



**THE COMMONWEALTH PARLIAMENTARY
ASSOCIATION
CAYMAN ISLANDS BRANCH**



**VERBATIM REPORT
OF THE
32ND REGIONAL CONFERENCE
OF THE CARIBBEAN, THE AMERICAS
AND THE ATLANTIC REGION**

***Embracing Change in the Way we do Business: Efficient
Government***

GRAND CAYMAN

24TH – 30TH JUNE 2007

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**32nd REGIONAL CONFERENCE
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OF THE COMMONWEALTH PARLIAMENTARY ASSOCIATION
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GRAND CAYMAN
CAYMAN ISLANDS**

[25 June 2007]

OPENING CEREMONY

PRESENTATION OF FLAGS

Mr. W. Alfonso Wright, MLA (Cayman Islands):
Can we all stand for the presentation of flags?

The Flag of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association.

[Commonwealth Parliamentary Association Flag presented]

Mr. W. Alfonso Wright, MLA (Cayman Islands):
Please remain standing for the presentation of flags of countries represented at this 32nd Commonwealth Parliamentary Association Conference.

The Flag of Anguilla.

[Flag of Anguilla presented and National Anthem played]

Mr. W. Alfonso Wright, MLA (Cayman Islands):
Antigua and Barbuda.

[Flag of Antigua and Barbuda presented and National Anthem played]

Mr. W. Alfonso Wright, MLA (Cayman Islands):
Bahamas.

[Flag of Bahamas presented and National Anthem played]

Mr. W. Alfonso Wright, MLA (Cayman Islands):
Barbados.

[Flag of Barbados presented and National Anthem played]

Mr. W. Alfonso Wright, MLA (Cayman Islands):
Belize.

[Flag of Belize presented and National Anthem played]

Mr. W. Alfonso Wright, MLA (Cayman Islands):
Bermuda.

[Flag of Bermuda presented and National Anthem played]

Mr. W. Alfonso Wright, MLA (Cayman Islands):
British Virgin Islands.

[Flag of the British Virgin Islands presented and National Anthem played]

Mr. W. Alfonso Wright, MLA (Cayman Islands):
Grenada.

[Flag of Grenada presented and National Anthem played]

Mr. W. Alfonso Wright, MLA (Cayman Islands):
Jamaica.

[Flag of Jamaica presented and National Anthem played]

Mr. W. Alfonso Wright, MLA (Cayman Islands):
Montserrat.

[Flag of Montserrat presented and National Anthem played]

Mr. W. Alfonso Wright, MLA (Cayman Islands):
Saint Lucia.

[Flag of Saint Lucia presented and National Anthem played]

Mr. W. Alfonso Wright, MLA (Cayman Islands):
Trinidad & Tobago.

[Flag of Trinidad & Tobago presented and National Anthem played]

Mr. W. Alfonso Wright, MLA (Cayman Islands):
Turks & Caicos.

[Flag of Turks & Caicos presented and National Anthem played]

Mr. W. Alfonso Wright, MLA (Cayman Islands):
Presenting the flag of the host country, the Cayman Islands.

[Flag of the Cayman Islands presented]

Mr. Alfonso Wright, MLA (Cayman Islands): Please remain standing for the playing of the Cayman Islands National Song.

[Cayman Islands National Song played]

Mr. W. Alfonso Wright, MLA (Cayman Islands): Please be seated if only but for a short time as we call on Pastor Winston Rose to say Prayers.

PRAYERS

Pastor Winston Rose: Good morning. I know you have been standing, but could I ask you to indulge me again to just stand for the Prayers. I promise to pray not too long.

Bless the Lord, oh my soul and all that is within me, bless His Holy Name. Bless the Lord oh my soul and forget none of his benefits who pardons all your sins, who heals all your diseases, who redeems your life from the pit.

Heavenly Father, we acknowledge you as our creator, sustainer and saviour through Jesus Christ who is the King of kings and Lord of lords. We thank you for your many blessings bestowed upon us and we celebrate your abundant goodness. You are great and worthy to be praised.

We thank You for the privilege and honour granted to the Cayman Islands, the host of this Regional Conference. We pray for all the arrangements that have been made, that everything will run smoothly and efficiently.

We thank You for all the Speakers and Members of Parliament who are in attendance and we pray for their safety and well-being as they attend this conference and as they return to their homes in the days to come.

Heavenly Father, as they meet to discuss important matters of mutual interests, we pray that Your Holy Spirit will guide them and grant them the wisdom they will need to deal with the issues before them.

We recognise that the challenges in each country or territory are many and varied, but we acknowledge that government is a divine institution. Therefore, we pray for these parliamentarians, Your servants, that You will continue to grant them the resources they need to fulfill their responsibilities.

Help them, Father, to recognise their need of Your grace and to invite Your spirit into their lives and situations. Bless them with good health, courage and uncommon wisdom. Bless their respective countries and territories and their families, whose support is so important to them.

These mercies we ask this morning in the name of Your Son, Jesus Christ. Amen.

Mr. W. Alfonso Wright, MLA (Cayman Islands): I now call on the Honourable Edna Moyle, JP, MLA, Speaker of the Legislative Assembly and President of

the Cayman Islands Branch of the CPA, to give welcoming remarks.

WELCOME

Hon. Edna M. Moyle, JP, MLA, Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, CPA President (Cayman Islands): Your Excellency, Mr. Stuart Jack and Mrs. Jack; Honourable Kurt Tibbetts, Leader of Government Business and Mrs. Tibbetts; Honourable Official Members and Ministers of the Cayman Islands Cabinet; Honourable Dr. William Shija, Secretary-General of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association; Honourable McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition; Elected Members of the Legislative Assembly of the Cayman Islands; Mr. Alfonso Wright, MLA, Chairman of the Conference Organising Sub-Committee; Representatives of the International Executive Committee of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association; Representatives of the Regional Executive Committee of the CPA; Delegates; Observers; Secretaries; and all other distinguished guests.

It is indeed a great pleasure for me to extend to you a gracious and warm Caymanian welcome to the Opening Ceremony of the 32nd Conference of The Caribbean, The Americas and The Atlantic Region of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association.

To the Secretary-General of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, the Honourable Dr. William Shija, we are indeed honoured to receive you, Sir, to this your inaugural CPA Regional Conference. We look forward to your presentation of the first Conference session later today when you will present the topic "The Commonwealth Parliamentary Association and Parliamentary Democracy: How to Improve Communications with the Public."

The Commonwealth Parliamentary Association was founded in 1911 by a group of Parliamentarians of the United Kingdom, Australia, Canada, Newfoundland, New Zealand and South Africa and has grown into a membership to include 169 national, state, provincial and territorial Parliaments throughout the Commonwealth, with a total membership of approximately 16,000 Parliamentarians. Its mission is to promote the advancement of parliamentary democracy by enhancing knowledge and understanding of democratic governance. The Cayman Islands has been a member of this prestigious Association for 43 years.

During the course of the conference our distinguished delegates will be discussing topical, regional and international issues, and I trust that they will challenge and enlighten us in moving forward to effect responsible change for all future generations.

The different sessions cover a range of topics that affect us all in the region. In one, you will be examining the role that democracy plays in the lives of the people who choose to be governed this way.

The vital role the citizen plays underpins the very existence of democracy which is still the best known form of government to foster human development. The more involved the citizenry get in the running of a democracy, the more vibrant becomes the government that rules them. Yes, a democratic government may not be able to wipe every tear from every eye or ensure that every child is protected but a well-run democracy is the next best thing to the unattainable notion of pleasing all.

By the same token, a democracy is only as vibrant as the involvement of its citizens in its functioning. Apathy, disenchantment with the system, or inaction on the part of those who govern can undermine the efficacy of an entire system, even when non-involvement is a type of expression. Voter apathy, for instance, can be a type of expression and has the potential of undermining and skewering an election.

Another topic of discussion will throw much needed light on whether male youth in the region rise to their full potential and examine the reasons for their underachievement. While it gladdens my heart every time a woman or a girl proves her mettle, gender equality is a concept that I uphold dearly. Girls invariably score better on our national examinations or in gaining academic qualifications or in making great strides in the workforce and kudos to them for that. However, if society's achievements are not to sound hollow, we must ensure that we do not lose sizeable numbers of our male youth to the scourge of crime, thereby denying society of their essential strength. This is a prospect that each of us in the region faces and it demands our urgent attention.

Equally as important, the majority of us who are island nations in the region have to start examining and planning for the potential effects of climate changes. We already face the annual threats of hurricanes. We in the Cayman Islands have lived firsthand through the devastation visited by Hurricane Ivan in September of 2004, three days that are etched in the minds of many, including our younger generation. The destruction wrought by Hurricane Katrina in 2005 primarily on the USA's Gulf Coast is still fresh in our minds.

Global warming and the rise of the sea levels predicted have direct consequences for all of us. Now is the time for us to be talking about this and taking stock, as a region as well as individual nations. Let us pool our knowledge and see how we can help one another by taking the first step of sharing what we know.

Given the importance of tourism to the economy of each of us in this region, there is no doubt that the degradation of our environments will be a direct blow to our identity as a tourist destination. We all know this yet have to contend, among other things, with disposal of mounting piles of garbage. Our Minister in the Cayman Islands responsible for Environmental Health jocularly refers to Grand Cayman's landfill as "Mount Trashmore" but he knows firsthand

that garbage disposal is one of the challenges that we in the Cayman Islands face, like many a small nation, especially a small island nation. Again, this is another area we can learn from our collective experiences and expertise.

So, it is no exaggeration to state that I keenly look forward to all the deliberations in the coming days of this conference.

As Parliamentarians we have a high duty to preserve the future of our Region and through this CPA Conference may the views we share assist us in further developing effective change.

I wish you well in your deliberations during the conference sessions and trust that throughout your stay, you will enjoy our Caymanian hospitality. We take pride in the warmth we extend to visitors to our shores and are especially pleased that such a distinguished gathering from the Region and beyond will call our beloved land your place of stay for the next few days.

I extend to you all a hearty, cordial Caymanian welcome once again.

As Parliamentarians we have a high duty to preserve the future of our Region, and through this CPA Conference may the views we share assist us in further developing effective change.

Thank you.

[Applause]

Mr. W. Alfonso Wright, MLA (Cayman Islands): I now call on the Honourable D. Kurt Tibbetts, Leader of Government Business, to give his remarks.

REMARKS

Hon. D. Kurt Tibbetts, JP, MLA (Cayman Islands): Thank you, Master of Ceremonies.

Your Excellency, Mr. Stuart Jack and Mrs. Jack; Secretary-General of the CPA, Dr. William F. Shija; Madam Speaker and President of the Cayman Islands Branch, the Honourable Edna Moyle; the Honourable Leader of the Opposition; visiting members of the CPA; my colleagues in the Cabinet; other Members of the Legislative Assembly.

And I have to say hello to my wife. I already did that this morning but anyway . . .

I am reminded that I have to recognise the Youth Parliamentarians who I see in the audience. There are also some past Members of the Legislative Assembly who are here with us, and I am certain we are all very grateful that they still have the interest of the Country by attending such meetings as we have.

Also, I cannot forget our only living National Hero, the Honourable Mrs. Sybil McLaughlin, who is a former Speaker and she is with us today also. Ladies and gentlemen -

Good morning.

On behalf of the people of the Cayman Islands, a very warm welcome and a special thank you

for attending the 32nd Regional Conference of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association.

We are privileged this week to be the host country for this distinguished conference and our aim is to make this event exciting, informative and relevant to the work we do as Speakers, Presidents of Senates, Ministers, Members of Parliament and Members of the Legislative Assembly.

This Conference is the first in the Region to be attended by the CPA's newly appointed Secretary-General, the Honourable Dr. William F. Shija.

Doctor Shija is the CPA's first African Secretary-General, and he brings to his post a wealth of knowledge gleaned from many years as a member of the Tanzanian Parliament and the Pan-African Parliament. He was nominated to this prestigious position by the CPA Executive Committee after they conducted a Commonwealth-wide selection process, and he began his term in January of this year.

It is indeed an honour and a privilege to welcome you to the Cayman Islands, Sir. Please join me, ladies and gentlemen, in welcoming Dr Shija with a very warm round of applause.

[Applause]

Hon. D. Kurt Tibbetts, JP, MLA (Cayman Islands): Thank you.

To give you a little perspective on the breadth of Dr Shija's responsibilities, he has taken over a Secretariat which runs programmes and services for all of the Parliaments and Legislatures in the nations, states, provinces, and territories of the Commonwealth. This is a monumental task and one of great importance and I know we can all learn from him during his session this afternoon which, as the President alluded to, is entitled "The Commonwealth, the CPA and Parliamentary Democracy: How to Improve Communications with the Public."

As hosts of this year's conference we were of course tasked with choosing an appropriate theme that would speak to the concerns of our counterparts in the region but would also be relevant to our own situation here at home.

In choosing the theme, "Embracing Change in the Way we do Business: Efficient Government," we hope to describe our common goal of achieving modern and progressive governments. In the Cayman Islands, we are approaching several of our most important landmarks in the road to truly modern government, including undertaking constitutional reform and the implementation of freedom of information legislation.

Several representatives here today have experienced a similar process of constitutional reform and freedom of information reform in your own home territories. Like you, we realise the importance of these movements and the need for them to evolve in

a dynamic fashion with the full participation of our people.

As representatives of the people, we are conduits for change. By networking with each other this week and learning from each other's experiences, we will not only strengthen our ability to lead our own people but we will become better informed about all of our efforts, our challenges and indeed our triumphs across the region.

I am pleased that several of my fellow Parliamentarians will be making presentations to support our theme this week. Among the presenters are: the Honourable Attorney General, the Honourable Samuel Bulgin, QC, who will speak on "Law Enforcement and Interdiction: Regional Cooperation".

One of our Elected Representatives for the district of Bodden Town, Mr. Osbourne Bodden, MLA, will speak on a topic with particular relevance as we enter the hurricane season, and that topic is "Disaster Preparedness and Recovery".

Our Minister of Education, who unfortunately is not here this morning, the Honourable Alden M McLaughlin, Jr., MLA, will speak on a topic which is very dear to his heart and to many of ours and which is a core concern of his Ministry. That topic is "Tertiary Education Towards a New Approach". While a Member of the Opposition, who is a representative for the district of West Bay, Mr. Rolston M Anglin, MLA, will present a topic of particular relevance to small island states, that topic being: "Environmental Protection: Landfill and Disposal of Refuse/Beautification".

I am pleased to say that this week's agenda is diverse and educational and I want to encourage you to be introspective for the next few days and soak up these presentations and ideas for your own benefit. We all have the ability to cope with highly stressful lives, but unfortunately, this skill does not win us any medals. So sit back, relax and simply become a student again.

