

No. 9

TUESDAY

First Session

13th November, 2001

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 NINTH MEETING, FIRST 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.

FIFTEENTH SITTING

13th November, 2001

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

The Honourable House of Assembly met at 10.10 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

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 Health and the Environment
Honourable Dr. Douglas Slater

Member for South Leeward

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 Transport, Works and Housing
Honourable Julian Francis

Government Senator

Honourable Edwin Snagg

Government Senator, Parliamentary
Prime Minister's Office, Special
Responsibility for Labour and
Grenadines Affairs

OTHER MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE

Honourable Arnhim Eustace

Member for East Kingstown/
Leader of the Opposition

Honourable Terrance Ollivierre

Member for Southern 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

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

Honourable Louis Straker

Member for Central Leeward

Minister of Agriculture, Lands and Fisheries

Honourable Selmon Walters

Member for South Central
Windward

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

Honourable Conrad Sayers

Member for Central Kingstown

Dr. the Honourable Godwin Friday

Member for Northern Grenadines

SAINT VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

TUESDAY 13TH NOVEMBER, 2001

PRAYERS

Mr. Speaker, read the Prayers of the House.

HONOURABLE MR. SPEAKER: Before the Obituaries I would like Honourable Members to recognize the presence of a number of students from the Girls' High School, Form 5. We wish to recognize their presence here. We want them to feel welcome, as they observe the proceedings. It will do well for you, indeed, hearing the proceedings of Parliament and we would have to encourage other s to come from time to time. Thank you, very much.

CONGRATULATORY REMARKS

HONOURABLE CLAYTON BURGIN: Mr. Speaker, Honourable Members I rise to congratulate a few of our youths involved in sports and culture art forms. I rise to congratulate first of all St. Vincent and the Grenadines and by extension the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States leading long distance running sensation, Mr. Pamenos Ballantyne. Mr. Speaker, on many occasions this young man has been congratulated for his achievements in various long distance marathons, and half marathon events. Mr. Speaker, on Sunday the 14th November 2001 he once again captured the annual NEMWIL, OECS track and field championships half marathon in St. Lucia for a record seven consecutive victories in a time of 1 hour 8 minutes 16 seconds. Mr. Speaker, also in October he won a 15 K in Forte de France Martinique. Mr. Speaker, this young man continues to make us, Vincentians proud. This young man knows no other word but success. And as I have said before, his success does not come by mere chance, he puts in over 30 hours of training in one form or the other each week. And Mr. Speaker, let me remind this House and the general public that he has been made Goodwill Ambassador by this Government. The Unity Labour Party Government and also this Government because of his achievements have organized full time employment for Mr. Ballantyne. Congratulation to him, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to tell our athletes for them to succeed they have to be committed. They have to have commitment, will power and discipline to put in the kind of training that is required. Mr. Speaker, I also want to congratulate, Miss. Adelaine

Carrington who placed second in the same OECS championship in St. Lucia on the 4th. Again hard work, perseverance and dedication are her hallmark. Mr. Speaker, I also want to congratulate Courtney Melody Williams of the St. Mary's Catholic School and our primary school 2001 calypso monarch for placing second in the 5-12 age group in the inaugural Caribbean youth calypso in Trinidad on October 26th. His rendition was "AIDS is a Killer". Also representing St. Vincent at that event was Shannel Mc Kenzie of the St. Vincent A' Level College and Alex Oliver of the Girls High School.

And finally, Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate the St. Vincent and the Grenadines swimming team for placing 3rd in the 11th OECS championships in St. Lucia over the weekend. Mr. Speaker, this effort by our team is commendable, since we do not have any top class facilities like the other territories. Mr. Speaker, it shows that culture and the arts have a role to play in the development of our youth as well as the nation. I wish these youths all the best and hope that others can emulate their dedication to hard work. Mr. Speaker, I thank you.

HONOURABLE EDWIN SNAGG: Mr. Speaker, Honourable Members I rise to offer congratulatory remarks to a national of St. Vincent and the Grenadines Dr. Kendol Stewart. Dr. Kendol Stewart was recently elected to the New York City Council. Dr. Stewart came from very humble beginnings. Born in Ashton Union Island, he attended the Aston Government School, then came to the mainland and attended the St. Vincent Grammar School. He continued at the Caribbean Union College, a Seventh Day Adventist institution in Trinidad, he then move to New York where he did his Bachelors in Chemistry at the City College and continued at New York College where he did podiatric medicine. Dr. Stewart enjoyed a very successful medical practice. He was involved in various cultural social activities in New York, he also had very close connections with the famous mass band 'Borokits' of Trinidad which has a branch in New York, and whom he housed free of charge at one of his buildings. He is an example of persistence, having contested the democratic election for the position of district leader on more than one occasion, he was eventually successful and then after two outings of the democratic primary, he finally won in September; and moved on to win a seat on the New York City Council in November. We on this side of the House wish Dr. Stewart and his family, his wife and five children we wish them well and wish him a very successful tenure in Office.

I, Mr. Speaker, want to offer my personal congratulations to Dr. Stewart as he comes from a family with which I am fairly well associated, having grown up with his great aunt who was my grandfather's wife, I feel a personal sense of happiness for Dr. Stewart and I wish him and his family all the best in the future. I think, Mr. Speaker, that Dr. Stewart is a fine example to all Vincentians, particularly to the young people, as I see we have members of the Girl's High School with us here this morning, and I think in particular to the young people of the Grenadines, it shows that one can rise

like the proverbial Phoenix out of the ashes to achieve one's goals, once there is a certain level of commitment and persistence. Once again I offer our congratulations to Dr. Kendol Stewart, thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HONOURABLE DR JERROL THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker, I too rise to offer congratulatory remarks and to endorse those presented by my colleague, Senator Edwin Snagg. Kendol Stewart is a friend, a colleague and a true Vincentian. I may not be able to add more accolades on top of what has been so eloquently presented by Senator Edwin Snagg, but I can attest to the character, integrity, professionalism and success of Dr., I should say Honourable Dr. Kendol Stewart, or Councilman Kendol Stewart.

I practiced with Dr. Stewart in New York, and should say that in spite of the fact that I do not actively practice medicine in the USA anymore officially, my practice address is that of Dr. Kendol Stewart office on Church Avenue. In the early days we referred patients to each other. I became his mother's doctor. I campaigned for him, but working with Dr. Stewart allowed me to see the true caliber of this Vincentian man from Union Island, he was a giver, he shared, and I think that today all Vincentians should be very proud that we have someone whose being elected to Office in New York can help to push St. Vincent and the Grenadines and Vincentians living there in that part of the Diaspora forward. I offer Dr. Stewart and his family continued success, and hope that he even goes further, thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HONOURABLE TERRANCE OLLIVIERRE: Mr. Speaker, I rise to offer my congratulations to Vincentians who continue to do this country proud. Firstly on behalf of the people of St. Vincent and the Grenadines, and particularly those of Union Island, I wish to offer congratulatory remarks to Dr. Kendol Stewart who has been elected as a City Council Member of the 45th District in Brooklyn, New York. Indeed, Mr. Stewart came from humble beginnings as was said before, and being closely related to that family of Ashton Union Island, you know I am particularly proud in that the way our locals when given the opportunity have been able to use that to rise to position of distinction throughout the world. Indeed, Mr. Stewart, being the brother of former Member of Parliament and Minister the Honourable Glenford Stewart, has indeed his mark in that District in New York, and I think all Vincentians should be justly proud of what he has been able to achieve.

I also wish to join in the congratulatory remarks of Mr. Pamenos Ballantyne, and indeed he has proven that he is top in his class, not only in the OECS, but indeed in the entire Caribbean region. Recently while in Trinidad I was proud of the recognition that was given him in the 'Express Newspaper' for his success throughout the region and indeed, I think that what ever we do, no sort of words would be enough to express the gratitude on what he has been able to do for St. Vincent and the Grenadines. Congratulations is also in order for Miss Adeline Carrington, this country's top female long distance runner, I think everything should be done to ensure that our youths, and

that young athletes out there will know that whatever they do to put this country on the map, that we at the highest level are justly proud of the achievements that they have been able to bring to this beloved country of ours. Thank you.

HONOURABLE MICHAEL BROWNE: Mr. Speaker, Honourable Members I wish first of all to support the sentiments expressed in relation to outstanding Caribbean people and Vincentians. I however rise specifically to congratulate the National Independence Committee headed by Minister Baptiste, and duly assisted by Deputy Minister Senator Francis. This committee was instrumental in bring a refreshing breeze for our Independence celebration. I think that is very important, Mr. Speaker, for not only because it was the first independence under the new dispensation, but within recent times, independence celebrations have been characterized prior to the last one under the NDP with a message of doom and gloom. Very depressing, and the uplifting work of this committee must not go unnoticed, and must be congratulated. Despite the fact that this committee was headed by two Ministers with extremely heavy schedules and was supported in a sense by a cast of very hardworking committee members. They were able to produce a programme that span from the gay uplifting decorations not only of the city but of the villages throughout the country, and also to embark on a programme of activities that ranged from musical items to competitions. And I think it really lifted the spirit of the this entire nation, in a time of the post September 11th period when there was additional gloom on this land.

I wish to take this opportunity to congratulate also those members of Cabinet who are under the directions of Cabinet and the Prime Minister traveled overseas thereby missing our own local celebrations to be with our Diaspora, and this is important because this Government conceptualizes our nation in a new manner distinct from the way it was done by the previous regime, that is, we understand that while we have a nation state that comprises a landscape of St. Vincent and the Grenadines and the surrounding seascape, that our nation indeed is made up of Vincentians wherever they are and therefore it is important under this new conceptualization of nationhood, that we link with our people overseas. Accordingly, Cabinet and the Prime Minister felt it was very important that we go overseas, and I would like to thank Minister of State in the Ministry of Education, Honourable Clayton Burgin for doing his assignment in Barbados, Minister of Telecommunications and Science, Honourable Jerrol Thompson for doing his work in London, Minister of the Public Service for doing his work in Toronto and the US, the Deputy Prime Minister for doing his work in the United States of America, New York and Miami for the Deputy Prime Minister, in the case of the Minister of Public Service, Honourable Vincent Beache, Toronto and Philadelphia. For my own part I had a very wonderful gathering with our students and Vincentians in Jamaica on the Mona Campus and they send their greetings to this Government.

I must take this opportunity to indicate that the students are all eager, very eager to come home and serve under this new dispensation. And the Minister of Tourism went

to St. Croix to join our nationals there, and I would also like to extend congratulations to her and thanks for a job well done. For my own part I also did some work, and this is for the public's information because I understand the famous Lynch has been at his job again, casting aspersions; I did a lot of work on the Campus in the interest of the Ministry of Education and the Government as well as attended a very important publishing conference in Jamaica.

Mr. Speaker, we must also congratulate our Prime Minister for the leadership demonstrated in this his first anniversary of independence celebrations. You would notice Mr. Speaker, from the media that people continue to congratulate him for his outstanding address which situated our independence and our struggle for it in not only a historical context, in terms of how we arrived at this point, but also situate these celebrations in the contemporary context and the struggles yet unfinished; and I am happy that that document is printed, and I am hoping that the schools will have access to it in their libraries, I notice that there are some students from High School here, I trust that if they have not heard it that they will get a copy of it. Once again, Mr. Speaker, Honourable Members I really wish to focus on the National Independence Committee and its outstanding work, congratulations. Job well done.

DR. THE HONOURABLE RALPH GONSALVES: Mr. Speaker, Honourable Members I would like to join all Honourable Members in their congratulations to the outstanding Vincentians whom we giving praise today.

I would like Mr. Speaker, to comment on two matters, in my congratulations, the first to Pamenos Ballantyne, and I begin by repeating something what the Honourable Member for the Southern Grenadines said, that he was very proud of the recognition given to Pamenos Ballantyne in Trinidad. Now, for seven years since Pamenos was running seriously from age 18, he is now 25. Eight years the NDP administration did absolutely nothing for Pamenos for Vincentians to feel proud of him. It is all well and good for us to come here and praise but when those who are in office do nothing, it jars me. Pamenos Ballantyne I have said before in this House, his family has a piece of land in Sandy Bay on which they have their house, and the sea has eaten away their land, and going to the foundations. They marked out a piece of land in a village called Maggom, London right across from Maggom and an NDP directive came for an NDP supporter to pull up the stakes for Pamenos Ballantyne and put down their own and claim the land. That is the person who is now being praised by the NDP, we have to speak forthrightly on these matters. Then he went to St. Martin School, he went to the Technical School, he is trained as an electrician and they couldn't find a job for him because he supports the Unity Labour Party. It is now being commented upon that Pamenos Ballantyne is running now better than ever before, not only is he maturing as a Marathoner, but there are two factors which are helping tremendously with his greater confidence, 1. He has a highly paid job secured for him by the Unity Labour Party administration. And I am not just talking about a small salary, I don't want to call

his salary in this House and it is paid for by a private sector entity in the Grenadines which we in the Unity Labour Party negotiated for him.

And Secondly, we gave Pamenos Ballantyne the honour and privilege to carry a diplomatic passport and to be called a Goodwill Ambassador, His Excellency Pamenos Ballantyne. These are matters which add to his confidence so that the newspaper in Trinidad and Tobago must write up about Pamenos in a big way; as the fellows say on the block, you must big him up, because his own people big him up. And I am very glad to hear that the Honourable Member for the Southern Grenadines said that he felt proud of the recognition given to Pamenos in Trinidad, but he was not given the recognition here by the NDP Government, and we are now in this Government in power for only seven months, not 17 years.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to congratulate the National Independence Committee on their fantastic work. There was a measure of patriotism over independence period in this country that had not been seen since the Union Jack was lowered in 1979 when we became independent. People are flying flags on their vehicles, on their motorcycles on their bicycles. Amazing. And Mr. Speaker, the work done by six Cabinet Ministers overseas, one a week before in the case of the Minister of Tourism and Culture but five around the time of Independence. The public should note and Vincentians overseas should see quite clearly the emphasis which we put on our citizens overseas. More than one third of the Cabinet of St. Vincent and the Grenadines was sent overseas to be with our fellow countrymen and women in celebrating Independence.

