say, Cenio who has done it, because we have Cenio in mind to appoint as our High Commissioner when he was Carlyle deputy. Incidentally Carlyle has fully supported Cenio's appointment he says he is an excellent man. Mr. Lewis has been successful in extending that program where we are now going to get one hundred and eighty seven Vincentians trained and employed in the British Navy.

All these are jobs and training for the Vincentians and they are coming down here in June the army and more going into the army. I know some people are saying well, they might have to send them to Afghanistan and how the white people don't want to go Afghanistan or go to Yahmin or any way at all. But I say this, it up to any young man or woman, they have a choice whether to join or not join. They got an opportunity to get a full and proper education and to get discipline and after a couple of years in the Army or the Navy they can leave if they want with their training and with their credentials and get a job any where. Those who want to make a career in the British Army and the British Navy they can make it. For those who say black people can't rise up I say to them they must look at Baramas Amos she is a black woman from Guyana and she is in the House of Lords, they can look at Baronett Scotland she is a black woman from Dominica who is in the House of Lords. We provide the opportunities you take them if you want, you leave them if you want, cause this is a free and democratic country.

Mr. Speaker, we went to the people and told them that we are going to provide greater competition for the existing supermarkets, particularly two of them because the people were saying that increase prices. The prices are too high for food and I agree with that, and we said we would seek to get competition either from at home or overseas. Not just the rivals people for the sake of rivaling but to reduce prices. We will beef up the supermarket, state owned supermarket so that it will stop its losses and start to make some money again. Now when we said that they said we want to put people out of business. We don't want to put one single Vincentian out of business; we want low prices, its funny. They said that I am a socialist, but when I want to introduce some real lovely capitalism, like competition for the supermarkets the NDP find themselves defending two people who keeping prices high, funny world eh. If they want to tie themselves to the coat strings of those who keep prices high that's their business. The fact of the matter; this is what I mean, I know when I speak about the two supermarkets it riles;

**HONOURABLE MR. SPEAKER:** Senator Leacock, I would ask you to restrain yourself and be careful with the language you use in this Honourable House.

**DR. THE HONOURABLE RALPH GONSALVES:** Mr. Speaker, I hope the public heard what he said, what kind of nonsense I am talking as Prime Minister. That's what he said there. I am talking about getting competition for the two supermarkets. I am not abusing the supermarket owners. I am saying as a fact, that I consider, the people consider that the supermarket prices especially in two supermarkets are too high. The people say that too, not me. What we are saying is that we want more competition for them, either by local supermarket operators; new

entrance, or if we have anymore new entrance which come from elsewhere in the Caribbean. Why are they so, feeling that; Bollers came in here from overseas and they are employing people, when the NDP bought in Courts to rival the little man and to rival all the local furniture operators Roddy Grant who own the local Y D Lima they said they must have competition.

But now the ULP wants competition for the supermarkets they say is foolishness, nonsense, well they must go and continue to defend them in the public that's what I want. We're not abusing anybody we are encouraging business to see local entrepreneurship fly, including the local supermarket before we want to see that. My wife shops at the local supermarkets including those which have high prices, but we have decided that we will provide a little competition through the state owned supermarkets and we have invested one point three million dollars in the state owned supermarket. We close for a month for renovations and we're opening tomorrow afternoon 3 o'clock with a bang. We opening with a bang that I believe also nonsense and foolishness, and one thing you can be sure any Minister who goes there to credit will have to go to the people and apologize to them. If they do it a second time, well they can be in the house but they won't have a Cabinet job.

Mr. Speaker, in the field of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, I have several pages of achievement including the agricultural diversification fund. What is happening to more irrigation, the restructuring of the Banana industry?

Mr. Speaker, let me just speak about what we have achieved on twelve short months on the Banana industry. First of all we have a new Banana Industry Act dealt with, widespread consultation throughout this whole country, including three major consultations on radio, where people can question the Ministers and on one of them the Prime Minister, in Chateaubelair.

Mr. Speaker, we have removed certain bottlenecks in the administration system and restructured the industry in accordance with the wishes of the farmers. We have taken the decision that farmers must pay for their imports because you have some farmers who are crediting, use a different card on which to sell their banana and leave the Banana Association in debt; nearly thirty million dollars we meet it debt. We have slim down the personnel at the Banana industry nobody has been fired because we have strengthen the irrigation section in the Ministry of Agriculture by putting some of them there. We strengthen the extension section In the Ministry of Agriculture.

We have decided to take over eighteen million dollars of the debt we have also Mr. Speaker, organised the matter in such a way that CTAW, the Union gets the contract to provide the service for loading the fruit at port. Historic first for the working people in this country, their Union providing a service and we are now engaging a new procedure, a new system to have contract farming so that you will have back to back contracts WIBDECO and the supermarkets in the United Kingdom and WIBDECO and the farmers. Those are important structural changes in the industry to reduce cost, make the enterprise more efficient.

Mr. Speaker, right at the moment six hundred acres is identified for additional irrigation and six hundred and fifty later this year early next year.

We're bringing back the Arrowroot Industry, and the action plan. There has been an enhancement in livestock production, demonstration plots in citrus to boost food production and so on and so forth. We have restructured the Marketing Corporation, the produce section and we are enhancing our opportunities in trade in the Windward Islands and then Mr. Speaker, we have written the historic wrong.

Nearly one thousand estate workers who for seventeen years were not given their severance pay. When I tell people overseas about this they can't believe that Sir James and the current Leader of the Opposition when they were Prime Minister didn't pay the people their severance pay. People who know them they say they didn't give the people their severance pay. For seventeen years, when Mr. Speaker, during the election the ULP said that we will pay it, close to a thousand of them. At Rabacca, Wallilabou and Fitz Hughes.

They said no way, we lie, in fact they even convince some of our own voters who found it so remarkable that you will pay out close to two million dollars (\$2M) to a thousand workers, they didn't believe that it could be true and when we came to office because the records were in such a haphazard condition we had to piece together the records, including interviewing the people in the area. The Ministry of Agriculture had a wale of a time, rough time to do it.

Made more difficult by the NDP propagandist on the ground, those who have jobs, those who were on the Gravy train, last NDP administration, telling the poor people don't bother on Ralph that will never happened. Don't put down your name, don't answer any question about whether you used to work on the estate, while they put together the records. They say no don't do it at all. So I went into the areas and many people watch me in me face and tell me they don't want Ralph money and the reason why they don't want Ralph money is because they say it will never come. As the day due closer for the money many of those same persons knocking me down, they waiting for me, 7'oclock I going to work. Comrade I didn't believe you Mr. Eustace said no, they won't a bother on you, you won't a paid the money, you only a talk so. I say well when I tell you something you can put your pot on the fire.

The money was paid, in fact Mr. Speaker, Honourable Members, because of the scrappy state of the records and because they did their propaganda work, many of their own people and some who because the records were not in such a good state, who are entitled to be paid were not paid and I asked the Ministry of Agriculture to go through the whole process. They give me a list after Christmas, I said that I want to check and double-check it.

In the new year they came back to me about February with a refined list I said I want you to check it and double check it because when I pay the balance this time I don't want to hear any body else coming forward. I believe I have the list more or less complete now and I am asking during the lunch period here, I have already spoken to the three Ministers whose constituency

they concern, Minister Daniel Member for North Windward, North Leeward, and Central Leeward. When every body gone lunch here today, they coming by the Prime Minister's Office, they are going to go through to make certain and I am going to try my best to see if I can get that money available to pay those other workers completing the righting of the historic wrong first labour day May 1<sup>st</sup> brought back by the Unity Labour Party Government. They can talk and we will do righting the historic wrong. Mr. Speaker, whilst we are righting historic wrong and paying the people their severance pay what was the Leader of the Opposition doing to me; paranging me, writing me letters to pay the Members of his party who no longer in Parliament. And I said to them and I always keep my word. I said to them I am paying the worker their severance pay first and I am doing that in August. When I am finished I will pay the former Prime Minister and the other Ministers who are qualified, who have reached 55 years old and who have served nine years, their pension and they got that in September. I said you all left the economy in such a terrible state I have to take a couple of months to catch my hand and I will give you your gratuity for Christmas and I kept my word on each case. Two are not qualified yet when they 55 year old they will also get their pension and their gratuity minus what ever they owe the Government.

Now not a letter was written to me by anybody from the Opposition to pay these unfortunate workers their severance pay, whom they didn't pay for seventeen years. Mr. Speaker, I am side with a British Airway plan over the Atlantic going to London I had former Members of Parliament for the NDP harassing me to give them their money. I am in a plane over the Atlantic, but we are on the ground in Saint Vincent they wouldn't pay poor people their money. Well we have done that. Righted a historic wrong and we will complete that and I want to work very fast and very strenuously to make sure I could get that in time for Labour Day. It would fill my heart with joy. Weeping may endure for a night but joy comes in the morning.

Mr. Speaker, the work in Tourism has been magnificent, the cleaning up of the city the work done by Minister of Tourism the Honourable Member for West Kingstown has been fantastic. I want to report this that although there was September 11<sup>th</sup> last year and overall we were able to save the decline in the number of visitors to just 7% the decline in the number of people visiting Saint Vincent. Of course on the mainland a number of our hotels were badly hit they had declines in 20%, 30% or more. But cruise tourism held their own; the yachting tourism went up by 20% nearly 30% and the hotels in the Grenadines held their own. To such an extent Mr. Speaker, Honourable Members that the estimated gross earning from tourism in the year 2001 was some seventeen million dollars more (\$17M) than the estimated earning from tourism in the year 2000.

I want the people to remember this, remember when we had introduced some alterations in the fees at the time of the Budget for the Yachts and there was a misunderstanding by some persons who were applying the new rates. The Member for the Northern Grenadines and the NDP as a whole went on the radio on a war against St. Vincent and the Grenadines; not against the Government you know. They said the yachts are leaving in droves, they pulling up their anchor and leaving, they not hanging around; it's the worst season ever, because of the changing rates.

The Government doesn't do what they are doing and the yachts are justified in leaving. They carried out war against St. Vincent and the Grenadines you know in January this year, unpatriotic, but when the figures came in, the increase of the yachts; I don't have the document in front of me, but the Honourable Minister of Tourism has it, but I know when I read, I remember things, nearly 30% increase in the yachts.

You see the point about this is that there are a number of other persons, in fact, I want to say to you further to that, for the month of January and February 2002 and I can get the figures there. The number of yachts coming into St. Vincent and the Grenadines has increased even more. Tourism statistical report for January I will tell you. The total number of visitors by port of entry for January 2002 was twelve thousand nine hundred and three (12, 903) way in excess of January last year. Now Mr. Speaker, remember to you know the year 2001 was our year nine months and I am saying despite September 11<sup>th</sup> we didn't do too badly overall, though many hotels on the mainland suffered and that is why on the mainland for the hoteliers this Government pass the law reducing the taxes which you charge to hoteliers from 40% to 35%.

We did the same thing for the manufacturers and if you export extra regionally outside of the region you only pay 10% on the chargeable income derived from exports extra regionally; 25% if you go through CARICOM, 30% OECS exports. We have reduced the taxation for hoteliers and manufacturers. This Government is showing that we are a business friendly Government. You know what the NDP said, they said that we must reduce our taxes for all the businesses, that what they said on the platform. I shouldn't do it just for manufacturers and hoteliers I should do it for every body, including doing it for Cable and Wireless and doing for the banks them, that's what they want. So when you want to get medicine in the hospital you can't get any, when you want work on the road you can't get any, when your children to get school books they can't get any. You see they are not thinking in a creative manner and targeting.

Mr. Speaker, in the Offshore Finance sector and I will answer a question on that today which I will give certain details which are favourable and we have made tremendous reforms. In the field of telecomm we have been the first to set up the telecommunications commission. We have involved ourselves in the negotiations with Cable and Wireless and we are satisfied that in the transitional period for these six months before full liberisation comes that we're going to have a reduction of rates, international rates and domestic rates. I can't talk about the extent because the negotiations are not complete, and then sometime before the end of this month we are hoping to issue two licenses to two cellular operators and one fixed line operator, to enhance the competition for Cable and Wireless and reduce very much the cost of telecommunications.

My third budget address, Mr. Speaker, it was said in their public meetings between the last occasion of the House, you said you notice they didn't even report to the House on the 28<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Speaker I indicated to you that I will wait until today I wanted to see their faces while I am making the report. I miss you. I know you'll come, I wanted to see your face so that you can bear this you will hear the lyrics, and you had a dead end approach to your protest. You first of all said that you would not come in and sit back in here as the Minister of tourism is here. You

stayed away for two occasions you didn't want to miss the third one, because you know if you miss the third one the Clerk was going to write you if you miss three more, you wouldn't face by-election, these three will have to face by-election and they afraid because they know is all fifteen not just twelve, all fifteen, and then they said on the platform that they may come back. But when they come back every time the Minister of Tourism gets up to speak they get up and walk out. Well she has spoke this morning why you didn't walk out and she will speak again and lets see you walk out. But the thing is this they most afraid of is what I said last week. That if they once miss this meeting I am going to take it out of their pay.

(Out burst of laughter)

**HONOURABLE MR. SPEAKER:** May I ask please those of you in the gallery, please again ask let me ask you to restrain yourself. I am asking the gallery to please restrain yourself.

**DR. THE HONOURABLE RALPH GONSALVES:** Mr. Speaker, we have dealt with in some way disaster preparedness which is now under the Ministry of the office of the Prime Minister and you know when that happens Mr. speaker, mistakenly again how they don't know things, and they said in Mespo the propagandist said in Mespo said, doesn't respect the Minister of Social development, is he who take disaster preparedness but I can't really swear for the little referee of those persons who are issuing such comment, because Mr. Speaker, one of the conditions to get the World Bank loan they made it plain to me that if you want to get the six million dollars (\$6M) you have to take disaster preparedness under your wings. I said if the World Banks want us to do that and I want the money. I will do that. I spoke to the Minister of Social Development and she said its find and we work out amicable arrangement. But they don't, you see that is why, plenty propaganda and plenty lies, truth is a different thing you know entirely different.

Mr. Speaker, I have outlined many of the areas already of fiscal measures and more will be outlined even during this current Sitting of Parliament. But I want to say this one of things which we have been doing very much in the Ministry of Finance is to make sure that we don't waste the [people's money. Things are tight and we have to be very careful how we are spending he money and that is why I don't like when people going to work on the road projects and leaving at 12 o'clock and 1 o'clock I don't like that at all, because they cheating themselves and their children.

The NDP put such bad habits in people it is like hell to get some of them to break them, but I am fighting against it and I am telling you no NDP person going to knock the shine off of my ball. (Interjection) You see this is the thing with Senator Leacock he said that while we get down to 48% in support. Mr. Speaker, we have done a poll and I don't know, you see they have a few people whom they get when they have a few public meetings and they get one hundred, one hundred and fifty, people at public meeting not from the village even all around they bring them in with money supplied from one or two supermarkets, that's why they have to defend them putting on prices on the poor people you know, defending them. They are paying to

transport them and Mr. Speaker, I must say to the country that our support during the election was 58% and since the election it is 64% that was what the poll showed, and the NDP is 21% the rest either they don't know or they undecided that is what our poll tell us.

Mr. Speaker what they are worried about is that the local Government reform which we are bringing which is an achievement we have finished the Motion on the Constitutional Reform and before the end of today's Sitting I hope to tell the Leader of the Opposition the date when we are going to have the Select Committee some time later this month, early next month neutral agreement for the Select Committee meeting to deal with the Terms of Reference and personnel for the Constitutional Reform Commission. When we finished that and all the political education which is going with that; they talking about political propaganda you know, political education and what frightens them more than anything in this whole business is that back drop of support that overwhelming mandate that we have and continue to have that the census results are now about coming.

Actually they are in. They are preparing the report and under the Constitution there has to be a boundary Commission after census and they are wondering giving the population movement would there be more seats on the mainland would the boundaries be cut and they see themselves getting wipe out. You notice the Leader of the Opposition went thought full all of a sudden, he didn't think about that, the Leader of the Opposition has gone thoughtful all of a sudden. (Interjection). Which by-election. Look at how he so hip the last time in the election you all said Beache gone Scumbo come. You all wrote up, your propagandist Kenneth John wrote up, that, he change it, he say 'Move Beache Scumbo Reach' he said that Beache is going to lose and he talking he done already calculate how many percentage and how many people move from which area and so forth. When the election results came, Scumbo was scrambling to save his deposit.

You all are really out of touch with people and reality; you're out of touch with reality. Mr. Speaker, the value added tax arrangement has been put in place in terms of consultancy. This I must say is a continuation of a policy initiative, which was commenced by the previous Prime Minister when he was Minister of Finance. He had made an application to the Caribbean Development Bank for the funds to get requisite technical assistance to do a study for the value added tax. They had not responded to him during his time on the matter, they have done as consequence of the further approaches that we have made.

Mr. Speaker, Ministry of Transport, Works and Housing, Water and Electricity those are areas, which we hear about. The advances made in education a phenomenal over the last year where the school repair programme, where the appointment of the forty-nine qualified assistant teachers, the two million eight hundred thousand dollars (\$2.8M) three times the amount ever, loan to students to go away and study. Paying off in our first four months paying four million dollars (\$4M) from the seven million dollars debt that was left to us for the University of the West Indies so that students can go back to study.

The Leader of the Opposition said, an educated man, that I am wasting the money by paying it to the university. That I, should of put it to people to get work to sweep the streets and clean the drains. That's an educated man said that, that I shouldn't take the money and pay off the university. Poor people children should not be able to go university only the well off who could finance themselves must be able to go. That's what you're saying take the money to clean the drains. When the time came for us to put the money to clean the drains when they had spend two hundred thousand dollars there last year at Christmas we spent one million one hundred thousand dollars. So we can both pay more to clean the drain, put more people on the road, clean the drain and still take care of poor people children to go to the University of the West Indies. But you see if you allow the lowest common denominator to lead you, as leader of your party you will continue to make these kinds of blunders. Do not allow lowest common denominators and convicted felons to lead you or mislead as the case may be. They have given an award, they have made history, first convicted felon in the history of the Caribbean has been given an award for fine performance by a mass political party, that is the contribution from the NDP over the last year.

President Chavez, organised to see if he can get political office he didn't thief Government money so if you want to put President Chavez on the same level with a man who thief Government money well you go ahead and do that, but that is the sort of thing you expect. Well they are able to say and do those things when they are by themselves.

Mr. Speaker we are going on with the computerisation programme. We are putting Spanish and French into primary schools; we have started that already. Mr. Speaker, I just want to tell you what has happened in the first September we came in. There is a 12% increase in student population in the A' level division at the Community College. A 21% increase at the Technical College. A 200% increase at the Teachers College. The reintroduction of secondary school teacher training programme in which seventeen students are registered and the preparation further for the integration of the Teachers College, the Technical College and the division of A' level studies and School of Nursing. We are only in power for twelve months.

Mr. Speaker, a programme for national skills strategy for the next en years has been produced and will be launched shortly. Further in the area of education we have gotten twenty-five more scholarships to go to Cuba, bringing the number to a hundred and twenty-five. We secured forty partial scholarships to Plattsburgh University from September 2002. Plattsburgh University in New York would take extra fifty students from us on scholarships. There are a one hundred and thirty public employees whom we have sent off to university training in the year 2001-2002.

Mr. Speaker we have made significant improvements in the school feeding programme over the past twelve months. The Government has started to pay the helpers, and the cooks. We have increased variety to the school baskets from January 2002 much of the can foods are being replaced by fresh meats. You know, to show you how the NDP on these matters is really backward. You know what they said on their radio station, that people used to get tin meat

salami, they're not getting it any more, that's how they are putting you know. But the fresh meat; they prefer to have tin meat, tin salami, tin sardine and tin corn beef rather than give them fresh meat and fresh fish, which is what we giving the children in the school feeding programme. I don't understand it; a shipment of freezers and transformers has been received for distribution to specified schools. Thirteen cookers have been distributed to particular schools. Workshops were held in December 2001 to train the cooks in food preparation, food hygiene, personal hygiene and sanitation.

The provision for uniforms for the needy children has been improved substantially. Mr. Speaker, I went down to an event in Mustique, I didn't go down there for anything for myself. I talk to some people who down there who are wealthy but very good people and they have promised me I have sent off a list from the office of Prime Minister that they are prepared to provide two uniforms for every needy child as of September free of charge. We have sent the specification, they have promised to send the cloth; the Ministry will be responsible for the giving it out to the seamstress and tailors who make the uniforms. This particular group of wealthy people will pay for the making of the uniforms as a contribution to helping the people in education here. I don't go down and ask them for anything for myself, I don't do that. Other people can do that; who want things for themselves.

Mr. Speaker, in the area of adult literacy, we have trained twenty-four persons as adult educators in Kingstown and Sandy Bay. Some of these are prison officers to help train people in the prisons. We trained one hundred and forty persons in Kingstown, Layou, Georgetown, and Union Island in a range of basic subjects. Such as basic hospitality studies, basic book binding, skills for the job market, basic information technology, leather craft, computer skills, evening classes. Mr. Speaker, it will take me an hour just to itemize the number of things. Then we have improved the school bus system; it is at its stage better ever than before.

The Youth Development, I think Mr. Speaker, we have done a remarkable job. There is the National Stadium project; other facilities for sports so far and I want the young people to listen to it. Mr. Speaker, the Tennis Association came to me at the beginning of January, they said they want five thousand dollars to put two other courts along side the other four which the Chinese has provided to host the Davis Cup; first time ever in St. Vincent and the Grenadines. I joke with them, I said why so late you all come; you think I have a bag of money in the corner. I found the five thousand dollars for them. Bishop Edmond John did the contract, did it very well, and completed the programme in record time.

Five hundred thousand dollars is available for development of the Arnos Vale playfield. For the constructions of hard courts at the South Rivers Methodist school for Netball and Volleyball. Refurbishment already has taken place for netball, eighty-five thousand dollars to facilitate the hosting of the under sixteen tournament.

The securing of employment for at least sixty sportsmen and women who have represented St. Vincent and the Grenadines prominently among these are Cameron Cuffy, Nixon Mc Lean,

Pamenos Ballantyne. We have accorded them the privilege four sports persons of being ambassadors to carry diplomatic passports and one cultural person Alston Becket Cyrus. We are now securing positions in training for dozen of sportsmen and women. The case of Helima De Shong, under twenty-three netball captain is a case in point. The school under thirteen and under-fifteen competition have been reintroduced. Primary schools under cricket competition have been reintroduced. There is a draft policy for sports and physical education has been developed. We have been working with the entire sports organisation and they are saying the Prime Minister being in addition to an education Prime Minister, he is a sporting Prime Minister.

I welcome Senator Leacock to talk football; I have offered him and I repeat the offer here for him to take up. I can give to the football federation an executive officer or an assistant secretary level in the public service; because the load on him, I told him he cannot (interjection) you need to write me. Let me put the law in place, and let us discuss one out of he pool of individuals whom we can get. Because, I have told him that if he runs the football federation, anybody, not just him, he will not run it well, because you require the administrative supports. The Government is prepared to pay for a person from the public service or the teaching profession to go there and they will retain their pension benefits football is the sport of the people. You had a Government in power for seventeen years they never provide you that offer.

Mr. Speaker, in the area of culture and arts the renovation of the Peace Memorial is well on the way. We are looking; we talk about he library, which we are building. Financial support was given to Starliff by the Government to compete with Caribbean Panorama in Trinidad. We are hosting the Caribbean Panorama here next year. The National Cultural foundation will be launched on April 26<sup>th</sup>. The Carnival Development committee will be transformed into a CDC as Carnival Development Corporation. When the Bill is discussed here today Vincy Mass 2001 was the best ever. Revitalization of the National Trust, Cultural exchanges throughout the Caribbean, a number of rallies and other events staged by the Minister of Culture. The passage of the order of National Hero, conferring the honour of National Hero on the Right Excellent Paramount Chief Joseph Chatoyer. All the various Holidays which we have proclaimed to touch and connect with the people's culture to remove the day when you all use to revere Columbus the NDP January 22<sup>nd</sup> and Columbus never set foot on St. Vincent and the Grenadines. You had that as a day steep within a Colonial mindset. We have emancipated the people from that mind set; National Hero's day, National Hero the Right Excellent Carib Chief Joseph Chatoyer.

Mr. Speaker, in the area of Health and the Environment there are many features of the work, which we have been doing, but very importantly to talk about the cleaning of Kingstown.

We had to talk about the collection of garbage Nation wide. Lets pause on this; when we instituted in October, Nation Wide collection garbage throughout the whole of St. Vincent and to put that in the Grenadines on a different footing. In mainland St. Vincent we said that the recurrent charges would be twenty dollars month to do it. Recurrent not to recover capital cost

and we are asking householders to put five dollars a month. The NDP went up in arms, they said five dollars, squeezing poor people, when you go out all about throughout the country the people telling you one of the best thing this Government has ever done is to put the garbage; and they are satisfied to pay five dollars a month for the collection and disposal of garbage. Mr. Speaker, Honourable Members, what is a standing sore point with the NDP is every single morning when the green vehicles move out to collect the garbage from poor people homes all over the country, never happened before. Mr. Speaker, Honourable Members, the NDP commenced the Solid Waste Disposal project. The NDP however had constricted the Solid Waste Disposal project in a radius between Stubbs and just below Campden Park, just in the main population center. They had no intension of extending it nation wide, none whatsoever.

I made the point, I said, I cannot have the Prime Minister's constituency in the North East dirty, with no garbage collected. I said I would resign as Prime Minister before I allow that to continue to happen and I give the instructions. We called the CWSA, the Chairman, the Manager, the person in charge of Solid Waste to a cabinet meeting. When I came I listened to them and when I give the instructions that I wanted and the deadline they said that, that deadline was impossible. I said we will do the impossible and then in the month of October, the green vehicle starts to move about all up to Colonaire, go up to Georgetown, Fancy, then they go down to North Leeward. It is so beautiful to see them. Over the weekend I was going to North Leeward behind them and as I am behind them and they playing the ice-cream music, the jingles and to see the people coming out and putting their garbage, I said yes we cleaning up St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

That is what happens practically. Mr. Speaker, one of the more important areas which we have been addressing in the issue in Health is that concerning the building the battle against HIV AIDS; an institutional machinery has been put in place there. Now Mr. Speaker, in Social Development there has been s series of initiatives and some of those we will talk about during the course of the day. The war on poverty has been very important for us and many of the programmes, which we have put forward, have indicated that we are very serious about eradicating poverty.