You will all appreciate that we have not planned a conference that is all work and no play. We have made sure to include an island tour for those who are new to Grand Cayman. There is also a Caymanian Culture evening on Friday, hosted by the Minister of Culture, who is also the Minister of Education, the Honourable Alden M. McLaughlin, JP, MLA, and our Minister of Tourism, the Honourable Charles E. Clifford, JP, MLA.

Finally, there are several receptions, including one which I advise you not to miss. His Excellency has asked me to make sure to let you all know that he expects to see every one of you at the reception hosted by himself and Mrs. Jack at Government House. I think that is on Thursday evening.

Is it?

Thursday evening. Right.

We have a very full schedule today so I will conclude by saying that I hope we will fulfill our jobs

as hosts with excellence and that you will give us your honest feedback on how we have performed.

Once again, it is truly an honour to host this conference and to be in the company of such a distinguished group of leaders. I recognise faces that I have seen at other meetings and certainly I am sure you all will be anxious to renew acquaintances.

Best wishes and God bless all of us as we step up to the challenge of embracing change in the way our governments do business.

Thank you.

[Applause]

Mr. W. Alfonso Wright, MLA (Cayman Islands): I now call on the Honourable McKeeva Bush, MLA, Leader of the Opposition, to make his remarks.

Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, OBE, JP, MLA (Cayman Islands): Master of Ceremonies; His Excellency the Governor and Mrs. Jack; Honourable Speaker, President and Chairman of the Local Branch of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association; Honourable Leader of Government Business and Mrs. Tibbetts; National Hero, Honourable Mrs. McLaughlin; fellow Members of the Legislature; Secretary-General of the CPA; members of the Youth Parliament; visiting delegates and parliamentarians; observers; other distinguished guests.

The Cayman Islands is indeed thrilled to be hosting this 32nd Regional Conference of The Caribbean, Americas and The Atlantic Region of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association. This Conference re-unites us with some old friends and introduces us to some new faces who we expect will also become our friends.

It is a real pleasure for me to meet some good friends again whom I have known for many years and I take this opportunity to recognise them this morning: Mr. Speaker Roett, Barbados; President of the Senate, the Honourable Syringa Marshall-Burnett. It is real good to see you here with us. Former Chief Minister of Montserrat, the Honourable Ruben Meade; my good friend from Turks & Caicos, the new Speaker, the Honourable Clayton Greene; and, of course, our friend, Speaker Dame Jennifer. It is a real pleasure to me to see all of you again.

I cannot forget the long-serving Clerk from Trinidad, my good friend, Jacqui [Sampson]. It is good to see all of you here in Cayman, and I do not know if I will be able to see much of you this week, I will be leaving the Island later on in the week. But I will get an opportunity to see most of you and indeed the Opposition is well represented in the Conference.

I wish to add my own words of welcome to all delegates from the 18 participating territories here this morning as your host. As has already been said by the Leader of Government Business, it will be an honour to show you around the Island and give you a

taste of our culture. I trust that your brief stay here in the Cayman Islands will refresh and inspire you.

I had the privilege of meeting the new Secretary-General in London some weeks ago and would personally also like to add my welcome to you, Sir. You will enjoy Cayman. I know you spend all your time mostly in London. Cayman will be a humongous improvement on London!

In hosting these conferences the CPA is mindful of its mandate to promote knowledge and understanding of parliamentary democracy, respect for the rule of law and individual rights and freedoms. For us in the Cayman Islands the Conference comes at a particularly interesting time when we have been contemplating some of the very issues that underscore this conference's theme "Embracing Change in the Way we do Business: Efficient Government." We have been engaged in implementing changes to our public sector management, and naturally, such actions bring with them a certain level of anxiety and perhaps even resistance.

The role of the civil servant within a new culture of governance is one of the topics to be explored at this Conference. I expect that this will be of particularly good relevance to us. Change must come, but change must be for the good of all our people so that it takes them along and enhances their way of life. We do not want change for the sake of change; it must be relevant to the people whom we serve.

Our strong democratic tradition in these islands has stood the test of time, even as we acknowledge that there is perhaps room for improvement in terms of our current governance. Changing times and a changing world around us are calling for new and improved applications of democratic principles and we recognise that we cannot stand still.

Pressing issues such as constitutional change and immigration have been weighing on us for some time and bringing with them a realisation that we have to be prepared to embrace such changes as are necessary to continue to build a society that is prosperous, progressive and inclusive of differing personalities and different perspectives. As we do so, we have to do so with a Christian mind. If Cayman fails in that exercise, the world will pass us by and we will fall in the brackets of "have-beens".

Moreover, major issues affecting democracies across the globe . . . some have already been mentioned: climate change, globalisation and its impact on national economies, migration and its cultural impact, governance requirements for changing times are the very issues that we have to grapple with in this region—all this and to keep our economy strong for our people.

I said some time ago that our people should embrace wealth or reap poverty and we do not want to go down that road. For us, as small island nations, these issues loom larger than life and every day and more of our energies and resources must be directed to deal with them.

I am therefore pleased to see the many presentations on the agenda for this Conference will highlight some of these very issues and I look forward to the discussions that we will engage in in these very vital matters.

The Commonwealth Parliamentary Association Regional Conferences have always brought keen insight and a broad range of perspective to the issues that affect our democracies and I expect that the deliberations of this Conference will do no less.

Through these conferences and the collaboration that takes place among Member Associations and Parliamentarians, the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association has played an important role in supporting small island countries like ours in strengthening our democratic institution.

These conferences have been a good way for the CPA to determine and therefore provide the necessary skills, support and technical assistance that are helping to modernise parliamentary democracies in our region and elsewhere across the world.

I am personally happy to be involved and know that I speak on behalf of my fellow Members of the Opposition when I say that we are confident that we will be thoroughly stimulated by these proceedings.

I know I will not get another chance to do so (or I do not believe I will) so I take this opportunity to thank all those who have been involved over the past several months in the preparation of this Conference. As you who have been hosts before know, it can become taxing even on a small staff such as we have in our legislature. So I certainly want to thank the staff of the Cayman Islands Legislative Assembly for all of their hard work in making this conference possible, and of course to thank my colleagues the Elected Members and the Official Members of the legislature for their work also.

I wish, therefore, for everyone a productive and enjoyable conference.

Ladies and gentlemen, thank you very much.

[Applause]

Mr. W. Alfonso Wright, MLA (Cayman Islands): Ladies and gentlemen, please help me welcome to the podium the Honourable Dr. William F. Shija, Secretary-General of the CPA Headquarters.

[Applause]

Hon. Dr. William F. Shija, Secretary-General (London): Good morning ladies and gentlemen. Indeed the Lord is the Shepherd. I am here for the first time in my life and my work. This is the Caribbean. You are most welcome.

Your Excellency, Mr. Stuart Jack and Mrs. Jack, Governor of the Cayman Islands; the Honourable Edna Moyle, Speaker of the Legislative Assem-

bly and President of the Cayman Islands Branch of the CPA; the Honourable D. Kurt Tibbetts, Leader of Government Business and joint Vice President of the CPA; Honourable W. McKeever Bush, Leader of the Opposition and joint Vice President of the CPA; Honourable Regional Representatives and Members of the CPA Executive Committee; Honourable Speakers; Members of Parliament; Honourable Ministers; distinguished delegates; members of the Diplomatic Corps; invited guests; observers; ladies and gentlemen.

I wish to thank the Grand Cayman Branch of the CPA and you all for inviting me to this 32nd Regional Conference of The Caribbean, The Americas and The Atlantic Region. This is the third CPA Regional Conference to attend after I took office in January this year at the Headquarters in London.

The other regional conferences were the Asia/India Regions in March; in Islamabad, Pakistan, and the British Islands Annual Regional Conference in May which was held in Belfast, Northern Ireland. The Northern Ireland Assembly has actually already submitted its application to join the CPA and will be considered in New Delhi this September.

I sincerely wish to express to you the Honourable Speakers and other parliamentary government leaders of this beautiful Island of Grand Cayman for the reception, warmth and wonderful hospitality that you have availed to us since our arrival here.

Similarly, I wish to express my sincere appreciation to you all parliamentary leaders of this Region for the hospitality which you offered to me when I visited Antigua and Barbuda to attend the OECS Workshop on Standing Orders from 17-20 this month, and for the Branch visits I made to Barbados and Jamaica during the last four days. There was very, very nice input had from Branch visits in this Region.

I assure you that this being my first visit to the Caribbean in my work and life, I have drawn tremendous benefit from the contacts and discussions with the Speakers and Presidents of legislatures, staff, former CPA members and ordinary people I met in these countries.

I have tried to maximise my study of the social, cultural and economic environment of the States in the Caribbean, an experience that I will utilise in my services to the CPA.

Again, I thank you all very much for the wonderful reception and hospitality which as I learned a long time ago—indeed, a long time ago—is typical of the culture of the Caribbean people.

I come from Tanzania in East Africa and there is no doubt that at my age I have met people from the Caribbean in several parts of the world and I know them to be hospitable, to be good and very accommodating.

Your Excellency, I have noted that this conference has been dedicated to the theme of “Embracing Change in the Way we do Business” and we are referring particularly to “Efficient Government.” This

theme is relevant from both internal and external dimensions of government and governance.

Government and governance are interlocked in the performance of all the three branches of government. Usually cracks have to be filled in and differences ironed out from time to time if government and governance have to function as efficiently as possible. We in the CPA would not have sustained our activities and events if we did not embrace change in the political milieu of regions and branches.

Since we have been prepared to adapt to new situations and change, our activities have been constantly relevant to the needs of human life. For example, the question of the emergence of highly sophisticated communication systems and technologies have put pressure on our political, social and economic needs, particularly with reference to our cultures. Also, with regard to the climate changes currently being experienced by many nations, particularly the small nations, our preparedness through governance must constantly be reviewed.

In similar terms, Your Excellency, we at the CPA Secretariat have also recognised this type of challenge. The expectation, therefore, is to examine, more or less constantly, the extent to which we can strengthen the way and manner in which we administer the activities of the Association. The CPA Mission and Strategic Plan are constantly made clear by yourselves as Members.

However, the execution of various activities must always be guarded to reflect the efficient and professional management systems that we all desire. That is why when I took office in January I set out my mission to be the need to strengthen the CPA through communications. And I sent out this statement to all Branches.

I will be doing a separate presentation on this subject, but I wish to briefly outline now that an international and well-placed organisation such as ours at the CPA, should always embrace change in the way we do business to achieve maximum efficiency.

Your Excellency, in the course of implementing our plans, I am happy to report that Members have continued to demand that we must always utilise our own parliamentary human resources that we have here and we have in other branches, that is, parliamentarians and staff that are available with us among our legislatures. And I agree with this 100 per cent.

This demand is clear and understandable. An association must always revert to its principles in order to stay what it is. Nevertheless, because we are in a constantly changing world, we also continue to be flexible in working with out partners for the benefit of our members. That is why you will have noted that in recent years we have teamed up with such organisations as the UNDP and other UN agencies, the World Bank Institute, World Trade Organization, Parliamentary Centres in various countries, such as Canada, as well as sister organisations such as the Commonwealth Secretariat itself in London.

In my six months in office, I have met a number of partners to clarify our partnership principles as, indeed, we need them for our work.

At this conference, Your Excellency, I wish to request you, as I have done and will do in the other CPA Regions, for three major things:

The first request is for you to continue to support the CPA Executive Committee decisions as the Executive Committee deliberates from time to time on many of our important issues.

The second is for you in the branches and regions to strengthen your communications with us at the Secretariat, hence my plan to convene a meeting with all the regional secretaries later on this year for the purpose. There is a missing link that I have discovered. We must fill the crack.

The third is to request you to point out your specific needs and interests pertaining to the environment of small countries, for example, as well as regional conditions. All of us usually draw up our needs from the general strategic plans that we endorse at the General Assembly, but we must draw from it specific plans that are relevant to our regions and branches.

Your Excellency, I wish to inform you that the CPA Executive Committee at its mid-year meeting in Cyprus, in April of this year, considered, among other things, the Working Party Document which will be refined in New Delhi and put before the General Assembly for approval. And there are many issues in that working document.

The document, among other things, has included the suggestions from the CWP Steering Committee which sat in Gauteng, South Africa, in March this year. That is how keen we have been. Indeed, the chairperson of the CWP did submit those recommendations from CWP in Gauteng for the Steering Committee to the working party very, very effectively in Cyprus.

In India, the General Assembly will also be requested to approve the CPA Strategic Plan that is being put forward or prepared for 2008-2012.

I hope that members in this and other regions are tracking this information to be able to give their suggestions for the final consideration by the Executive Committee and approval of the General Assembly in India.

Finally, Your Excellency, ladies and gentlemen, I also wish to inform you that the Executive Committee has accepted a recommendation that, beginning with the Annual Plenary Conference in India, the CPA prepares a documentary to begin to package electronic information for our internal parliamentary communication purpose as well as the communication between CPA Parliaments and the public at large. This will be the first action of its kind for the last several years.

The second accepted recommendation is for the CPA to prepare for its Centenary in the year 2011. As you know, my colleague here earlier on, the Hon-

ourable Speaker, mentioned that we were established in 1911, and we would like to celebrate and commemorate or observe the Centenary of 100 years in 2011. Naturally, I will be looking out to your assistance and participation, former Speakers, ex-members or former members of the Executive Committee, people who might be interested to come up with something special for that kind of documentation in this noble task in the life of the Association.

The Executive Committee also noted with great concern that, up until now, we have not secured the Branches to host our CPA Annual Plenary Conferences for 2009 and 2010. I am already nervous about this.

I wish to humbly submit to you, Your Excellency, Honourable Speaker, as well as distinguished Delegates of this Region that The Caribbean, The Americas and The Atlantic Region may wish to consider this option. Indeed, as you so wish.

Your Excellency, Distinguished Delegates, ladies and gentlemen, as I will have to return to London on 27 June for another assignment coming up on 29 in Scotland, I wish to again very, very humbly reiterate my mission to serve you in a manner of commitment, sharing and service to you all.

May you all and together in this Caribbean region achieve the best of this conference deliberations. Upon your return to your countries and homes, please convey my loving greetings and best wishes to all Parliamentarians who did not come to this conference, as well as to staff and your families.

I sincerely welcome you to visit us at the CPA Secretariat Headquarters when you next come to London. We will always be very delighted to tell you a little more about what we are doing there.

I thank you all very much indeed and God bless you.

Thank you very much.