Mr. Speaker, there are so many, next year we would not be able to go to the same places, because we have to spell where we go, we have to rotate them. People elsewhere in Canada would want us, also in the United States, other places in the United Kingdom and so on and so forth. The visits to Barbados and Trinidad was specially targeted because of our commitment to regionalism and education. Jamaica and Barbados, very important, and I Mr. Speaker, sometimes, they don't want me to use the word, I, I don't use it in the way in which a predecessor of mine use I, not as an I man, but where I give certain clear instructions I will comment on it.

From my own experience it is very important when visits are made to the University of Barbados, Trinidad or Jamaica for the official to interface, for the Minister to interface with other officials for example, as Minister Browne did with the Registrar in charge of Student Admissions, he knows the Registrar, if there is a problem with a student, including one who is listening to us, who wants to get in and there is a problem and there is a delay in communication, he can make a telephone call, that is what experience and thinking teaches. That he would have appointments with every single one of the wardens of the Hall of Residence, because when our students leave here it is difficult to get Housing in Jamaica particularly in the first year, or in Barbados at the

halls of residence; so we get to know the wardens at the Halls of Residence so that we can make personal calls to them so that our students can get in and get accommodation there and settle in. This is a government that is thinking and I congratulate those Ministers who went out and I commend the Government policy for ensuring that the Diaspora is being kept closely in touch. I am obliged, Mr. Speaker.

HONOURABLE ST. CLAIRE LEACOCK: Mr. Speaker, I rise to offer the further congratulations of those of us on this side to the individuals and committees that have been recognized this morning. And I trust, Mr. Speaker, and I could do so very much in the vein of my fellow Senator, Senator Snagg, Junior Minister in the Ministry of Finance, and I say in the same vein, because I thought he did a wonderful job devoid of politics and decisiveness that has characterized our politics and I am sure that those who would like to receive the congratulatory remarks, would like to know that they were delivered in most non partisan of ways. Certainly it is an opportunity for us in this House to mature and to be able to know to leave the politics behind.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Stewart was at the Grammar School at about my time and I think that we may well have been in the same form at one time or the other and I am proud of his contributions, not just as a member of the Alma Mata but pretty much one who has come from an area of St. Vincent and the Grenadines that before the Establishment of the New Democratic Party were defined as a hard area, thank God he was able to prevail and today to succeed in the manner that has been demonstrated.

Mr. Speaker, as you know we on this side of the House are pretty quick on the up take and would not be the ones to turn the other cheek. We are glad that the administration of today has seen the wisdom of the New Democratic Party Regime to make sure that there is adequate representation throughout the Caribbean, throughout the international community, be it St. Croix, BVI, New York, Montreal, Winnipeg, Philadelphia, we have indeed set a good pace, and the fact that they have followed must be commended.

Mr. Speaker, while the independence committee ought to be commended, I say to them that we are glad that they are now on the board of nationalism; I know that there is an extent to which the presentations this morning are perhaps coloured by the presence of our young minds in this distinguished Parliament, and I ask that we keep it pure Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, before I take my seat in the same vein of the presentation that has preceded my own commendation to the Independence committee, I can't help but make the commendation that while we were in fact celebrating independence, and the Government had committees doing an important role in that regard, the post independence celebration has shown and has revealed that there were also other committees at work seriously taking away the independence of a lot of individuals in

St. Vincent and the Grenadines. Our independence must also be marked for that recognition, that many Vincentians lost the jobs just about that time. I thank you.

MINUTES

The Minutes of the sitting held on the Tuesday 16th and Wednesday 31st October, 2001 copies of which had been circulated previously, were taken as read and were confirmed.

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

Question put and agreed to.

STATEMENTS

DR. THE HONOURABLE RALPH GONSALVES: Mr. Speaker, Honourable Members, I would like to make, with your indulgence, two brief statements. 1. Mr. Speaker, concerns a letter which arrived addressed at the Post Office to the Prime Minister, Financial Complex, Kingstown. It arrived on Friday, and according to the advice which I have received when it was about to be put into the letter box, a powdery substance came out from the letter and off the envelope. The Ministry of Health and the Environment and the police have the letter in their possession, and the necessary tests are being done. I have been advised Mr. Speaker, inside of the envelope, there is a note which reads:

*"I was asked to distribute this sample of Anthrax, so by now
I know you are contaminated.*

Yours sincerely,

Osama Bin Laden

Mr. Speaker, instinct really is to treat it as a prank, as very sick prank, a sick joke, which emanates from the minds of either the deranged or the politically partisan, those who have not yet accustomed to the loss of office, or those who follow them.

Mr. Speaker, as a consequence of this additional security measures have been taken for all mail coming to all members of Parliament, those on the Government side and those on the Opposition. Mr. Speaker, in this country, and this has nothing to do with the Honourable Members of the Opposition, because they would not do anything of this sort, so that declaration has to be made, there is no necessity for it to be made but it must be made simply because I know how some people, when they listen, they distort things, but there are some people in this country, their minds are so malignant

because they have lost the gravy train, they have not yet gotten accustomed to the fact that their party is no longer in power, and naturally I am the principal villain. It is not my fault that the people elected the Unity Labour Party, there was a free election. Not my fault at all. But I think, I should make this known to the public, and to bring this matter to the attention of the House. I myself not intimidated by these matters because as I have repeatedly said I have lived more years than I have remaining to live, and I am not fearful of anything happening to me because I feel satisfied my soul is with the Lord.

Mr. Speaker, I beg to lay on the table and make a statement in relation to an International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism. It was ratified by Executive action at the Cabinet on Wednesday 7th of November, 2001 this convention is called the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism. And the ratification is to make St. Vincent and the Grenadines a Party to the Convention. The international community acting through the United Nations has not so far come up with a comprehensive convention dealing with international terrorism. This is partly due to the difficulty in agreeing on the definition of terrorism or agreeing on all who are terrorists as opposed to freedom fighters, but particular manifestation of terrorism, or terrorists acts have been dealt with in a pragmatic way through specific conventions adopted for instance against the high jacking of aircraft, or the suppression of unlawful acts against the safety of civil aviation, or on crimes against internationally protected persons or on hostage taking. The present convention, that is to say the international convention on the suppression of terrorism 1999, was adopted in New York on the 9th of December 1999, and was one more treaty instrument to combat terrorism, through international co-operation in dealing with the suppression of the financing of terrorism. By December 31st 2000 for which published information is available only two States, Botswana and Sri Lanka become parties to this convention though 36 States including the U.K. and the U.S.A. had signed it, but after the incidents the terrorist attacks in the United States on September 11th 2001, wider participation in this convention has acquired a greater urgency. Security Council Resolution, 1373, of 2001 adopted on the 28th of September 2001 specifically calls on all States to become parties as soon as possible to the relevant international conventions relating to terrorism, including the present convention on the suppression of financing of terrorism which I have laid here this morning.

So, Mr. Speaker, Honourable in accordance with our international obligations under the Security Resolution 1373 of 2001 St. Vincent and the Grenadines has now ratified this particular convention and will set in motion all the requisite processes to accede to it in the way specified; and that is why it is laid here on the table and as you would notice Mr. Speaker, this is a new phenomenon in the House of bringing international treaties and conventions. The provision of this convention shows a two-fold purpose to enhance international co-operation in 1. The adoption of effective measures for the prevention of the financing of terrorism and 2. The suppression of the financing of

terrorism through the prosecution and punishment of its perpetrators. The measures expected to be taken by the State parties to the Convention for the prevention of a financing of terrorism through domestic legislation and regulations for the financial institutions in the country, exchange of information with other countries and so forth are listed in Article 18 of the Convention.

The suppression of the financing of terrorism through the prosecution and punishment of its perpetrators is to achieve by the State parties making, providing, or collecting of funds a Criminal offence in terms of Article 2 of the Convention. Establishing jurisdiction over the offence on a number of grounds mentioned in Article 7, including the mere presence of the alleged offender on one's territory, providing for the freezing or the seizure of any fund used for committing that offence and providing for either the extradition or submission of the alleged offenders case to one's competent authorities for prosecution.

The Security Council Resolution 1373 of 2001, Mr. Speaker, calling upon all States to become parties of this Convention as soon as possible was adopted acting under Chapter 7 of United Nation's charter that is after determining that the horrifying terrorists incidents of September 11 constituted a threat to the peace and was indeed considered a breach of the peace, or act of aggression. Under Article 25 of the UN charter all members of the United Nations agree to accept and carry out the decisions of the Security Council in accordance with the charter therefore St. Vincent and the Grenadines is also duty bound to become a party to this convention as early as possible. Under its Article 25 this Convention is open for signature at the UN headquarters from June until 31st December 2001, so as a first step, St. Vincent and the Grenadines can sign this Convention in New York before the 31st of December 2001 and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Minister of Legal Affairs will so communicate to our ambassador to the United Nations.

Now, Mr. Speaker, since there is no generally agreed definition of terrorism or terrorists, this Convention lists all the existing nine UN Conventions to combat specific acts of terrorism in the Annex, and Article 2 makes it an offence to provide, or to collect funds for carrying out any act which constitutes an offence under any one of these 9 conventions. But realizing that a State wishing to become party to the present Convention may not be a party to one or more of those nine conventions listed in the Annex while depositing its ratification or accession to the present convention a State is permitted to make a declaration that in the application of this convention to that State party, particular conventions shall be deemed not to be included in the Annex. St. Vincent and the Grenadines is today a party to all but two conventions mentioned in the Annex. Namely the Convention on the physical protection of nuclear material 1980, and the convention for the suppression of terrorist bombing 1997. So while depositing our instrument of ratification to the present convention we would have to make declaration under Article 2 (a) to exclude those two conventions from the Annex,

in the application of this convention to St. Vincent and the Grenadines, unless of course before the 31st of December we also ratified those other two conventions. And those Mr. Speaker, are being studied right now in the legal department and I am hopeful that they will be brought to Cabinet for ratification so that when we sign these, either we do not have to make the declaration because we would have completed the entire process, or if indeed we sign this before those other two are ratified we will exclude those from the Annex and then later when we ratify those we will simply include those two also.

Mr. Speaker, I should also point out that the conventions in the United Nations, in the Annex the five conventions, to the international convention to the suppression of the financing of terrorism to which we have already acceded had the following.

1. The Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Seizure of Aircraft, done at the Hague on 16th December 1970.
2. The Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Civil Aviation, this was done at Montreal on 23rd September 1971.
3. The Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of crimes against Internationally Protected Persons, including Diplomatic Agents, adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations on 14th December, 1973.
4. International Convention against the Taking of Hostages, adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations on 17th December 1979.
5. Protocol for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts of Violence at Airports Serving International Civil Aviation, supplementary to the Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Civil Aviation, done at Montreal on 24th February, 1988.
6. Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Maritime Navigation, done at Rome on 10th March, 1988.
7. Protocol for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Fixed Platforms located on the Continental Shelf, done at Rome on 10th March 1988.

Mr. Speaker, Honourable Members you would notice on the Order Paper today there are two pieces of legislation which we are seeking to bring into our own domestic legislation, two of the conventions which are listed in the Annex to this particular convention. In relation to this one, Mr. Speaker, the international convention for the suppression of the financing of terrorism we would wish to bring in the not too distant

future legislation here in this House to incorporate this convention into our own domestic law.

Mr. Speaker, I have made a statement on this matter so that the Honourable Members in the House and the entire country would realize the importance for us particularly in this period after September 11th to shoulder our international obligations, because under security council resolution 1373 of 2001 we are enjoined to make a report as to what we have done to fulfill the terms of security resolution 1373, and Mr. Speaker, a committee has been established by the Cabinet to monitor the Committee which comprises members of Cabinet and public officials to monitor the implementation of security council resolution 1373, so it must not be said at anytime that this Government is not living up to its international obligations. And that we are doing our paid in accordance with our commitment and resources to fight international terrorism. I am obliged, Mr. Speaker.

REPORTS FROM SELECT COMMITTEES

DR. THE HONOURABLE RALPH GONSALVES: Reports from the Select Committee, there are two Select Committees, Mr. Speaker, as would be noted on the Order Paper, select committees relating to Financial Intelligence Unit, Bill 2001; and Proceeds of Crime Money Laundering, Bill 2001. There has been a second full length meeting of the Select Committee and present at that Select Committee too, Mr. Speaker, I should indicate to the Honourable Members of the House were Mr. Draton who is the leading drafts person of these two bills, who is attached to the CFTF and the FATF Caribbean Division, and also with the anti-money unit under those auspices out of Trinidad and Tobago, and also present was someone at the British High Commission in Barbados who deals with these matters and then of course, there were persons from the community from the Offshore Financial Institutions, and there was a fulsome discussion. The work is not complete, Honourable Members, and the date that has been scheduled for the completion of that work is the 20th of November, that's next week Tuesday, and we intend Mr. Speaker, with your own gracious permission to have the House at today's sittings suspended to the Wednesday 21st to consider primarily these two bills which intent to complete at the Select Committee on the 20th. The Reason for that, Mr. Speaker, is that we would wish to have these matters dealt with in Parliament, and to go through the third reading before Parliament is prorogued, which I have indicated to the Leader of the Opposition and to the Clerk of the House, and I have spoken informally on the matter with His Excellency the Governor General to be prorogue on the 23rd, because if the House is prorogued before the debate is concluded we would have to start afresh with these bills. And there is a FATF meeting scheduled in Miami for December the 4th, I am now asking for it to be put off for a later date because the debate on the Estimates and the Budget is likely to be still going on at that time, and I am hoping to have that date put off sometime where I am hoping that I myself would be able to attend to give a report as to what St. Vincent and the

Grenadines has been doing in addressing these matters. So that is the report in so far as the Financial Intelligence Unit Bill and the Proceeds of Crime and the Money Laundering Prevention Bill, 2001.