The rebates which we have given on electricity, on water for the indigent, the paying of the estate workers, the low income homes, all the enhanced benefits under the NIS which we have put out, and some time shortly there will be an increase in minimum wages, after discussion in the community. Then for the workers we have created fifteen hundred jobs. We have paid the estate workers' severance pay, labour is under the Prime Minister's portfolio so it gets attention, and the trade Unions are involved in the National economic and social development council, the tripartite committee on the economy, and several other important Government bodies.

We have appointed, on the advice of the Commercial Technical allied Workers Union, an industrial relations advisor to public enterprises so to better head off industrial disputes or conflicts. We have insured payment of severance pay to workers at Diamond Dairy, the Banana Growers Association and WEBDECO. Mr. Speaker, we must not forget for six years the NDP

was playing the fool with Diamond Dairy, we have to solve the problems there, and we make sure that the workers get their severance pay when the problem was solved. We have appointed the wages council for the first time in thirteen years to review wages. We have returned Labour Day to the workers.

Mr. Speaker, I want to address before I sit down the issue for good governance and I want to say this, all that I have spoken about the performance of this Government; in the area of good governance, the waging of war on corruption and also a war on poverty. It is not Ralph Gonsalves or the ULP who are blowing their trumpet, no, the British Government is a respected Government in Europe, has declared that the ULP Government is weighing down against corruption. That we have a focused approach to poverty eradication. We have a sufficiency of good governance. Why do I say this Mr. Speaker, for three years the NDP administration was trying to get from the British Government, debt relief under the Commonwealth debt Initiative Trying to get the Debt relief of thirteen and half million dollars (\$13,500,000). They couldn't get it. They wrote the Leader of the Opposition, then Minister of Finance, and said to him you can't get it because your Government is not weighing down on corruption, official corruption. That your Government is not focusing on poverty alleviation, that your Government does not have a sufficiency of good governance. That's what the British told them you know. Mr. Speaker, I want to say this to you, that letter which the British Government wrote the Minister of Finance, was taken off the files. The NDP were so ashamed of that letter they removed it from the files. I want to repeat, because the day when the British came to me first and I spoke to them about debt relief, they produced this letter which they had written the then Minister of Finance, now Leader of the Opposition. Mr. Speaker, I sent for the file, it was not there, I said no, look, turn up, upside down side any file related to anything like that, no where to be found. I had to get a copy from the British and I put the date on it when I received it. Received by PM 12<sup>th</sup> April 2001. That is the date, when I saw that letter. They were so ashamed of their performance they hide the letter. Of course subsequently I discovered letters have not been there and certain things have been removed and when people doing enquiring they are going to find out more things were removed, but that is a different story.

So when they say the ULP has done nothing, the people must ask them how is it that you were fighting for debt relief under the commonwealth initiative and a Government like the British Government look and examined you carefully say no I can't give you, because your performance ain't good, you are too corrupt. You are not taking care of poor people and who don't have good governance. Within five months this Government got the debt relief on the same basis that we were a good Government weighing down on corruption and fighting against poverty. The Member for the British cabinet on August 31<sup>st</sup> in London at her office when I entered she said to me Prime Minister you don't have to talk to me about this one, this one is okay with you. When I open it, it is debt relief. Now what we are seeing happening in this House Mr. Speaker, and it is very good for people all over the world to listen to us and to see how we function.

This speech that I am making here is being broadcast live on two radio stations and on channel 45 on television. Every speech in this House is the same thing, which happens open. Remember during the NDP time when Glen Jackson tried to see if he broadcast what Parliament was doing on SHAKE-UP they ban him from the House. He then somebody up with a little tape recorder recording the speeches and they playing them back delayed. The Speaker under the instructions of the NDP majority said that it is a breach of the privilege of the House I never hear more sections they quoted. That people can't hear what is happening in the House. The tape recording had to stop. Now anybody can talk in the House who is elected or appointed here and you hear it on radio and on television. You see I want an informed people, I am not afraid of an informed people, I am not afraid of people who know. What I am afraid of is ignorance. I am not afraid of knowledge an abundance of knowledge is what I welcome. I want everybody in St. Vincent and the Grenadines to know what is happening in the House and I know while I am talking here a number of the NDP persons turn off their radios they don't want to hear the truth. Some of them will remain in a state of unknowing and I keep this back so that they will be here.

Because I know they want their money and they didn't want me to deduct it, so that they will come back today. What you are saying I don't have the authority to deduct your salary. If you don't come to work of course I deduct your salary. But, I give you all a little time and you come back today so I don't mind, you will get your salary for the other times you didn't come to work, because you see it doesn't matter we are all Christian people it doesn't matter when you come to redemption so long as you come in time and you just barely come in time. Mr. Speaker, Parliament is now a working institution. Parliament used to meet under Sir James and under the current Leader of the Opposition with frequency of the Supreme Soviet under fiat they use to meet three time a year, four times a year, they will prorogue Parliament in August to commence the New Session in December when they presenting the Budget. The country is run by executive fiat without Parliament for several months, that's what they used to do.

Parliament now meets every single month twice a month, three times or even more than that, because we have important stuff to discuss with the people, live on radio and on television. Mr. Speaker, when I was in the Opposition and the Honourable Minister of National Security was the Leader of the Opposition and Mr. Monty Maule was Speaker of the House we tried to get the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association Local Branch going. Mr. Maule out of this pocket organised the first meeting; they came, everybody and at that meeting it was decided at the next meeting that I would present a paper on the comparative position in Commonwealth Parliament as to how they deal with conflicts of interest matters of integrity, so that we can lay the basis for some legislation. The second meeting Mr. speaker, not one single Member of the Government came. They said they not coming to discuss things like that. They want to come and eat the Speaker's food; old talk and not discuss serious business.

Since we have been in office we have had three meetings. The Speaker is president and we have had three meetings of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association Local Branch and on no occasion has the Opposition attended and on no occasion had the Opposition had the

courtesy to inform the Speaker, politeness, the respect, to say we are not coming. You see we want to see our institutions built so that the Commonwealth and the international community to respect us as a people who are fine examples of the Caribbean civilization and who are steeped in their democracy. We want to build the institutions. Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition is repeatedly being consulted by me on critical matters. I send information to him because I respect his office as Leader of the Opposition, but sometime when you hear them talk about me they have no respect for the office of the Prime Minister. Some are so hunger to get back to power ignored by those who have loss the gravy train, that they will seek to traduce and demean the name of the Prime Minister, but fortunately the NDP ain't have title deed for St. Vincent. They were in power for seventeen years they believe they have a title deed they were here only at the democratic will of the people. Mr. Speaker, the way in which the NDP handle integrity legislation, let talk about it. When we were in Opposition we introduced a bill here on the day the when Opposition business has priority for integrity legislation. The NDP voted it down, they said that they will bring it before the end of that Session in Parliament it never came, they said they will bring it in six months time it never came, they said they will bring it before the election it never came.

On my desk is a draft Bill on integrity legislation, which has been discussed already by Honourable Members, sent to us by the office of the Attorney General where we give her the instructions from cabinet to have such a bill, prepared. We in fact hired a consultant to assist us among other things in the preparation of such a Bill and it will come. Mr. Speaker, have the Vincentian people ever seen any Bill connects intimately with the public being published for the people to see. The Bill of Freedom of Movement of people in the OECS was published in the newspapers for the public to send in their comments; the National Heroes Bill. Mr. Speaker, two bills which are before us today, the National Parks Bill, and the National Lotteries Bill, they have been published already in the newspapers inviting comments. The Carnival Development Committee Bill, which is before the House today, since July last year it has been distributed to people within the Carnival community and hopefully it will be debated today and we will publish it before we have a select committee on it so that the people will be able to make comments on that Bill. Never in history of St. Vincent and the Grenadines you have seen Bills being published in newspapers.

I have a criticism to make of our people, they are not responding as well, they have been so long subjects in the democracy rather than active participants in the civic culture, but the people have to come along with the democratic culture and changes introduced by the ULP. We had three nation wide consultations on the Banana Industry Bill; they were broadcast live on radio. Mr. Speaker, when we talk about these things and people listening in Barbados, or people from other places listening they will want to find out that if this is a Greek city state. The kind of democracy, the way it is alive and nurturing in this country. It's magnificent to be in a free and democratic society with a Government, which has enlarged the freedom and the democracy of the people, it is magnificent. Because if you open a democratic relationship with the people if you make an error it is easy for you to correct it because the people know that you are listening to them and we are setting up the mechanism for them to correct you if you make a

mistake and because of that you see we who are here we will have to retire in our seats. We will have to beg people not to vote for us anymore.

Mr. Speaker, we have been reforming and modernizing Government. I've spoken about Local Government Reform, Constitutional Reform. We have set up a National and Economic Social Development council involving all the communities. We have set up all the NGOs, tripartite committee, and the economy these are important elements. Institutions in managing this country and we don't just set them up we have appropriated money for them in our Budget two hundred thousand dollars (\$200,000). We have just hired an economist to work with the National Economic and Social Development council which is a body involved in NGOs and we are going to bring a law in this House to put them on juridical footing so that those of us who are here when we leave, who comes after us in the ULP to be on this side of the House will keep those laws which we put in place, the monitoring mechanisms and public enterprises, the Cabinet committee and the economy. We have an entirely new methodology in getting programmes going, starting from the successful implementation of the one hundred days and then Mr. Speaker, we are waging a war against corruption. In June 2001 the Minister of Foreign Affairs signed a Inter-American Convention against corruption on behalf of the Government of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines. We are the only country in the OECS which has signed that Convention. It's on the Order Paper today for us to debate a Motion concerning that Convention. We have set up a white-collar crime unit, drafted an integrity Bill. We are conducting on-going investigation in a number of questionable deeds conducted by the previous administration.

As you know we have commenced the process to the relation of the lands purchased to knock down prices and I want to know if this country is going to tolerate somebody being in cabinet and buying land from the Government at all or buying it below the price, which the market says, should be paid. They are now resorting to all kind of legalism. Legalism such as what the chief surveyor says; who makes the decision the chief surveyor. The chief surveyor can recommend a price; who appoints the chief surveyor.

Mr. Speaker, we have amended the Commission of Inquiry Act to strengthen the hands of the Commissioner of Inquiry. We did that at the last Sitting and currently I want to announce to the country that I am considering the name of a distinguished Queen's Council from the Caribbean. I hope he will be available to be chairman of the Ottley Hall Inquiry. I am also making contact with a retired investigator from Investigative Services of the United States Government to be attached to that investigation as the chief investigator. Yesterday I had a long discussion with a retired Member of the Investigative Services of Her Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom whom I am holding discussions with to engage him as a consultant to carry this Inquiry. It will cost us some money but I want to know how we could owe close to eighty million dollars (US \$80M) on the Ottley Hall project and the project is only five million dollars (\$5M) I want to know where the money gone. So I know that there were persons who were saying what is the Government doing how are they taking so long to deal with some of these matters. Mr. Speaker, we first wanted to take a cheaper route to have the provision liquidate at

Ottley Hall converted by the court into a liquidator and that was what we honestly wanted to do and I had announced that, that we are going to move for that. But it is luckily that we studied these things very carefully and fulsomely we discovered an agreement which said if the Government of St. Vincent and the Grenadines had cause a liquidator to be appointed the debt which we owe will become due immediately all of it. So thy tried to see if they could tie our hands; I said okay you all want to try and tie my hands, my hands are loose. The Government's hands are loose we will amend the Commission of Inquires Act which we did last time, to do what among other things, to allow the Commission of Inquiry to go any where on the face of God earth to take evidence wherever there is any body evidence wants to be taken we contact that particular Government and say we want to come there and let the Commission of Inquires go there. I said you all want to tie the ULP Government hands alright we will go to the Intelligent Agencies in Britain and the United States and we will see what we can hire. I know that some who have been involved in Ottley Hall, they are quaking in their boots since Commission of Inquires law has been changed and they will quake more when they hear what we have in mind. As a taxpayer I want to know way the money gone. As Prime Minister I have an obligation to put it to the cabinet to inquire where the money gone and the Cabinet has a solemn duty to support such an inquiry as to way the money gone.

Mr. Speaker, we're now at the moment conducting a one woman Commission of Inquiry into the housing land mess at, Diamond, Gibson Corner, and Pembroke and there is much there and we are building a culture of honesty and transparency some simple things on wards.

You do not see Mr. Speaker, you do see any Government Minister driving a Government vehicle, and you don't see that. You certainly don't see Government vehicles driving up and down a nights taking girlfriends to discos and by hog-hole or sugar hill, or taking the family to church on Saturday or Sunday you are not seeing that because we have made it plain and as Prime Minister I have indicated to my colleagues that any of them who abuses Government vehicle by driving it about; Government vehicles are being seen late on evening in them, gallivanting on weekends. I said you don't have to explain to me, you will have to explain to the people on television and on radio, because I am not taking any blame for that kind of conduct. You are not seeing me in that. Mr. Speaker, on one occasion and I must say this, the driver of the Prime Minister's car who is under serious destruction as to how that vehicle is used. Negligently used the vehicle to drive I think it was 11'o clock that night when my wife and I drove the baby sitter home because anytime; I have made it clear that anytime you drop me home in the Prime Minister's car when you are taking the baby sitter you use my personal jeep which I pay for out of my own trousers for. Park up the car, drop her off somewhere beyond Arnos Vale come back, leave my jeep, take up the car and you go home. Beautifully this officer goes home. I went in this particular evening I didn't have to repeat it because it had been followed to show you how their minds are malignant. They apparently saw the Prime Minister's car with the babysitter driving in it, they said on their radio programme, they said in their speeches that Ralph using the Prime Minister's car to carry home he woman them late at night. You hear where it gone. When the matter was drawn to my attention that the officer had done that, that evening I told him the next day that, that it is unacceptable and it must never

happen again, because the way it is done is as I tell you; my wife and I go out and the babysitter has to remain, we leave the Prime Minister's car take my personal vehicle drop the babysitter and come back because I want to make sure that we set the standards in the use of Government vehicles which are so high, and you must conceive the general public that we have been setting those standards. You have not seen our Government vehicles anywhere our Government vehicles being misused neither by public servants in fact the last time I saw a public servant do it, he had to answer because we must be scrupulous in the way we conduct affairs and we must be open and transparent and we must do it beyond and above reproach. Mr. Speaker, I must say before I sit down that this Government has made enormous strides in linking with Diaspora. I myself met with Vincentians in every single Caribbean country where I visited and every single country where ever I go where there are Vincentian people we have worked hard and tirelessly to deepen the integration movement and the work which this nation has done has been recognised in the region and that is why the Prime Minister of this country has been selected by the OECS to lead the Prime Ministerial committee on closer union in these islands.

We have broadened the necessary legislations in this parliament. As you know we hold certain things clear philosophically; among them are that this nation is founded on belief of the supremacy of God and in the freedom and dignity of man. In the pursuit of practical policies, to aid and develop the consolidated freedom and dignity of man to do so through the principles of social democracy as applied in practice, to follow the law. This is a Government of laws not of men. They are open and transparent and we occupy a portion of this world in this Caribbean where we assert unequivocally, believe solemnly, sincerely, that we are an independent authentic civilization. There is a Vincentian component to that civilization called a Caribbean civilization and it is the duty of every single one of us individually and collectively to act in ways to further ennoble that civilization. We are not perfect every single one of us has sinned and come short of the glory of God. Every single one of us has made errors and we will make errors again as a Government and as a people individually and collectively but we must learn from our mistakes and when the mistakes arise we must deal with them openly, transparently and correct them and move on to develop this country and to enhance our people's nobility. That is the way we have functioned, it is within that framework, that philosophical structure with those ideals and in a practical implementation of them that I have recorded to you in a summary form on every facet of our performance over the last year.

Mr. Speaker, I have given to the nation a summary report in the presence of Her Majesty's Opposition I hope that they take this report to heart reflect upon this report and cease their lies and propaganda so that then, with us join hands and hearts together now to develop further this beloved nation. Thank you, may God bless you.

SUSPENSION 2:05 P.M. LUNCH  
RESUMPTION 3:40 P.M.

**HONOURABLE JULIAN FRANCIS:** Mr. Speaker, I find it necessary to make a statement on the matter of the schools repair programme. On two occasions in this House Mr. Speaker, in the not too distant past, I think between September, and December last year I made two very fulsome reports to this House in response to questions put forward by the Opposition on the schools repair programme. But within recent times it would appear that certain elements of the opposition maybe the school repairs programme was too effective and maybe that my reports were too fulsome and that we made a lot of mileage out there on the schools repair programme. So the facts, Leader of the NDP who carries a daily calling programme I think called new times seem to have been very deliberate in going on radio and trying to create mischief on this matter. The reports that I receive stated and these were confirmed that there is some two million dollars unaccounted for, or have not been spent, on the schools repair programme.

In the report that I give before this House on two separate occasions I did go through the list individually but not because, the talk show host has raised this in public, but it has gone one step further and appeared in the searchlight on the 28<sup>th</sup> March 2002. Where one of the esteemed columnist who writes a column called the 'love vine' seems to have been lynched and he has taken to put in print and peddle the same story that was being broadcast on New Times radio programme. I have a pullout of the searchlight on 28<sup>th</sup> March 2002 and I want to refer to it before I get and deliver a report once again. Yes it is searchlight of 28<sup>th</sup> March 2002, I don't see a volume number on this page put it is page nine of the searchlight of 28<sup>th</sup> March 2002.

He started by saying to be honest when the ULP took office people of all works and talks suddenly found their spirits raised to a higher gear like cruising on a over drive along a highway built with great expectations. We were energized by a leader who was ready to ennoble his people to meet the requirements of a new Caribbean civilization. Next came the hundred days programme to the GA team and he went into the GA team. He then went into all the matters that happened under the hundred days programme and give a very favourable report up to that point. But this next very paragraph he says every body was pleased with there hands on approach by Ministers, Francis, Baptiste, and Browne but like their hands on was not deep enough so it's now hands in and that messing things up and believe me that's the beginning to see the same old khaki pants. Unconfirmed reports that two million dollars are either unaccounted for, is still to be spent on the schools repair programme. When he said that, I think that the 'for' there should have been 'or', I'll read it as it is in the papers. So he has picked up this thing on New Time radio that totally lynched and decided that he would come and print it in the newspaper. Thereby reducing the integrity of the searchlight newspaper. I thought it best to write the editor and I drafted a letter to the editor but then I said on second thoughts maybe I'll leave it and speak on it in parliament which is the place where you speak to people's business and maybe I should not reduce myself to a newspaper print with the like of journalist like this. But he goes on after saying that generally there is a high level of accessibility to public information and prompt reporting by Ministers on the people's business. So that, while there is a high level of accessibility to public information and I have come in this House and given information, he is still saying there is unconfirmed reports and he is basing his arguments

on unconfirmed reports. Well all Bassy had to do was to call me and I will give him all the information that I had, but you see Mr. Speaker, the love vine it is parasitical. Well you said that one. Well anytime you put a piece of love vine on a piece of bush it kills it. But Mr. Speaker, it would appear therefore that the journalist, who is considered to be of above average intelligence, seems to be one of the few in that bracket (those above average intelligence) who are obviously impressed with the radio talk show host on New Time's radio. Very few number of persons and I describe that group of persons as the 'lynch mob'.

Now Mr. Speaker, the NDP seem to be on this path because last week Saturday night I am driving in my jeep and I tuning in as I normally do to listen to Keith Joseph talk show, and he started on a matter which our deputy political leader had responded to publicly already which I think I should highlight today, stating that he had received reports that the transmitter for the radio station called Nice radio was systematically destroyed and he went on and paraded saying that, that is no problem, they will have to destroy all, because we will continue to replace them as they destroy them. Giving the impression that the Unity Labour Party, he didn't say the ULP, but the way he was going on, it was obvious that persons on this side of the House Members of this Party could have been linked to such an act. I thought it very strange because I didn't think and I didn't see the need to see anyone would want to destroy a transmitter of NICE radio. So I called to find out about the matter. The facts are on this matter that the owner of the house, who in fact is a stalwart of the Unity Labour Party in which this piece of equipment was held and I am using this Mr. Speaker, in relation to the negative comments that were made in the searchlight newspaper and to show it was a deliberate attempt by the New Democratic Party to peddle this sort of misleading information to the public and I want to set the record straight on both of them.

That transmitter was at one time housed at Fort Charlotte. You would record early in this administration Mr. Speaker, that radio station was asked to remove it transmitter from Fort Charlotte because our understanding was that the electricity being consumed up there is the electricity of Fort Charlotte and the Minister responsibility for sea ports who has responsibility for Fort Charlotte was instrumental in getting this effected. It was moved down hill to a very prominent supporter of the Unity Labour Party who agreed to house the transmitter in his radio room at Fort Charlotte.

I suspect that they have made arrangements with him for electricity consumption. The report is that the owner of the house and he is a stalwart of the Unity Labour Party; if there was any need to destroy the transmitter of Nice radio we didn't have to wait so long. As soon as we put it in, the owner of the house he would have destroyed the next day. But he lived with it in his house and the owner of the house had some very massive bad dogs, very few persons including members of his family refuse to go in the yard if he is not there.

His report was that one day he saw the door on the transmitting room was open and called the technician at Nice Radio. The technician at Nice radio said he did an inspection and reported to Keith Joseph at a shop at Lowmans Hill and Keith Joseph took this information juicy-and-nice

and went on radio with this matter. The next Monday the talk show host on the New Times radio had it blasting all over the airways saying that supporters of the Unity Labour Party had destroyed the transmitter of Nice radio.

Well I met Keith Joseph and I said to him I trust that you will have the guts to go back on radio and apologize that you all fed wrong information. I understand on his weekend programme while he didn't apologize he did say and indicate that the information was incorrect. That the he was porter, I want to us that term Mr. Speaker, I am putting it in that way because a porter is somebody who carries luggage. So Keith Joseph was porter and he carried the luggage that he got and the talk show host finding it so juicy went on radio with it not knowing that it was false, but it doesn't matter if these things are false or true. Because I asked him about this schools repairs programme I met him in Georgetown, when I was visiting the Rabacca and I said lynch what kind nonsense are you carrying on with the schools repair programme? He said he never said anything about the schools repair programme, that all I said was this, that this two million dollars if it is not spent yet Ralph Gonsalves should fire Julian Francis and Cornelius Ollivierre that is what he said, he said on radio. But Keith Joseph was potted and Bassy was lynched, with both witness of that information peddled it into the public.

Mr. Speaker, I trust that the editor of the searchlight newspaper to be careful in future, because the integrity; if you continue with columnist like this the integrity of your newspaper would be in question. A searchlight as far as I am concerned is a very balanced newspaper I see the Leader of the Opposition getting a fair coverage last weekend, back page and the whole of the double fly leave, beautiful, well balanced newspaper. But you have to check on your columnist and the garbage and the luggage that they carry.

Mr. Speaker, I am saying all that the information that was being peddled about the schools repair programme is nothing but mischief by the NDP. If the political leader is in fact the Leader of the party I think he should do something to correct it. But he comes in the House, Members of the opposition ask me the question about the schools repair programme and I give them all the information; details, school, by school, contractor by contractor but yet it the factual leader is not taking the information that the party gets and he goes on radio and give a completely different story.

Mr. Speaker, let me tell you how this thing started. I have a report here that was done as of the 30<sup>th</sup> September 2001. I think I had just made a presentation to the House around this time, and it goes into full details of the programme. The schools repair programme the amount approved by the EU was five million five hundred and sixty seven thousands and forty-eight dollars (\$5,567,048). Two million eight hundred and fifty-one thousands, eight hundred and sixty-one dollars (\$2,851,861) was spent on materials. Two million and seventy-six thousand, eight hundred and nineteen dollars (\$2,076,819) was spent for labour. Two hundred and fifty-nine thousand, six hundred and two dollars (\$259,602) on contingencies and there was three hundred and seventy five thousands dollars for the project implementation unit.

This report which was sent to the Prime Minister and sent to the European Union the representative office here in the Ministry of Finance, over in the financial complex. It went through details on the works that were carried out the building structures, the building roof, grounds, landscaping, building services, execution of works, the zones, it listed the number of schools that were repaired, Kingstown nine, West. St. George seven, Marriacqua nine, Grenadines nine, the Windward side twenty, the Leeward side eighteen and total seventy-two schools in all were repaired. They initially reported seventy-one, but the Stephanie Browne School in Union was overlooked. But, after I visited Cornelius Ollivierre who is the project manager and our representative on the ground down there, the man who ran for us in the last election Senator Snagg. The man who is in charge of Grenadines Affairs, under the Prime Minister, we decided that works had to be done on the Stephanie Browne Primary School as well. So seventy-two schools were done.

There was a progress report done on the work, the report went through zones individually and they showed you exactly what each school cost what was the original estimate and what was the final estimate. Where ever there were variances in the estimates of the actual works those were presented. Zone 1, zone 2, zone 3, zone 4, zone 5, zone 6.

It highlighted the problems encountered and it had a place that says a 'Way forward'. The Way Forward I will read that one first Mr. Speaker, because I think that it is much shorter than the rest. The Labour Intensive schools repair programme was executed very rapidly during the first three month, June July, August, and September 21. As the 30<sup>th</sup> of September 2001 the expenditure stood at four million, nine hundred and seventy-four thousand, seven hundred and four dollars and eighty-seven cents (\$4,974,704.87).

The original expenditure for material and labour is as follows and I went through those before. Expenditure to date materials and supplies, two hundred and seventy-three million, nine hundred and sixty-one thousand dollars, (\$273, 961,000) labour two million and twenty-seven thousand, nine hundred and sixty-one dollars (\$2,027,961), and it showed you the variations so that materials and supplies were estimated at \$2.851M, we spent \$2.733M and labour estimated at \$2,076, 819, we spent as of that date \$2,027,961. So we had a \$117, 899 dollars left back on materials and \$48, 858 dollars left back on the labour.

The Ministry of Transport, Works and Housing are in receipt of a number of requests; this was after the works was done to open schools on September 6<sup>th</sup>. I have received a number of requests to further works to be carried out at schools. In some cases these requests were beyond that which was carried out recently. These requests have resulted in our supervisory team visiting schools to determine what further is to be done and the estimated cost of these works. We have recognised the project does not have sufficient funds for materials, supplies and labour to effectively operate until 2002. On the other hands there are funds to accommodate the projected operations of the PIU, so there wasn't sufficient money, because you see this project was presented over a one year period but we decided that we would go on fast track and get it

done in the August holidays and we spent \$4.9M up to \$5.5M in the first three months. But the PIU which consists of five persons their salaries were accounted for up until June 2002.