[Applause]

OPENING OF CONFERENCE

Mr. W. Alfonso Wright, MLA (Cayman Islands): For the official opening of the Conference, I now call on His Excellency the Governor, Mr. Stuart D. M. Jack, CVO, Governor of the Cayman Islands, to open our Conference.

Your Excellency.

[Applause]

His Excellency the Governor: Members of the Platform, Delegates, Observers, other distinguished guests, good morning.

I too shall like to extend a warm welcome to all the participants of this Conference. I hope that you will have an enjoyable stay on this wonderful Island as well as useful deliberations. I hope that you will get a

taste—and I literally mean a taste—of the unique culture of the Cayman Islands. My wife and I very much look forward to seeing you at the reception at Government House.

In the Cayman Islands we have a lively parliamentary democracy. Although under our system of government I, as Governor, rarely venture into the Chamber, I can assure you that the (and I will pick my words very carefully so as not to get into trouble) constructive vitality of the deliberations of the Legislative Assembly reverberate well beyond the thick walls of the building.

Our Legislative Assembly may be small in terms of the number of members, but it is a very productive legislature—something, again, I can vouch for as I endeavour to read all of the considerable volume of new legislation which I am asked to sign into law. I can tell you that is quite a challenge.

I am certain that the effectiveness of our legislature is one of the reasons why the Cayman Islands has developed so successfully, particularly as a major international financial centre.

But every body of parliamentarians, however effective, must constantly seek to up its gain. In many, maybe most of the countries represented here today, the electorate has, at one and the same time, rising expectations of government and of their political representatives and also a degree of disappointment with the political process.

Criticism of politicians is perhaps the natural dynamic of democracy. But it remains vitally important that we all do what we can to boast a confidence in our politics and our system of government that we encourage participation through the ballot box, political parties and civil society.

In my view, as someone charged to encourage good governance, but also as a member of the public, I believe that parliamentarians must respond to this challenge by displaying leadership, vision and integrity. Leadership can help us find direction as we tackle the many issues in our own individual countries regionally and globally that other speakers have referred to, issues like providing opportunities for all our young people, issues like climate change; issues like crime.

Vision must underpin that leadership and must be embodied in wise legislation. And integrity—collective integrity—must ensure through parliamentary scrutiny the accountability of government. It is very important, for example, that every legislature has an effective public accounts committee or equivalent.

To all these ends, every body of parliamentarians can benefit from exchanges with colleagues from other Commonwealth countries who share the same values and often face similar challenges.

I therefore consider it a pleasure and an honour to declare open this 32nd Regional Conference of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association.

Thank you.

[Applause]

VOTE OF THANKS

Mr. Alfonso Wright, MLA (Cayman Islands): Just to wrap up this morning's proceedings, I would like to move a short vote of thanks to a few people and organisations.

First of all I would like to say how grateful we are for the number of Delegates who have made the effort to be here with us, including our Observers and Secretaries who have flown in to take part in this Conference.

I would also like to say a special thank you to the Associate Members, other Members of Parliament and members of our Civil Service who came in for the ceremony this morning. We are extremely grateful that many of our Youth Parliamentarians are here with us. We have invited them to attend any or all of the sessions, so you may see them around. They are a curious lot and are not shy in asking questions. We encourage them to do that, so accommodate them where you can.

I would like to say a special thank you to our Secretariat who have been working tirelessly over the last few months preparing for today and the rest of the week

We now have a Protocol Office set up in the Cayman Islands, long in coming, but we finally have one. I would like to say a special thank you to Ms. Virginia Madison and her crew for the protocol officers and the liaison officers that have been greeting and taking care of our guests as they came in and will be doing so throughout the conference.

Our Organising Committee has had an extremely difficult but I would say enjoyable job getting the Conference put together. We will sit down and cry a little after it is all over, we will miss you all so much! But we have had a very good crew and I would like to say a special thank you to each and every one of them.

To all those who have taken part in this session this morning, I would like us to give a huge round of applause for our Royal Cayman Islands Police Band [applause]. And our Cadet Corps [applause]. While it does say "Royal Cayman Islands Police Band" I am sure you realise that many of them are not old enough to be police officers. Many of them are students, but they are building for the future. Thank you all very much.

Special thanks to Pastor Winston Rose for coming in this morning and gracing us with the Prayer.

I would like to thank our Speaker, and President of the Cayman Islands Branch of the CPA, the Honourable Edna Moyle, for her welcoming remarks, and for remarks from the Honourable Kurt Tibbetts, Leader of Government Business, the Honourable McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition, and our Secretary-General, Dr. William Shija. And also, His

Excellency the Governor for declaring the Conference open this morning.

We will have some time during the week to thank a lot more individuals. We cannot do everything this morning.

By now, I think all Delegates would know that we have our Secretariat and our Delegate's Internet Lounge with available Internet for any of you who need to do that on this same level in room 302. The Secretariat is in room 300. Most of you would have been there before.

We did make the effort to put most of the kits in the rooms. Some Delegates have not registered because their kits were in their rooms, but we still need you to go to the Secretariat and register. We need to know your whereabouts and how we can reach you if we need to. So, we need you to do that for us as quick as you can this morning.

We have the group photo for the Delegates, Executives, and Secretaries that we would like to have done in this room immediately following the ceremony this morning, so we are asking you to please not go out through the doors. You can come up here, have a group photo and then we can go to the outside of the room for refreshments. But we do need to vacate the room as quickly as possible because this is the room we are having the Conference in and it needs to be set up for the Conference starting at 2.30.

Lunch will be served at 12.30, so we should be ready to make that on time.

So, without any further ado, I would like to say a special thank you to everyone who is here now who has shared in this very special moment with us, and do enjoy the rest of the day and the rest of the Conference.

Thank you very much.

[Applause]

SESSION 1

Chairman: Hon. Edna M. Moyle, JP, MLA, Speaker of the Cayman Islands Legislative Assembly

THE COMMONWEALTH, THE CPA AND PARLIAMENTARY DEMOCRACY: HOW TO IMPROVE COMMUNICATIONS WITH THE PUBLIC

Presenter: Hon. Dr. William F. Shija, Secretary General (CPA Secretariat, London)

The Chairman: I hope we all had a good lunch and we are all ready for some contribution to the First Session of the 32nd Regional Conference.

There are just a few housekeeping jobs that I have to do and the first one is to do with the chairpersons of the sessions. The Delegates will observe that the chairmanship of sessions will be rotated among the Presidents and Speakers who are Members of the Regional Executive Committee. These persons will be advised in advance by the Secretariat when they will be required to chair a session.

The second is presenters. Each presenter will have a maximum of ten minutes, with the exception of this session, the First Session. This means that if there is more than one presenter on a particular topic, then each has ten minutes. Other speakers will be limited to five minutes. One to two minutes will be allocated for questions following each presentation.

Time keepers should record the starting time of presenters and other speakers taking into consideration interjections by other participants (which we hope we do not have too many) so as to ensure that they remain within the time limits.

To facilitate the smooth arrangements for the sessions, we are kindly requesting Delegation Secretaries to inform the Secretariat Room No. 302 of the Delegates who are desirous of speaking on a particular topic. The floor will remain open for other interested speakers subject to time.

As I was telling someone a while ago, Speakers do not speak, so I am one of these Speakers I make what I am saying very short.

So, without further adieu, I now invite the Honourable Dr. William Shija to address us on the First Session, "The Commonwealth, the CPA and Parliamentary Democracy: How to Improve Communications with the Public". I am sure that we are all eagerly anticipating his presentation.

Dr. Shija.

Hon. Dr. William F. Shija (London): Hon. Dr. William F. Shija, Secretary General (CPA Secretariat, London): Thank you very much, Honourable Speaker.

Honourable Speaker;
Honourable Delegates;
Good Afternoon.

I wish to present to you, as briefly as I can, my perception in the approach regarding this community of parliamentarians in the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association.

Briefly, what I should say in the introduction is that the Commonwealth almost covers one-third of the areas of our world and as one of my colleagues suggested some statistics this morning we have about 177, sometimes 176, Parliaments and Legislatures spread across the world in the Commonwealth countries, in 52–, 53 countries. They move up and down.

We are one of those who are participating in the world of global issues. Usually when we meet we discuss about things that affect the human life in this world and this is our relevance and this is our activity. The mission therefore as we know it is to promote parliamentary democracy and good governance which does necessarily evolve the three branches of government. Parliamentary democracy does not stop at just having parliament as such, but the three branches of government must function as equitably and as well as possible in order for a nation state or a country or legislature, or an entity of that nature, to have what is called "parliamentary democracy system".

Just to inform you that is why we have in Fiji a problem at the moment. Fiji, as much as we had a very nice conference about two years ago, has fallen back into a problem. There is not there now, what you would recognise as the values of parliamentary democracy. Therefore Fiji remains something else other than a part of this community, other than part of this family. But we also have, and therefore we all know, possibly we all know, that Fiji has been suspended from the CPA and also the Commonwealth Secretariat as such continues to follow it up a tab so that it can get the best out of the situation which is actually half military and half civilian. So, we had good Fiji fall off from what we had as a member of this family.

But we also have Bangladesh. In Bangladesh there is a problem even though there are mixed feelings. We have communicated with Bangladesh but the Executive Committee was satisfied in Cyprus that we need to have Bangladesh placed in abeyance because there is no parliament as such which is supposed to be in place from point 'A' to point 'B'. What is in Bangladesh now is, the elections might be done some time in the future; it is not quite known. And you know, our Constitution does stipulate that unless we have a parliament that is running from a certain period to a certain period and we know about elections, then we cannot have that branch enjoy our membership in our community.

But there are also the problems of Zimbabwe and we have had Zimbabwe completely drop out from the Commonwealth. There is an activity now in Zimbabwe by the Civil Society, including some members

of parliament who are actually agitating that they need to come back to the Commonwealth regardless of whether the head of state is interested or not. How that mechanism is going to be forged out and how the Commonwealth Secretariat is going to succeed remains to be seen. But we communicate with the Commonwealth Secretariat and the Honourable Don McKinnon to the extent that we are able to advise what can be done in such situations as is in Zimbabwe.

So, this community of the Commonwealth is a community that needs really preventive measures in order for us to make sure that a member does not fall off. If we can help, let us do it as well as possible. If we can intervene at a particular point then let us do it in order for our member not to be lost for good.

Now, the purpose of my presentation—going to the next one—is to highlight to you how I consider that the challenge of the Commonwealth, as well as the CPA, is actually to continue to be relevant, to continue to be relevant to ourselves, those parliamentarians who are there and to continue to be relevant to the new parliamentarians who come in. We have the resources, human and otherwise, to make sure that such a situation is continued. If we turn over beyond just making sure that we have a democracy, we have a process that goes on. We need to take care of the communication system that we have in order for us to make sure that the various processes that we undertake are actually strong enough to make sure that pillars are there and even more than the pillars.

So, here we look at the possibility of strengthening the CPA through communications. And if you talk about communications, you are talking about the past, the present world and possibly the future world. People today are hooked up through the web and they communicate so profusely, but sometimes we are not quite sure how these messages are effective to the point of making sure that our association is benefiting.

So, I am pursuing this line, and certainly I am joined by many, many parliamentarians who think similarly that we need to have not only the Commonwealth guarded in terms of its values of democracy but also its parliamentary arm, the CPA, does have in place all the time the various structures and processes as well as products that are supposed to be had for the benefit of old or veteran any new parliamentarians.

So, here we have the structure. And for structure (I will present a little later on) we have something that we have built for ourselves that actually takes care of our actions in the association which goes into the process and also our products, the likely products that we have been giving out and the products that we are giving now and some products that we could give in the future.

If we take the CPA structure, briefly so I may say, we find that we have our Constitution very well

designed. It functions very well from the General Assembly to the Executive Committee, the regions, the branches, the members and the Secretariat that is charged with implementing the kinds of goals and objectives for the whole system, for the whole structure to be able to function. However, my question remains, and I have been following up this up: Who knows about this structure? That could be a sarcastic question. Do we know about this structure? Do members know about this structure and how it functions?

Many times I meet sometimes new parliamentarians who do not know the CPA as I know it even though they benefit from it. Many times I bump into incoming parliamentarians even to the parliamentary visits which we have as programmes that do not quite know what happens in terms of our structure. And I have become concerned: Why is it that our parliamentarians . . . Maybe it is that they have not had information or maybe it is that they are not interested. So, I am beginning to be concerned maybe just like you are that we need to have this structure actually known by the members so that they can utilise this structure as well as possible.

The relationship between the General Assembly and the Executive Committee is quite easy but when it comes to regions, branches and members that is where you get a problem of unsteadiness that does not produce the kind of results that we would desire to have, and I will go into that a little later on.

Let us go to the next [inaudible] I must say briefly that from the General Assembly to branch members there is a lot of information that is poured from that level downwards and what we see is, when you as a member go to attend the Plenary Annual Conference, for example, in the Cayman Islands, let us say in 2009 or 2010, then you go back. Maybe there will be three of you: your members and your secretary. My concern is what happens when you go back. Do we have a system in place—maybe some have, some do not. Do we have a system in place where there will be General Assembly materials that will be filtered down effectively to branch members? Does that happen? We need to find that. We cannot just assume. Sometimes members go to a General Assembly they will be huge and very well-designed issues for discussion and indeed very good discussions, but do they filter them down to the other members?

If a House has, let us say 40 members, 3 members go to the Annual Assembly, when the three members come back what happens to the other 20 or, 30- something members in as far as that information of the General Assembly is concerned? Because that is where we actually baptize our policies; that is where we talk about global issues that pertain to our problems; pertain to what we are concerned about. And that is why we say we are part of the global village; we are a part of the United Nations; we are part of the international world that actu-

ally takes care of its own problems and suggested solutions.

Between regions and the branches, this is something that I said this morning I am going to be pursuing quite effectively, I would like to sit with the Regional Secretaries and find out how indeed they communicate with the branches. Is it an effective communication that they carry out or is there a problem? If there is a problem what is it? How can we handle it? For example, let me tell you it may be too early to suggest it. Let me just be critical that I have been in the position of Secretary General for the last six months now and indeed I boast myself that we have communicated to every branch, but nobody knows about it. Quite a few people would know about it., Sso, if I would stay there assuming at your office in London that, oh, every member knows here I am with my team serving them in the services or in the matters that are supposed to be serviced but do they know about it. If they do not know about it: why? Where has that information been stuck? And yet, we will have sent out information to that effect.

And there are several other examples, not only for me. Take away my own example as Secretary General —, new Secretary General, it may not even matter. But there are certain things that we need to have in place in order for us to effectively organise our events, conferences and otherwise, communicating with the Caribbean Region for example. If I do not get effective communication between them, between yourselves and the office, we might find ourselves not in place in terms of timing for something to be achieved.