Mr. Speaker, I have signed, and I beg to lay on the table the report of the Select Committee of the Holidays Amendment Bill. I think I had already given it to the Clerk, Mr. Speaker. And when the occasion comes for the report from the Select Committee for the third reading, I will move the motion for the adoption of the select committee on that bill. I am obliged.

DR. THE HONOURABLE RALPH GONSALVES: Mr. Speaker, may I just say before the questions formally, we intend today, I have discussed the matter with the Leader of the Opposition that today's sitting is likely to be a shorter sitting because we have three bills under consideration, and what we want to do is to go through without a luncheon adjournment, so to speak, we will have a break maybe about mid day there about for some snacks and come back if necessary to finish those three matters. The reason why I am asking this, Mr. Speaker, I have to head a delegation to Rome, and I have to leave this afternoon to discuss the matter of Ottley Hall with both West LB and Sasche. It should have been last week, but West LB was not available, it was not convenient for them, and they suggested this week; and that's why I crave the indulgence of Honourable Members in that regard, and some of the other bills I will be involved in as Leader of the House and as Prime Minister. So I just want to make that particular point, Mr. Speaker, so it is being broadcast live, so that if persons who are listening see we have a short working day today they will understand why our working day today is a short one, for a very hardworking Parliament, because we have been doing quiet a bit of work. During the luncheon period just for a short period maybe fifteen, twenty minutes, the three school buses which we had negotiated on our visit to the Republic of China, they are here and they are downstairs, and the Embassy of the Republic of China would be making a formal presentation to us during the luncheon break. So I just want to indicate that. I didn't want to have them handed over, wait until next week, when I return on Monday, because I want to have those buses out on the road so the children can use those buses.

QUESTIONS FOR ORAL ANSWERS

- 1 *The Honourable Arnhim Eustace (Leader of the Opposition), to ask the Honourable Minister of Finance, Planning and Development to provide us with the contributions of St. Vincent and the Grenadines to the Foreign Reserves of the Eastern Caribbean Central Bank from April 1st to October 31st 2001 and to advise whether or not our monetary contribution could be leveraged at the individual level in restructuring our economy.*

DR. THE HONOURABLE RALPH GONSALVES: Mr. Speaker, in relation to question one, the Leader of the Opposition had indicated to me that he is withdrawing the question; and I must say Mr. Speaker, I don't think he would mind me saying this, he was out of the country and he indicated to me that he had not himself drafted the question and that he quite rightly would not want to ask such a question which touches upon the foreign assets of the Eastern Caribbean Central Bank, in any event, Mr. Speaker, as is well known it would be very irresponsible as the question was indeed suggesting that we take money from that in order to leverage, aid in the restructuring of the economy, and I think it is important for me to say, Mr. Speaker, less there be no misunderstanding, there are two sets of monies, there is the foreign reserves which you can't touch, the foreign reserves, if you touch the foreign reserves you weaken the currency, and I know the Leader of the Opposition would not be interesting in that, and certainly this Government would have no truck with the weakening of the currency, but I should point out for the person who has in fact framed the question in his absence that -- and for the benefit of the country that the Central Bank agreement provides for the Central Bank to extend credit to member governments within specified limits and the available credit as the 30th June 2001 for St. Vincent and the Grenadines would be \$22 million, now this government is not going into that, we are not even going for that, that is in a sense, you have to put that there as a cushion. A responsible Minister of Finance will not go to touch that. And Mr. Speaker, in any event if all countries were to apply you would not get the \$22 million you might get maybe 40% so in real terms, it may be about \$8 - \$10 million dollars EC which would be available and I think the Leader of the Opposition would be very, - himself who is very knowledgeable about these matters be pleased that I make the statement in those terms, and I am very, very grateful that he withdrew that particular question. . Thank you.

7. The Honourable Terrance Ollivierre (Southern Grenadines) to ask the Honourable Minister of Tourism and Culture to please state:

- a. The total financial contribution of Government and the private sector, broken own by sector, for 2001, to this year's Carnival celebration.*
- b. What was the net financial results of the Carnival Development Committee's carnival activities in 2001, and whether Government has as yet received un-audited or audited statements of accounts.*

HONOURABLE RENE BATISTE: Mr. Speaker, Honourable Members, I have been advised by the Financial Comptroller of the Carnival Development Committee, Mr. Lennox Timm, that the Financial contributions are as follows for the Carnival 2001.

Government subvention \$275,000.00.

National Lottery Board \$418,000.00

The Private Sector contribution \$160,754,00. In relation to the contributions, you would notice that the sponsorship from the private sector this year went up. Last year private sector was \$67,000.00; the National Lottery Board was \$102,000.00, the Government subvention was \$275,000.00 making a total contribution of \$444,000.00.

I need to add in order to answer the second part of the question that the gate receipts and other contributions from franchise fee et cetera; the total this year was \$267,825.00 as compared with \$240,403.00, the year before, that was last year, and the year before that was \$191,567.00. The total revenue this year was \$1,121,579.00 as against \$684,403.00.

In relation to the net financial results, the statement indicates that there is \$13,900.16. Which is termed by the Financial Comptroller as a modest deficit compared with \$29,100.00 of the previous year, that's the year 2000. \$31,210.00 of 1999, that's the information provided by the Financial Comptroller and I need to state that the statement of account has already been submitted since September and it has been circulated to the members of the Cabinet. I am advised that the figures are about to be sent to the auditors for auditing. So they are un-audited figures at this stage.

3. *The Honourable Terrance Ollivierre (Southern Grenadines) to ask the Honourable Minister of Tourism and Culture to please state: the Hotel occupancy rate from April 1st to September 1st 2000 and for the corresponding period in 2001.*

HONOURABLE RENE BAPTISTE: The Hotel occupancy rates were submitted by Members of St. Vincent and the Grenadines Hotel Association on a voluntary basis. There is no compulsion so to do by law, or directive and the number of hotels who have so far submitted their data are 8 hotels. For the period April 2000, 8 hotels have submitted, the period 2000 April 46%; 2001 42.8 %; May 2000, 42%; 2001 36%; June 39.2%; 2001. 2001 36.1%; July 43% in 2000. 2001; 34.5%; August 41% year 2000. 2001 24.3% as the member would understand that the figures run to the end of the month rather than the beginning of the month.

And just to give you a sampling by random, the Mariner's Hotel April 2000, 20% April 2001 26%; Rosewood Apartment Hotel April 1999 76%, April 2001 84%, August 1999, 72%, August 2000 71%, and up to July which they have not done their August yet, is showing 65%, one hotel in the Grenadines showing April 1999, 41.1%. April 2000, 50.3%, April 2001; 67.8%.

8. *The Honourable Terrance Ollivierre (Southern Grenadines) to ask the Honourable Minister of Education, Youth and Sports to please give:*

An update on the upgrading of playing fields and hard courts with particular reference to:

a. grading, grassing and lighting of Victoria Park;

4. Dorsetshire Hill playing field;

5. Richland Park playing field.

HONOURABLE MICHAEL BROWNE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, I think it is important to reiterate the question, basically, the question asked for an update on the upgrading of playing fields and hard courts, with particular reference to (a) grading, grassing and lighting of Victoria Park. (b) Dorsetshire Hill playing field (c) Richland Park playing field.

Mr. Speaker, none of the three areas: Victoria Park, Dorsetshire Hill nor Richland Park Playing field, none of them has hard courts. It follows that 50% of the question is disqualified. Secondly Mr. Speaker, the first limb, grading, grassing and lightening of Victoria Park and I wondered if Victoria Park did have a hard court how we are going to grade it and grass it, if indeed it were a hard court. The responsibility of Victoria Park is not the Ministry of Sports, but the Ministry of Social Development, and I would suggest that the Honourable Member appropriately directs his question to the appropriate Ministry. That disqualifies another aspect of the question.

Mr. Speaker, having raised the issue of Victoria Park it is necessary to remind this nation of the debacle and the confusion created by the New Democratic Party Government in relation to Victoria Park. I do not intend to address this at this time, even though it is outside of my Ministry, but it impacts on sports, but certainly I can assure the Honourable Member in the event he contemplates re-entering the question, that it will be fulsomely dealt with in the upcoming budget debates when we list the inventory and the litany of wows and sins of the New Democratic Party in relation to sports and other matters.

In essence, Mr. Speaker, only about one third of the question submitted is valid. And as an old teacher I am tempted to disqualify the question completely, it has not even reached 50%, nonetheless, I will address the question of Dorsetshire Hill playing field and the Richland Park Playing Field.

Firstly, Dorsetshire Hill, Mr. Speaker, the playing field which is known as Dorsetshire Hill playing field has been in existence for a long time, and many of us as ardent and

avid cricketers played on that field, many, many, many, many moons ago and we played with the greats such as Zepton Greaves, and the Gibson brothers and so on in those times.

Under the Labour Party Government, a track of land was acquired that led from the mainland down to the playing field, notwithstanding that over the years the New Democratic Party left that field neglected, they did not consolidate the track, which was the base for a road which led to the playing field and it remained over grown as was the playing field over the years. Within recent years, a number of community-minded people in part banded within the Dorsetshire Hill Action Group re-instituted a competition on that field and the community organized the cleaning up of that field. I assisted directly over the last couple of years, and indeed I was invited to open the competition over the last two years. It is delayed this year because the organizers had not sorted out a number of things in relation to the competition, and I am advised that they will begin the cricket competition in January. And I have already given my usual commitment to assist with the cleaning of the field.

I recall last competition, Mr. Speaker, when I was invited to open that competition, one Mr. Linton Lewis, turned up, a national regional cricketer who had not associated himself with the field, but because election was coming up and he was going to be a candidate he turned up and that did not go unnoticed, the opportunism that was reflected in his presence at that time, and I imagine that one of the motivating elements for including this question for Parliament today in some ways is connected with the opportunist overtures of others to attempt to establish a foot hold electorally. But there are plans, Mr. Speaker, to identify a new playing field in the area and there are discussions taking place in the Dorsetshire Hill community with an organized section of that community, the Dorsetshire Hill area council, not only in relation to identifying a new place, but for a more appropriate use of this playing field which is somewhat limited. But we are addressing it, our immediate plan is to have it thoroughly cleaned and I would continue to assist as I did when the NDP was in government and they neglected it, and we will ensure that competitions can take place there while working on the developmental plans for sports in the area, that is to say possibly a new playing field, and there are some possibilities as well, for the upgrading of that particular facility.

In relation to Richland Park, another debacle. Approximately three acres of land were earmarked for the Richland Park playing field, right within the heart of the Richland Park community, again, as a consequence of the neglect and the incompetence of the New Democratic Party regime, we had the land being encroached upon by squatters to an extent that we are currently left with a very small facility in terms of playing area, which is in a very bad state because of over use. So here you had a bit of land that ought to have taken care of a full sized field being encroached upon by squatters, and some people say encouraged by the New Democratic Party over the years to the

extent it has been whittled down to a very small area. Through the National Sports Council, and I should point out that Richland Park is a place that has turned out National and indeed regional sports people in the vein of Alwyn Guy, Jerry Crick and Korby Crick in football, the young runner Campbell Richardson, long distance man, Casper Davis and so on from that very community. So we understand, not withstanding the constraints, the kind of talent that was horned on that playing field and others such as the Cane End over the years, but the national Sports Council has a programme to develop this playing field, Mr. Speaker, and include among other things, this development for catering especially football and cricket, changing room facilities, vending booths, a foot path, bleachers, drains, retaining wall, and of course, grading and grassing. It is really stripped, basically striped of grass; I was there on Sunday, Mr. Speaker, they estimated the cost to do all of this to be in the vicinity of quarter million dollars. A substantial amount, but we are going to do it incrementally.

The tragedy Mr. Speaker, Honourable Members, of the sporting facility, the playing field in Richland Park, is that this quarter million which ought to now be used for the development of the playing field was literally put on a platter as gift to an NDP stalwart, and if I am not mistaken, at the time a Minister of Government, Dr. St. Clair Thomas. Because the NDP Government bought some two acres of mountain land in the high region of Richland Park to the tune of \$256,368.00 more than quarter million, imagine if we had that money, Mr. Speaker, Honourable Members to develop the central facility in the middle of the Richland Park community at this time. I am advised that mountain land in that area costs any where around \$6,000.00 per acre and if you have two acres you are talking about \$12,000.00, but the tune of over quarter million dollars was paid to an NDP man. There is a big gap, I am a teacher, I know maths if you subtract \$12,000.00 from \$256,368.00, you get a nice sizable sum and a big smile on somebody's face. If only we had that money today, Mr. Speaker.

I went to the land on Sunday, because this is how we do our work on this side, 'nah no dem say', Sunday afternoon I took a drive to Richland Park so I could see for myself, and when I went on that track of land I could not believe it. Mr. Speaker, it moves from one road to a river right under the mountain side, on one side bananas, on the other side a couple of houses nearby, deep into the Richland Park mountains, and it is a narrow strip of land, Mr. Speaker; and as the Minister of Public Service had said when we were in Opposition the only thing it is good for is to ski, because it is narrow and going down a slope, you know how they ski on snow going down. (laughter). The only thing it is good for is to ski down into the river and take a fresh water bath, so for you to turn that into a playing field you have to acquire more lands on the top side. So you could get something of an oval roughly circular piece of land for sports development, it really nothing short of vulgarity.