There were other expenditures, which will carry us to June 2002 but they were diminished compared to the initial burst of work on the project. This Bill was suggesting that some supplementary amounts of funds have to be provided to bring about some balance and in this regard we discussing the way forward. Initially while it was envisaged that the repairs could have been carried out totally during the summer vacation the project was written up with duration of one year. This was based on the past administration's track record on the execution of such projects.

The unit within the Ministry has effectively and sufficiently executed the programme. It is staff, financed and has the capacity to undertake the much needed additional works. Accordingly we are recommending that this can further the assessments which are currently being carried out. A sub-project for materials and labour be put together which can be executed over the remaining life of the PIU approximately six months. So Mr. Speaker, we finish the money we had a small amount of money left; there was more works to be done on the schools.

The state that we met the schools in, \$5M couldn't repair all of them and restore them to what the people or we would like to see. There were still some nagging things that was done that we try to correct with the little bit of money we had left. So this was the report of \$4.9M was done as of September 2001, and it goes through here and it gives us the annexes attached Mr. Speaker, I will be laying this document before the House as a public document so that all those who want to search it can search it. It is a fulsome report as of the 30<sup>th</sup> September, when the projects are finished and the final accounts are prepared I will bring back before this House and lay an audited copy of the accounts of the schools repair programme. It shows you in each zone each individual school, what their estimates were and what their expenditures were and attached to the back a projections from July 1<sup>st</sup> to 2002, for the last months of 2002 showing an expenditure of forty-one thousand, five hundred and thirty-eight dollars \$41,538 which would end the project, the PUI and everything will be closed by that time; that is September Mr. Speaker. When this was sent over we had a full report of all the vouchers and documents and everything.

We have what is called a payment voucher Mr. Speaker, and I brought a copy of it to show to the House to possibly lay it before the House if necessary. A payment voucher that has on it purchase order number, a cheque number that issues the payment, a ledger number, category under which it is claimed, a description and particulars of the payments and the amount paid. It is signed by the person who prepares it, it is signed by the project manager, it is certified by other members of staff and when the cheque is being prepared it is signed by the project manager and the permanent secretary in the Ministry of Transport Works and Housing, who are the two signatories on the cheque book at the National Commercial Bank.

What was omitted Mr. Speaker, by the accountant in the PIU is that the receipt at the bottom was not signed. So when we sent them over to the EU unit they said that they were not acceptable that we must get all persons who received money under the project to sign their voucher. It says at the bottom, receive a sum of so much dollars and the payee must sign. Mr. Speaker, this was like about two months after the project was closed.

We put an announcement on the radio that all persons who work under the schools repair programme must report to the Ministry. Well everybody came 90% of the persons signed the forms, the other 10% suck the teeth and said "I think is more work you all call me for, I did not come here to sign no form, I thought you all have some more schools to repair, why didn't you all get me to sign the form at the time". Well we got 90% of the forms signed that is for the contractors; well for all cheques to be issued because for each cheques to be issued one of these had to be made up. But the suppliers of the material we asked the supervisors to go around to the shops and the stores who supply the material and get them to double check the amount they receive and sign the receipts first.

I such firm which is known to support the NDP refuse to sign the form and that Mr. speaker, is where I think the information was leaked to the New Times radio talk show host. Eventually we insisted that they sign the form because we have a cheque that is endorsed by them and they agreed and they signed the form. So that is where it came that \$2M missing. Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to report that well over 90% that was to be 94% of the forms have been signed and the EU representative here says to me Mr. Francis those that we do not sign yet I don't think we are going to have a problem, because I have every single cancel cheque in the project information. So this form here is really a double up, I know you all sleeping over there, so play-sleep; this one bothering you all. This is just a duplicate of the signature that you put on the back of the cheque. Anybody who gets a cheque deposited in their account there is a stamp by the bank saying deposited to the account of the payee or they will sign their John Henry to the back and that is the receipt of the money. So the EU office says that once they have the cancelled cheque it ain't necessary to get all the forms signed, I am pleased that I got so much signed. So that settled.

Mr. Speaker, I have done a report as of the 3<sup>rd</sup> April. (Interjection) I am making sure that the people know it because if they talking they lie they will get the information and go on radio and tell them. That is why we have to repeat these things time after time after time, because they continue to peddle it sometimes our people don't speak out enough, but I want to give you a full detail to have the information.

Mr. Speaker, after the 3<sup>rd</sup> April of the \$5.567M, \$5,470,000 was disbursed from the EU to the projects implementation units, to the project it self, of that \$90,561 was spent buying small pieces of furniture for different schools. In fact twenty-three schools received different pieces of furniture (\$90,000). Small contractors were employed to build furniture; this is not furniture we are going out and buy ready-made, is buying material and giving it to small contractors, fellows with carpentry shops to builds these furniture. Twenty-three schools with small

contractors building uniforms, labour cost, clerk of works and cleaning. There were seventy-two clerks of works and there were at least two cleaners at every school; we had to clean up the schools before the 6<sup>th</sup> September. So between the clerk of works and cleaners we had two hundred and sixteen persons there employed two cleaners for each school and a clerk of works for each school (2x72) and we spent \$174,314.01.

Contract cost this is where the labour cost comes in where the contractors got their work, seventy-two contractors, the total spent on that is \$2,104,667.78, N.I.S for the clerks \$5,210.67 making it a total of \$2,284,192.46. Mr. speaker, in this category where we spent \$2.2M, we had seventy-two contractors, at least ten persons per school, created seven hundred and twenty jobs; so creating jobs that constructions are not a permanent job where we will continue to repair and construct and we will continue to provide the jobs.

Material cost Mr. Speaker, what went into the local economy to the business houses \$2,616,914.41 for the seventy-two schools that was the cost of material purchased locally except for the windows, Mr. Speaker and I want to say something on that, you know that in this country there is a local manufacturer of windows, do you know Mr. speaker, that under the former administration all windows for all Government buildings were bought from outside and very few windows were bought from the local manufacturer who employs people in this country Mr. Speaker. I insisted that all windows that had to be replaced in the schools repair programme must be bought from the local producers of windows. He didn't have enough windows in stock. He went he bought the material from Trinidad, (not finish windows) and made his windows here Mr. Speaker, these were supplied by local contractors, \$2.616M.

Trucking Mr. Speaker, there was seventy-one trucks employed and on each one of these truck there was at least two footmen; again that is two hundred and sixteen people. We spent \$181,891 in trucking that's the expenditure. The supervisors allowance we spent sixteen thousand dollars \$16,000, this supervisors allowance I uterlise the supervisors allowance to, within the Buildings Division within the Ministry to assist in the rapid work of the schools repair programme and I told them if we have done the work satisfactory, before school reopen, I will give them a bonus. The workers finish Mr. Speaker, wrote to the Ministry of Finance, went to the steering committee and I got the permission to pay them their bonus \$16,000 in bonus was paid to the supervisors. When you give workers commitment and you make promise you must fulfill the promises.

Mr. Speaker, in capital expenditure there was fixed assets, equipment three computers and four printers total of \$16,568. We bought a motor vehicle, a Toyota double cab, four wheel drive \$57,214.36 and office furniture four desks, and four chairs and some stacking chairs and office chairs that come up to \$8685, so we spent \$82,467.36 on fixed assets. Mr. Speaker, it therefore means that under the schools repair programme which was approved of \$5,567,048. The project itself has received \$5,470,298 that means that there is \$96,750 still over at EU to come to the project. So we spent \$90,561 purchasing furniture, \$174,314, for clerk of works and cleaners \$2,104,667 labour contracts for works the N.I.S for the clerk of works \$5210 total labour cost

\$2,374,755. We spent in materials \$2,616,914, trucking \$181,891 that total \$2,798,805 if you add your \$16,000 to that you will get a figure of \$5,189,560. We receive \$5,470,298 we therefore had \$280,738 left back the PIU expenditure was \$215,659 that means we have \$65,078 left back.

The project implementation unit \$3200 in allowances, \$6460 in bank service charges \$247 in medical, \$10,922 in administration \$4,691 in office supply, salaries \$157,251 PAYE \$24,552; the people them paying tax to, telephone \$2,666, traveling and entertainment \$2,345 totaling \$215,659. Mr. Speaker, the programme has been balanced. I have a Balance Sheet that shows it has been overdraft by \$13,386 there's many come to so the overdraft doesn't worry us too much. If you take that from the fixed assets it will give you \$69,080 and if you add payables of \$4,001.62 plus the \$65,078 that I told you we have left back here we balance out at \$69,080.59. Mr. Speaker, I have accounted for every single dollar. Every single dollar of the \$5,070,000 I want to say this is why when we open the Marion House and Mr. Calabory who is the big boy come down here the European Union Ambassador; let me find the words he said.

**DR. THE HONOURABLE RALPH GONALVES:** It was a grand success.

**HONOURABLE JULIAN FRANCIS:** Man let me say it nah. He describes the programme as a grand success. Now Mr. Speaker if my Ministry did not spent the \$5M you think Mr. Calagory with his reputation at stake in the European Union will come here and say the programme is a grand success. Mr. Speaker, I would suggest to all those who have been lynched, porter, mob and those in the House when they get correct information they keep it to themselves. That is why today Mr. Speaker, I really want with a lot of pride to lodge this report here which was sent off on the 30<sup>th</sup> September, and I really want to thank you very much to allowing me to give this report.

### **QUESTIONS FOR ORAL ANSWERS**

1. *The Honourable Arnhim Eustace, (Leader of the Opposition) asked the Honourable Minister of Telecommunications, Science, Technology and Industry to please indicate the current status of the Call Center Project specifically;*
  - (a) *Whether Teltec has withdrawn its contract from the Call Center Company.*
  - (b) *The status of discussions to switch to Cable and Wireless as the provider of choice.*

**HONOURABLE DR. JERROL THOMPSON:** In October 2001, Teltec, a company interested in establishing a Call Centre and a Medical Kit Assembly Unit at Ottley Hall approached the Development Corporation. DEVCO negotiated the lease of a 2000 sq. ft building space to be sublet to Teltec. In November 2001, a plan to also sublet some of the seats at Information Technological Services of St. Vincent and the Grenadines at Arnos Vale was finalised between

Teltec and Devco for a six-months trial basis. This arrangement was to provide an incubator service for new Call Centres in order to get them going until they were fully established. This would also provide additional revenue for ISSVG. However, as a result of technical problems, the usable seats of the 144 seats Call Centre were less than 70. Notwithstanding the technical problems, Teltec was still able to dial successfully. They used only 20 seats during the day and between 10-20 seats at nights, at a lease price of \$US6, 800 per day. The periods of technical problems were recorded and the daily charges pro rated accordingly. An initial invoice of US\$114,000.00 was issued on February 22<sup>nd</sup>. However, in view of the down time from technical problems, both parties arrived at a settlement of US\$50,000.00 which was agreed to by Teltec. Numerous correspondence from the owners of Teltec stated that monies were wired and on one occasion DEVCO only receive \$6,000.00 of the agreed \$50,000. Request for initial payment of the building lease, which was to have been paid by February 1st, was also not forthcoming, raising serious concerns and suspicions about Teltec.

Mr. Speaker, from contacts with other Caribbean Governments and investment promotion agencies, it is clear that a number of companies attempting to invest in the Caribbean would travel from Island to Island and are intent on ripping off people and the Government. It is a strict policy that any new foreign company conducting business in St. Vincent and the Grenadines must supply the information to conduct due diligence. DEVCO had made several requests to Teltec for additional information in order to complete the due diligence process, and this was repeatedly promised. Teltec subsequently refused to supply this information. As a result DEVCO reduced the number of seats to 5 in the day and 5 at night. On February 27<sup>th</sup> after a final warning, Teltec again advised DEVCO that fees owed had been wired into DEVCO's account but by the end of the next day February 28<sup>th</sup> no money had arrived so DEVCO closed down Teltec. Any suggestion that Teltec pulled out is erroneous and false. Teltec was closed down for its non-payment and refusal to supply additional information required to perform due diligence.

Mr. Speaker, in relation to question (b): Mr. Speaker, there is no doubt that the Call Centre has had significant technical problems, and presently, it is operating at half of its capacity. However, 90% of the technical problems have been solved, and over the last two months the quality has been adequate and stable. However, with these types of new technology, we are mindful that technical problems can develop at any time. Negotiations have been completed for Cable and Wireless to provision a new fibreT1 line from the Call Centre at Arnos Vale to Reno Nevada. This would provide telephone lines for half the Call Centres and the other half would continue to be provided by the existing VESAQ. This is to provide some level of redundancy in case anything was to go wrong. Cable and Wireless' normal delivery time unfortunately is 8 weeks. So we are presently awaiting the final provisioning of this line.

Mr. Speaker, recently, I too have noted a number of public statements. The report that was mentioned previously by the Minister of Works, Housing and Transport such as radio stations claiming that their equipment was smashed, and that the Call Centre only has one programme or Teltec has pulled out. These and some other insinuations are maliciously false and steeped in

politics; nevertheless this Government will continue to hold a cardinal principle, transparency. And we stand committed to developing the Call Centre industry and Information Technology here in St. Vincent and the Grenadines. Thank you very much Mr. Speaker.

2. *The Honourable Arnhim Eustace, (Leader of the Opposition) asked the Honourable Prime Minister and Minister of Finance to please indicate;*

(a) *The number of entities registered with the Offshore Finance Authority as at 28<sup>th</sup> February, 2002.*

(b) *The number of entities registered as at 28<sup>th</sup> February, 2001.*

**DR. THE HONOURABLE RALPH GONSALVES:** Mr. Speaker, Honourable Members, the following is a breakdown of the number of entities on record at the Offshore Finance Authority as of the 28<sup>th</sup> February 2002 as compared to the 28<sup>th</sup> February 2001.

Mr. Speaker, I would give the grand total first and then I will give for each category to the Honourable Minister. As at February 28<sup>th</sup> 2001, 11,452 entities were on record at the Offshore Finance Authority. As at 28<sup>th</sup> February 2002, 12,697, that is to say as of 28<sup>th</sup> February 2002, there were 1,137 more entities on record. I think it is important for that to be stated Mr. Speaker because there has been a statement repeatedly made by many persons who could easily object to say that from last year they have been saying that the number of entities on record have gone down to 7,000 which is not true, as I have just given the figures. In fact there is an increase in 2002 over 2001.

Mr. Speaker, I would like, while I am at it, to point out the revenue which has been derived. As of 28<sup>th</sup> February 2001, the sum of 1.39 million dollars. As of 28<sup>th</sup> February 2002, 1.788 million dollars. I want to say however, Mr. Speaker, that the month of February 2001 had more registrations in that month than the month of February 2002, 455 as against 145. And I would come and give the reasons. I don't have to indicate all that in terms of the answer, but I believe in complete transparency because the offshore sector is a sector which is so fragile that we ought to take the malice out of it and deal with it on the facts.

In terms of the entities, the comparisons: International Business companies; in February 2001, 7,997 as against 9,134. Continued companies, that is to say, companies under the old Act, pre 1996 which has been continued under the old legislation, 2001, 871, 2002, 1067. International Companies not yet continued; 152 in 2001, 1346 in 2002. Limited Duration Companies as provided for under the International Business Companies Act, 33 in 2001, 34 in 2002. Trusts; 2001, 738, 845 in 2002. Continued Trusts which are the same relating to the continuation under the IBCs; 62 in 2001, 63 in 2002. International Trusts not yet continued; 169 in 2001, 168 in 2002. Banks; 34 in 2001, 35 in 2002. I should point out Mr. Speaker that the amount in banks for 2002 would now be less given the recent revocation of licences in the case of nine. Mutual

Funds; 4 in 2001, 3 in 2002. Insurance companies; 2 in each of the years. Registered Agents; 31 in 2001 and 38 in 2002.

Mr. Speaker, I have indicated the revenue. I want to point, for completeness, to the issue of employment which concerns all of us. Cheques with the bank excluding those which have been now revoked. So I am only dealing with those which currently exist. The banks reveal that at least 27 persons have been employed by offshore banks since February 28, 2001.

Mr. Speaker, the reasons which we have assessed, as we have said that we have more on the books at February 28, 2002 than in 2001, but in the month of February there was a decline. And we are assessing this decline and the reasons which the professionals have indicated for the decline in that particular month, they have found that many persons were concerned about the OECD blacklist and the FATF blacklist and we have to watch now we have come off the OECD blacklist, how that is going to help relative to what has happened before when we were on the OECD black list. It would be interesting to see those persons who have been saying that because we are still blacklisted on FATF, the recent progress report on FATF to see whether that will help us. But apart from those technical issues on the blacklist and off the blacklist, there has been a general slow down in the region in registration, in this period, consequent upon September 11<sup>th</sup>, and very aggressive measures are being taken on the issues of suppression of terrorist financing but there are many people who are being very cautious. So it is important that we put our regime in place to make people feel very comfortable. And thirdly, though we have an increase in number in 2002 over 2001, Mr. Speaker, we have been marketing not in a full scale way because we know of the problems with the blacklisting under the OECD and the problems of the blacklisting under the FATF. Now we are off the OECD blacklist and now we have made progress on the FATF blacklist, we are now devising a programme to step up the sale of our offshore products. And in fact, I have been discussing this with the officials at the Finance Offshore Authority, and what we want to do, we want to move the person who used to do the marketing, we want to put that person in a separate building because you know, the FATF, they do not want the people who are involved in marketing to have anything to do really with those who are involved in supervision and regulations. So we would have a complete set of persons who are marketing. Indeed the question which I have been discussing down to this morning with a Consultant, Andre Iton, and one of the things we are looking at is the issue of having a central unit for the promotion of investment in the Offshore Finance Sector, for manufacturing, for tourism and for information technology. So that we garner specialized staff which can work in the various areas without having too much duplication and increasing cost. So we are seeking to look at a different way to restructure the marketing aspect of it. I believe that the Opposition would be very satisfied with this more than fulsome answer. I could have just given the basic data which you asked and sit down, but I want Honourable Members to have an understanding in detail to what is happening and the general public. I am obliged.

3. *The Honourable Arnhim Eustace (Leader of the Opposition) asked the Honourable Minister of Education, Youth and Sports to please indicate;*

- (a) *whether he is aware that the rafters of the Dorsetshire Hill School roof are still infested with ants despite the school repair program.*
- (b) *if in the affirmative, are there any plans to replace the roof.*

**HONOURABLE MICHAEL BROWNE:** Mr. Speaker, before getting into the substantive response to the question asked by the Honourable Member, I want to take this opportunity to commend us on the Government side, and indeed our Leader, the Honourable Prime Minister for a profoundly successful year in Office.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to turn the attention of this Honourable House and the listening public to a critical word in the formulation of that question. The question reads, ‘whether he – the Minister of Education, is aware that the rafters of the Dorsetshire Hill School roof are still infested with ants despite the school repairs programme. The word “still” indicates that there is a history to this particular problem. And indeed there is a history. For a number of years this problem existed at the Dorsetshire Hill Primary School, and the logic of that is that the problem pre-existed the Unity Labour Party administration.

The Hansard of this House would indicate that while I was in the Opposition between 1994 I periodically raised issues of the Dorsetshire Hill School including the issue of the continued infestation of ants. Indeed, at one time the then Minister of Education, the Honourable John Horne accused me of taking a camera up to the Dorsetshire Hill School while it was in session and filmed aspects of problems at the school. Of course, there is no truth in that whatsoever, but it proves the point that I have been raising these matters and we, while in Opposition had been raising these matters of the Dorsetshire Hill Primary School. But they did very little about the problem over the years and I assure this House that it was not until the comprehensive school repair programme which touched Dorsetshire Hill School, that you had a profound reduction of the problem – not a total elimination but a very, very serious reduction of this particular problem. Members of this House and the listening public would recall that they had submitted a question on the school repair programme, and in the first submission they had referred to that programme as the “infamous” ULP repair programme, and I made the point that is an indication of their thinking as in so many other things.

Mr. Speaker, without going too far back into the history, I would just read a letter from the Principal of the School dated June 10<sup>th</sup> 1998. This is the Head Teacher of the Dorsetshire Hill Government School. It was directed to the Chief Education Officer.

*“Dear Sir,*

*This is to inform you that the School is heavily infested with red ants. The students and teachers are being bitten by them when they fall from the roof. They can be seen marching like soldiers on the wall in each class. ‘They even drop in our plates when we are having lunch. This was reported to the Public Health Inspector on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> June*

*1988. He said that he would spray the whole school on Friday 12<sup>th</sup> June 1998. I am therefore appealing to you to help us (meaning the NDP Government in 1998) to solve this problem.”*

This is not the first bit of correspondence, and we could pull more from the files Mr. Speaker. But the point is, by inserting the word “still”, the Leader of the Opposition acknowledges that there is a history, which history is reinforced by the correspondence of this nature.

Mr. Speaker, the New Democratic Party had a very weird way of addressing the question of the physical plant/school building. They would let the entire holidays go out and on the verge of the children going back to school they start repairs. This has happened in so many schools, they were so disorganised that repairs which may have started sometimes in the school holidays could track into the beginning of the school term. Look at the example of our programme from the Unity Labour Party; the volume, the scale, and yet we were able to get the children them back in school for the beginning of the new school year. There were no problems. Thanks to Minister Francis and his wonderful team at the Ministry of Works.

People could hardly believe that today is Wednesday the third day of the third school term, not a murmur, not a rumble throughout the school system. On Monday we did what you call a “scan”. We got our Senior Education Officers to telephone all the schools in our country, nearly 100 institutions. Minister Burgin and myself went on the telephone to call Head teachers all over the country and they, who have not heard from us on the first day, because we had done it before were surprised that a Minister of Education would take time Monday morning they so busy to call them to see how they are. A new style Comrade! Another letter from the same Dorsetshire Hill file reinforced the point, that for example, they started repairs in the Easter holidays, using paint on the school so that when the children went back to school they had to call an emergency Parent Teachers meeting. This is in 1998 under the New Democratic Party. They had to pull them out of the school, send the children home, send the teachers to other schools nearby until the school could be used for the continuation of education.

Mr. Speaker, since 1984 when the New Democratic Party won Government, both the East Kingstown constituency and the West St. George constituency, both of which constituencies are served by the Dorsetshire Hill School, on both sides the NDP reigned until we broke it in West George in 1998. In 1994, you had the late Eddie Griffith, a teacher himself. In the By-election in East Kingstown, it had Parnel Campbell from 1987; Carlyle Dougan because the constituency had changed and Parnel went to Central. Carlyle Dougan for two terms in East Kingstown. The Honourable Leader of the Opposition currently since 1998. So, in the East Kingstown constituency they had NDP reigning there from 1984 until now. In West St. George, you had Marcus De Freitas from 1984, Yvonne Francis-Gibson, teacher and head teacher from 1989-1998. So they had control of the two constituencies in which the school was and now they are raising this question with us. Mr. Speaker, the truth of the matter is that as a result of the labour intensive programme which we heard a lot about, the problem has been drastically reduced, not eliminated, because we are still having some problems. Indeed a

number of schools have problems still with some ants and so on. But the problem has been so abated that it constitutes almost a non-problem at this time. And I want this Honourable House to take note of that. We normally, if the problem recurs we treat it but we are looking for permanent solution. And against that backdrop, the (b) part of the question, there are currently no plans to replace the roof. Thank you very much Mr. Speaker.

**HONOURABLE ANRHIM EUSTACE:** Mr. Speaker, I would simply say to the Minister that I am well aware of the problems, and I would suggest to him that he pays a visit to the school at this time.

**HONOURABLE MICHAEL BROWNE:** Well, that is not a question that is a request and a comment. Mr. Speaker, I am regularly at that school - up to a couple of weeks ago. In fact during the Labour Intensive Programme Mr. Speaker, I was on the spot. I left in the midst of the repairs of the Dorsetshire Hill School, went to Arnos Vale to Terminex, I the Minister of Education went to book them to do the spraying of the school during the school repair programme.

4. *Dr. the Honourable Godwin Friday, (Northern Grenadines) to ask the Honourable Minister of National Security, Airport Development and the Public Service could the Honourable Minister please state clearly Government's policy in relation to the Marketing Board and in particular the supermarket?*

**DR. THE HONOURABLE GODWIN FRIDAY:** Mr. Speaker, having received information about question number 4, and having been confirmed by the Prime Minister this morning regarding the status of the supermarket, I wish to withdraw that question and to proceed to question number 5.

5. *Dr. the Honourable Godwin Friday, (Northern Grenadines) asked the Honourable Minister of National Security, Airport Development and the Public Service; in light of the closure of the Canouan Resort scheduled for May 2002, has the Government commenced any discussions with American Eagle for the possible continuation of flights to this county?*

**HONOURABLE VINCENT BEACHE:** Mr. Speaker, American Eagle started to operate out of Canouan in May last year – the 17<sup>th</sup> of May to be exact. The question of the closure of the Canouan Resort has no bearing on the schedule for the airline, and therefore we have had no discussion with the airline personnel, but we have inquired as to whether there would be any change, the status quo remains as it is now and the schedule would remain as it was from the beginning.

6. *Dr. the Honourable Godwin Friday, (Northern Grenadines) asked the Honourable Minister of Agriculture, Lands and Fisheries; what is the status of the promised program to upgrade the fish processing facilities in the country, particularly those in Bequia and*

*Union Island, so as to enable our fishermen to export fish to Martinique and other European Union markets?*

**HONOURABLE SELMON WALTERS:** Mr. Speaker, before I answer the question, permit me to make a short statement concerning the new date for Fisherman's Day celebration which would now be on Whit Monday, May 20<sup>th</sup>. This is because of the massive Labour Day celebrations which we have planned for May 1<sup>st</sup>. I would make a further statement on that in the Media.

The upgrading of the fisheries facilities in Bequia and Union Island is on course. \$730,000.00 is allocated under this year's estimates for the project. Of that amount, \$478,700.00 has been released for the project. The preliminary studies are completed, which include costs, and other relevant information. Eight applicants were received. These were sent to the Public Works Department. The approved applicants, three of them, would be sent to the Tenders Board next week for selection. The drawings Mr. Speaker, are being finalised in conjunction with the Japanese who had given technical assistance on this project, they being the original donors of this project. It is hoped Mr. Speaker, that work on these two facilities would commence towards the end of May so that we can resume the sale of marine resources, particularly fish to the European Union countries.