So, there is a major concern, as far as I am concerned, about the communication between regions and branches because I am not seeing the feedback in London that I expected to see and I would like to begin to see it. So, I would like to see that we work together in order to make sure that we arrive at a very good vertical as well as horizontal communication system.

Between members in the region, some have done some training arrangements to be able to communicate more effectively. Well, we encourage that for sure, but of course training cannot, oh, at the same time take every branch and every one of us. We simply need to say if there will be interest for some branches to train in order for them to communicate on something, on an issue, on an aspect, we encourage that because we know the kind of communication between them will be quite effective. But we have to know about it in order for us to also inform other branches as to what kind of material, what kind of effectiveness is got out of that situation in order for others also to copy or to utilize.

In as far as the products are concerned, ladies and gentlemen,, we find that indeed for the last 90-something, 95 years, 96 years of the CPA we have enjoyed together the promotion of knowledge. When

we come together we consume a body of knowledge in each one of us. Whether veteran or new or in between as a parliamentarian, we find that we are enriched by knowledge. This knowledge comes through literature, much of it, as we started.

For example, personally, I gained a lot when I was studying more and more about the events of the CPA in the past several years. bBy reading that book written by Ian Grey called “The Parliamentarian” from 1911 to very recent years. because I could see some of those who participated were not only expected to participate, but you wonder how they participated. If you knew them from your country you even wonder and say, ‘Oh, this person was part of the CPA.’ You wonder but they were there.

Look at how the Caribbean as well as the African Diaspora in general, as well as the UK, as well as other countries who contributed to the promotion of the anti-apartheid removal in South Africa, many of you. And it is written, it is documented. One can actually follow how members used to argue from the first members downwards to where some countries of the Commonwealth begin getting independence, how they argued for the promotion of universal suffrage in several other territories. It is there. It is in the body of knowledge. It is in literature. This has created common understanding in the position when it comes, for example, to global issues or to regional issues and this is what we have done. But we need to recognise that these are products. I therefore say: what about the contribution that we give to the global world, to the global society. Whereat is it?

I have a number of books in my office that the CPA has produced in partnership with several other organizations. It is there but we still have not tied in how we have given this for global contribution in terms of knowledge. We would like to design that in order to begin for us to trickle down that kind of knowledge coming from the CPA and there are encouraging notes from the Executive Committee to us to begin to affect other people who are still finding the best way to practice democracy in their countries.

Let me go to some of the communication issues, and I think I mentioned some of them earlier, between members. You have individual members, you have members within branches. How do these members actually consume this knowledge? How do they get this knowledge? How do they get this information? We need to be more scientific and talking about embracing change in governance, Honourable Chairperson, we need now to actually go into these areas scientifically to find out how are we actually sharing this knowledge between branches and individual members?

For example, at the CPA Secretariat you have empowered us to produce one publication called “The Parliamentarian” and we do produce it four times a year. You contribute articles. We edit them, we put the flavour of pictures and all of that, and we print it and

we mail it to you. But my concern today, and I am talking very much to Andrew, but, Andrew, we need to move ahead. I want to ask you, where is the evaluation of "The Parliamentarian"? How have you evaluated the document to be able to say scientifically that it is effective when it comes to communication between individual members, branches and legislatures? Is it fine?

We need to find out, for example, between regions I wrote to their dates and invitations to regional meetings and the topics. I would like to suggest to you very, very humbly in the future that I think our regional branches need to be enriched even more. I would like to have seen here some representatives from Asia, for example, from India, from Africa, to learn about what you are talking about at your regional conference. If we cannot do that through actual, physical attendance then we can capture that information from here and actually deliver it to those regions to be able to cross-communicate or cross-pollinate in order for us to share the information.

The information of small countries, for example, is not just for small countries. It is for all of us. When people get affected by the effects of climate change in small countries all of us in the Commonwealth are concerned, or we should be concerned. So, if something gets discussed here, resolved or is brought into consensus, I would have wanted that that information is packaged and sent out to other branches. Later on I will tell you how I would like that we package such information, but for these regional meetings the topics, how we share them, how we evaluate them, how we set even the dates for these conferences is supposed to be aimed for us to share.

I said, Honourable Speaker, that I will be sitting with regional secretaries to assess how indeed we can arrange these conferences. I am going to have to miss one regional conference in one region because they are back-to-back with that of Canada. And then I say why. Why should it appear like that because we should be able to get that information from each of these meetings in order for us to prepare that information for the future.? And the more we share it as much as possible, the better.

I have also said in this thinking that there should be comparative studies for the purpose of sharing in the cultural exchange as well as on issues of gender. We may define how we think about these areas, but if we need to actually . . . —this word one here is supposed to be developed, between developed and developing democracies, I was happy to see on our list of attendees to this conference there will be some Canadians and members from the House of Commons of the UK. I would have liked, as I am saying, more to come into this relationship of saying if there are democracies that appear to us or have done or have developed their systems, then we need to share as much as possible, exchange on various of these issues (there are several issues beyond gender)

and then we can actually produce knowledge for the future in order for us to share.

Between parliamentarians and the public is one level where I create interest that sometimes the public, after electing us, come up to accuse us as parliamentarians that all of these guys are just sitting and, you know, we do not see how effective they are and that kind of stuff. In various societies you will find these uncalled for accusations, but maybe because we do not communicate enough. That is my position. That is my hypothesis. So, between parliamentarians and the public something has to be added. We know that parliamentarians actually communicate with those people who vote for them, the constituents, the members of public, civil society, in their constituencies or in a nation because they have to deal with national issues where they are. If it is a question of health, if it is a question of education, if it is a question of breakdown of health problems, the problems of migration, I have noted everywhere there is a stamp of the immigration in this region is written not valid for employment, so I am going to be referring such stamps in my book later on in the future. It is very interesting.

But you find they have stamped in the immigration stamp of the Cayman Islands or in Barbados not valid for employment. Why? Because migration has caused it to be a problem. And it is a very distinct problem for small states. If you simply find yourself you have filled in the place, why are you going to leave anyway? So, you are very strict and you are right to be very strict because you need to control how indeed social and economic arrangements are supposed to be made.

So, I am saying these are supposed to be national things that cross over from just a government or rolling party to also the position and all the members have to share such national issues as they continue to work together in our nation state.

Let me say that here we have publications we have said and I have posed the question, for example, we are challenging ourselves at the Secretariat how relevant are these publications. Some will say, oh, they are very nice, very relevant. But if we carried out scientific research on them we might find something very surprising. But the actual challenge that remains is, we must bring our publications to something that is more palatable. These days there are computer experts who can actually design for you a publication that appears to be more palatable than before. Are we there? Are we at that level? We are challenging ourselves.

Also, in ordinary mail and email we are, with your permission, working on the web system at the Secretariat that will enable us actually to reach almost every member who comes into parliament in various parliaments or legislatures. So, this year is ordinary mail and email, but how are we utilising this to effectively carry out the interest of our association.

Lastly, we have the known areas of radio, and television, video systems –, what is called the “electronic media”.

I would like to invite you to consider that really with the youth that we have who are supposed to be parliamentarians in the future who must be leaders in the future we must get a way of crossing over to them in order for them to begin to learn about leadership. They go for the electronic media. Where are we in the electronic media?

I have attempted, and succeeded in some aspects, in London to be interviewed by some television houses and we have succeeded in some at least saying something about the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association. It was not there and I got feedback that, for one, they were surprised, those who watched the programme that we were talking about the Commonwealth as well as the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association.

So, we must cross over to the electronic media in order for us to continue to be relevant. This is my position and I know many of our colleagues will know that the younger generation will always want to grab something quickly and maybe if you have prepared that information well they always grab that information in order to utilise it.

Your interest as a person of my age is to close the gap between yourself and that group in order for us to serve society as well as possible. If we cannot cross it through education and communication then we are in trouble.

So, this year I have recommended (as I said in my speech this morning) that we try a documentary for our annual conference. This came out of the idea that, look . . . , At one point, honourable Members, you were in Fiji: , some of you maybe.— When I read “The Parliamentarian” (I was not in Fiji myself) but when I read the Parliamentarian to find out what topics were discussed in the conference in Fiji, it was such useful information, so rich that you could not just trust it to one medium. You would have to apply a multi-media approach in order for you to reach as many people as possible inside the CPA and outside the CPA.

So, I am saying why can we not come out with the documentaries? And I am slowly having to request it because you cannot work, you know? I have to ask it through the Executive Committee and I have to ask the regional bodies like here that that, suppose you did a very short 15 minutes, 20-minute shooting of this conference and you are able to edit it at the end of time with narrations and some speeches and all of that and then put it together with that of Canada, put it together with that of Africa, put it together with that of Australia, the Pacific, put it together with Asia, India, put it together with the UK. Put them together in a documentary of, say, one hour. Those conferences, those documentaries are likely to attract quite a few

people in as far as particularly young people are concerned.

So, that permission has been granted and we want to try it. We have requested that India shoots and we are going to want to supervise them, but we want to have it narrated and edited in London for the best broadcast quality to be had. This is really a composite idea of not only the annual conference but it will go down slowly to other levels of our events and activities.

So, my main concern is taking the CPA to the public. If we cannot take the CPA to the public and if we find maybe IPU will be going to the public before us, we might be proved irrelevant. And if we cannot take the CPA to the public we might be missing the young people who must participate in politics, who must participate in governance. If we cannot take the CPA to the public we shall be losing a lot of information which is supposed to be stored and utilised in the future for research and other purposes.

So, I am requesting that we continue to apply ourselves in this area including, for example, when we will be preparing for the centennial celebrations. We will need people like you, yourselves, to contribute what has happened; , to contribute through the print material what has happened and why; , what are the areas that have been covered; and the interest of the world history and world knowledge is going to say you are the people who contributed. So, we will be getting some committees in various regions to actually begin to pick up the actual things that they think are valuable to be mentioned when it comes to 100 years of the CPA.

In general, I want to say that the Commonwealth mission, as I said earlier we practice within our constitution we simply want to agree. And the spectrum is so wide now that we find that we can accommodate ourselves across continents and across countries easily and want to continue to make this as a value, as a world value. Right now the Executive Committee, I want to report to you, has literally actually accepted (go to the last one, we want to show Her Majesty the Queen. I have passed that one now so go to the next one).

This is a mosaic of how indeed we have been called upon to be interrelated. We no longer consider ourselves as relevant belonging to several of our regions. No because the values that are there are human values to be practiced whether for political purposes or for social purposes, for economic purposes. At least we know there is globalisation. We need to work together.

Here shows a background of the President of Nigeria, Her Majesty the Queen and several other leaders who are attending a conference of CHOGM which is going to be done again in Uganda this year. The purpose is to show how indeed we have been able to mix together beyond culture. The Commonwealth is no longer now an area of subjects and prin-

principles. The maturity is already beyond that. So, the best way is for us to increase the degree of sharing; the degree of exchange; the degree of communication so much so that we can actually assist ourselves and assist others in terms of the best human life to be achieved.

Let me finish with just one example. The common heritage that we all have received through the interchange and exchange and communication of the Commonwealth is such that you find almost no borders between us. I could come here and I get something from you, either legal knowledge or some knowledge in health or some knowledge. We have exchanged a number of expats and expatriates within the Commonwealth very well. Some of it may be called a "brain drain" but nevertheless we have exchanged such people and they have been able to work in the capacity and ways that they have been able to do that within the Commonwealth. There may be complaints or [some may] say, *'These days we do not go to Britain without a Visa and yet we are Members of the Commonwealth'*. There are such complaints that we get, particularly when we arrive at postulation seminars. But the situation has changed as this conference theme simply talks about. There is a difference between 30 years ago, 40 years ago and now. No one actually expected the situation of terrorism as it is. So, who would know about Shija being part of whatever? So, nations have learned to put in the kind of mechanism that would at least assure ourselves that we are in charge of what we have to take care of on behalf of the people.

But together parliamentarians as well as other organisations can continue to work well to make sure that in the Commonwealth we have the best practice and also in the CPA we encourage the best promotional work for solution building, for building consensus, for building understanding and the more we do that the more we create a better world in which to live.

I want to apologise, Honourable Chair, personally for taking that long but it is at heart that I am presenting this subject in this way. I decided to my mind and heart that while I work for the CPA I am going to contribute something that is based on my professional knowledge. My doctorate is in mass communication and I know how to measure through research, social science research, how messages can be useful or they can be useless, how to change messages for who. Is it for women? Is it for children?

I know in Indonesia the conference complaint, particularly the Committee which were discussing about gender issues, a number of Delegates complained that we are leaving our children too much to TV and the Internet. I glued myself there because those who were actually speaking very loud about that problem, that issue, were mothers, were women. And some of us as men wanted to understand that maybe in a more biological way that there is a problem with these developmental utilities that if you leave too much TV and the Internet almost uncontrolled to our

children, particularly the young children, you will be losing somewhere in terms of value and control. That can be shared differently.

But I know in the UK and the United States studies have suggested just that. Do not leave too much TV to your children – uncontrolled TV. Do not leave too much Internet, uncontrolled Internet to your children. How you do it as a parent is something that we in the CPA can always share.

I thank you very much and let me just stand up for questions.

[Applause]

The Chairman: Dr. Shija, thank you very much for that in-depth presentation on the Commonwealth, the CPA and Parliamentary Democracy: How to Improve Communications with the Public.

Are there any other speakers? You can catch my eye by raising your hand. *[pause]* Any questions? *[pause]* You mean that Dr. Shija did such an excellent job that we do not even have one question?

Okay, Barbados.

Senator Andrew A. Bynoe (Barbados): You did say that in Indonesia there was some concern about the effect of TV on attitudes and general upbringing of today's child. Do you think just as within recent times we have come to recognise, rather belatedly, that global warming has put the environment at a great disadvantage? Do you think that in a similar way as we have now approached the subject of global warming that we should look at the effect of TV on our cultures, our individual cultures of our people? I am asking this bearing in mind your experience within your sphere of interest.

The Chairman: Dr. Shija.

Hon. Dr. William F. Shija (London): Hon. Dr. William F. Shija, Secretary General (CPA Secretariat, London): Honourable Chairman, let me be very careful in responding to the question by the honourable Member from Barbados. I am saying let me be careful because these are two maybe related or unrelated subjects., Lbut let me just take generally that the effects of television for quite some time have been measured through experiments, that they do influence or alter some behavioural things in human beings and it differs between ages, it differs between gender, it differs between other aspects of demographical differences.

So, yes, the first concern of a parent, I believe, would be: what type of education do I desire for my children? That will be one question. But the other question which nations also do grapple with is: Wwhat type of education should we give to our children?