So, Mr. Speaker, we do in fact have a plan to address the playing fields but we have to do it against the back drop and the legacy of the New Democratic Party's incompetence and corruption, but we will press on. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

7. *Whether the Diamond Dairy has been officially sold.*

(b) If in the affirmative, please state the name of the buyer, and whether the buyer is a private individual, private or public company, local or non-local.

(c) If non-local, what were the best local bids and the eventual sale price.

8. *The names of persons comprising the entities who represented the buyer or buyers in negotiations for the purchase.*

DR. THE HONOURABLE RALPH GONSALVES: Mr. Speaker, Honourable Members, this question should not have been directed to the Minister of Agriculture, Lands and Fisheries, but I will answer it nevertheless even though it was incorrectly directed. We are not going to do like how the NDP used to do it, we will answer the questions, even when they are wrongly directed.

Mr. Speaker, I should indicate to the Honourable Senator Shallow who is still on a learning curve, and we all are, some higher and some lower. But on his particular learning curve I want to suggest to him that he appreciates the distinction between Diamond Dairy Company Limited and Diamond Dairy Company Limited in liquidation; because the company having been put in liquidation the arrangements to be made are arrangements required of the Ministry of Finance.

The Company was put in liquidation over five years ago, Mr. Speaker, Honourable Members and for this period of over five years, the NDP Government was paralyzed by indecision and they spent about 1 ½ million dollars paying people to turn up to work but not working, because the Diamond Dairy, the physical plant was closed, and then people start to leave at 3:30 p.m., then they start to leave at 3:00 p.m., then they start to leave at 2:00 p.m. Sometimes they go in at 10:00 a.m. because there was nothing for them to do. The only persons who had any thing to do there, Mr. Speaker, were those who were involved in keeping the machinery clean, but the Government was paralyzed in not doing anything, the NDP Government, and on a particular occasion I brought the whole file, well this is one of them and Senator Shallow can go through it, he can come to my office, I can go through it with him to show the whole story, because I have nothing to hide, and he will learn perhaps that he is really on the wrong side, he is mistaken to be there, because he is asking me something which is really his party that put Diamond Dairy in this mess.

So, Mr. Speaker, for five years, more than five years they are paying about 1 ½ million dollars. When we arrived in office, at the end of April 2001, after the first month in office, the people at Diamond Dairy contacted me and said that they are owed two months in wages, and I said what does that have to do with me, there is a liquidator appointed by the Court, he said well we have not been doing anything out there, it is over five years. So I had to authorise for two months salary to be paid for the month of March and the month of April, \$70,000.00 for them to do nothing, that has been happening every month you know, \$35,000.00. I then asked for the file, I studied it, got a memo prepared for Cabinet and we took a decision Mr. Speaker, which the NDP government was not prepared to take for years, we took in a few weeks. And what we did in accordance with the arrangement in the Court between all the parties, we put in, the Government put in \$2.15 million to get Diamond Dairy in liquidation in way in which it can go forward to get the bids come in to sell Diamond Dairy, in other words to privatize it. \$153,000.00 and change for the minority shareholders so that we will pay them out, or the liquidator would pay them out and \$2 million as the consideration for the 13 acres of land, in accordance with the Court settlement, the arrangement upon the liquidation. And Senator Shallow should have gone and read the document in the Court and asked those who perhaps who should know about it, because it would have saved him the embarrassment of this particular question for his party.

Mr. Speaker, having done all that the liquidator, not the Government, the liquidator dealt with the matter. The bids went to the liquidator, the operational persons for the accounting firm, Floyd Patterson, who has a firm of accountants, had the job of liquidator and he was the individual doing the work and the bids went to him and the liquidator, that is to say the group of accountants made the determination, not me, all I had to do, all the Government had to do was put the monies and make the decision to have the scheme of arrangement put in place.

Diamond Dairy has been sold to the Goddard Group (SVG) Limited which is a locally incorporated company owned by a Barbadian company. This locally incorporated company employs over 180 Vincentians. The selling price is \$3.16 million which is \$600,000.00 more than the best local bid. Mr. Speaker, I am not going to call the names of the best local bid, for the simple reason that until the liquidator declares that to the public I do not want, maybe the company does not want to be known publicly. Just in case anybody thinks that we operate politically, the General Manager of that company is not only a strong personal political supporter of mine, but also is a known supporter of the Unity Labour Party but he did not get the bid, that was the second best bid, because I know the mischief makers are out there, you know, and nothing conquers mischief better like truth. Mr. Speaker, there are persons who will say, well, why we did not give the local person, the second highest bidder, the company, if that happened the people whom Diamond Dairy owes would have been able to put the liquidator in Courts if there was no money remaining to pay out the debts because the liquidator has a fiduciary duty, a duty of trust to all persons who owed money by the

liquidated company. So a liquidator cannot just simply dismiss \$600,000.00 because he could have been opened to a law suit if there was not enough money there as I doubt it would be in this case, to take care of all the creditors, including the Government.

The liquidators intend, Mr. Speaker, to pay all others, other than the Government 100 cents in the dollar for the debt. That is how we do business and the minority shareholders would be paid their share at par value, and Mr. Speaker, when this company, when we are moving with the decision, and the decision having been taken to go along with the arrangement in the Court with the liquidator, the liquidator and I held a meeting with the workers, discussed what was about to happen, I then entertained, Mr. Noel Jackson who was representing the workers and he came with a delegation at the Cabinet room, I discussed the issue again with them and then when they were to be paid, when the bid was accepted, the Honourable Vincent Beache and I again went out there again with the liquidator, explained to the workers and on the same day made certain all the workers received their severance pay. The Ministry of Finance advanced \$330,000.00 in severance payment off the top, clearly on the undertaking the Government would be repaid the \$330,000.00 for the severance pay, and we have promised those workers, those who want to be retrained we will provide retraining for them and the Ministry of Labour has made that available.

Part (d) of the question, Mr. Speaker, again Senator Shallow didn't quite understand what happened, there were no negotiations. (d) he said the names and persons comprising the entities, who represented the buyer or buyers, in negotiations for the purchase; he should have consulted with the Leader of the Opposition and he would have found out that sales based on tender are done by tenders received in response to invitations issued by the liquidator, and that was done in the local and the regional media. There were no negotiations for the purchase.

Mr. Speaker, I want to say I am very grateful to Senator Shallow to bringing - I do not know why they ask questions - to bring these matters to the public, because these, because none of these questions provide answers favourable to them, and their administration. So, Mr. Speaker, I am very grateful they ask these questions. I am obliged.

6. *The Honourable Gerard K. Shallow (Opposition Senator) to ask the Honourable Minister of Agriculture, Lands and Fisheries to please state: whether the requirement by farmers to pack their bananas on pallets is a further subsidization of the industry by replacing previous labour cost.*

HONOURABLE MONTGOMERY DANIEL: Mr. Speaker, in 1969 Nemogon and the matricide which was used in the control of nematodes was brought to this country by the St. Vincent Banana Growers Association, this was so done to assist farmers in the

control of nematodes, since then Mr. Speaker, no other chemical was brought directly to assist farmers where farmers would not have paid directly for such assistance. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, at the moment there is no issue of any subsidy that is within the Banana Growers Association or the industry.

Mr. Speaker, let me repeat, there is no issue of any subsidy within the industry. Mr. Speaker, within the restructuring process of the banana industry, there was an agreement of the various roles to be performed between St. Vincent Banana Growers' and WIBDECO, all of these roles have been spelt out here previously, but if the Honourable Senator wishes I can refresh his memory by indicating the various roles and responsibilities.

WIBDECO was responsible for purchasing, reception and loading, marketing, technical support services, bulk purchasing of inputs, marketing non-banana crops and transportation from reception stations. The St. Vincent Banana Growers' Association its responsibilities were negotiating an advocacy on behalf of growers, pests and disease control and input distribution. WIBDECO which has the responsibility for reception and loading has since then placed tender for packing of pallets and that is after these bananas have been bought by farmers. To date WIBDECO has not released the winner of any tender to do such work. I believe whenever the name or names of any such tender or tenders are released all of us will be so informed.

Let me say Mr. Speaker, that the intention of the restructuring process of the industry is basically to place more money in the hands of the farmers. Mr. Speaker, once again let me say in the Banana Growers Association there is no subsidy, as I know it. I am much obliged, Mr. Speaker.

HONOURABLE MR. SPEAKER: I think before I entertain question number 7, I must again make a comment because I would want to believe that this question is misdirected and I am not one for ruling questions out of order. But if the Honourable Member would check on Section 8 of the rules he would see that questions are directed to Ministers, and one to whom this question is directed to is not a Minister, he does not sit in council and maybe I don't know if someone would want to answer this question. He would be so obliged to do.

DR. THE HONOURABLE RALPH GONSALVES: Mr. Speaker, may I, I think it is right and proper that Senator Leacock be brought up to speed on his learning curve. If you play cricket you must read the rules. He is in the House he should read the rules. And you are quite right. Senator Snagg is the Parliamentary Secretary in the Ministry of Labour. I am the Minister of Labour and I am prepared to answer the question if he wants to direct it to the Minister of Labour. I know they are afraid to ask me questions. They find every way, instead of asking me he wants to ask Senator Snagg, but I invite you to ask me if indeed you would like me to answer it.

HONOURABLE ST. CLAIRE LEACOCK: Mr. Speaker, I thank you for your indulgence and I recognized the preparedness of Honourable Minister of Finance and Labour, Prime Minister to accommodate today's question.

7. *The Honourable Major St. Clair Leacock (Opposition Senator) to ask the Honourable Senator Snagg, in view of the continued summary dismissals of employees of the various state enterprises, including DEVCO, Marketing Corp., VINLEC, Town Board, the Port Authority, Public Works etc, and the total disregard for the basic and conventional one month's notice, and the apparent ignoring of the right and recourse to reinstatement, would the Senator please state whether Government:-*

- a. *expects the private sector to follow their example; and*
- b. *contemplates removing from the law the right to due process and protection in employment;*
- (c) does the Government intend to bring legislation to the House to make it easier to dismiss employees in the private and public sector.

DR. THE HONOURABLE RALPH GONSALVES: Mr. Speaker, this is a very convoluted question and misguided in many fundamentals and therefore in its misguided nature, and its convulsion it must be answered full and certain basic things explained.

First of all Mr. Speaker, there are no continued summary dismissals in any of these agencies mentioned, and Mr. Speaker, wherever there has been any dismissals since this administration has taken office, where they relate to State corporations like DEVCO, Marketing Corporation, VINLEC or the Port Authority, those decisions were taken by the Boards which have been appointed. For example at VINCLEC, a gentleman was dismissed from his employ which employment he previously held because of his political affiliation, with the then ruling New Democratic Party because the Board at the time, including the manager and other senior persons in the accounting division wanted that person to have him dismissed, but politics kept that person in his job because of his lack of performance, because he was all about rather than doing VINLEC work, doing NDP work as a Public Relations Officer, up and down the country. And he was dismissed because his political protection was removed, and he has received his benefits in accordance with law, because had he not received the benefits, being a litigious person he would have gone to seek redress through the appropriate legal machinery. That is all I know about VINLEC.

I don't know about anybody else who has been dismissed by VINLEC, and it is well known that VINLEC has a manager and has senior people in the accounts section who are very businesslike and they don't tolerate any foolishness or any incompetence,

that is well known, unless, of course as in the case of that particular dismissed worker, they had political protection.

Mr. Speaker, I do not know of anyone in any subordinate capacity who has been dismissed at DEVCO. I know that the manager was dismissed because he refused to carry out a specific instruction of Cabinet, what was the specific instruction. We were seeking space, for the Ministry of National Security, and DEVCO had had its staff denuded by the NDP administration, many people were fired; not because of any malice, I am not alleging that or any political mischief, but because simply DEVCO had gone to the dogs.

They have a two story building, they had even reached to the stage where they were leasing a part of the building to somebody else; so the Cabinet took the decision for the allocation of space, that the then General Manager should move from upstairs and go downstairs where there was enough space if you divide the situation properly, and the Minister of National Security would be housed upstairs. The Minister of Telecommunication and Industry passed on the instructions of Cabinet and he said he was not moving. Since he doesn't want to move from upstairs to downstairs to accommodate the Ministry, he moved out. And he was paid his benefits. I am glad you asked these questions.

In the case of Town Board, where the Town Board employs people at the market, they were put on there, -- when we came into Office you had nearly 80 cleaners at the Central Market nearly 80, 50 of them were put on between December and March, the time of the election; it was an employment agency, anybody from East Kingstown who wanted a job, the Leader of the Opposition sent them there, he was then Prime Minister. Take a job that is what happened, at the Market they used to go in, register their names, go home, make breakfast for their children, fix the lunch tin, and come back and sit underneath outside of the Court House there and when I passed in, they heckled me; their job was to heckle ULP politicians. You had more cleaners than place to clean in the Vegetable Market. We were losing nearly half a million dollars a year on that market, so what you want us to do? Keep them on? [Interruption] Look if you are doing a monthly calculation and you are losing over \$40,000.00 a month when you annualize it is half a million dollars.

HONOURABLE MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Prime Minister, let me point out to the Honourable Member that he can ask a supplementary question so if he can wait at such time and ask a supplementary question. You should not be disrupting questions. We do not debate questions.

DR. THE HONOURABLE RALPH GONSALVES: All I am doing is to annualize the sum that is an elementary proposition when you deal in accounting. If you loose over \$40,000.00 every month, annualized is roughly half a million, \$480,000.00, annualized.

I could understand why the NDP was loosing money because they never annualized anything. They just leave everything, they say oh, that is only just one month, man, that is another month.