#### **SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION**

**DR. THE HONOURABLE GODWIN FRIDAY:** In the last session, I believe the Honourable Minister said that the work was to be started some time in the third quarter. He has indicated that the work is to commence in May. Can he indicate as to when the work might be completed and when the facility would be ready for use?

**HONOURABLE SELMON WALTERS:** Mr. Speaker, we are saddled with this question over and over again, and listeners would get the impression that we are the ones who brought about this problem. It is a mess Mr. Speaker that we inherited. When we came into Office and I was handed the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, we found out that the facilities were downgraded by the European Union Inspectors although the NDP was warned that the facilities were deteriorating and that the conditions were not good. In fact, they were notified in 1996 and 1998 and did nothing. Today Mr. Speaker, we have to clear up this mess. All I can say to the Honourable Member is that we are working on the facilities. The work is going to commence towards the end of May and it would last, I was advised for about three months.

7. *The Honourable Gerard Shallow, (Opposition Senator) asked the Honourable Minister of Agriculture to please indicate:*

(a) *what progress (if any) has been made since the Honourable Prime Minister's letter to the EU on the further unilateral reduction of the ACP Banana Quota.*

(b) *whether a fall in banana price is likely because of the purchase by Wal-Mart of the USA of one of the leading UK supermarkets ASDA.*

**HONOURABLE SELMON WALTERS:** Mr. Speaker, I notice the Honourable Senator Shallow is asking me two questions and he is not asking any to the Minister of Ecclesiastical Affairs. I wonder why he is running and hiding?

Mr. Speaker, I crave your indulgence to direct the question to the Minister of Finance, the Prime Minister because quite naturally, the question of the letter here was written by the Prime Minister and the Prime Minister is the spokesperson in CARICOM for bananas internationally and regionally and I think he is the best person to write an answer to this question.

**DR. THE HONOURABLE RALPH GONSALVES:** Mr. Speaker, I am very grateful for the Honourable Minister of Agriculture and I am also very grateful for the Honourable Senator Shallow to pose this question. And it is a good thing that the farmers are now at home and would be able to hear yet again answers on these matters, because we cannot say them too often. I would like to advise the Opposition and I think I have indicated this before, because I am the spokesperson for bananas in CARICOM and in the Windward Islands that matters which touch upon the international trade aspects of bananas, we will not reject the question if it is directed to the Prime Minister. Matters of the internal arrangements for the banana industry here should be directed to the Minister of Agriculture. I say that by way of procedure. You know, I explain that again Mr. Speaker because it has been said that the Minister of Agriculture cannot even answer a question on bananas. He has answered questions on the local issues of bananas and there is one here which he will also answer. But the regional, international aspects I will answer. And I must say here Mr. Speaker, that has been the case, by and large, when we were in the Opposition when Sir James was the spokesperson for bananas.

Now, in relation to question (a) Mr. Speaker, the Management Committee of the European Union Commission met on February 6<sup>th</sup> 2002. And among other things finalised arrangements for the management of the C quota under phase 2. The allocation to the traditional operators has been reduced from 94% to 89%, while that of the non-traditional operators has increased from 6% to 11%. This was after the transfer of the 100,000 tons to the A operators. As a result of the change the share of the 750,000 tons quota has been reduced from 750,000 tons in phase 1 to 667,500 tons in phase 2.

The allocation of the UK based operations are (this is for the UK based traditional C operators). The Company WIBDECO UK, 118,795 tons. FYFFES - 70,483 tons; GEEST bananas, 69,437 tons. BICO in Jamaica, 72,650 tons and DELMONTE, 21,115 tons. Now, the impact of the change on the annual licence allocation to WIBDECO UK is a reduction from 127,535 tons to 118,795 tons, that is to say, a reduction of about 6,760 tons per annum. In value terms this has been estimated to represent a loss of at least US\$365,000.00 per annum. It means also that on its own WIBDECO UK would have just about enough licence to import current volumes from the Windward Islands. However, WIBDECO UK has an arrangement with GEEST bananas

whereby the two companies share the licence responsibility for the Windward inputs. Since the share is about 185,000 tons between two companies, the available licence is more than adequate to meet anticipated requirements for the Windward reports.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to read, with your permission, the Eastern Caribbean States Bulletin which is published by the Eastern Caribbean States Embassies in Brussels, Issue No. 10, March 4<sup>th</sup>, 2002. It is headed, "Bananas, the last Chapter.

Despite protest from CARICOM (and as you know, I spearheaded the protest for CARICOM) West African Ministers and traditional suppliers, the College of Commissioners last Wednesday (that would have been late February) adopted the proposal that 11% of licences for assessing the ACP Quota be reserved for non-traditional operators."

The rationale apparently presented was firstly, that the traditional supplier under utilized their allocations in the past, having only imported an annual average of 670,000 tons of bananas which is equivalent to 89% of the 750,000 ton current quota, and secondly, that some ACP suppliers wanted more licences for non-traditional operators. Notice some ACP themselves wanted more licences, not for traditional suppliers from the ACP, but for non-traditional suppliers.

"The decision though has concluded the reform process, albeit on unfair terms to traditional ACP suppliers especially in the Caribbean who are less competitive.

Whilst the terms of the final accord must be seen as a betrayal, the seeds were sown quite some ago. Firstly, it was the US Chiquita successful demand for exacting 100,000 tons from the ACP banana quota and precluding the free use of licences between ACP third country sources. Then, the Europeans choose to provide at the expense of the ACP compensation for their non-traditional operators who had in the deal last April with the US, lost licences for the import of Latin American bananas. Even if these companies had not been handling the ACP bananas they will now each obtain some value from either handling a modest quantity of ACP bananas or more likely selling the licenses. Up until the end the ACP did not help themselves. The ACP remained bitterly divided with the most forceful lobbying interventions supportive of Europeans non-traditional operators rather than of ACP interests. This was due to a mixture of a lack of understanding of the issues and the assumption by the Dominican Republic and initially Belize, that these non-traditional operators would use their licenses to import their bananas rather than other ACP fruits."

In other words, in this whole tangle both the Dominican Republic and Belize. In fact we had a long debate with Belize on the issue. There had been real misunderstanding on the issue.

“Admittedly, letters were written from West Africa and CARICOM leaders and there was a joint, though unenthusiastic position of traditional suppliers, but the Commission cynically exaggerated the differences and proceeded to implement an arrangement based on its own interest.

In the long years of the dispute the dependable and courageous allies of Europe were the Windward Islands. Without their support and central role in the dispute it is most unlikely that the European Union/ACP position could have been sustained politically. It is instructive that the final outcome ...”

And notice the words “ it is instructive”. These are our diplomats. In fact this came from Ambassador Laurent, who is our Ambassador in Brussels. He is a St. Lucian.

“It is instructive that the final outcome favours the Dominican Republic which was often indifferent and on occasion even hostile to the campaign. It is worth recalling that when seeking support for accession to the Lome Convention, the Dominican Republic had assured CARICOM that it had no intention of participating in the banana protocol. “

And all these countries agreed to help the Dominican Republic, including the then Government of St. Vincent and the Grenadines. I am not blaming; I am just saying that is what happened, and now you see they turn around and benefit from something and pushing for something, which we are losing at. So that many important lessons are to be learnt from the experience in the banana dispute and in the nature of its resolution. Well, now that it has been resolved in that framework, up to 2006, and I hope the farmers understand now that what we have is 89% and that we have enough licences between the two WIBDECO companies. Nevertheless, even though we are disadvantaged we still have enough, 189,000 tons between the two WIBDECO companies, which would be more than adequate to meet the anticipated requirements for the Windward Islands. So I don't want them to feel even though we have been disadvantaged we still not inside of the ballpark.

And the (b) of the Senator Shallow's question is a very thoughtful follow-up, because now we have the reform process the issue arises, (and I have addressed that several times already), but it is good that at Press Conferences and in some speeches, it is good that it is addressed here in Parliament. It should have been addressed two sittings ago but Senator Shallow was not here to ask the question so I had to answer it in many different ways in the public. But it is a thoughtful follow-up. I don't want to say that I see the hand of the Leader of the Opposition behind this question. I believe that this question was first asked by the Leader of the Opposition but it was changed around, and Senator Shallow put his name subsequently. In fact, I know it to be so.

I think it is important now to look at the market situation because he is asking in the (b) lest the listeners forget, “whether a fall in banana price is likely because of the purchase by Wal-Mart of the USA of one of the leading UK supermarkets ASDA.” So we have the regime, now how are the individual firms now functioning within that, and I would like to give a comprehensive

answer to it, perhaps even beyond what you have asked so that the farmers who will be home now, by the rum shops listening, or in the homes, cooking until the lady comes home or on the block. And I could see them in South Rivers and Park Hill listening to this. Sitting down by Margan, by Mirage and Insurt and those boys by the shop opposite VINLEC or by Alban Pereira Shop and others in Byera and elsewhere.

Now a major change is to take place in the supply arrangements to the United Kingdom multiples supermarket in May 2002. ASDA, the third largest supermarket multiple in the United Kingdom which is owned by US based Wal-mart recently put out to tender their entire banana business; 85,000 large cartons equivalent per week on a world wide single supplier basis. I want that to sink in with the farmers. An American Company Wal-mart out of Arkansas, notorious for its price cutting, has bought the third largest supermarket chain in the United Kingdom, and what they have done is what they have, they tend to do with volume commodities, they put them out worldwide for a single supplier. We want one supplier to bid to supply us; 85,000 large carton equivalent per week. The tender has been awarded to DELMONTE and is to come into effect in May. This latest market development potentially has far reaching implications for the banana industry in the Windward Islands whichever way ASDA decides to handle the issue. It is clear that DELMONTE was able to secure this deal at a considerable price discount in the order of £1.50 pence, large carton equivalent, approximately 15 cents per pound. The other companies who were involved in the bidding process including Chiquita simply had to run from the market place when DELMONTE began to cut them down with the bid. They just could not match DELMONTE's bid. It is estimated that ASDA could earn extra margin of the order of 6-10 million pounds if it decides to pocket all rather than to share it with the consumers. So we have the market regime, we fought for that and now there is war in the marketplace. When this has happened WIBDECO was advised by TESCO that it would be looking for a price reduction from the current £10.80p per large carton equivalent to £9.50p per large carton equivalent on all the standard loose bananas. The price for most of last year up to the beginning of this year was £11.10p per large carton equivalent, however two months ago TESCO forced a price reduction of 30 pence on all the suppliers, not just WIBDECO, taking the price down from £11.10p to £10.80p per large cartons or equivalent. And once ASDA had come into the marketplace like that, TESCO said to them, look we may have to come to you for a price reduction, from the £10.80p to £9.50p. Now if that were to be instituted, the effective reduction from last year's price would be £1.60p per large carton equivalent or 16 cents per pound. So that when some other people are talking we have to explain what is happening the marketplace honestly and truthfully and then we have to decide how we are going to combat it.

Windward's banana business - with these two multiples have been as follows: TESCO, 17% of our business, ASDA, 9%. In fact when TESCO was paying us £11.10 ASDA was paying us £11.80. The loss of the ASDA business to the Windward's, that is to say, 9% the multiple supermarket business will not have as adverse an impact on the Windward's Banana Industry because we can sell that 9% elsewhere. What really we have to look at, what is potentially damaging;( Notice, I am not saying damaging), potentially is the price. We are on the same

wavelength, and it is good that we are on the same wavelength so we can all talk honestly about the facts. Now, WIBDECO has had to respond, and as the person responsible for bananas, I have had to respond. And what I have done since is that I have been into the market place. I went to TESCO. I went to Sainsburys and Sainsbury supermarket we sell them 40% of our banana business. And our banana business is 30% of their total volume. And I went to Waitrose. I went to those to show up our banana business. I want to say Mr. Speaker, the day after the visit was planned in such a way that I would see TESCO the day before WIBDECO and TESCO were dealing with the new price round. And I am pleased to report that as a consequence of the discussions which we had with TESCO that when WIBDECO went on the price discussion the day after, TESCO decided that they would not ask for any price reduction at this particular point in time, they would hold the price for us and we have to implement certain strategies. One of them is a political strategy of lobbying. I have asked our High Commissioner and I have asked WIBDECO's General Manager that they must get in touch with all the other Caribbean Ambassadors (High Commissioners) in London for us to go out on a campaign now in relation to ASDA in the marketplace; a political campaign. I have spoke from London to the Chairman of CARICOM, Prime Minister, Musa and I have spoken to Prime Minister Anthony and Prime Minister Charles.

We are going to mobilise and their role is to mobilise the entire Caribbean Community to buy Windward Caribbean Bananas and to encourage their friends so to do. To the trade unions, non-governmental organisations, a political campaign on the importance of keeping out the marauding intruders from Arkansas in the marketplace or at least to contain them. Now that is important also for the supermarkets, not just in relation to bananas because ASDA intends to do the same thing for lamb, for apples, for everything, to go for a single supplier worldwide commodities market so that they can get the lowest price.

Now, the second limb of the strategy is that the supermarkets have to market, and particular TESCO and Sainsbury, to market Caribbean bananas as being different, tastier and smaller.

Thirdly, we have to agree on what is the optimal production cost for the banana and see what margin we can have for this special commodity as one of the TESCO executives said, so that the banana farmer would buy his wife a pretty dress and go down the road at the pub and have a beer with the boys. That is how the Englishmen talk it.

Fourthly, it requires us to be more efficient and to produce this very special quality banana. That is the message which also came through at TESCO at Sainburys. And people at Sainbury said, look, we have to act swiftly on all fronts because if within two years we have not been successful in beating back the marauding intruder, as I have put it, we may well be sliding. Waitrose is different. Waitrose is a supermarket that is upscale. They are opened by John Lewis. John Lewis is the John Lewis Partnership. The grandson was a socialist and all the shares for John Lewis are in a Trust Fund and owned by the workers, the people who worked. The same thing at Waitrose. If they are declaring dividends of 9%, everybody from Manager right down will get 9% on their salary. They don't have any trade union there. And they go for

the mobile people – the market. They have said that they started marketing our bananas as Caribbean bananas, not from St. Vincent, because Waitrose do not take any bananas currently from St. Vincent. The bulk of their purchases are from St. Lucia in the Caribbean here. And Waitrose since they put the Caribbean label on the banana, not Windward Isles or anything like that - Caribbean, their sales have gone up by 30% indicating that there is a place in the marketplace for our bananas if creatively marketed, and if we do it properly. Waitrose is down here for two days. They came on Sunday night. I met them here on Monday afternoon at my Office in the Cabinet Room and they want to make sure that your bananas are produced without too much nematecide, that the environment must be clean; for instance, they were very pleased with the production up in Congo Valley by people like Hucks and Allie and Mirage and Perry. They were very pleased with them and said these are people with whom they can do business. But when they were driving up they didn't like what they saw where people were throwing the diothene in the river and the place looked messy. They say if we have to market our commodity as special, our people who buying want to know that it is coming from a very special environment. I must say that they commented very well about the cleanliness of the city. They commented very positively about how they have not seen any garbage piled up along the road. They said they like the environment from where they are purchasing their bananas but they want some progress, they are going to write because they want some progress and we are going to work together because we are going to try to see if we can begin by getting 10 or 15 farmers to provide specific contract to Waitrose. And the Waitrose people have made it plain that they are giving a premium price, but they do not want the premium price to be absorbed in the Banana Growers' Association or passed on to anybody in any general way. If they are contracting with WIBDECO for a certain amount of bananas from St. Vincent and WIBDECO is getting 10 or 15 farmers for them, they want those farmers to get the premium price which as I tell them is fair enough.

I should point out that the fair trade people had written to me. I got back on Wednesday night; Waitrose were coming in on Sunday. They had said they understand the Waitrose people are coming and if we can clean up some of the diothene and so on around, all up Rabacca and so on. And I considered it on Thursday morning when I got the letter and decided let the Waitrose people see how the farmers are functioning, and then we work out a programme as to how to clean it because it doesn't make sense we do something that is artificial and false because they will come back again, you may get the contract and then it will go.

The final thing I want to say, and I indicated this to the Press. I want to send a couple members of the Press; I want to send a couple farmers and maybe, somebody from the Opposition. It may cost a little money really for us to go to the United Kingdom. I want them to go to Stansted where we have our operations, and you will see how terrible many of our farmers are – the packing. You have one box of fruit ripening at four different stages; some big grains and some small grains, obviously not coming from the same bunch of bananas. So there is a problem with the grading where you are packing and the packers themselves not seeing themselves as a long stop. So what you have to do, people ask you for bananas at a particular specification, when the fruit comes they have four different levels so you have to take out,

repack and you add to the labour costs. I therefore want to urge the farmers, (I have taken a long time to explain this.) And I apologize if this answer has been too long. But I think it is of such a fundamental importance that I explain thoroughly the regime, how we have arrived at it and what is happening currently in the marketplace and what we as the Government are doing in that marketplace with WIBDECO. Then of course, at the same time we are dealing with the restructuring here of the industry, to improve the efficiency and all the rest of it. And then particular areas of fair trade and organic production, but you know there are a number of people who believe that you can simply turn the land into organic cultivation. European Union Regulations. Many farmers don't know this. It requires that your land, if you had conventional cultivation, you cannot switch overnight to organic. There has to be a three-year period for the purging of the soil so to speak before you get into the organic production.

I want to urge the farmers to improve their efficiency; treat it as a business, treat it with seriousness. I want to urge them to keep their own environment clean. I want them to be more efficient and more productive, a more consistently high quality fruit. I know within the banana business there is a lot of bickering and backbiting. That ain't cutting the ice in the marketplace. It is performance, and the Government is interested in performance. We are not interesting in any demagoguery in the banana industry. We want to have improved quality and improved efficiency for us to all work together; in this case too, the Government and the Opposition. The banana is a political fruit. I know it. We have to try and stop making it a political fruit and treating it as a business. I am obliged.

8. *The Honourable Gerard Shallow, (Opposition Senator) asked the Honourable Minister of Agriculture, Lands and Fisheries to please state:*

*In view of the fact that farmers continue to experience difficulty in harvesting their bananas, owing to the shortage of critical inputs, what new arrangements have the Government put in place to have these critical inputs, including "White Diothene," made available so that farmers can harvest their fruits at the appropriate time?*

**HONOURABLE SELMON WALTERS:** The Honourable Senator cannot take chances with me. I dare him to ask a question to his representative later on.

Mr. Speaker, the shortage of white diothene experienced by the Banana Growers' Association during the month of March is not a default of the Banana Growers' Association or the Government, rather it is due to a break down at the factory in Costa Rica from where white diothene is bought.

A shipment which was supposed to arrive in St. Vincent on February 9<sup>th</sup> is now expected to arrive on April 24<sup>th</sup> 2002. In the interim Mr. Speaker, the Banana Growers' Association obtained limited amounts of white diothene from St. Lucia, Trinidad, England and from Veira Plastics here in Calliaqua. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, the shortage experienced was really a

manufactured shortage due to the overstocking by farmers, but there is sufficient white diothene on hand so that the supply would last until the shipment arrives later on this month.

With regard to other imports Mr. Speaker, Government had significantly reduced the indebtedness of the Association. We made four million dollars available for the purchasing of imports. Mr. Speaker, this is a Government for bananas and for Agriculture in general. We would never, like a certain gentleman who said that he prefers to lose the Elections rather than refinance the banana industry.

Mr. Speaker, this Government came to the rescue of the industry and will always stand on the side of the farmers. Mr. Speaker, the inputs section of the Banana Association is now operating as a separate unit. The company has been formed, it is run by an interim committee. This new company will source input for the wider agricultural sector. This, Mr. Speaker, is part of the diversification programme and will enhance agriculture in general. Thank you Mr. Speaker.

### **MOTION**

**DR. THE HONOURABLE RALPH GONSALVES:** Mr. Speaker, may I, so that we may not be caught napping today in the House. Normally, at this particular time, we would have already reached the bills, but today is an unusual day, largely because it is the first anniversary of a sitting, since the last Election. But I would like to move the motion Mr. Speaker, under Standing Order 12 (5) that the proceedings be exempted at today's sitting from the provisions of the Standard Orders, "Hours of Sitting".

**HONOURABLE VINCENT BEACHE:** Mr. Speaker, I beg to second the motion.

### *Question put and agreed to.*

**HONOURABLE MR. SPEAKER:** I suggest that under Section 12, I understand what you are saying but 12 (1) as I determine.

9. *The Honourable Major St. Claire Leacock, (Opposition Senator) asked the Honourable Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Planning, Economic Development, Labour, Information, Grenadines and Legal Affairs to please confirm that the previously free radio broadcast of church services is now costing \$200.00 per broadcast, thus severely preventing many smaller churches from having their services broadcast.*

**DR. THE HONOURABLE RALPH GONSALVES:** Mr. Speaker, Honourable Members, there are many premises in the question which are incorrect, and the falsity of many of the premises will emerge from the answer. I would not attempt to deal with each of the false premises in advance, that may be a little pedantic at this hour.

The National Broadcasting Co-operation is continuing its efforts at addressing the chaotic financial state in which the ULP administration found the NBC Radio on assuming office just over a year ago. Members may recall that upon our assumption of Office we found that the NBC owed its debtors, owed people who supplied it with all sorts of goods and services in excess of 1.1 million dollars. These debts included substantial amounts to the National Insurance Scheme, the Inland Revenue, VINLEC, for rent, to P.H. Veira. \$1.1 million dollars. Part of this Government's Stated policy on State enterprises is that they be efficiently run, self-sustaining and do not become a financial burden on Central Government. And I am sure that this is a policy which Senator Leacock will agree. In the case of the NBC, as was previously reported in this Honourable House, the state of finances was so bad, the bills could not and were not being paid, and not even one financial audit was carried out during the last four years or so of the NDP administration.

The NDP Government had come up with no plan to redress the state of affairs at NBC. Of course, I suspect that if the NDP had not discarded Senator Leacock at the Radio Station, and if they had kept him on as Chairman, I am quite sure that they would have come up with a strategic plan and would have made certain that the audited statements were carried out. I am absolutely sure about that.

The NBC Board which was appointed last year embarked on a number of measures geared at improving the financial performance of the Corporation, among them revising the structure of its advertising rates beginning the process of total FM transmission, embarking on a more aggressive marketing campaign, reviewing its internal systems of operation, improving the quality of its programs, among other things. It must be emphasised that these new measures have been occasioned by the poor state that the NDP administration had left the Radio Station. The NBC Radio therefore has had to reduce the number of public service activities in which hitherto it had been engaged. One such measure is the question of live church broadcasts. The NBC decided to affix a charge of \$200.00 for each broadcasts since it could no longer absorb all the costs of these services. Churches are now selected on a rotation basis. They have been selected on a rotation basis for some time. Once the regular rotation system is followed a church will have one such broadcast a year with some churches having two broadcasts per year since there are approximately forty churches now on rotation. So there is Saturday and Sunday; forty churches and one a week. It means that most of them would only have one church service per year on the Station in rotation.

The Corporation does not see this as something bad, exorbitant or unreasonable to ask a church to pay \$200.00 for one broadcast for a year, which is what it is. Furthermore, the regular charge for such a broadcast, taking the airtime and expenses into account would have been in excess of \$600.00. So this is a concession. Reflect on this. You have to leave Kingstown to go to Chateaubelair if you have a broadcast from a church in Chateaubelair. You have to take the vehicle down there. You have to take the staff. Now, how can it be unreasonable to charge \$200.00 in those circumstances? We are in fact subsidising the churches by putting \$200.00.

The NBC had written to the churches in relation to this new measure, and to date, I have been advised that only two churches have indicated their unwillingness to have their services broadcast at this time. Several churches have indicated that they understand the need for the charge and that they support it and they will continue to have their services broadcast and are grateful that we are still subsidizing the broadcasts. So the action is fair and reasonable. And thirty-eight of the churches I have been advised are quite happy. Senator Leacock is clearly speaking for those two churches which are unhappy, and may he continue to speak for the minority

**HONOURABLE ST. CLAIRE LEACOCK:** The Honourable Prime Minister would be glad to know that neither of the two churches, our churches –the Catholic church is not involved.

10. *The Honourable Major St. Claire Leacock, (Opposition Senator) asked the Honourable Minister of Transport, Works and Housing to please indicate the status of the Windward Highway Rehabilitation Project proposed to EU financing?*

**HONOURABLE JULIAN FRANCIS:** Mr. Speaker, the answer for this question has been hanging fire now for a couple of months since the Opposition has decided that they won't coming to do their work. I don't know what prompted them to come in here today.

The Windward Highway Mr. Speaker, was a project that was conceived as having three-phases. Now Mr. Speaker, this project was started way back in 1999 and was presented to the European Union as a project in that same year of 1999. There are three phases to this project: Phase 1, Diamond to Georgetown - 15 miles. Phase 2 - Kingstown to Diamond 7.5 miles. Phase 3 – Georgetown to Fancy 12.4 miles, making a total of 35 miles. When this project was presented Mr. Speaker, the preliminary estimates presented for this project; of the total 35 miles was 33 million dollars and approved as such. It meant that we have just about 11 million dollars available for each phase of the 33 million. In fact we have 11.5 million dollars available for the phase 1, Diamond to Georgetown. It was decided to use Diamond to Georgetown as phase 1. One time we were thinking Fancy to Georgetown but the European Union thought it best to go Georgetown to Diamond seeing that that is the most used aspect of the countryside. There was some work being done in Kingstown so the Kingstown to Diamond will have to take stage later on.

A Consultant firm of Mitchell and Partners was engaged since July of 2000 and was engaged to do the design works at a costs of \$790,950.00. This is only up to the pre-contract stage, that is, it is only up to the design stage and to prepare what is called the tender documents. If you are going to use them further from thereon, then you have to pay them more money. \$790.000 was the figure agreed to, to pay Mitchell and Partners.

Preliminary estimates Mr. Speaker, prepared by Mitchell, for phase 1 alone, the estimate is going to cost 33 million dollars. So the original project submitted for 35 miles at 33 million dollars was way underestimated, and the single phase alone between Diamond and Georgetown is estimated to cost 33.0 million dollars. We deliberated on this quite a lot Mr. Speaker and instead of delaying this project, we decided that we would do 11.5 million dollars worth of work on the phase Diamond to Georgetown, rather than delaying the whole project and going out and looking for 22 additional million dollars, we will do 11.5 million dollars worth of work. So we asked the contractors to send us tender documents while they will prepare the design for the entire phase, but they will send us tender documents for the area of Georgetown to Diamond. And they came in, starting at the southern extremity of Georgetown, that is, from a place call Brownstown which is outside of Georgetown city itself down to Diamond. And they say out of this we will have 7 kilometers of surfaced roads because the project involves the three re-alignments of the road. Small, Spring by the big bluff where the sea is now coming in and threatening the roadway, Bridgetown, that is, as you get to the top when you get out of Bridgetown, going on Cedars Hill and at South Union and that sharp corner at South Union. There will be re-alignments there. Then there will be rehabilitation of the following structures. The Argyle Bridge, the Colonarie Bridge, the Peruvian Vale Bridge and the Mount Grenan Bridge. Minor works will be done on other bridges between Diamond and Georgetown. So after these structural changes have been done, sufficient monies would be left only to surface 7 kilometers of roads.