. So, we do debate that and we do differ sometimes between ruling parties and opposition par-

ties the way they want one to take further the educational programmes of a country., Bbut, by and large, every parent in every nation always desires that children should be given the best possible education. How? What is the best education? What is it? It has to be defined. So, usually people get down to discuss in the nation as to what indeed is the best education for their children.

Now, in the cause of such concern there should be equal concern also to what extent should children of certain ages, particularly the tender ages, be exposed to television materials without borders, without care. That has been experimented; there are a number of books in the UK and the United States which a lot of organisations have done that research to the point that actually uncared television exposure of various messages could actually influence negatively the young children in how they perceive themselves as adults. So, that is one set if I understood the Honourable Member.

But the other set, yes, I think we have been late in recognizing—and perhaps this is the weakness of scientific knowledge being disseminated to the public. In as far as global warming, climate changes, I think scientists have failed to extrapolate. *[inaudible]* That is why I am dealing with this subject in this way. If you are late to relate your scientific knowledge to the relevant group or to the relevant humanity, then it is likely to be useless knowledge or belated knowledge that is not going to be helpful.

So, for the question of global warming I would have expected that we should have used, positively now in this case, exposure to television events, television things that have been known scientifically to be designed in order for us to learn about global warming and to take the necessary care. And, of course, that problem goes on to industrialization and all of that, but we leave that one aside. Bbut just the general knowledge or the general health care, if you were to take health as one aspect.

So, I think I agree with you – if I follow your line of argument – that television, any media or any medium, must be used as well as possible because that is where the second part of education is deposited.

The Chairman: Thank you very much, Dr. Shija. Bermuda.

Hon. Walter Lister, JP, MP (Bermuda): Yes, my name is Walter Lister and I am from Bermuda and I just wanted to address the point that Dr. Shija raised regarding sharing CPAs with other Members of Parliament.

What has been the standard practice in Bermuda is to, once we go back at our Annual General Meeting we prepare a dossier of information as to what has taken place at this particular meeting or any other CPA meeting and that is shared at the Annual

General Meeting of our CPA Local Branch. The Executive, of course, meet far more often than that, but I think that probably . . . I wonder if the Ddoctor has any ideas of what we can suggest as far as increasing the opportunity to share with more Members of Parliament, specifically some of the younger Members that come on. We have some Members come on for the first term and, of course, often times they look to us senior Members for experience and suggestions. Does the Ddoctor think that we should address that issue?

Just on another point which he just answered very briefly was the young children looking at television and also young children engaging online, the Internet. I think that is very interesting and it is very important that they be guided and directed as to where and how they should go because young people have the ability on the Internet to go anywhere they so desire; it is an open field.

I happen to have two grandchildren who are very young who are at the age now where they will be coming on the Internet, I think, 4 and 6. You know, what they do is they address popular stations on the Internet such as Disney, PBS Kids, Discovery for Kids, and there are very many programmes that help to develop the intellect of young people. It is just a real challenge. It challenges an old person like me so you know what it does to a young person.

I think that you have to be there to sort of guide and direct them because it is very easy to drift off into other areas, but being with children, young children, you keep them focused. I think that the Internet is something which they will use a lot more than we have and it will grow and expand by the use of it by future generations, and if we started with our young people I think it is vitally important.

The Chairman: Dr. Shija.

Hon. Dr. William F. Shija (London): Hon. Dr. William F. Shija, Secretary General (CPA Secretariat, London): Thank you very much.

I think the honourable Member was more giving suggestions than asking me any questions, but certainly I appreciate his point that he is making that for the youth we really must be interested in being with the youth because no political process can go well if the youth would will not be taken on board. And if they are not taken on board you would not have here young senators, young MPs because those are the ones who are going to take care of the society, the country. That is how governance is passed from one generation to another.

So, through Commonwealth days I think our branches can popularize the work of the CPA through Commonwealth Day. We do it ourselves at the CPA Secretariat. We have one day where we invite youth who belong to several countries but they live in London. We invite them and present to them what we do

at the CPA. We give them material and, of course, we share with them just a few things that we know will help them to understand the political environment in which all the parliamentary values that are there being taken in their countries and they like it very much, just a one-day seminar, a full-day seminar with lunch with them and all of that does interest those young men and women very much indeed.

Last February we had two young men from Jamaica, I think both of them were in Jamaica but some of them had travelled from Canada, had travelled from either countries. At least the feedback that we got from them even after they had left was that they got something that was very valuable in terms of knowing what the Commonwealth and the CPA was all about. So, I think this is civic education which we must engage, we must contribute, in order for us to make sure that our societies are transferring the valuable knowledge to the future generations that we need to transfer.

Let me say here, lest I forget, there are countries that are now finding the possibility of getting into the Commonwealth. There are some countries in Asia — there is a country called Burma (these days it is called Myanmar), Nepal, Bhutan. You have some countries in Africa also finding that perhaps they do not have the right positioning in as far as following up global issues are concerned. So, they are trying to come into the Commonwealth.

We have been advised by the Executive Committee that we need to invite them at our annual conferences as observers. So, this year in India we might have observers from such countries. One such country is Rwanda which is neighbour to Tanzania I know it. They have been trying to find their way into the Commonwealth, and I believe in Kampala they are likely to have deposited their application to be part of the Commonwealth. This is because this is simply a wide spectrum of various cultures and practices. We have republics and we have prime ministerial arrangements and yet we fit in.

Let me stop there by saying to the honourable Member that I am going to discuss with him—actually, we have almost agreed that I will discuss with him a couple of things that are going to further enrich what we are planning when it comes to communication between the CPA and the public, and he has bright ideas, wonderful ideas. I am going to get the best advice, of course, from all of you.

The Chairman: Thank you, Dr. Shija.

I recognize Jamaica, Honourable Syringa Marshall-Burnett.

Hon. Syringa Marshall-Burnett, CD, JP (Jamaica): Thank you, Madam Chair.

First, I would like to thank Dr. Shija for his presentation and for that emphasis on communication.

As you spoke, Dr. Shija, I was just thinking in terms of sharing, both among ourselves and with the

public., You know, a few meetings ago of the Presiding Officers in the region, we had a session, a very substantial session., for example. WWe have had many substantial sessions, but the one that comes to mind, because I was more involved in it, is one on disaster preparedness., and I see here where we are doing, similarly: , we are going to have such a session.

And I just thought in terms of your emphasis on communication that if we could have those sessions put together under that theme to share in the region., Wwe do a lot of public education;, we do a lot of other things especially as the hurricane season comes;. however,But it seems to me to be one more source of information that we could share with each other what went on before, what is the current thinking, and it would all certainly assist us further if we got these pieces together in some kind of printed or electronic form that we could circulate. and

Ccertainly, that is something that could be used in schools, andcould be used with the public. Itand could be used among ourselves because many of us here did not have an opportunity to attend that particular conference where it was well aired and, again, we are going to be more up to date two years later and we would have had something of substance between those two that we could share and help us, not just in this region but in other regions that face similar kinds of challenges of disaster preparedness and response. Just a thought.

Thank you.

The Chairman: Dr. Shija.

Hon. Dr. William F. Shija (London): Hon. Dr. William F. Shija, Secretary General (CPA Secretariat, London): Honourable Chairperson, I think this is straightforward.

What we need to put in place is a mechanism whereby the Secretariat actually follows up such meetings as are those who are Presiding Officers. In order for us to be engaged in one or the other, we can provide a model for communication purposes. But secondly, we can advise how, indeed, we can package such information in order to be distributed. because all what Hhuman life is all about is sharing information, and sharing information means you have to either distribute it, or send it, or receive it and that way you will shape the value of the kinds of things that you are concerned.

The area of disaster preparedness has been one of the topics of the United Nations for quite some time and because we are part of that family of the UN we always can propose indeed, first of all, to ourselves that we need to share such information and utilize it. That sharing, of course, must always include expats in those fields in order for us to get the right scientific information.

The Chairman: Thank you, Dr. Shija.

Are there any other questions? *[pause]*
Belize.

Hon. Rodwell Ferguson, MP (Belize): I am Rodwell Ferguson from Belize.

Many times when there is a parliamentarian meeting those that come to the meetings are mainly from [inaudible]

Most of the time when an invitation is being offered, those who attend the meetings are either from the Backbench or the Opposition and whenever they return back to the country, then those who are members of Cabinet and also members of Parliament do not want to listen to what we take back.

So, I believe that at the end of the meeting nothing has been resolved. What can be suggested?

The Chairman: Dr. Shija.

Hon. Dr. William F. Shija (London): Hon. Dr. William F. Shija, Secretary General (CPA Secretariat, London): As far as I know, in our Parliaments sometimes there are hostile and unfriendly relationships, and if you happen to have in a parliament or legislature a hostile relationship, you always definitely get that, that people who that represented you to an event such as a CPA conference would want to not be listened to when they want to present. But an ideal situation, I think, would be the Presiding Officer is going to make it possible for such a report to be received because that is where you share things that are beyond political interest, beyond party interests.

I think if the group would confer well with the Presiding Officer, it is likely that that Presiding Officer is going to make it possible for such a sitting to be carried out and such information to be disseminated to the point that it will be useful.

I do not think if a Presiding Officer is given such request would find it unnecessary or un-useful. I believe any Presiding Officer would allow a situation whereby such information is reported back, it is heard, it is recorded and then it is utilized.

So, while I do not know exactly the situation in Belize, I simply would pray that Presiding Officers would want to make it possible for such information to be used, to be received and used, and it would make a lot of difference between ruling political parties or Opposition parties, Opposition members, ruling members, because that is when you consume international information that is likely to bind all of you. That is how I find it.

The Chairman: Turks and Caicos.

Hon. Donahue Gardiner, MP, JP (Turks and Caicos): Good afternoon. I am Donahue Gardiner from Turks and Caicos.

If I may perhaps just add a bit as to what we in the TCI have decided to do to combat that same

problem that Belize just raised was that we at a recent CPA meeting actually agreed that once you are back from the seminars you would be required to make a report to the Branch, but also at the next meeting of the House that follows your return. You are required, or a part of the Delegation is required to stand up in the Chamber and actually make a report to the House. That is perhaps a way of getting information out so that all Members of the House could actually have an opportunity to benefit from it.

The Chairman: Dr. Shija, would you like to make a comment?

Hon. Dr. William F. Shija (London): Hon. Dr. William F. Shija, Secretary General (CPA Secretariat, London): I think, Madam Chairperson, this is straightforward. and I want to thank the honourable Member very much for this addition because that is how we get packages of information, useful information, channelled into Parliament. And out of Parliament, you get it to the public, because once you get it into the House, the more it is captured by the media, and such information will be output into the public. The more it gets into the public the more it is likely to be useful. This is how I am talking about these relationships.

The Chairman: I will allow one more question and then we will have our refreshments so that we can be on time for the next session.

Turks and Caicos.

Hon. Clayton Greene, MP (Turks and Caicos): Just a comment, really.

In this whole scheme, certainly from the Turks and Caicos' experience, the young children—I mean the grade school children—would learn of a lot of regional organizations, a lot of Commonwealth organizations as a part of their civic programme, but there is no mention in that context of the CPA and I think that is probably one of the first steps that we as Members of Parliament ought to do.

If we can put the relevance of the CPA on the civic programmes in the grade schools, then when a young child sees the CPA, sees the name, sees the General Secretary, sees anybody representing the CPA immediately they will begin to listen and they might find it interesting. But absence of knowledge of what it is, a lot of times information, if it goes out it will pass them by and those are the people that we are seeking, as the General Secretary said, to carry on this whole process of democracy.

The Chairman: Thank you.

Dr. Shija, would you just like to comment?

Hon. Dr. William F. Shija (London): Hon. Dr. William F. Shija, Secretary General (CPA Secretariat, London): Not really. I think the honourable Member simply wants to emphasize this point of civic education.

I know a number of us in various countries sometimes quarrel around how to give civic education that is going to enable even elections being carried out in a more palatable manner now than before, but of course it does not quite often.

But civic education is simply to enable the younger generation to take over the governance values into their generation, into their time in order for such practice to be improved and we are here really as the association, a world association working all the time to make sure that these values are always in place, they are improved where possible and disseminated from one group to another.

So, I really agree with the honourable Member and I would just take up an example of the workshop that was done in Antigua and Barbuda recently on Standing Orders. Certainly, there are a number of subjects that we could work on by simply designing what we need to do, but once we do that, that knowledge is going to stay there and it is going to be utilized. That workshop, I believe, was very successful because it brought the comparative knowledge that is had by the various branches of various legislatures. And the more you talk to each other, the more you discuss about such, the more you see how common you are or how you practice commonly.

So, that would finally be input into civic education or into an educational system as the honourable Member is saying. It will become absolutely useful in the future.

The Chairman: I recognise Dame Jennifer [Smith] from Bermuda.

Hon. Dame Jennifer Smith M. Smith, DBE, JP, DHumL, MP (Bermuda): Thank you, Madam Chair.

[Inaudible] Dr. Shija, I think that is the second or third time that you have referred to the seminar in Antigua that you attended. I think it is opportune to raise at this time that a number of the regional branches were upset that they were not able to access this particular seminar and to be beneficiaries of the knowledge that was exchanged on Standing Orders. And the question was asked, why was it only the OECS countries? If the CPA was involved then the feeling is that Members of the Commonwealth from the region should also have been extended an invitation so that they too could have benefitted.

The Chairman: Dr. Shija.

Hon. Dr. William F. Shija, Secretary General (CPA Secretariat, London): Hon. Dr. William F. Shija: Well, certainly, I do appreciate that it is an administra-

tive question but first of all let me say the interest by the OECS countries to have that workshop was made by them in an earlier meeting than when that was made., in an earlier meeting than when that was made. So, the programme had been agreed and the question, I think, came up in Antigua during the workshop: Who suggested this? And it emerged very clearly that it is them, those branches who actually requested and it was accepted.

So, the planning of that project or that programme was done way, way before. Given the limitation of the kind of funding that was placed on that particular programme, it could only be done with those branches, first of all, who had indicated interest to participate and then secondly to utilize only those funds that were made available at that time.

As the honourable Member would remember, we can only carry out a programme if we have planned it in terms of numbers and funding so that we are able to actually capture what has been planned. So, what was planned was simply for those OECS countries and the partners that we had in place also were interested in that group.

So, what does this mean? It does not mean that other regions or other parts of the region have been closed out. No, actually that is what I said this morning. This is where we come into planning, when we are able to plan in a region to have one or two or three particular events done we can actually plan them well, look at funding, provide the funding in care of them.

I would have loved to have three of such seminars or workshops in place in the OECS countries or in other branches, but for that particular time it was just planned that way and we could not have changed it in a different way altogether.