Mr. Speaker, and then some persons employed by the Town Board were dismissed because of corrupt practices, which everybody knows about. One of the things about corruption in the State administration, sometimes you can't find admissible evidence because people don't want to talk, and sometimes there is a trade union of vagabonds and everybody scratching each others back, so you expect us to keep that going on and bleeding the country, no, if they want to vote against the ULP Government for stamping out vagabondry and corruption, vote against it. We have to clean it, just like how we clean the town and the cleaning isn't finished yet, you know.

Mr. Speaker, at the Town Board you had people who were ordering materials which were not necessary for the work, you have people ordering more materials than is necessary, these are things which are documented also in the Director of Audit's Report, and which we in the then Opposition raised when the current Leader of the Opposition was member of the Public Accounts Committee. We raised it. And there was a concession across the then Government members that people are thieving materials, so when you fire those whom you know are thieving materials, we get this absurd question. We must allow thieving to go on.

Mr. Speaker, the Marketing Corporation, I went up there several weeks ago, I went up to the top, because I have a habit of making spot checks at different places, I don't tell people I am coming, because if I tell them I am coming they would fix up everything nice waiting for me to try to fool me. You can't do me that. Sometimes I just leave my office and turn up to see with my own eyes what is happening. I went upstairs by the Marketing Corporation and I walked into an area where you had a lot of administrative people, I said how things going, they told me things going well, I said how things going well and we loosing millions of dollars, and people downstairs thieving left, right and centre, I said all you don't get me annoyed, how you mean things going well, and I said if this place is not cleaned up, we will close it down, so we have set up systems to sort out the matter. How can you be selling food and you loosing money? When CK Greaves making a whole heap of money and PH Veira making a whole heap of money with their supermarket, that is loosing money. So we have instituted certain systems.

A management information system is being put in place, an MIS to track what is happening, and to deal with pilfering and there is an excess of staff at the Marketing Corporation, so we are dealing with that, but every body who gets laid off is either for one of those reasons we are talking about and we make sure that they are paid their severance pay. And we are investing close to a million and half dollars in the Marketing Corporation to fix it up good, the Management Information System, a

quarter million dollars for the produce, part of the diversification programme, and we have given them 18 months to show us results.

One of the reasons why we are persevering with the Marketing Corporation, I have made it plain in the elections, and I made it plain here today, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, under the ULP will not be dependent on food provided by two families. And we want competition for those firms, and if there is a natural disaster, they close their supermarkets or they want to hike up their prices, so we have to go and buy from them so we need the Marketing Board there to help the people if there is a natural disaster. So you want us to continue losing millions of dollars in the Marketing Corporation, where the Marketing Corporation under Vincent Beache up to 1984 was providing up to \$2 million dollars a year in revenue for the Central Government. We have to run things efficiently and Senator Leacock as a management expert must know that. And it lost money under him, plenty money under him.

Mr. Speaker, in the case of Public Works, there are watchmen who are not performing, and every body knows that there are watchmen who are not performing. They will turn up to work at a particular time and then they leave. We have reports of watchmen who are letting people work for them. So I am a watchman, I will contract out my job to Vincent and give Vincent half the money and I keep half, so Vincent works, well he works when he wants. We all know these things, we are involved in discussions with the Union at the moment about these matters because these workers are unionized. In the case of other public workers, we are just, Mr. Speaker, spelling people, because some people were just NDP people, getting work, so you enlarging the number of people who to get work so some of them when their time turns around to get work, instead of getting the work two weeks out of every six, they may get two weeks out of every eight or nine weeks. And that is what is happening. And I want to say to the workers who work on the road, and I have already instructed Senator Francis, Minister of Works, the Ministry of Finance is making available \$1 million for Christmas work to clean the streets and do little patching, \$1 million, because everybody has to eat, so I am glad these questions are asked of me.

Mr. Speaker, that we are involved in total disregard for the basic conventional one months notice. What is the law of the land, and there are trade unionist in the audience, one month's notice you must either give one month's notice or you give a month's salary in lieu, instead of the notice. Obviously if somebody is working with you in a position of trust, you decide to fire them, if you give them the one month's notice and let them hang around you, they will do you so much damage in that month, so the simplest thing is to send them home and give them their month in lieu of notice, the month's salary required in law and to pay them their severance if they are entitled to severance under the law. It is elementary. And it is the Labour Party Administration which pass the Protection of Employment Act and the workers has been begging for

the last years to have it amended, the NDP has not done it, is we now have a draft law which all the Unions and the managements, and employers have commented upon.

And that we are ignoring the right and recourse to reinstatement. Mr. Speaker, under the Protection of Employment Act Section 8, I know it out of my head, so I don't have to look it up because, in my previous life I use to practice this profession of the law. It says under section 8, that if you are deemed to be unlawfully dismissed, at the instance of the employee you can seek either severance pay or reinstatement, of course, problems arise for the Hearing Officer to order reinstatement because very often the workers do not want to contemplate reinstatement, and if the management refuses to give reinstatement there is nothing in the Courts to compel the management to reinstate the persons. Because I am quiet sure if Senator Leacock, somebody who works with Vincy Clean steals from him and he dismisses him, or he says they steal but they didn't steal but he is satisfied and the tribunal awards says that he must be reinstated, he will say to them well, bring the person to be reinstated, nah, you come and reinstate them, he would not do it. So I do not see why this effort is being made to say something which he knows though it exist in law, that particular provision does not have the compulsory teeth.

And we have, I must say this a very reputable person as a Hearing Officer under the Protection of Employer Act, the Former Senior Magistrate, a lawyer of 40 years standing, Mr. Errol Clynton Mounsey, so that is to clear up, Mr. Speaker, all the misconceptions and convulsions. Specifically now (a) whether I expect the private sector to follow the example, we are not doing it, so how do you expect the private sector to follow, and if they do that, they will face the Tribunal and the Protection of Employment Act.

It is pure mischief in (b) to say if we contemplate removing from the law the right to due process and protection in employment. You cannot remove the right of due process. That is a Constitutional requisite. You and I cannot remove that in this Parliament. So it is the kind of illiteracy you get in questions that we can do something here Mr. Speaker, which is unconstitutional. And does the Government intend to bring legislation to the House to make it easier to dismiss employees in the private and public sector. Senator Leacock knows that the draft we are circulating is making it harder for workers to be dismissed and it is employers from his employers federation asking us to soften the draft to make it easier to dismiss workers. Because the trade unionist they know that the draft we are circulating makes it more difficult to dismiss workers than currently is the case, and that is the long and short of the answer to this convoluting question; which I am very grateful it was asked to put to matters a lot of things to rest.

I appreciate I must say, Senator Leacock about workers, and I will appreciate even more if he were to ask me a supplementary to call out the names of those persons or

businesses or firms who owe more than \$30,000.00 to the NIS having taken out workers money and don't pay it to NIS, I would like to answer that question. I invite him to ask me that supplementary. I invite him.

HONOURABLE ST. CLAIRE LEACOCK: Mr. Speaker, I rise to ask a supplementary question of the Ministry of Finance and Labour that in view of the fact that he has agreed that several people have been dismissed from various State agencies and the Government of St. Vincent and the Grenadines, whether he can name for this Honourable Parliament which of those individuals have charges referred against them so that they could have appeared before employers to defend themselves before their dismissals which would have in fact allow them a legal hearing by which virtue reinstatement to their jobs for unfair dismissal would have become a natural course.

DR. THE HONOURABLE RALPH GONSALVES: Mr. Speaker, Mr. Leacock has not been listening to me. Senator Leacock. Senator Major Leacock has not been listening to me. I am very fortified by his reluctance to ask me the question about companies which owe more than \$30,000.00 having taken out workers money for the NIS. I am fortified by his reluctance, as a champion of the working people, to ask me that question.

Mr. Speaker, what I want to say is this if somebody is unfairly dismissed, nobody stops that person from making a complaint to the Labour Commissioner, who will first investigate the complaint then, he having investigated the complaint, if the parties do not resolve it in accordance with what the Labour Commissioner says, the aggrieved party can ask for a Hearing Officer and after the Hearing Officer has determined the matter any party which is dissatisfied can go to the appellate authority. There is a dispute settlement mechanism in the Protection of Employment Act, and a number of people do not choose to go that way because they get their severance pay, because they know if they want to go further some of them may well face criminal charges, because the Government is not interesting in going after small people. But I am saying, Mr. Speaker, the law of the land is being followed in every material respect by the Unity Labour Party Government.

HONOURABLE ST. CLAIRE LEACOCK: Mr. Speaker, in the absence of Prime Ministerial privilege to defend myself otherwise I proceed to question number 8. And I ask the question...

HONOURABLE MR. SPEAKER: Wait, wait, just a minute

DR. THE HONOURABLE RALPH GONSALVES: As a matter of -- Mr. Speaker may I just say this, so as the public will not be swayed, [interruption] Mr. Speaker, may I say this, Mr. Speaker, as a point of objection, you are entitled under the Rules to one supplementary. It is not a question of Prime Ministerial privilege. It is a question if you

exhaust your supplementary, you exhaust it and Senator Leacock must read his Rules of the House, if you want to play cricket, you learn the Rules of the game.

HONOURABLE MR. SPEAKER: Well, I really want to find out what is the reason for such a statement if he is suggesting that Prime Minister has particular privilege over well himself or you know, casting certain kinds of aspersion on the Chair or something like that, is that your intension, I would like to know that.

HONOURABLE ST. CLAIRE LEACOCK: I have every intention to respect your Chair and this Honourable House. I also recognized, Mr. Speaker, that those who are perhaps more seasoned in this Honourable House may know how they can manipulate the regulations and at times get in the House matters that are not properly before the House.

HONOURABLE MR. SPEAKER: Again Senator I am totally objecting to this. Every Rule that I make in relation anything that you would have done here I point you to the particular section in the Rule. And anyone who is guilty of such would also be given similar direction or guidance. And I don't know about this question of manipulating rules. I think I understand the Rule enough, and I allow people sometimes to go and even you on the Opposition to go you know some distance, and when I find it is getting outrageous I then to pull you back, but this question of manipulating Rules I will not sit here and allow you to make such statement.

HONOURABLE ST. CLAIRE LEACOCK: Mr. Speaker, again I apologize to you and I proceed to question 8.

HONOURABLE MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, very much.

8. The Honourable Major St. Clair Leacock (Opposition Senator) to ask the Honourable Minister of Legal Affairs: In light of the hostile response given to the Minister of National Security and the Parliamentary Representative for Central Leeward at a consultative meeting held in Barrouallie, would the Minister indicate what is the present status of the proposed new prison project and whether the Barrouallie/Mt. Wynne/Peter's Hope area remains the preferred site.

HONOURABLE VINCENT BEACHE: Mr. Speaker, Honourable Members, it is really astounding either we do not, or some of us do not read the Gazette, because the portfolios for Ministers were published in the Gazette. We are still living in the past where the Ministry of Legal Affairs handled the portfolio of Prisons. Be that as it may, Mr. Speaker, we have nothing to hide and I am prepared to answer fully the question.

It is true to say that at the conciliated meeting we had people there who orchestrated that they did not want the Prison to go at Peter's Hope. Since then I can tell you, Mr.

Speaker, when they understood that the prison would not be at Peter's Hope, but some two miles or three miles thereabout from Barrouallie, up in the mountains, and when they realized the advantages of having the Prison in that vicinity lot of those same persons who have been making row have come around now and are begging for the prison to be put there.

But to further answer the question, Mr. Speaker, we, or I and I am using 'I' in the first person now, I am not like a former Prime Minister we had here who decides what is and what should be. The Cruise ship pier is a case in point, and the Campden Park Container Port. We have had experts, we have had an expert here from Britain who was in charge of the British Prison System, Sir David Rumsbottom who looked at the Prison here and different areas with regards to the building of a new prison, through his assistance, and with the Prime Minister speaking to the British Government Ministers we were able to get an expert who built the prison in the Cayman Islands, I think, his name is Mr. Nick Brooks who came here and spent some 20 days, reviewing our Prison system and he is the man who is in charge of the British Prison System now, who looked at different sites and who went back some 10, 12 days ago and who would submit his report, he said by the end of this month.

We have had other experts looking at Prisons. We have had architects, we have had structural engineers, we have had local Vincentian persons, we have had ex prison officers, looking at the sites, although there is no site determined as yet, I have to say that from all intention and purposes the site at what is called Guadem, that is above Peter's Hope up into the mountains, there seem to be the one most favoured. Now, we are still waiting on reports, as a matter of fact, Mr. Speaker, we have a delegation coming from the United States today to look into this matter of the construction of a new prison. One member from that delegation was here before. We looked into the possibility of constructing the Prisons in a cellular form, we had people from the United States, they paid their own way, it didn't cost us any money, so it is not to say we are bringing people here and we had to pay out of the public purse, they are paying their own way, the gentleman who has been building a lot of prisons, and cellular forms in the United States he was quite open and honest he said to build Prison in cellular form you need a lot of flat lands, and he did think that this form, would be the correct form, and he recommended that we go towards pre flab, slab form. So we are looking into all of these.

We are also looking to the matter to using Prison labour and we have had a report from former prison's Superintendent and from the Ministry of Planning, so Mr. Speaker, I cannot tell you that the Prison would go at Guadem or it would not go Guadem; but whatever, and let me make it clear, whatever is recommended by the experts, and Cabinet agrees that is where the prisons will be located. Thank you.

9. *The Honourable Major St. Clair Leacock (Opposition Senator) to ask the Honourable Minister of National Security: In light of the escalating rate of crime as evidenced by media reports, and in view of the Government's stated position to be tough on crime and the causes of crime, would the Honourable Minister of National Security provide this Honourable House with a monthly breakdown by number and type of crimes from the*

(a) Police records for the period April to October;

(b) State the number of homicides (murders/suicides) allegedly committed.