Mr. Speaker, something that started five years ago also was the Windward Water Project, but during the time that the NDP was discussing this project – a water project that was in discussion and started some five years ago. And Mr. Speaker, this water project is covering almost the same distance that this Windward highway is suppose to cover, that is, this phase from Diamond to Georgetown. But there was never any thought by the NDP administration to marry both projects. The waterline on this water project is running from Byera to Diamond on the highway itself. So had this project started in advance we would have had to go and dig back up the road to plant the waterlines? So discussion started and we tried to tie both projects. Bringing in the water project could cause some delay because we therefore have to give water three months start on the highway before we can start to surface the road because we want to give them time to dig up the road, put in their lines and we get enough time for compaction and settling before we go in and do the road surface, the same thing we are doing with phase II and III of the Murray's Road. Realizing this, and realizing that Murray's Roads, works phases II and phases III. And Mr. Speaker, if I may say so myself, apart from a little ripple on the surface between Marion House and Maurice King gap, that is, Silky gap, there are some ripples there which we have to correct, I think that the contractors on Murray's Road phase II and III have been doing a wonderful job. They have reported to me that they would be one month ahead of schedule and they promised to have that phase finished by the end of May.

The Prime Minister wanting, (and I am in full agreement with him) that around the time that the Murray's Road works are complete that we must start work on the Windward highway, so we do not want any delay in the construction of the highway because the tender documents are in

now, and it looks as if the process of pre-qualification of contractors tendering evaluation award and mobilization is expected to take about six months. So major works from Georgetown to Diamond would not commence until October 2002, but we want to jump start the project. And between the Prime Minister and myself, we have agreed to start from Basin Hole, that is Langley Park, the bridge just before you get over to go to Dry River, before you turn up to go to Chapmans, we are starting there and doing from that down to Brownstown. So as soon as Murray's Road, or just about the time Murray's Roads is wrapping up, works will start on that. We have secured local funding for that. When I say local funding, the Prime Minister indicated this morning the Taiwanese would be helping us with that aspect of the funding. I would not declare how much funds are involved in that because that will be a giveaway to those persons who wish to tender on this project. Being just 2 kilometers, it is too small an amount for me to say what the figure is.

Mr. Speaker, the water project is an extensive project. The Prime Minister mentioned some aspects of it this morning, but I just want to give a little bit more detail on the water project. It is going to cover the areas from Colonarie in the North to Diamond Estate in the South inclusive of Park Hill, Belle View, South Rivers, Diamond Village, Mount Grenan, New Grounds, North Union, Chapmans, Higher Lowmans, Lower Lowmans, Lauders, Greggs, Cedars, Biabou, Bridgetown, Biabou water project.

**HONOURABLE ST. CLAIRE LEACOCK:** Mr. Speaker, an objection. The Minister is trying to give me an education on a water project which is totally irrelevant to question that I asked.

**HONOURABLE MR. SPEAKER:** So you are satisfied with the answer that he gave?

**HONOURABLE ST. CLAIRE LEACOCK:** I am quite satisfied. I asked a question about roads and I am satisfied with the answer given on road, I don't need to have an assertion on water.

**HONOURABLE MR. SPEAKER:** Mr. Minister I think if he is satisfied with the answer you don't have to refer to ...

**HONOURABLE JULIAN FRANCIS:** Mr. Speaker, I wasn't finished with the answer because I haven't concluded my answer on the highway. This is tied in to the highway project. The water project Mr. Speaker, I am explaining the works that are involved in the water project to give him the full status of the highway project.

**HONOURABLE MR. SPEAKER:** Are you saying that they intermingle? They are married?

**HONOURABLE JULIAN FRANCIS:** Yes. They are married. I married them. The NDP Government did not marry them Mr. Speaker. The water project is an integral part of the Windward highway. They don't want to hear about it Mr. Speaker, because they never obtained funding for this water project that they started five years ago. We got the funds approved Mr. Speaker....

**HONOURABLE MR. SPEAKER:** If it is relevant to the question.....

**HONOURABLE JULIAN FRANCIS:** You see Mr. Speaker, having underestimated ...

**HONOURABLE MR. SPEAKER:** Honourable Minister, I haven't really made a ruling on this matter. Just give me a second. I am saying that you may proceed and I would see how it relates to the whole thing.

**HONOURABLE JULIAN FRANCIS:** Thank you Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, what I am finishing here is that the water project is a very involved project. These areas are the areas that we will be supplying the water and the waterline Mr. Speaker would be running in Jennings Valley in the North to Diamond in the south. Five storage tanks would be built along this route Mr. Speaker, and the main pipeline will be running from Byera on the Windward highway to Diamond. That is where I am tying it in Mr. Speaker, so that it is delaying the start of the project by three months. We have to give Water Authority three months in which to get this program done.

**HONOURABLE MR. SPEAKER:** Honourable Member, proceed with the answer please.

**HONOURABLE JULIAN FRANCIS:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. So Mr. Speaker, the waterline as I was explaining with all these areas that are short of water and the waterline will be run over land from Jennings Valley to Byera, hence the reason why we feel we can jump start the project at Langley Park and even get into Georgetown and we can do right down to Byera from Langley Park. So by the time we are finished between Langley Park and Brownstown we can continue Georgetown to Byera because the waterline is not running there. That is why I am tying it in Mr. Speaker. So he doesn't want to hear the facts. He asked the question. They stayed out of the House and when you are answering it they don't want to hear the answer. Well, don't come to work if you don't want to hear the lesson.

Road works Mr. Speaker, in this country Mr. Speaker, on the Windward highway would continue and the construction process is expected to be 64 weeks. So if we start by October 2002, 64 weeks after that we expect that that phase will be complete. We will then have to revise the whole financing of the project Mr. Speaker, because we have to look for a total 99 million dollars to do all three phases because they were almost equal mileage except for Kingstown to Diamond, but that area is so badly smashed up. You see Mr. Speaker, when they were wasting the money in the past on all kinds of big projects that ain't bringing in no income; they have no income to surface the roads in this country and now we are left with this burden that we have to finish. But we will fix it. You have put a Minister of Works who knows what he is doing and he is getting people who know what they are doing, and we are going to get the Windward highway complete. Thank you very much Mr. Speaker.

## **SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION**

**HONOURABLE ST. CLAIRE LEACOCK:** You will notice Mr. Speaker, I would not allude to the fact how our exposure to political power breathes ignorance and arrogance sometimes. I take back the ignorance and arrogance Mr. Speaker.

**HONOURABLE MR. SPEAKER:** Senator Leacock, before you proceed, I did not get clearly your comments.

**HONOURABLE ST. CLAIRE LEACOCK:** Mr. Speaker, my comment was that when I listen to speeches sometimes, I am reminded of the fact that we must not allow political power to breathe arrogance. I am speaking to myself.

**HONOURABLE MR. SPEAKER:** I see. Ok.

**DR. THE HONOURABLE RALPH GONSALVES:** Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. Mr. Speaker, the point of order that I wish to make relates to the entire area dealing with content of speeches. During the time when there are questions, a member who is asking the question is not required to comment unless he gets your leave.

**HONOURABLE MR. SPEAKER:** Is that Standing Order 36?

**DR. THE HONOURABLE RALPH GONSALVES:** Yes, Mr. Speaker. And when someone speaks without the Speaker's leave, and he speaks really not to himself because he was audible. You Mr. Speaker heard him, and he was heard by me. And I think, frankly speaking, that the Honourable Senator Leacock should apologize for suggesting that another Honourable Member for answering questions fulsomely is arrogant because it reflects upon the character and person of another Member of Parliament. And I think that he may well consider that that ought to be done. I don't want to force the point under the rules which I can because I just want to raise it. Someone answers your question fulsomely, with which you yourself said that you were satisfied.

**HONOURABLE MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you very much Sir. I would think though that honesty would be one of the hallmarks of Members of this Honourable House and I would want to believe that the Honourable Senator is honest when he said that he was instructing himself and not directing his comments to any other person. Some people speak to themselves quite audibly and others ....

**HONOURABLE ST. CLAIRE LEACOCK:** Mr. Speaker, I am grateful for your senatorial years in this Parliament and your wisdom as exercised this evening. I want to ask a follow-up question of the Honourable Minister of Transport Mr. Speaker. And in view of the substantive amount of work required for the water project that you have admitted will stall the road programme, was it

considered that it may have been an opportune time then to start the project, perhaps from the Fancy end, particularly in view of the fact that those people have little or no road whereas the areas being considered at least have some form of roadway.

**HONOURABLE JULIAN FRANCIS:** Mr. Speaker, I don't need the question repeated. I understand where he is coming from. I never said that the water project will stall the road project. I said there was a slight delay. I never said it will be stalled.

Mr. Speaker, we have decided on the priority being Diamond to Georgetown. While we are doing Diamond to Georgetown, Langley Park to Brownstown, part of that route falls within the Constituency of North Windward. And I don't know when last the Senator went off to North Windward, but the Parliamentary Representative, the Honourable Junior Minister in the Ministry of Agriculture will tell you that we are doing a fair amount of repair work on the road surface between Rabacca and Fancy. Every quarter we have been spending some monies in that area, but because of the volume of traffic and the state of deterioration of the Diamond to Georgetown route. Along this route Mr. Speaker, there are about twenty thousand people living along that route and those figures came out in the study, both on the road project and on the water project.

And Mr. Speaker, if I may add to the debate that was going on just a while ago on a matter of arrogance; I wonder why all questions for the Senator has to carry the word Major in front of his name?

**HONOURABLE MR. SPEAKER:** I hope the Honourable Senator does not respond to that question.

**DR. THE HONOURABLE RALPH GONSALVES:** Before we enter on Orders of the Day, I think it is ...I think it is proper. I don't know whether he is to carry Major or not, but I believe that he is retired from the Cadet Core so it should be Retired Major. I was just wondering for the sake of accuracy if Major is required to be there.

**HONOURABLE MR. SPEAKER:** I don't think he is willing to answer anyway.

It is now 6:09 p.m. and according to Section 12, it was for me to interrupt the business of the House and I would proceed according to the provisions there, but in order for us not to find ourselves in such a funny situation and if we look at Section 12 (2) it was therefore necessary for the business to proceed that we moved the exemption under 12 (5) and I so asked the Honourable Prime Minister to which he did earlier. So therefore, I know there is a little bit of query on the part of the Leader of the Opposition as to whether this should not have been moved just prior to entering under the Orders of the Day which follows at this time. But, as you would have noticed, we anticipate that question time would go beyond 6:00 o'clock and therefore out of an abundance (as the Prime Minister usually says) of caution, I thought that I would use certain privilege and ask him to move for that exemption. Thank you.

**HONOURABLE VINCENT BEACHE:** I would refer you to Section 80, which gives you the authority so to do.

**DR. THE HONOURABLE RALPH GONSALVES:** Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this Honourable House do stand suspended for half of an hour for Members' convenience.

**HONOURABLE VINCENT BEACHE:** Mr. Speaker, I beg to second the motion.

*Question put and agreed to.*

*House suspended at 6:12 p.m.*

*House resumed at 6:50 p.m.*

## **ORDERS OF THE DAY**

### **NATIONAL PARK BILL 2002**

**HONOURABLE RENE BAPTISTE:** Mr. Speaker, Honourable Members I wish to place on the table the report of the Select Committee for the National Park's Bill 2002, and also a copy of the minutes of the select committee, both meetings held on the 26<sup>th</sup> of March, 11<sup>th</sup> of April, 2002.

Copies laid on the table.

**HONOURABLE MR. SPEAKER:** Any debate? Okay, yes, we had the debate already. So I suggest we move the third reading at this time.

**HONOURABLE RENE BAPTISTE:** Mr. Speaker, I beg that the Bill be read a third time, title and passed.

**HONOURABLE CLAYTON BURGIN:** Mr. Speaker, I beg to second the motion.

*Question put and agreed to.*

*Bill read a third time by title and passed.*

### **NATIONAL LOTTERIES AUTHORITY BILL 2002**

**DR. THE HONOURABLE RALPH GONSALVES:** I beg to lay on the table the Minutes of the Select Committee appointed by the this Honourable House to examine the National Lotteries Authority Bill, the committee being duly constituted on the 19<sup>th</sup> February 2002, at the conference room in the Ministry of Finance 25<sup>th</sup> March 26<sup>th</sup> April. I beg to lay the Minutes and the Report of the Select Committee.

**HONOURABLE MR. SPEAKER:** Point of Order.

**DR. THE HONOURABLE RALPH GONSALVES:** Mr. Speaker, the Bill did not follow the procedure of having a debate on the prior to the presentation at the level of the Select Committee and as we have promised Honourable Members that we will address the debate upon the Report from the Select Committee. I first would like to thank Honourable Members who participated in the Select Committee including certainly in one of the meetings the Honourable Senator Leacock. Mr. Speaker, there are several changes in the Bill coming out of the Select Committee. A lot of it is tidying up, not a fundamental alteration of the concept of establishing an authority and to have a board to manage the affairs of the National Lottery Authority.

Now I know it may come to many Members of this Honourable House and persons who are listening that the National Lottery is not a statutory body because it has a board; every body speaks about the National Lottery board. But what has happened when the Lottery came into being in 1984, a board was put in place obviously. There was an intention by the Cato Administration to have this matter put on the juridical footing as a statutory body but it started with a board appointed to assist the management with the National Lotteries and it simply continued like that for the last seventeen and half years, without it being on a legal juridical footing. The structure that is, because in real terms the National Lottery is part of the department, part of the Ministry of Finance because it is answerable to the Minister of Finance, but the practice has evolved that there is this board really in terms of how it is structured legally, should just be advisory to the Minister of Finance who will direct on the basis of the advice of the board, the general manager, but it has not evolved in this manner. It has taken on the shape and form of a statutory corporation without it having the juridical basis of a statutory corporation. An anomaly and for years, for the last seventeen years under the NDP administration, successive Chairpersons of the National Lottery Board, successive members of this Board have been asking, have been demanding, that it be made statutory corporation and everybody said yes, yes, yes, we'll make it a statutory corporation but nobody got around to it.

In fact Mr. Speaker, Honourable Members when the then Leader of the Opposition, now the Honourable Minister of National Security, was Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee and he summoned the National Lottery Manager and also the Chairman of the Board to explain a number of things that were happening in the National Lottery. At the time Mr. Steven Joachim was the Chairman of the Board and he was very, very, strong on the issue. And Mr. Mc Gregory Sealy, through thick and thin, have been doing a very good job as general manager of the National Lottery and they said that hey want the law to be passed, they want a statutory provision, a statutory framework an independent legal framework for the National Lottery, for it to grow, for it to develop for it to advance. The now Leader of the Opposition was the then Minister of Finance and he agreed and in fairness to him he said I would get the Attorney General to address this matter. You'll remember that; but of course he is a mere economist, he can't write laws and in another context somebody might say a mere lawyer and certain other things. But the then legal department did nothing so we are here now on he anniversary of the

ULP's presence in this parliament after general elections in March 2001. Delivering to the people of St. Vincent and the Grenadines a law for the National Lotteries. They can talk, but we do and then we talk and we do it so much that we have plenty to talk about.

Mr. Speaker in order to ensure that we have the widest public participation in the discussion of this Bill we published this Bill in the newspapers. Stating the gates for the Select Committee there was first meeting of the Select Committee and a second meeting. At neither of the Select Committees meetings, the first one was one week after the publication, the second meeting of the Select Committee, which was also publicized on the radio, was about three weeks after that publication but we got no comments on the law.

Of course we got from the National Lottery staff, authority, the board, I must comment on this briefly, Mr. Speaker, Honourable Members, the public rightly is calling for the draft laws which touch them, of great importance to them, to be published before they come to this parliament, and we have been doing that. We did it with the Banana Bill, we did it with the National Heroes Bill, we did it with the Freedom of Movement Bill, as to say the immigration Restriction amendment Bill, we have done it with the National Parks, we're going to do it with the Carnival Committee Bill. So we publishing, and people they must not only read and study, they must respond. I know building a democratic culture in every single way is not an easy thing, but we have to start and the Unity Labour Party. The party of jobs, the party of education, the party of roads and the party of excellent good Governance, they party whom the good Lord has blessed, commence this process openness and transparency to have people to comment on these Bills.

Now Mr. Speaker, the context for the National Lottery must be put, it had started in 1984, in a small ticket room outlet in the Customs 's compound with the staff of two persons and a few ticket runners. When it had started, the idea was initiated as I said coming into being then Prime Minister the late Robert Milton Cato. Lot of people up in arms but we see another good Labour Party idea has come into full fruition. The main source of income then was the instant game known as the 'Scratchy'. Today the revenue operates from a spacious location on Bay Street. Hoping that they will buy their own building shortly so they don't have to pay rent down there. The Lottery is now fully computerized and is more than match for any agent in the Caribbean and it is possibly the best in the sub-region. The National Lottery has grown from a staff of two to a staff of twenty-six (26), in addition there are sixty-eight (68) lotto and three retailers spread from Georgetown, Chateaubelair, Sandy Bay in the North to Union Island in the Grenadines. This institution has grown from nothing to a multi-million dollar institution, with **earnings** for as follows:

<b>1999</b>	\$5M
<b>2001</b>	\$13.04M
<b>2002</b>	\$10.49M ( <i>up to</i> ) March 31 <sup>st</sup> 2002.

The financial year as you know runs from August 1<sup>st</sup> to July 31<sup>st</sup>. Mr. Speaker, it had been said also that the National Lottery that is has not; been said by the propagandist for the NDP that the

National Lottery has not been doing well at all this year since the ULP has come to office. Well you know Mr. Speaker let us look at revenues. Ending the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2001, that is all of the NDP years, last of the NDP year; the year up to that, to March 31<sup>st</sup> was \$8.96M. The year up to the end of March 2002, is \$10.5M. I am not saying that the Lottery was not doing reasonable revenues under the NDP administration, all I am saying that we are moving on from strength to strength and rebutting again the propaganda. You know if I were to spend time rebutting in all the propaganda and the lies I wouldn't have time to do the work and then to talk and that is why they not making me lose focus at all.

Over the years the National Lottery has been able to finance the construction of several hard courts throughout St. Vincent and the Grenadines. In some constituencies there are two hard courts, the lighting of a number of sporting facilities, substantial contributions to Carnival on an annual basis. The construction of a triangle sporting facility substantial contribution to various sporting and cultural organisation, I have the contribution booklet here and a lot of details. Contribution to the OECS sports desk, construction of pavilions at Arnos Vale sporting complex and the rehabilitation of the Grammar School playfield, sponsorship of various athletes and national teams to enable participation in overseas tournament, The provision of medals, trophies for Primary and Secondary Schools throughout St. Vincent and the Grenadines and the recent open hand Health Centre at New Montrose. Mr. Speaker, the National Lottery has made contributions to a lot of specific playing fields including the one down at Sion Hill, which my friend Lloyd Lewis is claiming as his own; we had a meeting about it in Sion Hill last night (interjection). Well the point about it Mr. Speaker, I want to say this, in as much as the Honourable Member has sort to join me on this, and yes I will be fair to him. Lloyd Lewis has made a tremendous contribution to the playfield, no question about that, no question.

Sion Hill sports club has made a tremendous contribution, no question about that, none; but the property is the property of the Government of St. Vincent and the Grenadines and the National Sports Council, which has been formed, has been pulling all the state facilities under its umbrella for its oversight not for the National Sports Council to micro manage it because I understand that they; well I don't know if they have done it; but I had asked when the issue came up that Lloyd Lewis and others who had been involved at the Sion Hill playing field that they asked to be involved still in the management aspects of the playing field. Well I understand that the sports council followed my advice on that matter, and sometime last week they have taken a decision on that because I had advised it when the matter came up in cabinet. So that they can be involved but you have to bring it under the board suzerainty, just like the Grammar School playing field has been brought under the board suzerainty of the sports council, the Grammar School use to run it. The National Sports Council of which Lloyd Lewis is a member said no they should run it and Lloyd Lewis had been put in charge of that one as a member of the sports council so how could he reasonably object to the National Sports Council taking suzerainty over the Sion Hill playing field. But not to manage it in a micro sense to allow the people in Sion Hill and the surrounding areas to continue to manage it but with the assistance of the National Sports council; with the assistance of other people and with the

assistance of the National Lottery and that is it and people try to make a war about things where there should be no war.

Lloyd Lewis is my friend. The person who gave the Sion Hill sports council the authority to manage it, was the cabinet of Robert Milton Cato; and in the letter it stated that you must not build any permanent structure on it. Of course it doesn't matter if the permanent structure is there built, of course the permanent structure can be improved and we want to see it improved but clearly it cannot be improved of the ownership of the Government, just like the Grammar playing field cannot be outside the ownership of the Government. People try to make mountain out of mole Hill, I really don't understand and when I said that he want to claim it as his own, not he himself owning it, I am talking about his managerial own, that's the point I am making. Mr. Speaker, Honourable Members the National Lottery has returned some \$11.2M to the community, through donations, sponsorship and capital projects, with capital projects representing 60% of the stated amounts.

I want to outline how the National Lottery accounts for its money, for every dollar spent on the Lotto fifty cents goes back to the players as prize money, fifteen cents go to the Canadian Bank Loan as International as management fees, nine cents go back to the retailers as commission and that leaves the National lottery with just twenty-six cents from which they have to pay salaries, rent, utilities, maintenance and advertising and it is from that same twenty-six cents that they have to fulfill their mandate by provision for funding for sports, culture and education because you hear the loss talk you don't know what the National Lottery doing with the money. Well I am telling you what they doing with the money. Fifty cents out of every dollar go back to the players as prize money, that is the facts, don't crucify me for bringing you the facts.

The mission statement of the National Lottery is to develop managing gaming in an effective and efficient manner, for the purpose of generating profits to provide counterpart support to organisations and individuals involved in sports and culture thereby contributing to national development. That's their mission statement, a sound mission statement. When the Lottery began operations in 1984, very few people give it a chance to succeed in this dramatic way. Mr. Speaker, something that a lot of people don't know, the 68 agents for the National Lottery, I am not talking about the twenty-six people who work with the National Lottery at the National Lottery itself. The sixty-eight agents some of them earn in commission here this up to ninety thousand dollars a year. You see a lot of these agents who selling a lotto, you hear what I am telling you some of them earn ninety thousand dollars a year, the successful agents nine/zero, and ninety-six agent runners they earn 10% on sales.

Mr. Speaker, Honourable Members, the National Lottery is organizing four functional departments, General Administration, Finance, Sales and Marketing, and Technical. The premise of the National Lottery is secured alarm and security system implanted and maintained by Carlos Maloney and Company Ltd. At a cost of \$275 monthly the National Lottery benefits from the presents of three SSU personnel at the compound from the hours of 8:00 a.m. till closer. No, sorry the security system from Maloney is \$275 monthly for the SSU it cost \$7000,

which is paid directly to the Accountant General. The National Lottery is now operating under the terms of a new five years contract from the CBNI, which was signed in the year 2000.

From 1993 to 1999 the offices were located at Egmont Street where the rent was \$36,000 a year. Where they are down there now in that building the rent is \$66,000 a year, cause I want to repeat it. The rent where the National Lottery is well the building belongs to a former Member of Cabinet Minister of the NDP. Victimized; is under together now Ministry. \$66,000 a year the former Honourable John Horne is getting there. I am not saying that its not half descent premises you know, I am just stating the facts it use to be \$36,000, up here at Egmont Street, the Lottery was doing fairly will.

They take it from a central position and carried it down there and they charging \$66,000, that is why I said to the National Lottery you all must consider buying your own building and that is actively under consideration, because it doesn't take a wizard at finance as the Honourable Senator Leacock to appreciate that if they pay \$66,000 including taking care of the repairs you know, so the effective rent is closer to a \$100,000 because they have to talk about the maintenance. A lot of leases give you normal wear and tear will be taken by the landlord but there normally other things there which the landlord should take care of, which the National Lottery should take care of, so the effective rent is closer to \$100,000 because you have to talk about the maintenance a lot of leases give you normal wear and tear would be taken by the landlord but there are other thing which the landlord should take care of and which the National Lottery is taking care of so the effective rent is closer to \$100,000. You don't need to be a rocket scientist, if you take that money it will be more than enough annually for you to pay your mortgage. Now of course they say he's only a mere country boy lawyer, but we are going to buy the building and we are going to move. I understand money, I could count and I know \$66,000, and that is not the effective rent.

I want to say Mr. Speaker, that the matter over the so called waver street issue had been resolved and \$18,125 a matter that had risen in the previous administration that, that matter had been sorted and that money had been paid and I think it is important to say that. These are the basic facts surrounding the National Lottery. There are other things we can talk about, Mr. Speaker, they talk about traveling, the Minister of Government how they travel; they said that I am like a bird I traveling, I bring in money when I travel. I don't particularly like to be away from my beautiful young wife and my friends at home and my children, but duty calls. So when I went to Kuwait and I came back with US\$8.1M, in England I say the Market operators, I am not staying in cloud nine you know, I am going to talk to the executives personally. There is one Prime Minister who said that he only speaks to presidents and Prime Ministers not vice presidents, not foreign Ministers, Presidents and Prime Ministers. Well I would talk to anybody in the supermarkets who buy our bananas, I am not to proud for that, I am a simple ordinary boy from Colonarie, that why they love me so out there.

Mr. Speaker, the record will show that the National Lottery in addition to their normal maintenance routinely has spent over \$300,000 on John Horne building. Mr. Speaker, I think

they get close to about five years that about \$60,000 a year. You know sometimes when I see these things and I talk about them, is the goodness of the Lord and my faith that make me restrain me from getting me really mad, but I can't afford to be mad, I have to be cool so that I can be focus. That is the same man John Horne who got lands at \$2.00 a square foot while being a Member of Cabinet. No public advertisement that is misbehavior in public office and I throw him out and he went on a public platform he said wait Ralph Gonsalves issue I coming to him. I have been hearing that for the last so many years. I like when Colonaire River use to come down real, real bad in the days before they cut the tree in the forest, when it come down real bad it use to come over the bridge, when I was a boy before they build the bridge and we use to throw the top of the coconut shell if you cut it off properly at the top and you put a stick in it and you fling it inside there don't care how the water rough it floating on top and it coming down, that is like me. They couldn't touch I when I wasn't Prime Minister, is now they could touch me. Talking about, and that is not arrogance that is those who believe that they can do something.