So, we are just limited—or, I am limited to say indeed what was done. But I have opened up my full spirit to say that there are some of us who have those branches that we think, a young branches in some aspects or another. Let us capture those aspects. Let us submit them as areas of interest for us to refine or to coordinate. In a region we can coordinate such events and we can always look for partners to do such, including getting research [inaudible] persons from within the area and also from other areas, and we can always do that and succeed.

So, I want to thank you very much for reminding.

Hon. Dame Jennifer M. Smith DBE, JP, DHumL, MP (Bermuda): Thank you, Dr. Shija, that's with [inaudible] best with the Executive but you have been able to give the full details.

The Chairman: Well, that concludes the first session. First let me thank Dr. Shija—

[Applause]

The Chairman: — for For his presentation and to wish him every success in his plans for the future and to say that this region is prepared to support you in your work.

I would like to thank members of this conference for being so nice because I am certain the debate is going to get much more heated. I do not know if it is because the sound of my voice is a little bit intimidating but let us give the next Chairman the same type of respect and our conference will run smoothly.

Thank you very much. We will resume at 3.30 under the Chairmanship of the Honourable Syringa Marshall-Burnett, CD, JP.

Thank you.

SESSION 2

Session Chairman: Hon. Syringa Marshall-Burnett, CD, JP (Jamaica)

Democracy and Human Development: The Involvement of the Citizen

Presenter: Mr. Ottiwell A. Simmons, JP, MP (Bermuda)

Mr. Ottiwell A. Simmons, JP, MP (Bermuda): Madam Chair, the Bermuda Delegation is most pleased to present this paper on Democracy and the involvement of the citizen to this most august body—the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association.

Madam Chair, Bermuda is the oldest colony of Great Britain therefore we cannot lay claim to being a Sovereign nation, nor can we historically claim to have been the most democratic country in the world. Notwithstanding this, however, we are able to report that since 1968 we are no longer what we used to be nor are we at this time exactly what we need to be.

We, Madam Chair, are in fact a self-governing colony where the Queen is responsible for internal defence and external affairs. The Queen is represented by a governor. The question of independence or remaining a dependant territory is very much in the hands of our citizens.

The people of Bermuda in the last 40 years have been gradually advancing towards a progressive democratic system that could ensure the development of all of our citizens, and in due course we could possibly claim to be a democracy that could involve all of our people and our resources.

Bermuda boasts of having a buoyant economy with a high GDP per capita and strong growth. We also boast of a high level of employment, high standards of living, strong resources of government revenues and funds to service our communities. We have a very low level of public debt. Aggregately Bermudians enjoy high levels of income and there are

reasonable education statistics that highlight a consistent number of Bermudian high school and university graduates. Bermuda's infrastructure is well developed and tourists and international business are the backbone of our economy. Our nation is one of diverse people and cultures, racially and ethnically. Our population is healthy and we have a long life expectancy.

Government, on behalf of the electorate sets the rules and framework for numerous activities in the country. It can empower various sectors of the population; add or remove obstacles to change; provide various services that are not provided by the private sector, and is duty bound to regulate and monitor private sector businesses, services and charitable service providers, as is the case with, obviously, most democracies. But it becomes most important to us to regulate, in particular, the foreign off-shore companies.

Just a question of the Constitution: In 1968, Bermuda legislated its first written Constitution which resulted from a conference held in London among delegates from Bermuda and representatives of the British Government. Our Constitution has been amended a few times since we have had it. Presently, we are governed by that Constitution Order of 1968.

Madam Chair, it is well to note that Bermuda is an extremely advanced country in terms of its economic and social development. In the case of its political development, however, it is lagging and to some extent stuck in a quagmire, we suggest. I make this statement only in respect to the question of independence. There are a substantial number of persons who are fully supportive of independence. There is also a substantial number who support the notion of a referendum as the only legitimate method by which independence should be decided upon. There is also a rather substantial number of people who are unconditionally in favour of independence.

The government on the other hand has not committed to any special particular method other than to say it will educate the people and then the people and the government will arrive at the proper method to determine independence or no independence.

As far as Great Britain is concerned, it says that Bermuda will be granted independence upon the decision by a majority of the citizens expressing such a wish in the form of a . . . indicated by some method— voting or something.

As it is, colleagues, it is imperative to involve the citizens in the process. The Government of Bermuda established the Bermuda Independence Commission, for short it is called BIC. That was made up of an independent body, not a political party at all, of persons drawn from the widest most represented cross section of individuals, groups, trade unions, employer organizations et cetera, with the purpose of educating informing and encouraging discussion and debate on the subject of independence for the country.

The Bermuda Independence Commission (BIC) had a mandate to promote and organise a national dialogue or debate via the media, public meetings and forums, then also to collect and collate relevant data regarding independence. And also to identify and to procure the requisite services of experts consultants and so on, in all the matters as it pertains to independence.

The commission completed its work in August 2005 and for the first time in Bermuda history, we are proud to say, our Government moved to provide access, not only to the report of BIC, but also to all of the documents, minutes, tapes, and all of the commission's work. These documents and all other information are accessible to the public in Bermuda from our archives, the report, as well as the government website. It is open season—all of the information is out there. This we suggest is unprecedented in the past and we are quite proud to see that people are taking interest in it and they are making reference to the report of BIC.

Madam Chair, a few additional matters connecting us with the whole question of citizen involvement and the road towards a progressive democracy. In 2006, a political pressure group was formed, calling themselves "Bermudians for Referendum." This organization had as its objective, people to become involved in political discussion making. They established a petition urging citizens to sign in support of a referendum to precede any decision on independence. The media reported that the initiators of the petition garnered some 15,000 signatures, and that is substantial, I can tell you, with our small adult population.

The National General Election in 2003, with comparative figures, we had some 29,000 persons voting out of a voting list of 39,000 persons in total. Bermuda has a population of 62,000 and about 50 per cent are adults and older children. Collectively, Madam Chair, these facts are glowing indicators of a country that encourages its citizens to become involved in political discussion making, and also that citizens utilize such privileges.

Madam Chair, it is essential that I just describe what we consider to be a true democracy. And I will not hasten to conclude. A true democracy is really where the majority of the population makes the decision as to who should rule them. The protection of minority rights is critically important. Important is the rule of law that must apply to all citizens. Free exchange of opinion must be encouraged and respected by the authorities. All citizens must be equal before the law. The government exists to serve all of its people. The Constitution must set limits to which government act without the will of the people.

In conclusion, Madam Chair you will be pleased to know, in summary, a democratic government is one where the political power is in the hands and the hearts of the people. The citizen must be involved in every aspect of government. The citizens

must have the power to vote representatives into political office and the right to vote them out if they are not behaving in a responsible manner. A democratic nation is where the government has been elected freely and equally by the majority of the citizens, and lastly, Madam Chair, the citizens must be totally involved in the establishment of that government and the government must always remember the old adage when the people shout "We put you there and we can take you out!"

Thank you.

[applause]

The Chairman: Thank you, Honourable Simmons. And now we will accommodate questions and comments from delegates.

Delegate from Trinidad.

Mr. Harry Partap, MP (Trinidad & Tobago): Thank you Madam Chair.

Let me thank Mr. Simmons for that presentation. I want to make a comment first and perhaps . . .

The Chairman: Would you speak into the microphone a little better please.

Mr. Harry Partap, MP (Trinidad & Tobago): Yes. I want to make a comment first and perhaps Mr. Simmons can . . .

[Inaudible interjection]

Mr. Harry Partap, MP (Trinidad & Tobago): Oh yes, Harry Partap, Trinidad & Tobago.

There are times when the parties that contest for election would proffer a lot of . . . they will make promises of allowing the people to have a say and for the people to be involved in the democracy. Once the party gets into power, they take all kinds of actions and put all kinds of blocks in the way of the citizens when citizens try to be involved, or the citizens say they are not receiving what they were promised.

They use the coercive arm of the State, that is the police, and prevent the citizens from their expression. And it is always that they want to protect the State when really it is to protect the party in power or the government.

Mr. Simmons, what suggestions would you make when our democratic system is being undermined in this manner? It is happening . . . well I do not want to embarrass any country. What I am saying is that it happens.

When Dr. Shija was making his presentation he did mention places like Nigeria . . . not Nigeria, Bangladesh and Fiji. They creep into a dictatorship. People put them there. They elect them on the basis that they will be involved in the democratic process. Once they get in there they take action that is inimical to that same urge to be democratic.

Mr. Ottiwell A. Simmons, JP, MP (Bermuda): You have given quite a commentary there. I tend to agree with just about everything you have said.

If you are asking, however, about a government that sets out campaigning and canvassing, making certain promises to get the people's willingness to vote for them, and once they get in power they forget the promise as if it never happened. I think that is typical of a lot of governments. I could even say my government back home may be guilty of that. Don't go back to Bermuda and tell them Otty said they are guilty, but [laughter] we may be guilty of some of that.

Very often you do not even know what some of the candidates are touting at what we call the doorstep, when they go around canvassing for support. They make all kinds of promises too that might not be their party promise.

Basically, responding to what you are saying, I think that the sooner governments recognise that the power is in the hands of the people and not in the individual who is holding a powerful position, you know, they can only be powerful as long as they have the people behind them. I think if I say any more I am going to spoil it. The power is in the hands of the people and that is where it should be.

Hon. Keesha Webster (Anguilla): Good afternoon, I am Keesah Webster from Anguilla.

From your presentation it appears to me that, in my estimation, Bermuda is quite a utopia. But in Anguilla, and I am sure in other Commonwealth countries as well, even though we have citizens involved in democracy in the sense that the citizens choose the government, we still squabble with the idea of choosing a government based on popularity as opposed to based on issues. We have come to the realisation that it is our culture but something needs to change so that our country can further develop. Could you put some further light on that?

Mr. Ottiwell A. Simmons, JP, MP (Bermuda): I do not know. You spoke about the culture of Anguilla but I think you know once you get into a (quote/unquote) "democracy" a democratic process, and as I heard earlier today, with all of its shortcomings it is the only thing that works better than all the rest of the ideologies I know about. I am a democrat at heart. Started out at one point to be a Communist and a Socialist and the rest of it, but I found out they did not quite work.

With respect to the culture of the people of Anguilla or wherever, I think it is typical of people expecting one thing and government giving another; it just does not quite somehow gel all the time. And I speak as a government official.

In Bermuda we are not quite an exception. Back home we have many situations where we put forth legislation and people protest outside the House and things like that. And I guess it happens to all of

your Houses, you know. But we cannot always yield to every situation. For instance, we came here today and one of my delegates was freezing cold. I did not feel too bad because I was probably so nervous about getting up here to speak that I was feeling the heat! But a couple of them were kind of cold. In other words, given the same environment but it is the psyche maybe, sometimes of the people, like the way you are canvassing, or the way of your political party.

Another point I can say quickly: throughout the Caribbean the parties are usually labour and something else, but certainly always labour for the most part; labour oriented. The moment the labour party gets into power, and I can tell you some, they start legislating things that are not very labour like.

I have been a trade unionist and I have seen much of that—not only (I do not want to call the countries) but they are right here in the Caribbean, you know.

In Bermuda we somehow recognise some of the shortcomings in that regard and we are trying our hardest to show that we are truly a labour party. We are called "The Bermuda Progressive Labour Party" and we try to live to our name as much as we can, with our shortcomings, our morals, our kinks, and whatever. Thank you.

The Chairman: Let me apologise to the Delegate from Anguilla. I did not see your name so I was struggling for a moment to identify you. Sorry!

The Delegate from Turks & Caicos.

Hon. R. Donahue Gardiner, MP, JP (Turks & Caicos): Thank you. I am Donohue Gardiner.

When you speak of the democracy and persons, for example, being in the House seeking to pass certain legislation and persons going to the hilt with a protest on the outside, in our system of representative democracy is there any room, you would think, for a measure of citizens valid initiatives, that may from time to time be presented to the public for them to have a say before it actually reaches the parliament? Certain ideas may be fleshed out in the public by debate and then by a vote as to what the majority of persons in that community might wish to have.

Not only do we look in terms . . . and you spoke of it when you spoke to the question of independence. Not only do we need to look for the subtle will of the people by way of a referendum or something else on that issue, but the subtle will of the people on other issues becomes important and maybe the better way to get there is by valid initiatives.

Mr. Ottiwell A. Simmons, JP, MP (Bermuda): Yes.

I do not know. I suppose there are a lot of ways to get the citizens involved. Most of the time they are quite simple—just by getting each Member of Parliament to meet with his constituents. And that is one of the closest and coziest relationships that you

get in politics between the voter and the person they have voted for. That is critical.

The other thing, I guess, is that when you take it on a broader scale, through your party machinery, a lot of policies should be made at the party level, through your central committee, or whatever you call that group that holds your political party together. They should be good political sounding boards because here you have a core of people who are usually dedicated to the causes of the ideological philosophical purpose that the party exists for. So, I think you could get them involved here.

Once you get outside of that where you are dealing with all members of the public, the opposition as well as the governing party, then a referendum is not a sin. It is not maybe the desirable thing by some parties, given their circumstances. But that is not a sin to have a referendum. It is not a sin to have a general election or a bi-election. All of these are ways that the people are involved in the governance of the country.

Meetings of general, I guess they are called mass meetings, by a government or an opposition, are good. I think the key word in all of this (and I will conclude here and hope I have answered your question) is to educate, inform and get your people involved in all decision makings of government.

The Chairman:Turks & Caicos

Hon. Arthur Robinson, MP (Turks & Caicos): My question to you, Dr. Simmons, is that right now the people of Bermuda are enjoying a high quality of life and a high standard of education as well. Independence: Why would Bermuda want to move towards independence when everything is going good for them now?

My philosophy is, if it is not broken, why fix it?

Mr. Ottiwell A. Simmons, JP, MP (Bermuda): Right! Okay.

I see an anxious hand down here. May I refer your question to my colleague, Senator Caines?

Sen. Wayne M. Caines, JP, BA (Bermuda): Senator Caines, from Bermuda.

I think that the way you refer to independence concerns me on a basic level, and your response was, "*if it is not broken, why would you try to fix it.*" That is the assumption of independence; that the country would go in a less than stellar direction. I think when everyone makes the decision about the governance of a country one considers all of the circumstance.

The Progressive Labour Party in Bermuda has considered everything, that is, economics, the social issues, the educational issues. This is a government that is made up of intellectuals, as well as grass roots people and no stone has been left unturned. We are looking, not necessarily at independence, but at a path that is the best for Bermuda.