HONOURABLE VINCENT BEACHE: Mr. Speaker, I am totally amazed that in light of what transpired recently at the St. Vincent Marketing Corporation, the Honourable Senator would ask this question. I do not want to elaborate because I am sure the Honourable Senator would know what I am talking about.

There is no question of this Administration being tough on crime and the cause of crime. I can assure the Honourable Senator in this Honourable House that measures are in place and other measures are being instituted to bring those who have committed and those who will commit crimes to justice. But I know, Mr., Speaker, that when the action really starts, which would start not too long from now, that there would be those who will cry that we are embarking on a massive witch-hunt.

So far, there has been no escalation in the rate of crime as such. The figures are as follows for the major offences and I have the figures here if the Honourable Senator wants me to read them out I would. I can give him a copy. But according to the police, Mr. Speaker, the major offences are nine, murders, rapes, wounding, assault, burglary, theft, robbery arson, and drugs. So, Mr. Speaker, let me give you some figures for these and as I said the Honourable Senator can get copies of the others, because there is a whole lot of them.

For instance, Mr. Speaker, so far up to the period that the Honourable Senator asked, there has been 11 murders, April none, May, one, June, two, July, none, August, two, September, two and August, four, making it a total of 11. For all of last year, I don't have those broken down into months. They were broken down into quarters, there were 21 murders in 2000, but for the seven months of this year, there have been 11. You can do the maths to see whether there is an increase there or not, as far as I can work out there has been a decrease.

Rape, Mr. Speaker, there has been 20 cases of rape for the seven months. April, 4, May, 2, June 2, July, 4 August, 1, and September 4, and October 3. For the year 2000 there were 49 cases of rape.

The question of wounding, there 638 cases of wounding from April to October, 65 in April, 110 in May, 110 in June, 106 in July, and 88 in August, 80 in September, and 79 in October, and for the year 2000 there was 997.

The matter of assaults there was 920 cases of assaults for the seven month period, 2001, 122 in April, 130 in May, 138 in June, 139 in July, 141 in August, 129 in September, and 121 in October making it 920. But for the year 2000 the total was 1471.

The question Mr. Speaker, of burglary, there were 152 cases in April of this year, 171 in May, 169 in June, 172 in July, 184 in August, 178 in September 198 in October, making a total 1224. In 2000 there was a total of 1759.

For theft in April there was 203 cases, in May 175, in June 187, in July 235, in August 230, in September 231, in October 206, making a total of 1467. The total for the year 2000 was 2455.

The question Mr. Speaker, of robbery in April there was 4 cases May, 14, June, 5, July 12, August 9, September, 1 and October, 9 making a total of 54 cases; the total for the year 2000, was 79.

The matter of arson, Mr. Speaker, there were 2 cases in April, 2 in May, 2 in June, 2 in July, 3 in August, 5 in September and 6 in October, making a total of 22. the total for 2000 was 48.

And the last one Mr. Speaker, drugs, there was 31 cases in April, 29 in May, 25 in June, 36 in July, 22 in August, 30 in September, and 48 in October, making a total 221. The corresponding total for 2000, was 490.

Mr. Speaker, on the 12th of September 2001 Winston John a 29 year old male of Calliaqua was found hanging, that is accepted as hanging, and on 28th of October 2001, Mack Lawrence Samuel a 60 year old male of Mesopotamia was found dead by poisoning, by drinking Gramoxone, those are the suicides we have, Mr. Speaker, for the year as a matter of fact, not even for the seven months. If Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Senator would like, I have no problem, in any case what I might do is to lay a copy of this whole thing on the table of the House. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HONOURABLE ST. CLAIRE LEACOCK: Mr. Speaker, would the Honourable Minister on the basis of the statistics just presented indicate to this Honourable House that his tough stand on Crime has achieved a satisfactory performance.

HONOURABLE VINCENT BEACHE: No, Mr. Speaker, we are not satisfied. I have said we have set up measures. We have set up for instance the white-collar unit. It is not

fully functional as yet, we have also been doing investigations in some types of crime and so on. We have just had some promotions in the police force, they have not really taken up fully their positions as yet, but within the next week or so and they become functional, then we would have heightened activity into the investigation and prosecution of crime, thank you.

DR. THE HONOURABLE RALPH GONSALVES: Mr. Speaker, Honourable Members, perhaps this is an appropriate point to take the adjournment after the questions. I beg to move the adjournment Mr. Speaker, for, I said originally that maybe we will do 20 minutes but in view of the fact that the presentation is made downstairs we will say 45 minutes, that we try to have snacks after the event downstairs where the three buses is being presented and we return here at half past one, perhaps at that time we will move the motion for probable extension of time for the day, suspension of the 'Hours of sitting', but Mr. Speaker, I had indicated that I will not be in the House after 3:00 p.m. and the Honourable Minister of National Security in the absence of the Deputy Prime Minister will be the Leader of the House, acting in my own absence. So I so move Mr. Speaker, for a luncheon suspension for three quarters of an hour.

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

*Question put and agreed to.
Suspension 12:48 p.m. (Lunch)
Resumption 2:05 p.m.*

DR. THE HONOURABLE RALPH GONSALVES: Mr. Speaker, Honourable Members, as Chairman of the Select Committee appointed by the House of Assembly to examine the **Public Holidays Amendment Bill 2001**, I beg to move that the report from the Select Committee be adopted and that we proceed to the third reading.

Question put and agreed to.

HONOURABLE RENE BAPTISTE: Mr. Speaker, Honourable Members, in light of the report of the Select Committee I move that the Bill be read a third time by title and passed.

HONOURABLE VINCENT BEACHE: I beg to second the motion.

DR. THE HONOURABLE RALPH GONSALVES: Mr. Speaker, out of an abundance of caution may I just make sure that Emancipation Day is inserted instead of August Holiday. I am obliged. I am sorry, Mr. Speaker.

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

No. 7. MARITIME SECURITY BILL 2001

HONOURABLE VINCENT BEACHE: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move the second reading of an act to give effect to the Convention for the Suppression of unlawful act against the safety of Maritime Navigation 1988, and Protocol for the Suppression of unlawful acts against the safety of fixed platforms located on the continental shelf 1998, which supplements that convention and for purposes connected therewith.

HONOURABLE MICHAEL BROWNE: Mr. Speaker, I beg second the motion.

Question put and agreed to.

HONOURABLE MR. SPEAKER: Any debate on the Bill?

HONOURABLE VINCENT BEACHE: Mr. Speaker, Honourable Members, you might remember that in 1985 there is an incident with a ship called the Akylie Lourow where some armed Palestines took control of that ship, it was an Italian cruise liner, and this was done on the high seas and they held some crew and certain passengers as hostages and the demanding the release of certain Palestinians held by Israel. If my memory serves me correctly I think one American was killed on that ship. Since then I on the high seas and therefore because of in the United Nations it led to the adoption of this Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the safety of Maritime Navigation. This came about in 1988 under the IMO, in the interest of the International Maritime Organisation. The Convention felt that there were some other things needed to be included because in that convention they did not include fixed platforms like for instance, like platforms you have for drilling, say like in the North Sea or other areas where you drill for oil, because they felt that those were also at risk, maybe even more risks than ships and therefore a protocol later on was developed for the purpose of safeguarding fixed platforms on the continental shelf.

Now, there are over 50 countries, Mr. Speaker, that had become parties to these two instruments, including our own hemisphere, Barbados and Trinidad and Tobago from the Commonwealth Caribbean. As we all know we have a very great stake in international shipping, I think maybe we are the second or third largest Register of ships in the world, and hence it is in our interest to insure that we try to safeguard the crewmembers and passengers on these ships that sail the high seas. Now we would be depositing our accession to international treaties but once they enter into force that is 90 days after they deposited, we must have legislation in place to implement the provisions of these treaties to ensure that adequate punishment is incorporated in the laws of St. Vincent and the Grenadines for the punishment of those who have been found guilty for unlawful acts against Maritime vessels.

Now the following acts, Mr. Speaker, and the treaties are attached to the Act of the first and second schedule. The convention is the first schedule and the protocol is the second schedule but the following acts, if committed unlawfully and intentionally, would be established as offences under the convention and that is seizing or exercising control over a ship by force or performing any act of violence against a person on board of that ship, or doing anything that is likely to endanger the safety of that ship. Destroying the ship or damaging the ship or its cargo in such a way that it will endanger the safe navigation of the ship, all these and many more are offences that would be committed under this Act. But they are all spelt out in both the Convention and the protocol.

Now, Mr. Speaker if we look through the Act, there are also some exemptions, for instance war ships or ship owned or operated by the State, for instance the State of St. Vincent and the Grenadines if we are operating our coast guard for instance, and any naval ship when they are used or other ships that maybe used in Custom duties, those ships are exempt. But they are not exempt totally because they are only exempt if the person for instance seizing our coast guard or exercising control of the ship is a citizen of St. Vincent and the Grenadines. Now that rules out the exemption, if you are a citizen of the State, and you do anything with that ship even though it is a war ship then you can be charged under this convention. The Act is committed in St. Vincent and the Grenadines, now if the act is committed, if it is done, in St. Vincent and the Grenadines then you are not exempt. So if you are a national of St. Vincent and the Grenadines, then you are not exempted from being charged under this Act. The penalties are very high, and very steep. The Convention, in Article 5 states that each State party, that is any party that is a signatory to this Convention and the protocol shall take the offences set forth like some of those I was speaking about, Mr. Speaker. And they should approve appropriate penalties which take into account the grave nature of those offences, and so if you are found guilty for any of these offences and you are convicted, the sentence is life imprisonment, that is to show you how important, and grave they believe these instances are. It is not a matter that there is any discretion, well may be there, you can say liable but you can get life imprisonment according to what you have done. Obviously I can understand if somebody hijacked a ship and maybe afterwards, relented and they didn't hurt anyone that, well it is up to the judge, or jury or whoever is looking into this to say whether they are going to impose or recommend the life imprisonment or some lesser penalties.

It is a Convention, Mr. Speaker, that is universal, but I think under our circumstances we have waited a long time because this thing came into being in 1988, so we have been lagging for quite some time and in light of what has been happening with terrorism and so, it is timely that this be passed into law, so that we can really have the instruments there in case anything happens that we can deal with and somebody who creates any of these acts of terrorism would not through some technicality because we don't have it on our books might be able to escape. I think also the Act makes

provision for extradition so that you can try the person either in your own country or if you feel that justice might be better served that person if he is a national of some other country or even though the act is committed in St. Vincent can be extradited for charges or a trial in the country to which that person is a national.

It is a fairly comprehensive though short Act, I don't see Mr. Speaker, that any of us here can have any objections towards the passage of the law into course. There is also, Mr. Speaker, as would happen with any good law, there is also what we call a saving clause, but clause 6, sub paragraph 4, for instance says it is an offence for a person charge with an offence under sub section 3; and subsection 3 of this section says that, it is an offence for a person intentionally to communicate any information which he knows to be false in a material particular where the communication of that information endanger the ship's safe navigation of any ship. What this is saying, you don't have to actually take over the ship, if you are in St. Vincent and you know our coastguard is proceeding to Florida for argument sake, and you communicate this information, intentionally to some terrorist group or somebody who can maybe blow the ship up, or whatever it is, then you are also guilty of this grave offence. But there is a saving clause here that has you can have as your defence if you are charged, that when you communicated the information you were lawfully employed to perform these duties, which included communication of information. That you communicated the information in good faith in the performance of those duties, because somebody might eavesdrop in communicating it not with the intention of giving information that harm can be done but in this day and age with communication as it is, satellite all over the place, somebody might be able to eavesdrop on what you are saying and use that information do to harm, so once you can prove that these communications were done innocently and that you were really carrying out your duties then even though you charged, it is a defence and you cannot be brought guilty as far as that is concerned.

Mr. Speaker, who abets the commission of any these crimes, is also guilty. Any person who threatens is also guilty of these crimes. And one other section maybe that it needs to highlight is the master of a ship that is under the Maritime law that we have, the Merchant Shipping Law, the Master of a ship means not only the captain, but any person who is in charge of that ship at that time. So in any case, the person who is in charge of any ship at that time, if he has on board, somebody who he believes or he knows is going to commit a crime, can also put that person off at any Port of a State contracting party, because you can understand if you have somebody who is a terrorist on board you don't want to keep him as long as possible. If you coming from Australia where it is going to take 14 days to St. Vincent, you don't want to keep somebody like that for 14 days so you might pass in at India or at if they are signatory to this Convention or you might pass in at Fiji or one of the nearer ports and you can drop that person off.

In short, Mr. Speaker, this is what the Convention and the protocols are all about. The objects and reasons set out quiet clearly in a short form what this is all about. I ask Mr. Speaker, that this bill be given an easy passage, thank you.

HONOURABLE MR. SPEAKER: Any further debate on the Bill?