Mr. Speaker lets look at the bill, as it is structured, there's a National Lottery Authority, which is set up, and the tertiary of the Bill establishes the National Lottery's Authority and the authority shall have the power to carry out or provide the operation of Lotteries in St. Vincent and the Grenadines and without prejudice to the generality of that sub-section because to do certain specific things. The authority shall be the sole body responsible for operating lotteries in St. Vincent and the Grenadines, except that the Minister may after a consultation with the Board of authority license any other appropriate body, or agency to operate a Lottery in St. Vincent and the Grenadines. The authority shall be administered by the Board, that will not consist of more than nine persons, appointed by the Cabinet, some persons having the experience in matters of the following, business marketing and financial management, human resource management, and labour relations information systems management and computing, youth and sports administration, culture and the administration thereof, lottery agencies or any other persons as Cabinet may deem fit.

Mr. Speaker, the law sets out how the Board shall meet and the procedure for the Board, routine matters. But important seal of the Board, service of notice of the Board very importantly any member who is directly or indirectly interested in the application of the Board's offer of a contract or proposed contract with the Board shall declare his nature of interest at the first meeting of the Board at which it is possible for the member to do so. So if you have an interest in a matter you declare your interest and if you are there you are not counted as part of the quorum required for the meeting. The Board has powers to delegate remunerations for members of the Board and I was on the issue Mr. Speaker, the past administration, I understand that the Lottery use to pay people when they travel US\$250, subsistence. When I go to the United State as Prime Minister US\$60 I get. Wherever they go they got \$250, I have been advised.

You see why the people going to keep the ULP in power for a long time and the details come out. Subject to the approval of cabinet, that he Board should appoint a general manager on

terms and conditions to be agreed upon and there are provisions for the appointment of officers to the Board, by the Board. Mr. Speaker, no personal liabilities shall be attached to any member in respect to any thing done, nor suffered in good faith under the provisions of this Act. And any sum of money, damages cost that may be recovered against the member in respect of thing or act bonafide in accordance with this fact shall be paid out of funds and resources of the Authority so that members of the Board are properly protected otherwise they won't be able to serve.

The funds and resources of the Authority shall consist of funds arising from the sale, lease or other disposition of the property vested in the authority or from the conduct of lotteries game of chance and innate funds which arise from the operation of this Act. And subject to the provisions of this Act, the authority may borrow such funds required by it for meeting any of the obligations or any discharge in any of its functions. But the Lotteries authority can only borrow money under the Act, if he Minister of Finance approves the amount of the sources of the borrowing and the terms of the borrow; so that they can't go off and borrow how they want without they get the specific approval of the Minister and of course the Minister may guarantee borrowing by the Board. There is a reserve fund which is being set up under this Act, which shall, with the consent of the Minister, the Authority shall set up a reserve fund for specific contingencies. And these funds will be dealt with in accordance with the stated objectives that may be deemed expedient by the Board with the consent of the Minister of Finance.

The funds of the Authority shall be applied to the purposes authorized by the Act: like to pay the prizes, to pay the management fee, and also for other programmes such as culture, youth and sports or any other programme approved by the Board with the consent of the Minister. And then the accounts, Director of Audit respects of the accounts.

Mr. Speaker, I want to draw to Honourable Members attention provision of the constitution of St. Vincent and the Grenadines. A lot of laws have been passed in this country statutory corporation where the Director of Audit has been taken off completely, where the Board can simply appoint the auditors. Well we have examined this matter very carefully and Section 75 of the constitution.

It says that there shall be a director of audit whose office shall be a public office. The Director of Audit shall a, and then b, at least once in every year audit and report on the public accounts of St. Vincent and the Grenadines. The accounts of all offices and authorities of the Government, notice that the accounts of all offices and authorities of the Government, statutory authority and authorities in our view. So the Director of Audit should be the one overseeing the selection over the auditors. The Director of Audit can either audit it herself or appoint auditors who will be under her control and it is her audit and that is what we have introduced in the National Lotteries Act, because you can get some auditors who may not be appointed by a Board and you have a lot of "friend- friend" business going on. Its part of our transparency, but in the hands of the Director of Audit and let he or she appoint the auditors. So it says here he shall audit the accounts of the authority in each financial year by the Director of Audit, or by an

auditor duly. Naturally the auditors don't live in another world and he or she will naturally consult with the authority in the normal working of things. So if any thing goes wrong you can't have the very authority getting an auditor to cover up what goes wrong, get somebody independent which makes a great deal of sense and that is the way we want to go with all our pieces of legislation, in fact if I may say this, this has been a serious bone of contention. In the Director of Audit the successive Directors of Audit report; Fred Providence use to make the point, Beryl Baptiste before him use to make the point and if am not mistaken the occupant Mrs. Saunders makers the point.

Mr. Speaker the National Lottery is exempt from income tax or from stamp duty and other charges and there are certain penalties; if you obtain any sum from the authority by means of false representation or if you do some other things than the inventory specifies, you can be fined to ten thousand dollars (\$10,000), have imprisonment of two years or both. And a person who promotes and conducts a lottery or betting or gaming authority, without the permission of the Authority in contravention of section 5 commits an offence, and you can be fined fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000) up to five years imprisonment or both. Of course we put the penalty there but we are not a penalty people in the ULP, in that sense; because if anybody is going to set-up a lottery we will just simply inform them he wrong you can't do it, to educate the people, you can't do it unless you get permission from the National Lottery Authority. Mr. Speaker, there is something which I want to address, it is a clause 33 which ahs been put in, which reads as follows:

Where any provision of this act is inconsistent with the gaming, with the gambling Lotteries, and Betting Act the provisions shall apply.

Mr. speaker, if you look at; it's a peculiar thing; if you look at the gambling, lotteries and betting Act Cap. 276, it has a very interesting provision here. Subject to the provision of this Act all lotteries are unlawful, and the way they proceeded to address the issue in this law it is open to the interpretation that the way of the National Lottery had been operating and functioning may well be not within the four walls of the law, may well be. So we put in that provision there, that where there may be any conflict this law shall prevail. So we put on a clear and juridical footing. I want to commend all the drafts persons and those in the Attorney General's office who have been associated with this Bill who have done quite a good job.

I believe Mr. Speaker that we have a law here, which may not be perfect, but as I have always said we must not make perfection the enemy of the good and when I cross the pearly gates I shall enter the realm of perfection. Up to then I am satisfied with the goodness though I am in quest of perfection. I wish this Bill a speedy passage I am obliged. Thank you.

**HONOURABLE ST. CLAIRE LEACOCK:** Mr. Speaker, I rise to make a contribution to this important piece of legislation, which I venture to say need not be contentious and indeed we on this side of the House are delighted that after a protracted period the legislation has defensively found itself to the parliament of St. Vincent and the Grenadines. Indeed Mr. Speaker, the law

that is before this Honourable House this evening doesn't in essence speak to the fundamental benefit that were derived from the operation of the National Lottery but quite rightfully addresses the important question of the regulatory frame work within which the authority must operate and yes Mr. Speaker, some credit is due to the administration for their diligence on this matter. Mr. Speaker, we are not here this evening anywhere addressing a pioneering piece of activity, neither St. Vincent and the Grenadines nor the ULP can claim any initiative as sort as seeing the coming into being of the Lottery or be it as I said the contribution to the regulatory framework must be commended. So at best the action by the administration can be classified as enlightened continuity that serves (interruption) it may have Mr. Speaker. I am saying that the activity of the administration represents of which I call enlightened continuity for which none of us are attempting to take away any date of their conduct.

The Honourable Prime Minister was not quite accurate in his historic record of his coming into being for National Lottery in St. Vincent and the Grenadines. I think he may be right in 1984 but I can say with a fair degree of authority because I was around then as president of the football federation and I recall, competing associations, particularly the cricket and to a less extent football who are very active in furthering these submission to the Government of the day for the consideration as the owners question of financing sporting activity in general had become a burden to the government .I am just sharing with you some of these historical things which you don't have the benefit of that's alright. In fact a number of individuals made a number of contribution to the coming into being of this Lottery and I recall one Mr. Douglas De Freitas also bring to their information from Canada which is very germane to the coming into being and of course latter days Burns Bonadie played a very key role in this exercise as well and all that is important because in general.

**DR. THE HONOURABLE RALPH GONSALVES:** In the former NDP section.

**HONOURABLE ST. CLAIRE LEACOCK:** Well if you are prepared to describe the former NDP senator, we will not contest; there are some people on this side who have different names for him but this perhaps is not the best place to allude to that. I thank him for one thing for allowing me to be in here (out burst of laughter) and for thanking you and keeping you engaged. We on this side of the House Mr. Speaker, with respect to the National Lottery authority do agree with the need for a body corporate to be in place to regulate the business of lotteries in St. Vincent and the Grenadines and I say that because I have misgiving on another piece of legislation that may come before this house which I may want to raise for discussion because we are not in the contentious business Mr. Speaker.

That in this case, whereas the Prime Minister indicated we are dealing with a business, perhaps you may want to call it an industry in excess of \$10M worth business it is not a small sum of money, and it ought not to be left for chance to be adjudicator on, and he is quite right. Not only in dealing with the regulatory aspects but also the very important juridical issues that may arise out of management of such large monies. So the arguments of its existence both in terms of it quantum of the business, the regulatory of the business, justify an urgency to the establishment

of an Authority, and we support that. In addition of course, from this side of the House, we are of the view that one of the acid tests that should be employed in arriving at that decision to establish the statutory entity should be the ability of that entity to sustain itself over time, and yes Mr. Speaker, my colleagues on the other side of the House do have the benefit of coming to Government at this time because they can enjoy hindsight and in many respects tidy up where there has been admittedly some liturgy, and perhaps do what is more than a little bit of cosmetics to put things in place.

Mr. Speaker in the absence of the Leader of my precedence Honourable Arnhim Eustace who was unable to attend both sittings of the Select Committee because he was engaged in one occasion very pressing and urgent matters and on the second occasion we were both absent because of the late Dr. Kenton Richards. We were able to make and I think the Prime Minister would admit to that a number of important contributions in generally cleaning up the Bill and I see much of that reflected this evening in the report that is launched in this Honourable House.

I can't help Mr. Speaker, but to smile at some observation in passing of the tendency of recent legislation this one including to stipulate qualifications for the Board of directors and that obviously has a value it obviously has a benefit. I smiled as I said Mr. Speaker, because while the qualification for the Board and the administrators are identified there is no such qualification for the Minister himself. I am not speaking to this particular Minister, because it happens in other Ministry as well, sometime we simply assume the relevant competence resides in the Minister in overseas activities, perhaps the time will well come to say that for a people to have that responsibility we need to ask certain questions. Not making an issue just passing on.

But I want to draw attention to Section 62 and 4 of the Legislation and ask whether we need to be a little tighter in coordinating the Minister's right to appoint a Board. The Minister's right to appoint the Board or yes to the Board with the circumstances in which maybe I should go to the Section 62 and be very specific, it would help. Bear with me please Mr. Speaker. Section 62 says that every member of the Board shall be appointed by Cabinet for a period not exceeding two years and shall be eligible for the reappointment. And I have no problem with that, we on this side I think have no problem with that. But Section 6 says that if a person who ceases to be a member for any reason, Cabinet can appoint any member in its place for any duration of time that the member would have served. I may have missed my notes here and I think the point is not established. If I say is 6 its 4 I am sorry I am right 4, I am reading 6 instead of 4.

If a member is absent on account of illness or for any temporary cause to temporary absence from the state the Minister shall appoint some other person to act as a temporary member during the time the incapacity or absence continues.

What I want to say is that we may want to limit the time in which the Minister may have a temporary appointee because it may well be a convenient way to circumvent the Cabinet authority and appoint the Board member. In other words if it is going to be temporary for more than six months, nine months, eight months, 80 months Cabinet may want to say look a

temporary period is too long you need to have a sanction at the level of Cabinet for that temporary appointment that's the point I want to make. And we will want to make sure that the coordination between two and four are in sync for consideration. I think too Mr. Speaker, while generally we want to maintain a high degree of flexibility and to reduce bureaucracy to its absolute minimum, we need to be absolutely certain in our minds that the size of the quorum, three of a possible nine Board members, may not be a little small and may not be open to manipulation and I have been on several Boards and I understand the politics of Boards and what can happen on Boards. But it is very easy sometimes to call a quorum of three and as many as six people not being present and I thought that maybe four persons closer to five, not getting the Board bound down in bureaucracy, you may want to look at that, but three sounds a little small for a quorum to me, where a chamber of two members can come together and say we had a quorum for an organisation that is managing \$15M. I raise that again if we want to have a second look in our liberations.

Mr. Speaker, section 32 of the Act, application of funds; also evoke another smile for me and provocative one they may add Mr. speaker, in that it states the funds of the authority shall be applied for the purposes authorized by this Act and toward the development of culture no problem because that is what it is all about I believe, youth and sports projects and I say that the aged may feel they have just as good a case to be supported by the National Lottery as the youth, and you may want to ask why are we necessarily discriminating that charitable funds maybe restricted only for the young and that the aged are less deserving of the support. And from time to time we do have some very needy cases in society, of the aged, that comes above all kinds of reasons and I don't think this parliament would want to be a record of having used the major source of funds to discriminate against the aged who have paid their dues to the society and I think those of us on this side may want to specify the term aged but gives some other clause that allows you the flexibility to look after our old people in society, who after all, as I said have paid their dues. They Mr. Speaker, will contend are an important interest group that are too often taken for granted I may indeed say forgotten by us in this society and I would not want our parliament guilty of that act of omission.

Mr. Speaker, I started in my contribution saying that on this side of the House we often view that piece of legislation need not be necessarily contentious, and I hold to that but the Honourable Prime Minister who has raised so to mine own eye-brow with respects to the applications of some of the Lottery funds and the Sion Hill community and Lloyd Lewis. I think we have an obligation in St. Vincent, sometimes not to take short cuts and to work a little harder at getting the best results out of circumstances. I am not trying to be warned up on the other. We may want to say that the lands at Sion Hill were given to the community by a previous administration or you may want to take some credit; the Labour administration, the Cato administration, I have heard people give the credit to Levi Latham, and that is characteristics of the Latham's community spirit, but it is equally true to say and you cannot deny it, you should not contest it, that the Sion Hill community as a community has great equity, in that field. The piece of land that now constitute a football and cricket field could not be what they are today and has served the community for several years unless, the people in the

community were inspired by Lloyd Lewis and the community on a whole had given their sweat and tears, great sacrifice and money in their pockets for bringing and transforming that piece of land to what it is today. You should not deny them of that, they have worked hard for it and it may well be Mr. Speaker, this is something I have to take lesson from the Prime Minister because this is your forte. We do not know what may have been in the minds of Mr. Latham, the late R.M Cato, the administration of the time in giving that parcel of the land for the Sion Hill Playing field.

Whether it was intended that along the road that the society, the community become the owner of that property in fact I am persuaded that it was what they intended to because the society has been so vibrant, had been so forth coming had been so community spirited volunteer-istic that if they were prepared to take and transform a parcel of lands for the development and social cultural activities they were supported. So that it may well be that that may have been the intention to the back of the mind. I say that to make a point Mr. Speaker, that in your presentation which accepted a rational argument, Prime Minister, but you went to the extreme to suggest that in our society with respects to playing fields, that only Governments ought to be the owners of lands and playing field and it need not to be so. It may well be a blessing for you and for us, well I am putting it my own words that it may well be a blessing in disguise for you and for us that we are relieved of the burden of that playfield by allowing the Sion Hill community who have done such a good a job over the years, to continue, not that I am saying we must just suppose or it must be neutrally exclusive one more than the other, because there are circumstances perhaps it can go the other way, but I am simply saying that we should not be of the view that the people can't have a good case for themselves for wanting to continue that guardian role.

Once it enters under the National Sports Council the question of management, control and decision-making become quite snarled, quite difficult, complicated. I am now in another capacity having no end of trouble dealing with playing field issues, yes it that I can work very well with a very competent chairman of the National Sports Council, but even last Saturday evening he was obliged to go on radio to disassociate himself because the Board wanted to force him, because we allow politics to creep into everything, that what I want to say. I am not going to be naïve about how politics interferes with so many processes; you know; so I am simply saying let us look for an amicable solution with respect to the Sion Hill playing field and stop the one-man ship and let justice prevail in that situation. You know Mr. Speaker, the area of building institutions capacity, the area of promoting and developing organizational structure extra.

It is an interesting one for us sometime to study you know and comment on and quite accidentally I think that the Honourable Prime Minister did not make a very important observation and that is the Lottery I from its humble beginnings of two people and I believe he agreed with MR. Sealy was the one who started it in 1984. It is 18yrs after still at the helms still doing a good job for which he must be complimented. But when you read these pieces of legislation and the controlling role given by Cabinet, by Boards very often assumes that

prominence recedes at the level of both competence not always so sometimes. It is the professional person who brings the stability to the organisation and this may well be the case here in the National Lottery that no amount of structure might have guaranteed the success that we may have had or it may have not been to the level we have, had not Mr. Sealy and others along with him brought lotto up to be a level of professional approach to the business and secondly Mr. Speaker, and equally important as a fact that as the Honourable Prime Minister knows that a fundamental reason we like to believe for bringing statutory corporation into being is the assumption that we can rid ourselves of bureaucracy, interference of central government extra. But sometime you know the statutory corporations have more politics than central government has and sometimes servicing to their own undoing and the mere bringing into authority sometimes by itself does not guarantee anything, but it depends on the professionalism, the managerial efficiency and the ability of the Board at times to rise above participants politics and get on with the National Board of the country.

So I submit Mr. Speaker that, let us concentrate on whatever we are doing, on that which delivers the goods. Mr. Speaker, it is unfortunate that in one breath we promote the notion of together now, maturity, good governance, and development extra. For opportunity that provides itself to denigrate and castigate to shame and blame you bounce upon it. There is absolutely no need to draw on Mr. John Horne investment in the discussion this evening, absolutely no need, and there is this very false assumption that corruption, double standards, and all kind of izum and kizum resides in one particular house. I would ask if the Honourable Minister does not break our long standard and we have had an earlier engagement this evening to consistent in the position I am taking ignore his comment which can evoke much anger here this evening. We must life the debate of this House from a bunch of comess men and woman who warns in which the public can feel proud to the quality and discussion that we are bringing in here, because we are continuing with blaming and shaming and character assassination which is doing us no good. It is for the same reason Mr. Prime Minister that I would advise you in your very useful contribution I wouldn't want to hear you one more time depriving yourself as the coconut husk floating down a river you are much more than that. You have used the coconut analogy before and that is established but don't repeat in another forum. I don't think it deserving of you, I think you much better substance that. But if you want that label then that's your choice, but I don't share that with you.

I want Mr. Speaker to end where I started, because each time I come to address this house I seem to evoke some kind of anger from some of my colleagues on the other side of the House. All I intended to, set out to say this evening, is that we are very clear and very supportive of the regulations that tidied up on what previous administration have started and it augurs well, I don't do so grudgingly, I speak always from my heart and always with great passion. We on this side Mr. Speaker, therefore have no difficulty in supporting this piece of legislation and wishing it an easy passage through this Honourable House.

**HONOURABLE ARNHIM EUSTACE:** Mr. Speaker, I really had not intended to intervene in this piece of legislation, because I have gone through the legislation and in fact as the Prime

Minister himself said I had been supportive of the need of such legislation/. Indeed it was sent to the Attorney General's chambers during my stay as Prime Minister. But MR. Speaker, there are few things that I think that I need to say in light of the way this debate has evolved. For seventeen years the New Democratic Party administration has been involved in the development of the Lottery and what the Prime Minister himself described as the humble beginnings to an organisation of some stature and status in our society and I know it is the practice in this House to denigrate anything that the NDP has done in the past good or bad. But I want to say today that while I agree with the legislation I want to point out that despite the absence of that regulatory or juridical framework I think it is fair to say that period of time was actually one of those institutions and was able to present its accounts in including accounts to this parliament and despite of the date in that regard. Mr. Speaker, I want to agree with Senator Leacock on two matters that he has raised. First of all on the questions on the Sion Hill sports Club. I made it my business Mr. Speaker, last night, as representative, to sit in and listen to the people of that area discuss this issue in the meeting. I myself made no contribution. I wanted to hear from those involved what their own views were and for my own edification to get the clearer description of the history of the development of the playing field. I think it is fair to say Mr. Speaker that at that meeting a great deal of anger and anguish was demonstrated by the residents of the Sion Hill area. I think Mr. speaker, the residents of that area see the playing field as an important aspect of the unity in their community it is something they regard themselves as having developed, it is something they have great pride and that point was made over and over again last night and you see that, the action of the Cabinet has taken away from them something that they cherish.

They also saw the letter as being somewhat abrupt in a sense that it says okay they recognise their valuable contribution but we are taking over with immediate effect. There was no discussion, there was no consultation with the Sion Hill community on this matter and they really take this matter very seriously and Mr. Speaker, I believe that it is in the best interest of all of us that such a consultation takes place. Well assume it took place this morning, it happened up to last night, I was not involved in any party meeting last night. You see it is very easy to just push all things aside by comments about party and politics and so forth, but deliberately did not participate in the discussion. But the Government of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines I believe has to know what it is doing and I am just suggesting that in the context of what I heard last night it is more appropriate if such a destruction were to take place. I want to move off of that issue, I don't intend to spend long on this Bill.

The second issue, which I wish to raise, is something that goes on all the time either by innuendos or various types of statement seems to me that everyone on this side of the House and the party that we represent are corrupt individuals. Every opportunity is taken and very often by a innuendo to snare innuendo or various types of statement seems to me that everyone on this side of the House and the party that we represent are corrupt individuals. Every opportunity is taken and very often by a innuendo to snare sons on this side of the House. I have spoken about it before, the Prime Minister tonight in his presentation accused John Horne of misbehavior in public office, which to my mind is very serious accusation. He indicated that

because he purchased land at \$2.00 per square foot in Canouan and he happened to be a Member of Cabinet at that time that he misbehaved in his public office. There were some 99 lots in that development in which Mr. Horne purchased his land and he purchased his land on the same terms and conditions as all of the other persons that bought land. There was no particular concession to Mr. Horne for his purchase; indeed there are no concessions at all. It is easy to make light of the fact that evaluation was done by the chief surveyor or in some cases the law requires the chief engineer. But we can't have that in the law and then say the chief engineer appointed by the Government or the chief surveyor because that applies in the case of every Government and it doesn't mean that the chief surveyor does a valuation, which is accepted by the Cabinet that he does because he is appointed by the Government. I don't know what we are saying in effect is that the chief surveyor of the time was lacking in integrity. You know you have had your first year in office and a lot of comments were made today about the performance in office. Some I agree with some I disagree with and I will have my time to respond in due course. But I want to point out that we will find in due course that the same charges will be level with you and I hope within the goodness in that time you will recognise. Because there are instances which I shall use that I know of now and I want to say that we have to be careful. I know in the cut and thrust of politics we say things because we want to score points. I understand that and I am not naïve, but at the same time Mr. speaker, we have to exercise some care in the statements we make not only in this parliament but generally speaking when it comes to the character of other individuals. I just want to say that in respects of this matter Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister and I will deal with that latter on, I am not finished with that matter, don't assume that, and this is a question I have for the Prime Minister because I need to get some clarification. The Prime Minister made a point, which I am familiar with in which he broke down how each dollar of the Lottery is spent. Fifteen cents for prize money, some for Canadian Bank note, I think it is fifteen cents, nine cents for agents and another twenty-six cents for administration and also to make contributions. I recall having discuss the break down with Mr. Sealy and Mr. Joachim when he was the chairman and I think that they had indicated to me that the other twenty-six cents is probably somewhere between ten and twelve cents that was effectively available for distribution in that context I wish to ask a question in relation to section that deals with applications of funds.

Section 22 and it says here and I quote the funds of the authority shall be applied for the purposes authorised by this Act and towards the development of culture, youth and sports projects and any other programmes approved by the Board with the consent of the Minister. I would like to get the clarification as to what is a youth project? What are we speaking about when we talk about the youth project? I just want to get an explanation, I don't understand what it means, because apart from that I don't have any difficulties with the legislation but to me it is not clear on what a youth project may be because I am concerned that it is only between ten and twelve cents for distribution. We have to cover culture, we have to colour sports, part of which involve youth already; I want to know the reason youth per se and therefore what type

of project is incorporated in that definition in those few words Mr. Speaker I wish this legislation save passage.

**HONOURABLE RENE BAPTISTE:** Mr. Speaker, Honourable Members, I sit in this Honourable House and before I was Honourable Member of this House I use to come Mr. Speaker, sit in the strangers gallery and listen to the debates when legislation is debated. I this Honourable House and all of a sudden life suddenly seem to have change. I sit at home Mr. Speaker, and hear my mother being featured on a radio programme called NEW TIMES and I never heard other mothers being featured in radio programmes before. Seventy-six year old woman Mr. Speaker, who served over thirty years in the public service with distinction, and retired at the top of the public service and I heard her name and her character being castigated and I smiled when I say the provisions relating to audit. You know Mr. Speaker in her career sixteen times, I think she said, she appeared in the High Court for dealing with persons for handling Government money and since she left for some reason the director of audit seems to have lost prominence. I do not recall and I may be wrong. I do not recall in the last decade hearing anything relating to the director of audit and auditing of accounts extra. Instead Mr. speaker, we notice I said I came upstairs I listen, I bought my legislation and we notice some moment being made of this.

I am pleased Mr. Speaker that we have someone working with the consultant along with the parliamentary council and the Attorney General's chambers, who can look into these matters to help us that we stay in step with the constitution of requires of the constitution. But hear that woman's character being dragged through the mud a seventy--six years old woman, on NEW TIMES, NICE Radio. She is not involved on politics, I am Mr. speaker, and I hear all sorts of things being said about my character and me on radio. I have some taped, I hear them in public meetings, I have those too and so are the public meetings that I address during the campaign for political purposes to be heard. I did not drag anybody name or character through the mud; I didn't find it necessary to put my handbag in the gutter. Then I hear two swords being drawn Mr. Speaker, who are we trying to fool. God. Mr. Speaker, no other favourite expression you see about bad men. I have some receipts from bad men you know and video that is as much I will say Mr. Speaker and it should be assured to anyone lest they think I am about to roll over and die, I will only play dead. I was supposed to be spanked and sent home with a glass of milk because I couldn't beat the former holder of the seat in West Kingstown; well that is history. I am not an easy person to roll into the dirt and I will not be an easy person to walk over, it will not happen.