We believe that as a government, as a country, we have the necessary tools to govern ourselves on our own. This is something that we have been working towards—not being an independent nation goes against everything that is normal. You have a child, when you grow older you have a natural progression to evolve away from your parents. For us to remain independent for the unforeseeable future is to deny any evolved creature the basis of maturity.

Now, when you have a country that is doing well economically, something that is often said to Caribbean countries or countries in the Atlantic, is that if you become independent you will not see the same level of success that you do when you become independent. Well, let me remind you, before 1998 the country was told that if a Progressive Labour Party Government came in all the international business would leave, that tourists would stop coming to Bermuda. Would you believe that in 2007 we have reinsurance companies, offshore companies clamouring to come to Bermuda? It has very little to do with Bermuda the place, but with effective and prudent governance. And that is the thing we are advocating, not for our party but for the country in general. We are looking at it through prudent eyes, with strong fiscal eyes and eyes that have taken years of planning.

Are there going to be vociferous people against independence? Yes. But we have an agenda and we have to march constantly towards what our agenda is and not what the opposition and scaremongers' agenda is.

Hon. Arthur Robinson, MP (Turks & Caicos): As an individual you can have an agenda; or even as a group you can have agendas, but as you said earlier, at the end of the day it is up to the people. The people have to decide. We as politicians can decide the future of a country, we can certainly direct or educate, but at the end of the day—at the end of the day—it is the people who make the call!

Mr. Ottiwell A. Simmons, JP, MP (Bermuda): That is right! You need not say anymore. Yes, you are absolutely right.

Sen. Wayne M. Caines, JP, BA (Bermuda): Just to interject—there is something that I think I must stress: We believe in the democratic process and something that the honourable Member said earlier. He said that the country underwent something that is called the Bermuda Independence Commission.

We understand the psyche of the Colonial person. So what we did as a Government, we went throughout the entire Caribbean, we set up a commission that looked at independence and how it would affect our country. This is not something that is being done in a vacuum. We went all across the Caribbean and met with people. This commission then gave its findings to the people of Bermuda in an open forum. That is how you educate a people, by giving them all

the available information. Often times it is packaged to people of British Dependent Territories; they are scare mongered into these positions.

We decided as a country to educate our people so that they are able to make an informed balanced decision.

The Chairman: Do I see any other hands?

Any other comments?

Antigua and Barbuda. Bahamas, I'm sorry.

Mrs. Verna Grant, MP (Bahamas): Thank you Madam Chairman. Verna Grant from the Bahamas.

On the question of independence, sir, I do not know if I misunderstood you, or maybe you can clarify it a little bit more. The 15,000 persons you indicated who had voted, that was for . . . is that progressive? Are you still seeking for more support in that regard?

Mr. Ottiwell A. Simmons, JP, MP (Bermuda): I think I either put that incorrect, or you misunderstood. I am not quite sure.

Mrs. Verna Grant, MP (Bahamas): Okay, go ahead.

Mr. Ottiwell A. Simmons, JP, MP (Bermuda): But I think that 15,000 I mentioned were people who signed a petition. Is that what you are saying?

Mrs. Verna Grant, MP (Bahamas): Petition.

Mr. Ottiwell A. Simmons, JP, MP (Bermuda): Right.

I spoke in the context here today that those people were saying 'do you want independence, or not?'

I was trying to say that that was a group of people who were saying 'yes, let's have a referendum before we decide on independence' Okay? That is the context in which I said it

Mrs. Verna Grant, MP (Bahamas): Okay.

Mr. Ottiwell A. Simmons, JP, MP (Bermuda): Now, jump outside the box quickly, and say from my political experience and for the most part these people who started this referendum were quite clearly people who were not for independence. And the point I was making was that all people are given a right under our limited form of democracy to speak and express themselves.

Hon. Walter Lister, JP, MP (Bermuda): May I just add something very quickly, Mr. Simmons?

Mr. Ottiwell A. Simmons, JP, MP (Bermuda): Sure.

Hon. Walter Lister, JP, MP (Bermuda): Also, the largest group of those people were people who in actual fact had been given Bermuda status, had nor-

mally lived in the United Kingdom and so they themselves want to stay connected with Britain.

This clarifies the situation a lot better: Most of those people are Bermudians with status who originally came from the United Kingdom, and my feeling is that if they loved the United Kingdom that much they should go back. But the fact of the matter is that everybody strives to be independent.

Have you ever had a guest who came to your house for a week and it is now four weeks later, and you are still making up beds and laughing in front of their face, and talking like hell behind their backs?

We have been a colony for 400 years. What do you think they say in the Foreign & Commonwealth Office? They don't tell us. You pick the bones out of that one.

The Chairman: Does the delegate from Montserrat wish to speak?

Not now? Okay.

[laughter]

The Chairman (Hon. Syringa Marshall-Bennett, CD, JP, Jamaica): Turks & Caicos.

Hon. Clayton Greene, MP (Turks & Caicos): Might I just ask, where are we? Or where are the Bermudian people and the Bermudian government, and the Bermudian Parliament on the whole issue? Where is the progress coming?

Is there going to be an election that is going to put the question of independence on the agenda? Or is there going to be a referendum?

Hon. Walter Lister, JP, MP (Bermuda): I think my colleague made the point a lot earlier.

We have gone through the progress of looking at it, the BIC Report, and the matter is still in process and when we, the government and the people of Bermuda are satisfied with ourselves we will move forward.

Sen. Wayne M. Caines, JP BA (Bermuda): It is a process that you cannot rush into because this is not something you can afford to fail on. So what we have to do very carefully and strategically—remember we have an electorate; we have young people who are now growing up within the system and we have to make sure that we educate our young people so that everybody has a balanced understanding of independence. And that is why right now we are concentrating on educating our electorate on the pros of independence.

Hon. Clayton Greene, MP (Turks & Caicos): I only asked the question because I was getting the feeling that there was an impasse. But now I appreciate what is happening.

The Chairman: Please to address the Chair.

Hon. Dame Jennifer M. Smith, DBE, JP, DHumL, MP (Bermuda): Madam Chairman, I would like to ask a question. Is the reason for the question because they are looking for an example to follow?

[laughter]

Mrs. Verna Grant, MP (Bahamas): Madam Chairman. Madam Chairman, they need only look to the Bahamas!

[laughter]

[Inaudible comment]

The Chairman: They are getting a third bite of the cherry!

Hon. Arthur Robinson, MP (Turks & Caicos): When I make a decision I always ask the question: 'Is it good for the people? Will the people benefit? How will it affect their lives in the future? The indigenous natives of that particular country, how are they going to benefit when the majority of the investments in the country are actually controlled by foreigners?

What I am saying is that we need to give our people a head start before we go into independence. We need to make sure that our key people control the banks, huh? That our key people own the banks; that we have key people owning airlines. Do you understand me?

The majority of the countries in the Caribbean have foreign investors controlling these key areas in their countries. So what I am trying to get out of this is that if you want to go independent, at the end of the day it is the people—our people—who are going to suffer. We need to really think hard and long. We need to make sure that at the end of the day when we go independent it is going to be our indigenous people who are going to benefit.

Mr. Ottiwell A. Simmons, JP, MP (Bermuda): All right. I would—

The Chairman: Montserrat. . . Sorry!

Mr. Ottiwell A. Simmons, JP, MP (Bermuda): May I answer that question?

Hon. Reuben T. Meade, MLC (Montserrat): Do I have the Floor, Chair?

Mr. Ottiwell A. Simmons, JP, MP (Bermuda): I'm sorry. Go ahead.

Hon. Reuben T. Meade, MLC (Montserrat): I am looking at the topic "Democracy and Human Development: The Involvement of the Citizen." It is all well

and good for Turks & Caicos and Bermuda to have this chat. We can do this afterwards.

One of the things we must recognize is that the citizen, or the electorate, has a say in any decision. But the final analysis is that the politicians sitting in parliament are the managers of the country and they have to guide the citizens in terms of where they wish to take the people. Too often we hear rookie politicians making the comment that they must always go back to the people to find out what they want. They do not know what they want. And it is the reason why they have put the politicians in place; the managers, to guide them along a particular path and if they are not satisfied, they change them. So, if it is independence, or whatever it is, the politicians have to take the lead and move things forward on behalf of the citizen.

The Chairman: I think this has been a very robust discussion on this issue. May I also say that every political party goes to the electorate with what is generally called their "manifesto" in which they offer the citizenship certain things and whomever is elected, I think, the citizens have a right and an obligation—not just a right, but an obligation—to hold that party to what it has offered in that manifesto. And I am quite sure citizens can find many creative ways of ensuring that whatever is carried in that manifesto is to some extent, if not fully, at least partially delivered to them and that at a day of reckoning they make their decisions on the next manifesto from whomever.

So, I really feel that citizens do have an obligation, not just a right, that democracy is not the ballot box every five years or whenever the election is called. But as participatory democracies we are all striving for. And let us remember that it is a work in progress, we have never arrived there. And we will not ever arrive at that situation where we have gotten it all and conquered all. It is a work in progress and every generation, the same generation, has to reinvent itself in many ways and try all over again to make it work.

Let us also encourage citizens in their efforts to ensure in their democratic obligations. Of course we expect that to remain within legal boundaries and in good order, but certainly citizens are not lost of creativity to find ways and means of ensuring that the promises made in those manifestos are in fact carried out.

I thank you for a very spirited afternoon. I want to thank our Speaker. Will you join me in thanking him?

[applause]

The Chairman: Have you any housekeeping messages for us Madam Secretary?

[Inaudible comment]

The Chairman: Yes.

Mr. Chairman would you like to share some information with us?

Mr. W. Alfonso Wright, MLA (Cayman Islands): The welcoming reception is right here at the hotel at 6.30 pm, downstairs, right next to where we had lunch today. It is in the area where the bar is, right there between the inside area where the glass doors are and the outside area. We will be co-mingling in and out of that area.

Tomorrow morning, being the tour day, we hope to be able to leave here at about 8.45. Now, tomorrow is going to be a full day away from the hotel since the tour will take us pretty much around the Island. We will have lunch; our Speaker is taking care of us for lunch tomorrow in her district, North Side.

After that, we are coming back to the hotel via the North Sound by sea, so we will all be coming across by boat. We should be stopping at one of our sand bars for about 45 minutes to an hour, and then over to Morgan's Harbour which is in the West Bay area. So, we will make a complete circle around the whole Island and should get back to the hotel somewhere around 3.30 or 4.00 in the evening.

People are welcome to go into the water. The sandbar is somewhere around three to four feet of crystal clear water. If you want to swim with the stingrays you will have that opportunity and people are also welcome to stay on the boat. So please wear swimwear. No one will be forced to go into the water, but I will tell you that it is an opportunity you may not want to miss. It is quite an experience and the weather is looking to be just right for the sandbar. Tomorrow night is a free night, so indulge yourselves and take in some sun. The issues of Wednesday we will take up with you sometime during the tour tomorrow evening.

That is it for announcements. I do not know if there have been any issues with anyone, any problems you need resolved. We will be happy to deal with them for you.

You are staying on the Seven Mile Strip. The majority of the night life entertainment is right along this area here. Mostly when you step out of the hotel you turn left. There are a lot of things to do throughout the whole strip here, if there are any questions the Secretariat or the protocol officers, or any of us can make you know what you want to do.

We figured we would give you all some time to either catch up with some acquaintances or just relax, or if you want to visit some of the establishments on your own, you are quite free to do that—no restrictions. You cannot walk about without any clothes on! You can go bare feet wherever you want to go, but put on some clothes.

Thank you.

The Chairman: Okay, I take it that you do not have any pressing issues to address to the Chairman of the

Organizing Committee. Thank you very much. You are a great attentive audience. Have a wonderful evening. See you tomorrow.

[applause]

SESSION 3

Chairman: Hon. Ishmael A. Roett, MP (Barbados)

THE ROLE OF A SECOND CHAMBER IN LEGISLATURES IN THE CARIBBEAN

Presenter: Mr. Conrad Lewis (Belize)

The Chairman: The presenter will have ten minutes and others will have five minutes, please.

We are hoping this morning that everybody will be involved in this topic, even those that do not have a second chamber. I am sure that there is much you can say about the advantages or disadvantages of having a second chamber.

Mr. Lewis, please.

Mr. Conrad Lewis: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

My role this morning is primarily to present some provocative ideas and thereafter we can have an interactive discussion in relation to the merits or the merits of what I am about to present.

We are all aware that the system of government in the Caribbean is best described as a product of the region's historical ties to Great Britain, which was once an imperial and colonial power and later bequeathed independence to its colonial possessions in the Caribbean during the second half of the twentieth century.

So, when the English-speaking Caribbean Colonies of Britain gained their independence, a variation of the Westminster system of government was adopted by the newly independent states. But what was not imported is that constitutional infrastructure known as an unwritten constitution, which in the context of the British system created a sovereign parliament as its main feature.

All Caribbean state constitutions are written in which the foundation of the infrastructure of governments are clearly laid out. Instead of a supreme parliament the Caribbean states have a supreme body of laws known as the Constitution from where the legitimacy of our system of government is derived.

In most of the Caribbean states, the Constitutions call for a bicameral legislature—an elected House of Representatives or a House of Assembly, and an appointed second chamber known as the Senate. The Senate is commonly referred to as the upper house while the elected chamber is known as

the lower house. But regardless of such designation the elected House is the superior chamber.

The superficial hierarchical designation of the Senate as the upper chamber, as we may be aware, is a carryover from Westminster. Recall that the House of Lords was, and continues to be, a chamber for the upper class that was there in the past, at the behest of the Crown. Also recall the bitter, and at times deadly, struggle between the House of Commons and a determined monarch, supported by the Lords, who insisted on retaining absolute power. The conflict was continuously fueled and refueled at various times along the journey of political evolution.

Recall also that the Crown's wishes were expressed through the appointed House of Lords and the layman's aspirations were expressed through the elected House of Commons.

However, the Parliament Act of 1911 curtailed the powers of the Lords to reject the financial budget of the government and was further gutted by the Parliament Act of 1949, which set strict limits on the rights of the Lords to delay legislation and removed the rights to reject financial legislation. The two Acts of Parliament have been very influential in the kind of legislative practices that have largely regulated the relationship between the elected and unelected chambers in the Caribbean.

Now, let us look at the rationale for bicameralism. The principle of bicameralism has had a long history. The proponents of bicameralism defend it by advocating that it is necessary to achieve a parliament that is truly representative of the people that in a way it is not achievable in a unicameral legislature. They further advanced the argument that a properly structured bicameral legislature ensures that representation goes beyond winning a simple majority of votes in one election, and that it also encapsulates the state of electoral opinion in various cross-sections of society. Bicameralism is also claimed to be an assurance that the law-making process is not exercised in an arbitrary manner.