HONOURABLE ARNHIM EUSTACE: Mr. Speaker, Honourable Members, we have just commenced debate, Mr. Speaker, on a very important piece of legislation. I believe Mr. Speaker, that this country is party to a very large number of Conventions, I would not be surprised if approaching over 100, and today, Mr. Speaker, we are going to be dealing with two additional Conventions, and I want to point out, Mr. Speaker, that in smaller countries like ours, the size of our country does not release us from the obligation to be party to these international conventions; and therefore, Mr. Speaker, it brings a significant administrative burden on our country, and it brings, Mr. Speaker, also significant administrative costs on our country. I am sure that our Legal Department, Mr. Speaker, would be in full agreement with what I just said. Mr. Speaker, in larger countries who are better endowed in terms of human resources there are departments which has the responsibility to deal with only matters like these, but in the case of St. Vincent and the Grenadines and other similar small jurisdictions we have to put this as part of the job of someone and it really, Mr. Speaker, brings a very heavy administrative burden. I think it is important, Mr. Speaker, that we bear that in mind every time we find it necessary to look at one of these conventions. Today we look at maritime security, Mr. Speaker, we are a plural country; we are an archipelago, and in many ways we are a maritime nation unlike some of our neighbours, and therefore anything to do with maritime security is of importance and significance for us. I think it was the Minister of National Security, two sessions ago in this House who adverted to the size of our territorial sea being in excess of 1100 square miles although our country is 133 square miles. That in itself, Mr. Speaker, demonstrates how significant that is for St. Vincent and the Grenadines, in other words we have a larger territorial sea to be concerned about, than say places like Antigua or Grenada or Dominica, much larger, and indeed bigger than some of the larger countries in this region. So Mr. Speaker, on both counts we have to be very concerned and deal with issues arising from these Conventions. Because of our maritime nature, Mr. Speaker, many of our citizens worked on cruise liners, many of them work on cruise ships, and many of them work on cargo ships all over the world, many of our citizens. The Honourable Minister mentioned that we are among the largest, we have here, and closest to the largest number of ships registered in the world, and therefore the St. Vincent and the Grenadines flag fly on thousands of ships, all over this world, so we must be concerned, Mr. Speaker, with questions of maritime security. The ship registry is a significant part of our economy, making a very significant contribution to the consolidated fund of this country, on an annual basis and just a few weeks ago in this House, Mr. Speaker, we passed other legislation, in relation to Atlantic Tuna Fishing, which required us to put our nationals on many of the ships which are now on

our ship's registry, so more of our people, Mr. Speaker, in these circumstances are likely to be out there on the high seas.

But, Mr. Speaker, that in itself is not a problem, our problem steps, Mr. Speaker, from the changes that are taking place in the world, particularly in relation to terrorism, and the changes that are taking place in the world, Mr. Speaker, in relation to trade liberalization which means that as nations trade more and more with each other, we will find ourselves Mr. Speaker, having to use the sea more and more.

Another sector of our economy, Mr. Speaker, that is affected is tourism and we know how important, Mr. Speaker, that sector is to our economy, and therefore how important, maritime security is in relation to that sector of our economy. Even our bananas Mr. Speaker, are transported by sea to United Kingdom. Our merchants use, Mr. Speaker, banana boats on their outward journey from Europe to our islands here to bring in most of the items that we trade and buy in hardware stores and supermarkets and so forth. So virtually every sector Mr. Speaker, of our economy is impacted when we discuss this issue of maritime security. And I believe Mr. Speaker, that we as a people must understand the significance of Conventions of this type to the general development of the country given its impact on so many of the most important sectors in our economy.

Mr. Speaker, all of us are fully aware of the impact of September 11th not only here but throughout the world. All of us are aware of the strenuous efforts made now, Mr. Speaker, to bring into being mechanisms which protect our countries and our citizens from this evil that is now pervading much of our world. And given the fact, Mr. Speaker, that our economy is so tightly linked with trade, with the fact that so many of our nationals are serving in so many parts of the world on ships we have an obligation, Mr. Speaker, to comply with the requirements of this type of legislation. You would note Mr. Speaker, that there are a number of penalties that are outlined in the bill before this Honourable House and some of these have already been mentioned by the Honourable Minister of National Security, and he made reference to the passing on and communication of information known to be false which could endanger the safe navigation of the ship. He made reference to the destruction of ships and the damaging of cargo and if that in fact affects the safe navigation of the ships. The placing of devises and ships, Mr. Speaker, which could destroy them and endanger safe navigation is also a matter of concern and covered in this piece of legislation. Seizing of a ship is also a cover, Mr. Speaker, so there are a number of penalties which are associated if one is found guilty under this Act of committing any of the offences that are mentioned. And that of course extents to fix platforms like oilrigs and so forth, not just ships.

Mr. Speaker, we really in St. Vincent and the Grenadines don't have a choice if for any reason, we do not make the necessary efforts to in fact comply with these international

conventions, we could find the relevant sections of our economy badly battered including, Mr. Speaker, our ship's registry which is one of the largest in the world, and we know what the loss of revenue that would occur if that were to happen. So we really don't have a choice in the matter and despite whatever the administrative burden is, despite whatever the administrative costs are, Mr. Speaker, we find ourselves in a position that we have to take these things very seriously and indeed since September 11th we have to take them even more seriously than we have done in the past.

Mr. Speaker, the penalty for these offences is basically life imprisonment. And the fact, Mr. Speaker that such a harsh penalty is included in this legislation is an indication of the seriousness with which we have to treat this particular matter. And there is no problem with that, Mr. Speaker, because we are in fact seeking to protect the interest of the people of St. Vincent and the Grenadines as manifested in their standard of living. In deed, Mr. Speaker, we in this Parliament probably more than any other sector in our country have the responsibility to ensure and to work towards the general improvement in the standard of living for our people. And if it means, Mr. Speaker, that we have to introduce types of legislation or bits legislation of this type then so be it. The actual bill, Mr. Speaker, is not complicated, it sets out clearly what the offences are and what the penalties are. And in this context, Mr. Speaker, I wish to indicate that we on this side of the House wish this bill safe passage through this Honourable House.

HONOURABLE MR. SPEAKER: Any further debate on the Bill.

HONOURABLE VINCENT BEACHE: Mr. Speaker, I thank the Honourable Leader of the Opposition for further highlighting some of the problems that smaller countries with limited financial resources have to encounter. There are certain conventions that, because of the way we operate, that we must adhere to. We must become signatories to, and this is one as has been said. We are a maritime nation, for years now it has been like this, the Grenadines, some of the best sailors, captains in the world. Quite a substantial percentage of our population make their living from the sea, not only fishing, but also as sailors, as captains, as mates et cetera, and we know the clamour of people who want to go to sail on the cruise lines and on the yachts and so on. It is going to be costly. It is going to cost us some money as has happened with the ICAT, the convention we had to do dealing with ICAT, because there are certain measures that must be put in place but as the Honourable Leader of the Opposition had said we have no choice in the matter and Mr. Speaker, I am thankful for the support and now move Mr. Speaker, resolve itself into a committee of the whole House to consider the bill clause by clause.

HONOURABLE MICHAEL BROWNE: Mr. Speaker, I second the motion.

House went into committee.

House resumed.
Bill read a third time by title and passed with minor amendments.

No. 8. PROTECTION OF AIRCRAFT AND AIRPORTS BILL 2001.

HONOURABLE VINCENT BEACHE: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move the second reading for a bill for an Act to provide for the implementation of the provisions of the Convention for the Suppression of unlawful act against the safety of civil aviation 1971, and Protocol for the Suppression of unlawful acts of violence at airports serving international civil aviations 1998, and for purposes connected therewith.

HONOURABLE MICHAEL BROWNE: Mr. Speaker, I second the motion.

Question put and agreed to.

HONOURABLE MR. SPEAKER: Is there any debate on the Bill?

HONOURABLE VINCENT BEACHE: Mr. Speaker, this bill is similar to the one we just passed. Again we do not have any choice in the matter. We have seen what happened on September 11th. What this bill seeks to do, is more or less for aircraft what we have just done for ships. For the protection of aircrafts and the crewmembers and also passengers and also for the protection of airports. Similarly we had a protocol in the Maritime Bill to deal with platforms. There is also protocol in this one for the suppression of violence acts at Airports, serving international civil aviations. We will notice here, Mr. Speaker, that it is airports serving international civil aviations. This Act deals with airports that serve civil international aviation. The Bill is more or less in line with the one we just passed, Mr. Speaker, and as such there are also provisions in here as well for aircrafts that are used for military purposes are not included in this bill, expect with the provisos as well that if you are a national of St. Vincent as I stated before in prior bill there is also the saving clause here for a defence. If you are charged with an offence under this bill, if you communicating again, information and this is used for unlawful acts.

Mr. Speaker, it is more or less the same thing and maybe if we had one air and seaport administration we might have been able to combine both of these, I don't know, two different conventions, we might have been able to combine both of them. I must say, Mr. Speaker, that we are giving serious thought into the linking of these two confirmations of what is done in other places, in Trinidad, in St. Lucia, in Antigua, I think in Grenada they have one body that deals with airport and seaport, and we are now giving some thought to this. We have some investigations going on to see what are the ramifications, and whether it would not be in our interest - the interest of the

country to have one body that is going to deal with both airports and seaports. It is done in New York, it is done in London and other places.

So, Mr. Speaker, I don't think it needs to be a long debate on this; the bill itself is similar to the one that just passed. Most of the clauses are similar and the aim and the objectives are more or less the same, I would like to ask Mr. Speaker, that this Bill be given an easy passage. Thank you.

HONOURABLE ARNHIM EUSTACE: Mr. Speaker, the arguments that we used and which I raised in my presentation on the Maritime Security Bill also apply to this piece of legislation. The arguments in terms of administrative costs, the fact that we are a plural country, all again applied in the case of this piece of legislation. I think it might be of interest, Mr. Speaker, that small as this country is, we have annually more than 7,000 take offs and landing of aircrafts in St. Vincent and the Grenadines in any particular year at this time. So while we are small there are a lot of activities of that type which puts us in a position somewhat different from other islands, except to say Bahamas.

Mr. Speaker, I just have one point I want to seek clarification, and that relates to section 5.

Section 5 reads, Mr. Speaker, subsections 1 and 3 do not apply to the commission of any act unless the Act is committed in St. Vincent and the Grenadines, or where the act is committed outside of St. Vincent and the Grenadines you have (a), (b), (c), (d) and (e) which applies. I take it that (a), (b), (c) and (d) applied where the act is committed outside St. Vincent and the Grenadines. I am correct in that assumption. I just want to be clear in my mind that (a), (b), (c) and (d) are applicable when the act is committed outside of St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

Now, it says that subsections 1 and 3 do not apply to the commission of the Act. Could you clarify for me what would be the situation of someone who is not a citizen who commits the Act outside of St. Vincent and the Grenadines, and the aircraft landed in St. Vincent and the Grenadines, is that person subject to either extradition or local prosecution. Could you clarify? Is it either? So you have the right either to clarify to prosecute the non-national here or to extradite that non-national. I just want to get that clarification.

Mr. Speaker, given the obvious similarity and the obvious to my mind Mr. Speaker, the rational for having this type of legislation at this time we on this side of the House would give support to this measure.

HONOURABLE MR. SPEAKER: Any further debate?

HONOURABLE RENE BAPTISTE: Mr. Speaker, I too rise to give my support to this Bill more particularly as it touches and concern the business of the tourism industry. Matters arising in this Bill was the subject, Mr. Speaker, of much discussions at the recently concluded Heads of Government Conference in the Bahamas, Heads of Government of CARICOM and we will notice in this particular age in which we live Mr. Speaker, regardless of size, Mr. Speaker, as has been said because of the nature of the business that we undertake and being part of the international community, law abiding citizens, it is incumbent upon us to join the international community in giving legitimacy in our national laws to the conventions which were either signed on our behalf.,

Mr. Speaker, St. Vincent and the Grenadines has five airports, and has already been said over 70,000 landings per year. One of the questions that have arisen since 9.11. is the question really about the safety of our airports and seaports. In those halls of debate more than one jurisdiction is now looking at the possibility of merging the sea port and airport authority and over and above that to institute a unit which will be called a police unit that would be stationed at the respective sea or airports. One of the matters that came up for discussion at the conference. Was the cost of the implementation of these conventions and the policing and the monitoring of the conventions. It is a matter which is anticipated that would engage further discussion in development banks as the heads of Government brought to the attention of the international community, that small island states would need some financial support, both within the Ministry of Justice of Legal Affairs and also within the prosecuting ranks of the seaports and airports. Be that as it may Mr. Speaker, it is necessary for us to prepare ourselves for this legislation is like a further armoury that must be prepared to deal with unlawful acts against the safety of persons and property and in civil aviation. I trust Mr. Speaker, that we will continue to be a zone of peace, and that day will not come upon us too soon to implement this law and execute the rather serious and drastic functions that it envisages in order to protect life and property. I wish this Bill safe passage through this House.

HONOURABLE MR. SPEAKER: Is there any further debate on this Bill?

HONOURABLE ST. CLAIRE LEACOCK: Mr. Speaker, Honourable Members I rise too in support of this Bill, but to crave your indulgence to make an observation that may come a matter of attention to this Honourable House, perhaps in the near future if it is already not the case. And that observation, Mr. Speaker, is simply this; that both pieces of legislation or conventions that we are discussing today are by and large driven through developments in the external environment, and we cannot ignore that. Interestingly enough in the presentation of the Honourable Minister of Tourism, she introduced a word which ought to become a part of our language here in addition to security, she quite rightly mentioned the word of safety. And I want to suggest that sometimes security and safety are very close cousins. Why do I say that, Mr.

Speaker, it has been my observation for quite sometime now that as a maritime nation; am I not aware that we have on the books any legislation for example, to make it monitory that sea craft for example have life jackets correspondent to the number of passengers that must travel on that sea craft. I am also not aware of the fact that it is the practice. I am also not aware that very often we have excursions and all sort of trips to the Grenadines Islands that anything resembling the manifest of who is on or who is off so that in the unfortunate circumstances that one day we have a major tragedy, it can present untold agony to a number of people because we are in no way able to determine who was or who was not and while it is not the expressed subject of this evening's discussions out of my ignorance, Mr. Speaker, Honourable Members, I asked that what are the edification that may come to relief me of my anxiety, that at some future time and through some appropriate legislation if it does not already exist be taken on board essentially for the safety of our people.