Mr. Speaker, I ask Mr. Sealy last year to give me a break down of money spent on sporting facilities in West Kingstown and he give me list for the Hardcourt, the basketball court in New Montrose. At the time \$169,000 was spent on it. And I asked him certain questions and he really couldn't answer them. Mr. Speaker, I wonder when we break in the \$169,000 if somebody will be willing to tell me if that thing up there is \$169,000. Then I look at the money spent on the Edinboro court and the other courts and I wonder as well Mr. Speaker, where is the money, I can't find it. I am not an expert in economic or accounting but I have common sense I was born in Bay street, I went to school I have little learning, not much and I

keep asking myself where is all this money and then I ask Mr. Speaker, to further give me a list of persons in culture, quote, unquote, who would have had monies from time to time. Sometimes I wonder if this is somebody favourite neighbourhood banker, friendly neighbourhood banker and you know what he did he wrote down all of them for me, very interesting Mr. Speaker, and one of things I believe would qualify under section 22 for application of funds had to be; it is a whole page in one case and there is a whole page in another case that very interesting with a donations to youth and it says youth football, youth netball, youth all those things they are all listed here. 2001 to 2002 Mr. Speaker, due course in our deliberations perhaps at some time it would be laid in the House. So I have an idea of where the funds went but some of them bother me a little bit because they look a little fat others bother me because they look as a little rat went through it. But we are keeping a close eye because I am quite sure some of the beneficiaries will not be making applications anymore to the National Lottery for funds.

Mr. Speaker, I remember when this was being set up by the Labour Party Government there was a lot of criticism; Government sanctioning gambling and so on and so forth, but you see time is always longer than twine Mr. Speaker and it is amazing the number of organisations who have been beneficiaries over the years of the proceeds of the National Lottery. What amazes me even more Mr. Speaker, is that perhaps when you read about the functions of the authority for the Lottery to organise, provide, control and conduct the operations of Lotteries and carry on any forms pool betting and then if you have this legislation, this draft so long ago, where was it, playing hide and seek?

Couldn't be playing hide and seek, this is an important financial institution, multi-million dollar institution and every time you turn on the radio you hear so and so was going to do this and this one was going to do that when, and when we come to this Honourable House and bring this legislation or something constitution we have to almost hear the water coming out because the bread is in the mouth to say who is getting the credit for it and sometime we out-manoeuvre ourselves. For year and years, we talking about National Hero, on the 19<sup>th</sup> February when the Bill was passed only the Members on the Government side was in here to say yeah. Yes to bring the record of the Hansard passing the law of the National Heroes. Vengeance is mine sayeth the Lord, I will repay. Never work on the presence of vengeance you will out-manoeuvre yourself. Mr. Speaker, I look at the Members who should constitute Members of the Lottery Board and I am satisfied that the draftsman and the Select Committee indeed understand, in this modern day, that we have to go with a professional turning. Sometimes people with certain professional skills may not have the same religion, may not be of the same sex and neither of the same political persuasion. But you must look for people with worth, substance and standing to operate these institutions of Government and we are hoping Mr. Speaker, by the will of God, we will minimize the mistakes in appointing persons to the Board to ensure that they do have the capacity, capability and competence to carry on the functions and to administer this authority in accordance with the provision of Clause 6 of this Bill.

Persons in Business, Marketing and Financial Management, Human and Resource management and Labour relations, Information system Management and Computing and Culture and the

Administration thereof, Youth and Sports Administration, Lottery Agencies. But that would have been the capacity built up over the years from persons who would have associated with the Lottery and have done an excellent job by all accounts and any other persons Cabinet may appoint.

Mr. Speaker when you take Government, the Cabinet has certain authority and must act within that certain authority. And also when you drafting and preparing laws, you must put into the legislation what will be the role of Cabinet; what is the role of the Minister; what is the role the Board and the Member of the Board and other persons associated with the Board. Mr. Speaker you are not a Member of Cabinet so I can tell you, any matter that comes to Cabinet where any Member on this side of the House has an interest, I remember in one case a Member even left Cabinet room while the matter was being discussed, that member was not present during the deliberations and only came in after that item was completed in the Cabinet deliberations. Another case is, Members declared their interest and it so noted and stated in the Cabinet Minutes, because it is how we are determined that things ought to run and should be run. So it is not a question afterwards did this person have any particular or peculiar interest in these matters? Mr. Speaker, the usual professions that are contained here for the instruments for the incorporations and also for the appointment for the General Manager and some of the statutory duties that he would have to carry on.

I would like to take this opportunity Mr. Speaker, to commend Mr. Sealy for the excellent work he is doing and also the Board of the National Lottery, so appointed at this time. What is important is the way we function. The Chairman of the National Lottery and the Manager say they like to see the Manager of Culture to discuss certain allocations and how they should be done because they get several letters of appeal for all sorts of things, from Cultural organisation some strong, some weak, some with mediocre performances, some that are fluctuating, some they come and go over the years and we sit down and discuss these matters then we say we try to stream line because some people would come to the Lottery for money, still go the Ministry, still go to the Minister of Finance for money so they are trying to pat the horse three times to run the same race. So we want to avoid people doing this sort of thing, so we have streamlined persons coming and seeking donations for culture or for sports, but of particular to me matters relating to Culture.

One issue is the Peace Memorial Hall renovation that was also something to be done. For some reason there was so much impotence in the last administration, going to do it. There was no going, we just came, the money was there, you put the project in stream, you organise your Peace Memorial Hall Board, Lottery Board was then and you get the job done. Not so much song and dance of what you're going to do, get the joints prepared, get input from people who are familiar with drama, dance and lighting and get on with the task that you are elected to do Mr. Speaker. The Peace Memorial Hall Board, the Government of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines has used the funds of the National Lottery with care. In December the repairs started we had a report from the Minister of Works in March we had another report because it was asked in Cabinet it was asked at a Ministerial level so that we can keep a check to know

where we are going because you meet some surprises when you start doing work especially on old buildings.

Mr. Speaker, I wish also to thank the National Lottery for the amount of support they have given Carnival over the years, particularly the last Carnival over \$400,000 and I must tell you that we have before us the accounts for 1999, 2000 and 2001 they have been presented to me as Minister and circulated to Members of Cabinet for Carnival and I asked one long standing member of the Carnival Development Committee has he ever seen them, does he know if they were prepared and audited. I suppose it is something we had in mind to do but didn't get around to doing it either. I am hoping Mr. Speaker, that now the Lottery is going to be put on a sound legal footing so that it would not perhaps be flying in the face of the provisions of other laws in this state. That we can devise some new programmes because in going through the schedule contribution for the year ended July 31<sup>st</sup> 2001, sometimes we see some contribution seem to be over lapping, duplicating, going on over and over again, and we need to get some order in it. Every time we see some, these donations going out; there have been donations Mr. Speaker, given for worthy projects I would call them, not associated with sports or culture but associated with need and the National Lottery is to be commended for doing this work. But I am hoping as I had indicated to Chairman and Mr. Sealy that we will be able to continue streamlining how her contributions are used. In other words how the funds are applied. Mr. Speaker I am hoping that the National Lottery will not have to find themselves to borrow money. But one never knows the fortune of the future and in completing the corporate power of the statutory corporation those powers are inserted in the legislation Clause 19 and 20, in Clause 18 in sub- Clause C as well, and I see here that in Clause 21, provisions has been made for the establishment of a reserve fund for contingencies and I am also hoping that bearing in mind of application of how each cents and a dollar has been previously applied that we would be able to set up a good healthy reserve fund.

Mr. Speaker, I know that the National Lottery is looking for its own headquarters and a number of places have been identified and we are hoping in a not to distant future that the Lottery would be able to move into its own quarters and its quarters owned by the National Lottery won't be paying rent again. You know there are ten commandments in the bible and I remember somebody asking Christ which is the greatest and he says love thy neighbour as thy self but we as human beings have little things and big things and some people clarify certain of those commandments as little thing and murder as the big thing, but stealing. I don't know which one are those but we keep our eyes and ears pealed Mr. Speaker and I am hoping Mr. Speaker, that the provisions are here made report of the report of the National Lottery to be laid on the table of he House and that we as a Government on this side of the House would be able to keep abreast of our legal obligations to make these report available to be laid on the table of this Honourable House.

The Ministry of Culture next week is establishing the National Cultural Foundation, would be launched another one of those papertiqers and we are putting, as the prophets say breathe on these dry bones and let them live, flesh unto flesh, that what we are doing in this administration.

We are not putting on powder and make up like me, but we are putting substance to the reality of Governance that what we are doing in this administration Mr. Speaker and I wish to commend the Attorney General's chambers and the members of the Select Committee for an excellent job for going through this Bill so that at long last we have a National Lottery's Authority. And I wish to congratulate the Prime Minister for the vision and his absolute energy ensuring that we remain focus on the issues and concerns of the people and not to allow ourselves to be detained by the lowest common denominator. Thank you Mr. Speaker.

**HONOURABLE VINCENT BEACHE:** Mr. Speaker, it's been a long day but besides being a long day, it has been an interesting day. Very memorable, but sometimes, it amuses me when we want to forget the past and deal only with what is present and this is maybe good but I am told that we must flash on the future by knowing of past because if we don't know where we come from it is going to be difficult in the way we are going, but like some persons, I say last night on one of those TV programmes this guy who cold-bloodedly shoot another guy, who on trial says he's sorry, but he wants to live, he wants to live because he shot, he didn't want to live and I am hearing that we are speaking of he past and we must forget this, but even in the New Testament hearken back to what is in the old Testament. So if we even to take our excuse from at least we have to go back to the past to understand what is happening.

Now the question, and although Mr. Speaker, with your permission, coming to the Lottery just now, but this is also part of it; the question came up today of pension and gratuity for Members of Parliament. The law states that they should be paid pension and gratuity if you meet certain conditions, but we forgot that Grafton Isscas was over 55 when he lost and it took him four years before he got any of his benefits and Arthur Williams had to wait until 65 and that about maybe, I don't know how many years, I don't want to lie because he got it and Ken Browne had to wait over five years before he got his and we forgot all that and the very gentleman Sir James who is the architect, cause this, is one of the first men to tell you he wants to be paid; I don't know if tit is over the Atlantic or Pacific. But you see the country must know some of these things, I was the Leader of the Opposition when they sent for my diplomatic passport, I made no worry about it I sent it in, it didn't bother me, I was still in the House I was still the Leader of the Opposition and Randolph Toussaint sent to tell me that he was instructed that he must collect my diplomatic passport I said no problem. So when we know about all these things and now you cry and say forgive me, the only thing you can't say forgive me for I know not what I have done, because you certainly know what you have done.

The Lottery came into being around 1983 maybe started operating fully in 1984 and as the Senator said Mr. De Freitas had made some suggestions and Burns Bonadie who was Parliamentary Secretary in the Ministry of Trade and Agriculture; Cabinet mandated him to look into this and to see what is the best form and started first and foremost with scratchy. Those of us who could understand that we have these little scratchy, well you call them scratchy if that's the right name and we started that way because there was a lot of opposition, not only by the churches which maybe you can understand, but some of our own citizens who are so self righteous, that they didn't want gambling it was bad and it should not be entertained and so on,

but like everything else that the old Labour Party did, there was opposition. When we were to bring the flourmill in here there was a lot of opposition, they don't grow wheat, it can't work, it's going to be a strain on the economy and I don't have to tell you that, you know. When we bought the National Providence Fund, ..... all over the place, so we are accustomed to this, but if you are in Government you the vision, you are not going to be successful in every one of your projects but if you have the conviction and you believe that it is worth, you would never know if it is worth unless you try therefore you have to try and most of them have been successful.

Now I was the Minister of Trade and Agriculture when Lloyd Lewis and I don't want to lie, I think Mackey I might be making a mistake here; who came and ask for that piece of land at Sion Hill to use as a playing field I was the one who put it to Cabinet. I was the one who recommended it but it was never meant that it should be only owned by a particular set of persons or individuals. But a tremendous work, I am not saying no, they developed it, but I didn't know what big trees they said they had to cut down because if anything the ..... Was more a swamp than a forest (Interjection) yea exactly, there was a truck there thanks for reminding me and they did good work but this Government has decided there is a National Spots Council that is going to gain all the aspects of sports not cricket alone, not soccer alone but even the women rugby and all of this and that all playing field should come under the ambit of this National Sports Council. I can't see what is wrong with this, I don't know what is wrong with because Biabou can say now the persons running now what's his name, that they want to run it nobody should have any say in it, Georgetown can say the same thing and Sandy Bay can say the same thing and the Grammar School should say well is our sports, is our field so therefore we should run it and you have total chaos. Nobody is taking away the playfield from the Sion Hill community, it is there in close proximity, who is going to use it but Sion Hill? and nobody is saying they should not be involved in the management, so I don't know what is the thing. But they have made this into a political issue.

Now let me ask you something what was Edwardo Lynch doing at Sion Hill. The Honourable Leader of the Opposition says it was not a political thing but here we have Edwardo Lynch at Sion Hill addressing the gathering, he is the guru of the NDP. Addressing this meeting and telling them Government has no right to take away the playing field. We are not taking away the playing field, he started, but he is so versed in lying that he even told them they have it for 33 years even though earlier on they said that they had it from 1980. If my mathematics is right it 22 years, I don't how it come to 33 years, but if this was done political Edward Lynch doesn't come from Sion Hill, he doesn't live in Sion Hill, he's not a member of the club I don't think he's ever played any sport, except quick hand, in his life, I don't think he's ever done anything, fiddle fingers, maybe a good buyonist player. So what is he doing there, so when we talk about these things we must know?

Since the Lottery came into being they've done a good thing nobody is going to deny this and I quite agree with Senator Leacock the professionals can have quite an impact on the operations of the organisation but we also have to remember that we are all human and I hate to see Mr.

Sealy, he is my good friend and his daughters, friends of my son and so on, but there is nothing to say that Mr. Sealy would be there forever. The other day he was very ill and I was very worried that he'd even survive but I am glad that he did and so on, as I said.

So you have to put measures in place for the succession, and whereas you may have one person who is honest and you can leave everything up to, if that person departs, for whatever reason, better job, better position, the other person who takes over might not be that honest, or might not have the competence. So this bit of legislation is here to ensure the continuity succession of the organisation that is all that it is, very plain very simple. I am glad that we never had a matter that we had to go to court because I don't know all of the measures to charge for somebody for fraud or what ever the case would have to be charged on, some other law which the criminal court or whatever it is and as the Honourable Prime Minister pointed out that under the Gaming and Betting laws there was something there stating that all Lotteries were unlawful, illegal.

So we are correcting all of this, bringing all of this into one body so that we can have protection because the success of this you know is going to be that when someone wins that he should be able to get his money. There was only a period of three months if you didn't claim your winning. We have amended that in section 32, expire tickets of up to six months because we felt that somebody may be here they buy a ticket they go overseas, they don't know that they have won the lottery it might take some time before they found and so on and so on it is right. They invested their money and so we said instead of 90days we put it to a 180days all to make the provision that it can be reviewed, and if you have genuine case; just assuming that somebody goes away, get in an accident, suffer from amnesia and they have won. Might not have been permanent amnesia, the person might be in a coma to whatever it is or couldn't remember for maybe two, three years but it comes back; isn't it right that the person because it is no fault of his that he should get his winnings, so provision that are made here for these kind of things.

When you take these decision and we take the measure, every time you take decision they say is because of politics. In this case it had nothing at all to do with politics. Decisions were taken that, you can consolidate, you can coordinate, because there are times and it has happened before where because the Sports Council is not controlling the playing fields. Who have teams booked to play in one playing field and when they turn up somebody else who is in charge are already booked for the other sides to play and it is complete chaos and that is why we are saying that this why this whole matter needs to be coordinated and if we have a National Sports Council and if they are not going be given the work to be done then you might as well ban the Sports Council because what is the point in having them granted this is only one area.

Now if we build a Stadium at Diamond and we are going to build a Stadium at Diamond and that is in South Windward and the people in Stubbs, Carapan, come and say that they should control and run it, I mean it may seem absurd, but this is what Sion Hill is saying and they have

passed a resolution to say that they want to be in total control of the playing field and the letter of Cabinet dated 12<sup>th</sup> March 2002 be rescinded.

Now we ain't passing a resolution to say well let us ask for a meeting, we passing a resolution to say that the community bearing in mind that the Sion Hill Sports Club is now defunct so there is no effective control of that playing field except by Clive Lewis and Lloyd and what Lloyd is saying here, tell you is this hearing that since he received the message that he is no longer in charge but the field to be handed over to the Sports Council. He has not been to the playing field, but if the National Sports Council interferes with him there are some people on the block who they were told to kill, will only ask how soon and that he does not want that to happen. If they were told to kill all you have to say don't kill, he doesn't have to say how soon, all he have to say is don't kill (**interjection**). Yes, he didn't go there because there are some people, if he say kill all they would ask him; if the National Sports Council had interfered with him, I don't see why the National Sports Council has to interfere with him, that here are some people on the block who they are told to kill, they would only ask how soon, he does not want that to happen and this what is happening we didn't even set up the National Sports Council, It was set up under the NDP and it is a good thing but it was set up for a particular purpose.

I remember the time when the footballers were complaining that they can't get to play at Arnos Vale and that cricket had all the priorities and the attention and I think we have gone pass that now and we are trying to give to every sport the attention and to ensure that sports of all kind would flourish in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines. I was the most surprise person when I found out they had a women rugby team here, I was surprise they didn't have a male team but the women are taking the league (**interjection**) they have one well haven't heard anything about that. So it is a game that is foreign to us but at least it is sport, we support sports in every form because we think that our young people need this. One of the secretaries in my office I give a list out last night I ask her what are you doing here so late she said she went swimming, I said I thought you can swim she said yes, she help to teach people to swim in Tropic Breeze, I didn't even know and that's my ignorance, ..... this is good and I am looking forward to the day when we can construct an Olympic size and capacity that will meet all the requirements (**interjection**). So we moving and moving in the right direction because a lot of our young people just do not have the opportunity to excel; and as somebody says all of these not innovation but things that are coming to the fore only happened last year so I think we are on the right track. And I think that the Lottery has a very important part to play, and has played an important part and I think that this legislation is going to put it on a sound juridical footing so that they can move along. They can borrow money if they want, they can do what they want. Hopefully as the economy gets better, we might be able to increase the price of the tickets, I don't know, or bring other varying games because I am told know that the 3D had over taken the lotto, which is surprising, but that's what it is. Because one thing, people will gamble regardless, if you can make it easier and less dangerous. You have seen what happens to friends when they play cards, one person feels that the other person is cheating, murders, disrespect, we've had a lot of injuries and so on and I think that with the Lottery as it is going would increase staff, with greater transparency and with the knowledge that you would be audited

extra. And once we get those persons, those agents, to pay the money, as I understand there is a lot of outstanding monies for the agents to collect and wouldn't pay. Once we can put better control in the hands of I think that we would be able to do better.

Mr. Speaker, I think I heard that this Bill be given an easy passage.

**DR. THE HONOURABLE RAPLH GONSALVES:** Mr. Speaker, Honourable Members, I would like to thank very much all Honourable Members who have contributed to this debate. A few matters which I would like to clarify in the winding up presentation.

The first relates to a number of facilities, playing fields, to which the National Lottery contributes from time to time. The National Lottery contributes to sports including the Sports Council and also to individual playing fields for instance the Sion Hill playing field, the Georgetown playing field, the Keartons playing field, the Calliaqua playing field, Sandy Bay playing field all these playing field. Mr. Speaker, I think it is important for the issue, which has arisen in this debate concerning the Sion Hill playing field that the matter be clarify first in legal terms to avoid wooly thinking.

The National Sports Council was set up under the National Sports Council Act chapter 2:92 of the laws of St. Vincent and the Grenadines, which came into being on the 1<sup>st</sup> November 1988 under the first term of the NDP administration. Section 5.1 defines the functions of the National Sports Council, the functions of the National Sports Council shall be:

- A. To stimulate and facilitate the development of sports generally in St. Vincent and the Grenadines.
- B. To develop, maintain and manage sporting facilities including all playing fields and or Stadiums, other than Victoria Park, provided by the Government for public use.

The only playing field owned by the Government of St. Vincent and the Grenadines, the only facility which, is not to come under the National Sports Council is Victoria Park because that is under what is called the Town Board. There is no doubt that the Government of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines owned the playing field at Sion Hill. The Sion Hill Sports Club and an excellent community worker Mr. Lloyd Lewis true we have heard by the dean of the parliamentarians the Honourable Minister of National Security that he took the issue to the Cabinet on behalf of he Sion Hill Club, got the Cabinet to give the Sion Hill Club the opportunity to manage the playing field. Mr. Speaker, all that the National Sports Council is doing is to bring the Sion Hill playing field under its suzerainty which the law the NDP put in place gives it the right.

What had happened with the Sion Hill playing field and none can deny this and I can understand my friend Lloyd having proprietorial interest in it because of the seed he has put in it. But we cannot allow a facility which is so important to be determined by one person, two

person, or three persons. It must be put in a structure in which they will have an opportunity to serve, participate that's all, and for us in the Government to facilitate in the further development of that facility. And frankly, I am astounded that a matter like this could be transformed into a political halilabou and that is why several persons not just someone at that meeting in Sion Hill said that you must take the politics out of this business it was said so at the meeting.

They said let us look at this carefully, stop the politics with it, let us address it properly. And to the extent the Leader of the Opposition's contribution on that question is in that vein I agree with him, to the extent that it is so, and I am sure that the National Sports Council and the leading personalities who have been involved in the matter, and other people in Sion Hill, including the boys on the block who play sports would set up in consultation, in conjunction with the National sports Council, a proper management committee for the further development of that facility for the benefit of the people of Sion Hill and the surrounding areas and will get support from the National Lottery. I don't understand why people want to fight about something for which there is no reason to fight and as the Honourable Minister for National Security pointed out when you have inflammatory language if you tell people on the block who will kill all the people have to say is when and when you have someone who have nothing to do with the Sion Hill community, who is a paid activist of the NDP goes to the meeting and seeking to agitate the people.

The Leader of the Opposition doesn't have to say anything; he has his paid agent provocateur to do the job with great respects and I could understand why he didn't say anything because he was properly embarrassed by some of these things, which were being said. Though I take it as being very genuine, that he is concerned to see amicable resolution of this matter without the politics, because person pointed out at the meeting that people of all political persuasions contributed to the development of the playing field. To hear Senator Leacock speak is two or three people who have sweat equity in it so some how they have reportorial right. I find the notion to be very strange but you still have equity in it (**interjection**), no but the community is not a legal construct some legal entity will have the equity if you claiming by some means, if is one thing I believe I know is the law, but we don't have to get there with that kind of discussion it is a matter which we have to simply discuss in a straightforward amicable way. As I understand from the Minister of Education that persons has been asked to serve in a management structure for the field. Persons who have historically associated with it, because I myself when the decision took place at Cabinet I said we must ensure that persons who have been involved including Lloyd Lewis and I mentioned his name. He used to be my barber until the last elections, when common prudence dictated that I go elsewhere so I believe that that matter is laid to rest. And I think that the Minister of Sports, the National Sports Council, the Leader of the Opposition and persons in the Sion Hill community and someone who is very involved in practical matters, have a lot of equipment at his disposal, the Minister of Works, that they can all be involved in sorting out this problem.

Mr. Speaker, I want to comment upon something which I find strange and it relates to a holier than though attitude exhibited by some Members of the Opposition. You would go on the

political platform sometimes, which is broadcast on radio, and say Rene Baptiste cannot be touched by Ralph Gonsalves because Rene is for money laundering and Ralph is for drugs, that is what would be said that the Prime Minister of this country; you could have said that against me when I was Leader of the Opposition when I did not in some way encapsulate the authority of the political directory, but you can't say that. You just cannot say that there are certain things which beyond you do not say, you do not encourage support and have your paid spokes person on the radio say where the Prime Minister's car mistakenly used for to take home the helper that's to tell you I am unscrupulous, leave instruction that, that must not happen use my own jeep; that the Prime Minister have the policeman taking home his woman. Where on the platform where I am being traduced day in and day out that I am a bandit, while I was speaking today in the house I was called a vagabond, which is an legal category you can refer generally to people as being vagabonds or vagabondry without calling the name, but if you call the Prime Minister is a vagabond that is a defamatory statement because it is imputing that I have committed a crime of a vagabond and encourage other people to say it, that Julian Francis is the Minister of Works and way the \$2M gone and you making insinuation and innuendo that somehow he has been involved in absconding of \$2M or a portion thereof and he comes here and in fulsome defense of himself and his administration he give a full report of how every single penny has been spent on the works the school programme and then a resolution is brought, a Motion is brought against the Minister of Government with a series of ancient history unconnected to her and then operative part of the Motion said that if she knew about certain things which Nano was doing then she isn't fit to sit here in the House and she became guilty of a series of criminal offenses by her association as a daughter of a poor black woman who struggled and educated her and you want to pull her down you come here and start too play holier than thou. I cannot square these things.

I make a statement of facts that a company that John Horne I have been advised is the principle beneficiary rented the National Lottery under the NDP administration. A portion of a building upstairs the four walls for \$66,000 a year, four walls and \$300,000 for improvement has been made by the National Lottery and continuous repairs that is a fact. People may consider it as an excellent business arrangement for Mr. Horne's company and it will be a tribute to his business acumen but there is only one thing wrong is that he was a Minister of Government in the Cabinet where the National Lottery wasn't and is not now until we are trying to change it a statutory authority it was part of the Government for which the Cabinet could have given it directives of which he is a member. Now you may disagree and say that you don't see anything improper about a member of Cabinet renting to the National Lottery having them move that the Cabinet had them move from where they were and go down there in a building in a company in which Mr. Horne is the or a beneficiary, rent them essentially four walls which they had to divide up for \$66,000 a year that's a fact. I am not saying a lie and it is not an untruth to say that he got land at \$2.00 per square ft in Canouan and I am saying and the public is saying that it is only improper for a member of Cabinet to have land sold to him at whatever price because I made the point that he is not the only person who got land at \$2.00 per square ft, put the other ninety-eight (98) persons were not members of Cabinet.