In a related point, Mr. Speaker, I just urge this House to take extreme caution that again while we are driven by the external imperatives, that what is good for the people outside, that because there is a sizeable amount of domestic travel as well, we do not have one standard of security that obtains when people are travelling outside of St. Vincent and the Grenadines, but exclude or ignore totally those of us who must travel up and down the Grenadines on a daily basis, and so the protection we may have say for example LIAT, Carib Star, BWIA, et cetera is not in place for those domestic airlines that might overnight here; and so while we are providing for those outside that we remember always that charity begins at home. Mr. Speaker, as I said, I asked for your indulgence but I said again this on the basis of safety is the close cousin of security, and charity begins at home. I thank you and wish this bill a safe passage through the House.

HONOURABLE MR. SPEAKER: Any further debate on the bill?

HONOURABLE VINCENT BEACHE: Mr. Speaker, I thank the members who supported the Bill and debated it; the questions that were raised were relevant and we will look into them as I said in another forum that having so many airports at this time is going to cost us a lot of money. I have just come back from a DCA meeting in Antigua, and one of the questions that came up, that IKO is looking at is the certification of airports, this was not done before, you had an airport, you didn't have to have it certified but now they are looking into the certification of airports that they will come as how you would have to certify your car, to see that it is road worthy, your airports are air worthy, more or less, that is going to cost us money.

There are also some other security and safety measures that must be put in place. I raise the question about our airports in the Grenadines where we have to put in not only carryon baggage scanners but also luggage scanners, they cost a lot of money, and you can understand some of our people when they have to travel from overseas

their suitcases are like beds. You could sleep on them, they are so big. So we have to have the equipment that are going to be able to scan those pieces of luggage, and a whole lot of other things that we must put in, as the Honourable Minister of Tourism said they have to have may airport police or whatever it is, that have not been completely or fully determined yet but regardless of what is happening it is going to be costly. But if we are going to have these airports because I raise the question that they are not international airports, they said yes, they are not international airports in the sense but that international travellers use them, because you can go from Union Island or Canouan or Mustique to Barbados and out or so on so therefore these are requirements that must be put in place.

Mr. Speaker, we would have to look and see what is happening and see how we can cope with it and as such, I thank very much the members who gave the support of this bill. Mr. Speaker, I now move that the resolve itself into a committee of the whole House to consider the bill clause by clause.

HONOURABLE MICHAEL BROWNE: Mr. Speaker, I second the motion.

House went into Committee.

House resumed.

Bill read a third time by title and passed without amendments.

PRIVATE BILL

The Honourable Minister of Social Development, Co-operatives, the Family, Gender and Ecclesiastical Affairs, Chairman of the Select Committee appointed to examine the following Private Bills:-

- 4. The Brothers of the Christian Schools Incorporation (Repeal) Bill 2001.**

PETITIONS

1. THE HUMBLE PETITION OF THE BROTHERS OF THE CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS OF ONTARIO;

IN THE MATTER OF AN APPLICATION BY THE BROTHERS OF THE CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS OF ONTARIO

A Charitable Corporation Incorporated Under the Laws of the Province of Ontario, Canada.

THE REVOCATION OF
THE BROTHERS OF THE CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS INCORPORATION
ACT NO. 35 OF 1969
OF THE LAWS OF SAINT VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES
TO

THE SPEAKER AND HONOURABLE MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY
OF SAINT VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES

THE HUMBLE PETITION OF:

Brother Raymond Schell, Brother Isidore Wasylenchuk and brother martin O'Connell, the president, the vice-president and the secretary, respectively, of the Brothers of the Christian Schools of Ontario.

SHOWETH THAT:

9. Your Petitioners are authorized officers of the Brothers of the Christian Schools of Ontario a body corporate established under the Laws of the Province of Ontario in the Dominion of Canada.
10. Until recently the Brothers of the Christian Schools of Ontario operated and administered the St. Martin's Secondary School in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines through The Incorporated Trustees of the Brothers of the Christian Schools of Saint Vincent a body corporate established under and by virtue of the provisions of the Brothers of the Christian schools Incorporation Act 9No. 35 of 1969) of the Laws of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines hereinafter referred to as "the Incorporation Trustees").
11. The Incorporated Trustees have ceased to carry on in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines the operation of educational institutions the purpose for which the Corporation was established under Act No. 35 of 1969 and they have relinquished the operation of the St. Martin's Secondary School to the Roman Catholic Bishop of Kingstown.
12. The Brothers of the Christian Schools of Ontario no longer maintains a presence in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and have fulfilled all its obligations therein.
13. The Brothers of the Christian Schools of Ontario therefore desire to have the Brothers of the Christian Schools Incorporation Act (No. 35 of 1969) of the Laws of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines revoked thereby dissolving the Corporation.

AND YOUR PETITIONERS AS IN DUTY BOUND WILL EVER PRAY.

Dated the 19th day of August, 2000.

THE BROTHERS OF THE CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS OF ONTARIO

Signed by: Per: Brother Raymond Schell, President
Per: Brother Isidore Wasylenchuk, Vice-President
Per: Brother Martin O'Connell, Secretary

Sworn to me this 9th day of August, 2000.

Signed Stephen O'Donohue, Notary Public

Endorsed as being in accordance with the Rules with respect to Petitions.

Signed by Theresa Adams, Clerk of the House of Assembly.

5. The Fountain Gospel Hall (Saint Vincent and the Grenadines) Incorporation Bill 2001.

IN THE MATTER OF THE APPLICATION BY THE TRUSTEES OF "FOUNTAIN GOSPEL HALL" TO THE HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY SEEKING INCORPORATION AS A BODY CORPORATE TO:-

THE SPEAKER AND HONOURABLE MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY OF SAINT VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES.

THE HUMBLE PETITION OF:-

MR. HUGH MC KIE	– ELDER of Arnos Vale
MR. ELUM MURPHY	– ELDER of Cane hall
MR. BRENDON GIBSON	– ELDER of Cane Garden
MR. CHRISTOPHER DENNIE	– ELDER of Kingstown Park
MR. CURTIS GREAVES	– MEMBER of Queen's Drive
MR. FITZGERALD PROVIDENCE	– MEMBER of Old Montrose
MR. ORMOND CODRINGTON	– MEMBER of Arnos Vale

SHOWETH THAT:-

14. Your Petitioners are the members of the Executive Committee of "Fountain Gospel Hall" in the State of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines (hereinafter referred to as "the CHURCH")
15. Your Petitioners have been mandated by the Church to seek legal incorporation as a body corporate of the said Church.
16. The said Church was established in the State of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines with the objectives of carrying out the great Commission of Jesus Christ to go into all the world and preach the gospel.
Your Petitioners further state that the Church seeks not what it can receive but what it can give so that lives can be enriched and to assist Government in the eradication of social evils such as drugs, unemployment and general associated with teenagers, adult and social deprived in our society.

Endorsed as being in accordance with the Rules with respect to Petitions.
Resubmitted 2/4/01

Signed by Theresa Adams, Clerk of the House of Assembly.

6. The Christian Church of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines Bill 2001.

THE HUMBLE PETITION OF MEMBERS OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH OF ST. VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES.

The Humble Petition of PASTOR SIMEON NORTON and CLETON BURNETT and LANCELOT BROOKS, members of THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH OF SAINT VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES SHEWETH:

That sometime in the year 1980 a church called ARNOS VALE CHRISTIAN CHURCH was established at Arnos Vale, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines with a membership of 30 persons which has since grown to 110 persons.

That in or about December 1987 a branch of that church called GLEN CHRISTIAN CHURCH was established at Glen, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines with a membership of 20 persons which has since grown to 75 persons

That our combined total membership is 185 persons and will gradually grow in strength with the passage of time. Our total congregation now exceeds 185 persons.

That the members of the congregation of the said ARNOS VALE CHRISTIAN CHURCH and the GLEN CHRISTIAN CHURCH met and unanimously agreed that they should consolidate under one name THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH OF SAINT VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES, to be incorporated as a single church (the "Church" with several branches and with the rights and obligations normally given and performed by churches incorporated by the private Acts of Parliament.

The main objectives of THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH OF SAINT VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES and its branches which have a common doctrine is to teach in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines the Biblical truths as they perceive them as a part of the Christian religion.

That is the intention of the Church and its branches to serve the entire Vincentian community.

That the Church is active in social as well as religious work and will support develop and take part in cultural and other artistic activities beneficial to their communities; to relieve poverty, suffering and distress among members of the those communities through social welfare organisation or otherwise; to establish, maintain and supply technical staff required for medical and dental services and to cooperate with the Government of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines if this agreed, in meeting the medical and dental needs of the community; as well as to provide educational opportunities for members of the church in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, and elsewhere in theological training and related disciplines.

That the need for our presence in the community is evidenced by the growth of our membership.

That the Church is dedicated to the growth, survival and strengthening of our Christian community.

That our Church will be managed by an Executive Committee.

That it is essential that the Executive Committee of the Church be created an ecclesiastical corporation under the laws of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines with power to appoint trustees and their successors in office, and to own property for the sole use of the said Church.

That the Constitution of the State of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines guarantees the freedom of religion as is widely practiced in this State.

WE THEREFORE DESIRE that a Private Bill, the objects and reasons for which is to provide incorporation of the said body of THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH OF SAINT VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES as a corporation aggregate, and to effect the above purposes, should be introduced in the House of Assembly, Kingstown

AND YOUR PETITIONERS shall in duty bound ever pray.

DATED AT KINGSTOWN in the Parish of Saint George in the State of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines this 15th day of February in the Year of Our Lord Two Thousand.

Signed Pastor Simeon Norton, Lancelot Brooks, Cleton Burnett

Endorsed as being in accordance with the Rules with respect to Petitions

Signed by Theresa Adams, Clerk of the House of Assembly.

7. The Kingstown Baptist Church of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines Bill 2001.

THE HUMBLE PETITION OF MEMBERS OF THE KINGSTOWN BAPTIST CHURCH OF SAINT VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES.

THE HUMBLE PETITION OF:

Cecil Richards of Cane Hall, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Pastor.

Stephen Lewis of Cane Garden, Kingstown, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Treasurer

Diana Alexis of Rivulet, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Secretary

SHOWETH THAT:

Your petitioners are the Officers of an organisation called the KINGSTOWN BAPTIST CHURCH OF SAINT VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES, a body which has been in existence since 1979. This body is concerned with presenting the gospel to every one such that its transforming power will draw them into a personal dynamic relationship with God.

Your petitioners have been mandated to seek the legal incorporation as a body corporate of the said Organisation.

17. The membership of the Organisation is comprised of general members.

18. The objects of the Organisation as enumerated in the constitution are:

- a. To be a spiritual organism whose members are guided by the Holy Spirit in sharing their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ with as many people as possible in their local community and the world.
- b. To be a worshipping, growing, ministering fellowship of believers. This fellowship is a visible part of the body of Christ that seeks to glorify god in all of its activities.
- c. To be a part of the body of Christ whose members are committed to ministering to people in the community in every area of their needs where possible.
- d. To be a fellowship of believers whose purpose is to be Christ-like in all aspects of their daily lives.

19. Your petitioners append hereto a draft copy of the legislative measures considered appropriate to meet the requirements of the said Organisation should this humble petition be approved.

20. Your petitioners humbly pray that their Petition may meet the approval of your Honourable Personages.

AND YOUR PETITIONERS AS IN DUTY BOUND WILL EVER PRAY.

Dated in Kingstown in the State of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines

This 5th day of July, 2000.

Cecil Richards	Pastor
Stephern Lewis	Treasurer
Diana Alexis	Secretary

SAINT VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES

Endorsed as being in accordance with the rules with respect to petitions

Signed by Theresa Adams, Clerk of the House of Assembly.

21. The Light of Truth Church of God Bill 2001.

THE HUMBLE PETITION OF PASTOR CALVIN LEDGER, THEOPHILUS LYNCH, PHILMORE LYNCH, VIANNA WEEKS, EZRA LEDGER, NATHAN LEDGER, RODEN

FERGUS ALL MEMBERS OF THE LIGHT OF TRUTH CHURCH OF GOD SHOWETH:-

That in 1969 a Church called "The Light of Truth Church of God was started at Richland Park, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines.

That the said Church has since established a branch at Mt. Grennan, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines.

That it is the intention of our Church to serve the entire Vincentian community

That our church is active in social as well as religious work.

That our church is dedicated to the growth and survival and strengthening of the Christian within the State of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines.

That if necessary, our parent body situate at Richland Park, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines will present its articles for your co-operation and approval under the Laws of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines.

That it is essential that the executive committee of our church be created an ecclesiastical corporation under the laws of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines with power to appoint trustees and their successors in office and to own property for the sole use of the Light of Truth Church of God.

That there is existing legislation in the State of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines for upholding religion and perpetuating the rights and interest in like bodies.

It is therefore desirable that a private bill, the objects and reasons for which is to provide for the incorporation of the said body of the Light of Truth Church of God as a Corporation aggregate, and to effect the above purposes should be introduced in the House of Assembly.

And your Petitioners will in duly bound ever pray.

Dated at Kingstown this 26th day of November in the Year of Our Lord Two Thousand.

Endorsed as being in accordance with the rules with respect to petitions.

Signed by Theresa Adams, Clerk of the House of Assembly.

HONOURABLE GIRLYN MIGUEL: Mr. Speaker, as Chairman of the Select Committee of appointed by this Honourable House to examine the private bills I beg to table the committee's report.

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

ADJOURNMENT

HONOURABLE VINCENT BEACHE: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this House be suspended until Wednesday 21st of November, 2001.

HONOURABLE MICHAEL BROWNE: Mr. Speaker, I second the motion.

*Question put and agreed to.
House suspended accordingly at 3:20 p.m.*