Surely the Leader of the Opposition must see that a critical issue of good governance and transparency is at stake, it is my personal view that Members of Cabinet as a general rule should not purchase land from the Government when they are the one who determine who gets land and if that is to happen in any rare circumstance you must announce in advance that that is the case so that the public could know about it.

We must not forget these cases in Canouan the people who receive lands are residents of Canouan Mr. Horne is not a resident of Canouan and you can see that the residents are getting a preferential rate of \$2.00 put not him. I may well be wrong in this very strange notion that there must be transparency but if I am wrong I am also satisfied that the vast majority of people in St. Vincent are in agreement with the position which I hold. I am not traducing anyone.

Mr. Speaker I believe that the question raised by the Leader of the Opposition about Youth projects I think the formulation speaks for itself. The focus mandate the National Sports Council up to now has been Sports and Culture but they involve other projects like for instance they have contributed to people in the area of health, people to go away, they have contributed to Fisherman's Day, other programmes, other projects but that is not their focus.

There are several projects which I can think about as youth project, the National Youth Council for instance came to see me, they have spoken to me several occasions since I am in office and they are interested in farming projects, they are interested in building a proper office for the National Youth Council with sleeping facilities a kind of hostel for young people who are coming from overseas you have to raise money for a number of different places. Those are projects for which young people are being involved in. I understand Senator Leacock's position why not put the age there to, I have no objection in principle the only thing I would comment on is this if ask the National Lottery to do too many things they end up doing really nothing. I understand so that, but in the same way in which they had look at other things and because sports and culture which are essentially youth oriented you said as an addition you put the board youth projects but they in their judgment I can't give you this I can't give you that. In the same way other programmes they may put a programme for the elderly something one off. I believe in the; I wish to differ (**interjection**)

**HONOURABLE ARNHIM EUSTACE:** Mr. Speaker, as I can recall that at the Public Accounts Committee meeting when we discuss the council of the National Lottery I think it was in 2000. I think it was you Prime Minister who made the comment, the express concern at that time that the Lottery is getting in areas for which you traditionally did not get involved and at that time we discuss the very issue of the breakdown of the dollar and the fact that there was a relatively small amount given the totality of the National Lottery resources. It is a very small amount available really for distribution and it is in that context that I raised the question because it is very difficult to define the youth project and it is in that context that I was raising the question because it is very difficult to define a youth project and it is in that concept that I felt sports and culture which are already basically youth oriented put sufficient to cover given the resources available.

**DR. THE HONOURABLE RALPH GONSALVES:** Now I appreciate the point and I think the National Lottery is very seized of the issue and I think there is a settled view that the Lottery must try and stay as focused as possible, though in circumstances and a case by case basis it may well decide to go out of its ambit or fits focus. Mr. Speaker, I believe that the Senator Leacock has drawn our attention to two sub-clauses which I believe the person who has the carriage of this particular bill I think that there are useful suggestions. The first one that is to say in Clause 6.4 that we can put at the end of the clause; if a member is absent on account of illness or for any temporary cause or is temporarily absent from the state the Minister shall appoint some other person to act as a temporary member during the time of incapacity or absence continues I will say, he said up to six months, I think frankly it shouldn't be more than a month, because the point is this if you have to go more than a month you have to come to Cabinet and let Cabinet fill the position, so that if a person is absent by virtue of his illness the Minister appoints the person more than likely what will happen the Cabinet will; that to show you how I consider temporary, the Leader of the Opposition is saying a month is too short, three months, we can agree to three months. So we can put that in the time of the incapacity or absence continues for up to three months because what will happen more than likely the person who the Minister has named during the time of incapacity continues, not exceeding three months.

Mr. Speaker the way in which Cabinet Government operates the Minister of Finance name somebody he would more than likely consult with a number of other persons including his senior colleagues and the people of the National Lottery at least that's what I will do, so that if it is more than three months when I go to Cabinet in all likelihood the person whom I put temporarily will be confirmed by the Cabinet, that is the likelihood but I understand that there can be a mischief, not that there is likely to be one but potentially there can be a mischief and I see no problem with that.

I also agree with Senator Leacock the quorum of three was there when the number was originally in the draft was up to seven (7) and then when we decided to put it to nine (9) in our Select Committee meeting none of us who was there including Senator Leacock addressed to our mind to the increase to the quorum, now he addressed our mind he has a point and I think we should put odd numbers when we are having a quorum so I think we should move it from three (3) to five (5), the chairman plus four other members. I see no problem with the Lottery having a Chairman and four out of the other members coming to a meeting. If you can't get a quorum well you will have to get rid of those members who are not coming so that the Board can function. I will agree with those.

Mr. Speaker, let me just say persons outside listening and members of the House maybe saying well we are saying that the National Lottery is a multi-million dollar business in terms of revenue and the turn over and we hear the break down, in that case the Lottery doesn't have that much money put aside, because if the fifty cents to the winnings, and you come all the way down and you have twenty-six cents leave to do the administration, maintenance and so forth

and to go to Sports and Culture and other programmes that there is really no money for them to put aside for the kitty. Well I am please to report that the National Lottery has accounts, fixed deposits, Government bonds, which is \$200,000 saving accounts and chequing accounts bringing the total up to currently as of March 31<sup>st</sup> of \$2.37M and in fixed deposits they have \$1.235M. So they are in a reasonable state of financial health and I believe that given their base the extent of their turnover and the rent which they pay, the case for them to buy a building of a reasonable size is something which is not out of order at all and it is for them to make all the requisite considerations and to make recommendation to me as Minister of Finance so I can discuss it first with the Senior colleagues of Cabinet and then bring it to the full Cabinet having of course filtered it thorough the professional staff in the Ministry of Finance.

Mr. Speaker, by way of winding up that with the two amendments which I had suggested, which I believe have been noted I beg to move of the adoption of the report from the Select Committee with the amendments which have been made here today in the two particular Clauses that is to say Clauses 6 subsection 4 at the end of that move the full stop and put a comma and then not exceeding three months, and then in Clause 7, 5 in his absence the deputy Chairman and in 4 other member should form a quorum and I so move.

*Question put and agreed to*  
*Report adopted*

**DR. THE HONOURABLE RALPH GONSALVES:** Mr. Speaker, Honourable Members I beg to move that the Bill for the National Lotteries Act 2002 be read a third time by title and passed.

*Question put and agreed to.*  
*Bill read a third time by title and passed.*

**INTERNATIONALLY PROTECTED PERSONS BILL 2002**

**HONOURABLE VINCENT BEACHE:** Mr. Speaker, I beg to move the second reading of a Bill for an Act to implement an Act for the convention and prevention and punishment of crime against Internationally protected persons including diplomatic agents 1973. Mr. Speaker the object of the Bill.

Honourable Rene Baptiste seconded the Motion.

*Question put and agreed to.*  
*Bill read a second time.*

**HONOURABLE VINCENT BEACHE:** Mr. Speaker, this is a Bill that really is a convention this Bill has been a long time in coming. The prevention of conditions of crime against internationally protection of persons came into to being in 1973 but during that time Mr.

Speaker, nothing much was done about becoming signatory to the convention, because those days things were very quiet. As you would understand during the 60s and 70s you had the Red Brigade and the Mydamy-off gang and things like this, things were little bit hot and so this Convention came into being. It wasn't until in September 2000 that St. Vincent deposited its succession to the Convention, so we are signatory to the Convention but we have not given any legal status to the Bill. Despite the fact that we have an agreement with the Convention it is necessary to give the Bill juridical status for the reason that in the body of the Bill you can trail someone if they are found committing a crime even though that person had committed the crime overseas and unless you had the legal status to do this, it would be difficult.

Now in the Bill it tells you who the protected person is and the interpretation says that a protected person at any time of alleged attempts could be the Head of State of a country, a member of a body which performs the functions of head of state, a head of Government or a Minister of Foreign Affairs and is outside the territory of the state in which he holds office so that if something is done today to the Governor General of St. Vincent this Convention will not apply. Well if the Governor General is traveling or the Prime Minister is traveling or any other Minister of Foreign Affairs with his entourage and someone tries to commit a crime in the body or even the vehicles of those persons for instance that would represent a crime therefore this Convention comes into being. What it says here is that a person at the time of the alleged offense is a representative or an official of the state or an official or an agent of an international organization of an international – Governmental character and entitled under international law for special protection from attack on this person even his freedom or dignity that does not fall in the preceding paragraph which is the Head of State extra, extra.

So Mr. Speaker this is what the Bill means even the relevant premises of the person and in the relevant premises the interpretations state that it means premises which the protected person resides or is staying or which a protected person uses for the purpose of carrying out his functions as such a person. So if you have any of these persons staying a hotel in Brussels or wherever it is and somebody should mount up an attack then it doesn't matter the hotel is not owned by the Head of State or the Minister of Foreign Affairs this Convention would apply. Mr. Speaker the Convention is very clear it gives provision for extradition; if someone commits an offense in St. Vincent for instance I think we suppose to have the Commonwealth Law Ministers Conference here sometime or if we have the Head of State where we have the Prime Minister from St. Lucia, St. Kitts, or wherever it is here and somebody commits a crime here then that person can either be tried in St. Vincent or trailed in St. Lucia if it is against the Prime Minister's of St. Lucia or St. Kitts trailed in St. Kitts we can extradite that person or they can be trailed in St. Vincent. So it is very easy Mr. Speaker it is a Convention to which we have become a signatory since 2000, but to give the juridical status and that is why this Bill is being brought here so that we can complete the process and have the matter be dealt with.

**DR. THE HONOURABLE GODWIN FRIDAY:** Thank you very much Mr. speaker, this is as the Honourable Member representing the Bill employed it not really a controversial matter because

the Bill seeks to implement an international Convention which it seems to me timely given the current international pre-occupation with terrorism and Acts against persons of the state and so on. The Acts seeks to adopt the Convention and punishment of crimes against internationally protected persons to adopt that into domestic legislation.

As the Minister indicated Clause 3 claims jurisdiction over offenders who commit offense against persons outside of St. Vincent. I have basically one question which might easily be clarified and that has do to with Clause 3 I believe which appears to be in response to article one paragraph 2 of the Convention, which allows each country to set an appropriate penalty of the offense defined in Clause 3 and what I notice it doesn't refer to a penalty and I wonder if that is because the offences mentioned in article 3.1 a; are those which are already in the criminal court and which are already applied. You would note that 1b; also paragraphs ends it just simply say you're guilty of an offence. So for example the person who commits an offence against protected person lets say the offence of murder would subject to the death penalty. Mr. Speaker the members on this side of the house are essentially in agreement of the objectives of the Bill you would note and I will raise this point in greater detail when we discuss the other aspect of the Bill, well not this Bill but the other Bills which are similar, that it also imposes obligation on the Government and people of St. Vincent and the Grenadines which we must be cognizant of in implementing this Bill into domestic legislation because we would be required to meet those obligations and they are essentially set out in articles 4 & 6 of the Convention.

Mr. Speaker, we are very sensitive to the issue of international crimes and the protection of such persons identified here and therefore we wish this Bill a speedy passage with the concern that I raised with respects to the obligations fully in mind and hope that the Government will take those into account and instituting proceedings or procedure or an institutional capacity to ensure that we can make those obligations in the future and those are my comments Mr. Speaker.

**DR. THE HONOURABLE RALPH GONSALVES:** Mr. Speaker, Honourable Members, I am very grateful, but of course not surprised that the Opposition is in support of this particular measure because I think it is important that we show to the international community that this House is united in its fight against every single aspect of terrorism and we have been bringing a series of measures and there are others still we will bring in order to put our legal architecture in place so that we can fulfill our obligation as respective members of international community. As the Minister of National Security pointed out this Convention came into being in 1973 but we in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines we joined last year by depositing its succession with the secretary of the United Nations and the very process; Honourable Member from the Northern Grenadines mentioned it the very process of addressing these series of Conventions and putting domestic juridical frame to them that very process demands an institutional capacity. The drafting of these the consideration by Cabinet, all the technical people, in coming here in the House, its taking a lot of time and we have passed them we have to keep on following them making sure that we dot all the (i)'s and cross the (t)'s and Mr. Speaker everyday new obligations arise. The next Bill on the Order Paper relates to the Act of the taking of the hostages Bill that's another one, we have brought several already. There are series of

Convention with which we have brought since we were in office inter-Minister legislation as required by Security Council Resolution 1373, but even outside of the formal demands of the United Nations.

You have state-to-state relations where certain demands are placed on them, yesterday, I met the new American Ambassador to St. Vincent and the Grenadines he came and paid a courtesy call on me, but it was more than a courtesy call, it was a substantive discussion with the political officer from the US Embassy who has responsibility for St. Vincent, we had a discussion for over an hour and one of the areas which Washington is concerned about and would like us to cooperate on is the question of looking at the Ship Registry and to review all of the ships registered to see if there is any which should be de-registered on grounds of their suspicious ownership connections. Of course we have been doing through the Maritime Commissioner in Monaco a review already, but that requires a lot of effort the question of the due-diligence cost is phenomenal.

I had to point out to His Excellency Ambassador that, that is an area where it is important for us to do some work, but what is far more important is for us to have a memorandum of understanding that if there is a Vincentian registered vessel which is engaged in suspicious activities and where there is reasonable suspicion that an offence has been committed and the vessel is on the high seas that when we are contacted that we would have a memorandum of understanding in our circumstances like that as to the response. I have responded to the request from the US Government in the relation to series of matters and I have done so very promptly where there have been some suspicions and it is a well-known case with the United Kingdom Government with the Denesha on December 20<sup>th</sup> a vessel which left Mauritius with a load of sugar stop off in Djibouti and a Vincentian registered ship and the United Kingdom authority received intelligence report that either terrorist or terrorist material were on board the vessel and it was on the high seas sailing to the Isle of Wight of course within seconds I was contacted when I was doing the Christmas visit out at the Lewis Ponnet home, they called on the cellular phone and I give them the permission immediately for them to board as it is required under international law that they can't board unless they get the permission of the flag state. So that more and more simply addressing a series of quote unquote terrorist connected matters we would require more and more institutional capacity.

Since September 11<sup>th</sup> this issue is occupying more and more of my time, you have to read the report, you have to respond to enquires, you have to engage in discussions and it is a burden on a small state, there is no question about that. But I think what ever our limitations, it is important for us in the Parliament to speak authoritatively and act forcefully on all issues that are terrorist related because if we falter in any way or if there is any dissonance on the subject it will be to our disadvantage it will hamper our national development. So for that reason, as Leader of the House that I rise to support this Bill explicitly so that my words will be on the record of the Hansard as to the context in which we seek this particular measure and very much so in terms the Honourable Member for the Northern Grenadines has rightly and eloquently spoken I am oblige.

**HONOURABLE VINCENT BEACHE:** Mr. Speaker, only to say that the Member for the Northern Grenadines is quite correct that these measures impose upon us obligations would be costly and as such you have to find the funds, friendly government or whatever it is but once we have become signatories and we have now passed this into law, there are certain measures that we must put in place to try to prevent protected persons from being attacked or molested. Mr. Speaker, I thank the Honourable Member for his support of the Bill and thank the Prime Minister for his input and now move Mr. Speaker, that the House dissolves itself into a Committee of the whole House to consider the Bill Clause by Clause.

*House went into Committee.*

**HONOURABLE MR. SPEAKER:** Honourable Members the question is the implementation for a Bill for an Act for the Convention on prevention and punishment on crimes on internationally protected persons including diplomatic agents 1973 be read a third time by title and pass.

*House resumed.*

*Bill reported, read a third time by title and passed.*

## **5. ACT AGAINST THE TAKING OF HOSTAGES BILL 2002**

**HONOURABLE VINCENT BEACHE:** Mr. Speaker, I beg to move the second reading of a Bill for an Act for the implementation of the provision for the international Convention Against The Taking of Hostages 1979.

Dr. the Honourable Ralph Gonsalves second the Motion

*Question put and agreed to.*

*Bill read a second time.*

**HONOURABLE VINCENT BEACHE:** Mr. Speaker this is, as the Member for the Northern Grenadines said, this is another one of these Bills where there is a convention. The convention came into being in 1979 taking up of hostages you might remember around that time taking of hostages it would have been the great pass time for criminals they were high jacking aircrafts taking hostages even on ships and so on and so this convention came into being in 1979 and we deposit our accession with the United Nations Secretary General on the 12<sup>th</sup> September 2000, so once more it is similar to the one that has just passed. We are now trying to give this Bill the legal status, this one more so easier just as the one being passed, create even greater obligations on the state party, the host country for instance, we also have on this Bill the provision expedition, but we also have the offences, also where the jurisdiction where we have to ensure that once the act was committed in the territory of St. Vincent and the Grenadines even though

it's on a vessel in our waters, or registered to be licensed or subject to restriction of St. Vincent and the Grenadines then regardless of where the act was committed, person who committed the offence, if he is a citizen of St. Vincent and the Grenadines or a stateless person having the habitual or ordinary residence in St. Vincent and the Grenadines he is deemed a Vincentian, but we also have notification requirements that the results of all persecution under the Act shall be communicated to the Secretary General of the United Nations and all the other ramifications that this entailed. Also if you are suspecting somebody there are rights there for the suspect, if you record the suspect as being guilty of any of the offences describe which is in section 3 and those offences are, if you confine someone who is imprisoned or if the person seized or detained another person or you threaten the death or injury to or continue detention of that person in order or to compel a third party to commit any act or commission or cause it to be committed any act or commission either explicit or implicit conditions for the release of that person commits an act of hostage taking.

You would realise not too long ago people would take hostages and demand their colleagues or members of the organisation who are imprisoned should be released and so on that is termed as hostage taking etc, etc, etc. In the convention it self there are a lot of obligations now each takes part. For instance in Article 2 shall make the offence, in what I was talking about punishable by the appropriate penalties which take into account the grave nature of those offences. So the state now has the obligation to decide what penalty you are going to put on the different level of hostage taking and so on, Article 5 as well states that the state must take such measure that will be necessary to establish the jurisdiction over any offences quote in Article 1 etc, etc, etc. So it is similar Mr. Speaker except that there are more and greater obligations and the state part in this, which is ourselves, to this convention, but we are already signatory to this convention so all we are doing here is to give it essentially it's judicial status. Thank you Mr. Speaker.

**DR. THE HONOURABLE GODWIN FRIDAY:** Just a few comments Mr. Speaker. This Bill is similar to the one we just debated and again it's not a matter of controversy but I wish to put it on the record on behalf of the Members on this side of the House that we are in support of the objectives, particularly at this time Mr. speaker, unfortunately all countries and perhaps particularly small and vulnerable countries like ours are under a very powerful microscope now, in that countries who feel that they maybe targets or are more prone to be targets for international terrorism look to weaker countries as ours as possible places where those threats originate or at least give aid and comfort to such persons who would make those threats. We wish therefore, on this side of the House to send a clear message to the international community that St. Vincent and the Grenadines is not part of that and that we wish to take our place among those nations that would do whatever is in their power to prevent and combat such activities.

Indeed the convention itself says in its triangular statement that let me read the passage just for the benefit of those people who might just be listening; It says in the last part that being convinced, that's of the preamble, being convinced that it is urgently necessary to develop international corporations between states in devising and adopting effective measures for the

prevention and prosecution and punishment of all acts of taking of hostages as manifestation of international terrorism. As we all know and become painfully aware, this is the primary most important international concern arising out of the incident of United States on September 11<sup>th</sup> and with justification we are entitled to be concerned with such things.

Mr. Speaker, Honourable Members, will first of all the Act seems to me, is consistent with the provision of the convention the definition of the offence of hostage taking in the Act is similar to the Conventional Act, expressed differently, but it includes the same part, the same components. As usual the Convention leaves it up to the implementing State to determine the penalty taking into account the gravity of the offence, and in this case the penalty, imposes life imprisonment. It seems to me again is consistent with the offence that it seeks to prohibit and punish. The Honourable Minister indicated the obligations and it seems to me that it's important that, I say to the citizens of St. Vincent and the Grenadines and as law makers in this Honourable House that we are fully aware of those obligations because I said in the earlier debate you know it would be probably worse if having implemented the Convention we do not do enough to give it teeth than we have just simply left it alone, so once it is implemented again there is the obligation on the Government to ensure that it can be enforced properly.

The jurisdiction is fairly expansive particularly it allows somebody who commits the offense of hostage taking outside of St. Vincent and the Grenadines who is not connected to citizenship to St. Vincent and the Grenadines to be trailed in St. Vincent and the Grenadines, if that person is present within St. Vincent and the Grenadines. So what it means, such a person cannot seek refuge in St. Vincent and the Grenadines, it puts a positive obligation on the Government of St. Vincent and the Grenadines to take a action against such a person if that person comes within our midst.

There is of course provision for extraditions, but the request has to be made first before that could be effected. So it may come to point where the Government or the authorities of St. Vincent and the Grenadines would have initiated action against a person who is alleged to have committed the offence of hostage taking. There is another provision of the Convention which I think we should bear in mind that I ..... before, it states and I read State parties should cooperate in the convention set forth in article 1, and that is the offence of hostage taking. Particularly by taking all practicable measure to prevent preparations in their respective territories for the commissions of those offences within or outside their territories including measure to prohibit in their territories illegal activities of persons, groups, organisations that encourage, instigate, organize, or engage in the perpetuation of acts of a taking up of hostages.

Now two years ago we may not be concerned but again because of incidents in the United States September 11<sup>th</sup> there is much more of an eagles eye no pun intended, in the sense of those larger countries looking much more closely at us to ensure that we are acting in accordance with this provision and the Prime Minister I believe alluded to that reference to the interest taking in the ships that are registered under the flag of St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

There is also the obligation imposed in article 6 which says that upon being satisfied that the circumstances so warrant, any State party in the territory of which the alleged defendant is present shall in accordance with the law take him into custody or take other measures to ensure his presence for such time as is necessary to enable any criminal or extradition proceeding to be instituted. So here the obligation is that persons who are alleged to have committed this offence cannot be allowed to leave the State without us doing what we can in this country to ensure that they are brought to justice and Mr. Speaker, this is an obligation which we must take seriously if the international community is to have confidence in the State of St. Vincent and the Grenadines obligations and to take us seriously as being equal in terms of legal status in the international community with respects to our duties, obligations, rights on the international Conventions.

Mr. Speaker, I believe the Honourable Minister who put forward the Bill has indicated his willingness at least his acknowledgement of the obligations that imposed on the Government and I would urge him in the future to send a very clear message to the international community that we take those seriously and that we intend to enforce them and in particular the specific references to articles 4 and 6 of the Convention. Thank you Mr. Speaker.

**HONOURABLE VINCENT BEACHE:** Mr. Speaker, I thank the Honourable Member for the Northern Grenadines, as a lawyer, for expanding on the provision of this Bill. There is a lot more for instance article 8 also imposes obligation where we do not extradite the person you are supposed to trail that person without delay. Mr. Speaker I now move, that the House resolves into Committee of the whole House to consider the Bill clause by clause.

*House went into Committee.*

*House resumed.*

*Bill reported, read a third time by title and passed.*

## 6. THE INTERNATIONAL SALE OF GOODS BILL 2002.

**DR. THE HONOURABLE RAPLH GONSALVES:** Mr. Speaker, Honourable Members I beg to move the first reading of Bill for an Act to give effect within St. Vincent and the Grenadines to the United Nations on Conventions contractual for the international sale of goods done in Vienna on April 11<sup>th</sup> 1980. Mr. Speaker, Honourable Members the United Nations Convention for the international sale of goods was the product of seven to eight years work in the United Nations commission on the international trade law. To unify and harmonise the laws relating to the sale of goods in countries belonging to different legal systems, principally the common-law countries and the civil law countries. Some 58 countries world wide having diverse legal, political, economic, and social systems are parties to this Convention. St. Vincent and the Grenadines deposited its accession to this Convention last year because the benefits of

having a unified, harmonized, law which will be applied both on the cellos and the bias countries would be appreciated by all persons corporation involved in international trade.

**7. PHARMACY BILL 2002**

**DR. THE HONOURABLE RALPH GONSALVES:** Mr. Speaker, Honourable Members I beg to move the first reading of a bill for an Act to provide for the regulations, authorization and control of the pharmaceutical industry and related matters. The object of this Bill is to provide for the regulation, authorization and control of the pharmaceutical industry and for related matters.

*Question put and agreed to.  
Bill read a first time.*

**PRIVATE BILLS**

**HONOURABLE GIRLYN MIGUEL:** I would like to lay before this House the report on the Select Committee.

- 8. LIVING WATER MINISTRIES INTERNATIONAL (SAINT VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES) INCORPORATION 2002**
- 9. THE WELLS OF LIVING WATER CHURCH (SAINT VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES) INCORPORATION BILL 2002.**
- 10. APOSTOLIC DELIVERANCE CHURCH (SAINT VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES) INCORPORATION BILL 2002.**
- 11. BETHANY BAPTIST CHURCH (SAINT VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES) INCORPORATION BILL 2002.**
- 12. HALIBETHIAN CHURCH OF THE EPIPHANY (SAINT VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES) INCORPORATION BILL 2002**

*Questions put and agreed to.  
Bills read a third time by title and passed.*

**LIVING WATER MINISTRIES INTERNATIONAL (SAINT VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES) INCORPORATION ACT 2002**

**THE WELLS OF LIVING WATER CHURCH (SAINT VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES) INCORPORATION ACT 2002.**

**APOSTOLIC DELIVERANCE CHURCH (SAINT VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES) INCORPORATION ACT 2002.**

**BETHANY BAPTIST CHURCH (SAINT VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES) INCORPORATION ACT 2002.**

**HALIBETHIAN CHURCH OF THE EPIPHANY (SAINT VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES) INCORPORATION ACT 2002.**

### **ADJOURNMENT**

**DR. THE HONOURABLE RALPH GONALVES:** Mr. Speaker, Honourable Members before I move the motion for the adjournment I just like to indicate to Honourable Members and to the public who may be listening at minutes to 11'0 clock, the Carnival Development Corporation Bill 2002 we intend to have it published in the newspaper so that by the next time we meet we should have comments from the public and that will perhaps assist us in our debate. Mr. Speaker we have had a long day I want to thank all Honourable Members. I beg to move that this Honourable House do stand adjourned until Monday 13<sup>th</sup> May 2002 at 10:00 a.m.

*Question put and agreed to.  
House adjourned accordingly at 10:40 p.m.*