The fact that Caribbean countries are unitary states, the rationale for bicameralism is significantly different from that of federal states even though some rationale of their reason of existence (*raison d'être*) intersect in areas pertaining to function and purpose.

Political scientists and other pundits believe that the functions of an effective Senate are thus:-

1. To ensure adequate representation of the people of all states or regions where it is necessary;
2. To balance domination of the House of Representatives by members from more populous states, districts and regions;
3. To provide representation of significant groups of electors not able to secure the elec-

tion of their members to the House of Representatives;

4. To act as a House of review with responsibility for expressing second opinion in relation to legislative and other proposals initiated in the House of Representatives;
5. To ensure that legislative measures express the considered view of the community and to provide for opportunity for contentious legislation to be subject to electoral scrutiny;
6. To provide for adequate scrutiny of financial measures, especially by committees considering estimates;
7. To initiate non-financial legislation, as the Senate sees fit;
8. To provide protection against a government introducing extreme measures for which it does not have broad community support or mandate;
9. To probe and check the administration of the law to keep itself and the public informed, and to insist on ministerial accountability for the government's administration;
10. To exercise surveillance over the executive's regulation-making power;
11. To protect personal rights and liberties which might be endangered if there was a concentration of unrestrained power in the House of Representatives;
12. To provide effective scrutiny of governments, and enable adequate expression of debate about policy and government programmes.

What is the reality in the Caribbean?

Against the backdrop of the above-stated criteria, the reality in the Caribbean is considerably different. Besides having equal status in terms of complete jurisdiction over its privileges, immunities and power over its proceedings, a close scrutiny of bicameralism in our region reveals that the Senate, in practically every jurisdiction with a bicameral legislature is primarily to complement the House of Representatives.

In Jamaica, Bahamas, Barbados, Trinidad & Tobago, and other sister states, the Senate is controlled by the majority party in the House of Representatives and it has no jurisdiction over money bills and money motions. However, financial matters have never been considered the purview of any Senate under a bicameral system in the Caribbean. Further-

more, Bills may be sent to the Governor General for his assent without being passed by the Senate.

Belize has gone a little further by amending its Constitution in 2002 to first remove the automatic majority that the ruling party enjoys in the Senate. The Governor-General now appoints six Government Senators, three Opposition Senators and three Independent Senators. Secondly, the amendment conferred statutory powers on the Senate by ensuring that certain acts of government cannot be validly done without the approval of the Senate.

The powers and functions of the Belize Senate are to:

- (a) Approve any bill to alter any provision of Part II of the Constitution by a simple majority; (Part II covers the protection of fundamental rights and freedoms).
- (b) Authorize the ratification of any treaty by the Government of Belize, including any treaty for the final settlement of the territorial dispute between Belize and Guatemala;
- (c) Approve the establishment in Belize of any military base of operation from any foreign military forces;
- (d) Approve the appointment of an Ambassador, a High Commissioner, the Chief Justice, a Justice of the Supreme Court, a Justice of the Court of Appeal, the Auditor General, Director of Public Prosecutions, Members of the Integrity Commission, Members of the Elections and Boundaries Commission, the Contractor – General and the Ombudsman;

The President of the Senate shall have a casting vote in the event of an equality of votes in respect of any business other than matters referred to in (d) above—that is, the appointment of certain government officials.

It is apparent that in almost all Caribbean states with bicameral legislatures the Senate plays a supporting role to the House of Representatives. The Senate serves as an instrument of government to top qualified persons from among the general public to serve in Cabinet when the skill or expertise is not found in the House of Representatives.

In relation to providing a forum for persons, organisations, interest groups, et cetera, that would not otherwise have representation in the House of Representatives, the Senate in the Caribbean has largely been a channel for their views and input into the legislative process. Member states with a senate consisting of independent senators can attest to that reality.

Due to the non-elected nature of the Senate in the Caribbean, it is very reticent to venture outside of

its comfort zone where the issue is not clearly defined by the constitution. It fears that any action it might take which is not guaranteed under the constitution is suspect and might be challenged in Court. In 2004 the Senate of Belize appointed a special select committee to investigate the management and investment portfolio of the Belize Social Security Board and to make a final report and present it to the Senate. The Court is now being asked to rule on whether the Senate has jurisdiction and also to have the report quashed.

Today in the Caribbean, the Senate has no clout to match the dominance of the House of Representatives. There is simply no legal framework for that. It cannot ensure that legislative measures it takes express the will of the people because the House has the final say; nor can it provide adequate scrutiny of financial measures since it has no jurisdiction over financial matters.

In terms of protection against a government introducing extreme measures for which there is no broad community support, the Senate is again helpless. The elected House of Representatives can ignore the pleading of the Senate because the Senate does not have the constitutional wherewithal to put brakes on a runaway House.

Regardless of legislative scrutiny over the affairs of the executive branch of government only the House in many, if not all, of the countries can effectively scrutinize the activities of the government. This, of course, is also contingent on the size of the backbench and an effective Committee system. However, the Senate as a deliberative body can debate any issues it so desire. If its proceedings are broadcasted then it can impact the psyche of the nation.

What is also noteworthy is the ability of the Senate to conduct its debate in a less partisan fashion not heard of in the House of Representatives. It provides an atmosphere for a more critical and incisive scrutiny of Bills and other matters originating in the House of Representatives. This might be as a result of the Members of the Senate not being accountable to electoral constituencies. In Belize, from 2003 to present, the House has accepted all amendments to Bills proposed by the Senate.

In conclusion, it is quite apparent that the second chamber in the Caribbean is effectively a duplicate of the House of Lords without the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council. It is a repository for political associates of the political parties. It is a talk shop without teeth and a window dressing forum for participatory democracy.

If the region is to embrace change in the way we do business to engender efficient government, a dialogue needs to ensue to put a critical lens on the parliamentary system that the region has so effectively and efficiently used to advance their agendas for many decades. But there is a democratic deficit that needs to be bridged. Participatory democracy in the Caribbean is at a crossroad. An effective second

chamber can be one avenue to widen and deepen our democracy.

Thank you very much.

The Chairman: Thank you so much, Mr. Lewis.

I will now quickly place some very interesting points raised by Mr. Lewis: I am sure that one stuck with you, that in many Caribbean territories the senate is a house without teeth. Earlier, I said that I would really like some of the others, especially from the other territories who do not have a senate, to also make comments, so it is open to the floor.

Any comments? Just raise your hand, please.

Mr. D. Shane Gibson, MP (Bahamas): Shane Gibson, Bahamas.

Generally, my impression of the upper chambers, as we call it, is that the senate is basically a rubber stamp, particularly, since the members of the senate are not elected and they are appointed, I do not think you will find many instances when senators would actually oppose any piece of legislation that goes up to them from the lower chambers.

Of course, I believe that is important, in a sense, where you have the benefit of having persons who are able to scrutinize, in addition to the members of parliament, bills going through the senate where they are able to recommend changes and amendments. And changes are important to legislation that perhaps members of the lower chamber may miss during their debate.

For instance, in the Bahamas, the way it is setup—and we are actually going through a little constitutional challenge right now because of the way it is in the Bahamas. The Senate is supposed to reflect the balance of Parliament. And, of course, we have 16 Senators who are appointed. I think it is 9 by the Prime Minister, 4 by the Opposition, and 3 by the Prime Minister in consultation with the Leader of the Opposition. I think this is the closest the election has been in a while, and we actually ended up with 23 to 18 in parliament, with a parliament of 41, which means that when you look at the numbers it should be 9 government senators and 7 opposition senators.

But, of course, you know, there is a little challenge going on where the Prime Minister is saying he does not necessarily have to appoint senators to reflect the balance of the House, he could just appoint them as he sees fit. Once he consults in consultation, in some instances, I guess, it could be interpreted as, *'Once I mention it to you and I intend to do it; that is consultation'*. So, that is a challenge we have now.

But, basically, I believe unless we get to a point where senators are actually elected like members of parliament, I do not really see them—I mean, they serve a useful purpose in that you have additional scrutiny, but I do not think they are really getting full value for the dollar and full benefits of having a senate in place.

Senator Andrew Bynoe (Barbados): Mr. Chairman, this topic really has been exercised in the minds of parliamentarians for a pretty long time. Perhaps I could refer the meeting to a 1982 consultation, as it were, headed by Lord Shackleton as chairman out of the UK, at which time there were some seven delegations in the UK, India, Canada, Zimbabwe, Barbados, Malaysia and New Zealand that looked at this subject. And I would recommend that all members of this assembly take a look at the document that was prepared.

The document is captioned as “The Role of Second Chambers: The Report of a Study Group of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association.” And as I said, in this document this subject really consumed the members for four days. It was felt that the four days was insufficient, really, to bring some conclusion to the matter.

It was also recognised that the senate as a second chamber has a very important role, or could play a very important role in the practice of good government within any country.

There were instances cited of the example of 1975 when the second chamber in Australia brought down the Australian government—not that that will happen with us here in the Caribbean because as appointed, very often the majority by the ruling party, not many of us would want to bring down our government. Thus the statement that the second chamber has no bite and has no teeth is one that we ourselves as appointed senators should be concerned with.

What is our recommendation then to our various governments? I believe that yes, because the second chamber is an essential part of the democratic process within our countries, we ought then to be looking as to how the senate could have more weight in the day-to-day running of our countries. And perhaps the suggestion that senators ought to be elected is one, I believe, that we should be concerned with.

Thank you.

The Chairman: Jamaica first and then Turks and Caicos, please.

Hon. Syringa Marshall-Burnett (Jamaica): Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

While I would have to agree with some of the comments of the presenters, I also think that what a senate is established to do is a function of the constitution. You must put in the constitution, if you have an upper house, what you want or how you would want the structure and functions of that body.

I would say that my experience has been that it is an evolving house, and it is taking its own shape and frame in many of our countries in the Caribbean, which have some similarities but some differences.

In Jamaica, for example, one of the constitutional roles, other than being the review body, is to ensure that no piece of legislation on the constitution itself—that is, no part of the constitution that is deeply

entrenched—can pass the senate without both sides having an agreement built. Whereas in the runaway elections you could have three-quarters—and this has happened in Jamaica—three-quarters of the house could be on one side, and it has happened for both parties already. So, they could pass and change some deeply entrenched clause in the constitution. It cannot pass the senate without someone crossing the floor. And the ratio of senators between the opposition and the government was worked out for that purpose, so that no deeply entrenched piece of the constitution, two-thirds majority, they must cross the floor of the senate in order to do that. So your constitution can build in certain safeguards.

When we tried to have the law passed, for example in Jamaica, to establish the regional final Court of Appeal and to break the linkage with the Privy Council and the opposition disagreed, it was the President of the Senate that was taken to court, not the lower house. It was the President of the Senate because in our system in the legislation, for example for the opening of parliament, it is a meeting of the Senate to which the House is invited.

So there are little variations there. There are several statutory bodies that not only report to the House but must report to the Senate, and our presenter named some of them, that have similar bodies in Jamaica. So, your constitution must very clearly state what it wants its senate to do and how it will be structured and how it should function.

In our discussions for constitutional reform, the people want a larger senate. They are very happy, I must say, with the functions of the senate at the moment, and they want a larger representation; they want independent senators, and they would not mind them elected, but in a special way. They do not want them to have a constituency because they feel that that would encroach on the independence of the senate. But they would like to see a slate of persons put forward.

For example, they want the ratio maintained and each party to put forward a slate. So, if each party is given, say, 5, 10, 15, whatever, you would put forward a slate and they would select from that slate who they would wish, but maintaining the ratios for both the opposition. They also wanted independent senators that the Governor General would appoint, not anyone else. So these are variations and the senate is not always a rubber stamp.

Up to last week in our senate we voted against something that the lower house did, and I can tell you better than that. The opposition, except for one person, voted with the government against what the lower house had done, and that happened up to last week. I am not saying that it happens very often, but in our system that opportunity is there and it happened as recently as last week.

Many very important bills, money bills, are very important but they are not the only important

ones. For example, bills that deal with security, because our Attorney General is a senator, they all originate in the senate and we have also debated bills that originated from submissions of the Opposition.

So, you must put in your constitution and in your standing orders, I repeat, the structure and the function of the body that you create. And you must listen to the people in any constitutional reform to hear what it is that they would prefer to have in that second body, or, for that matter, in their lower body, as you call it. We are hoping in our revised constitution we will get rid of this upper and lower and this opposition and government that we talk about it. Maybe majority and minority and things like that.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman. These are just three examples. I could give you some more of the situation there.

The Chairman: Thank you.
Turks and Caicos.

Hon. R. Donahue Gardiner, MP (Turks and Caicos): Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Before I make the statement that I had intended to make, I am just wondering whether persons may give an idea as to whether in their respective jurisdictions, their respective senate, the persons who appointed the members—or who nominated the members for appointment—could then have them withdrawn from time to time as they may see fit, because that may be one of the reasons why the senate is seen as a rubber stamp and not something with any substance.

The Chairman: Oh, yes. That is a characteristic, I would say, of Barbados, that the government appoints 12 senators in Barbados and there are 7 independent senators and, unfortunately, most of us, say only 2 opposition senators. But those 12 senators who are appointed by the Prime Minister could be withdrawn at any time.

Does that answer your question?

Hon. R. Donahue Gardiner, MP (Turks and Caicos): Yes.

The Chairman: I speak for Barbados. In other words, they seem to have to follow government's policy.
Bermuda first . . .

Hon. Dame Jennifer M. Smith, DBE, JP, DHumL, MP (Bermuda): I will wait until you are finished.

Hon. R. Donahue Gardiner, MP (Turks and Caicos): Okay, well, what I wanted to say is that the Turks and Caicos, being an overseas territory, we, unlike Bermuda—all of the others do not have a second chamber. However, in most of the others (Turks and Caicos most notably) we have got appointed

members in the unicameral system that we have. What that does is to give the appointed members the same position as elected members. An appointed member may be made a minister, and an appointed member's appointment lasts for the duration of the parliament.

One of the things that we had at our last constitutional talks with HMG was whether or not we should have a second chamber. The report of the Constitutional Commission at the time, from the view of the people, was that we should not. However, we thought that it was something that we could manage, therefore we actually pursued it at our several rounds of talks in London. But the more we discussed it the more we saw that the position we have with appointed members in the House, as opposed to having a separate chamber, is not really going to give us the bang for the buck that we may need. And we decided in the end to stay with what we have, albeit we increased the numbers of appointed members by a whopping one.

So, we have got now four appointed members in the House, two of whom are appointed by the Premier, one of whom is appointed by the Leader of the Opposition and the fourth is appointed by the Governor.

That is the comment that I would wish to make at this stage. Thank you.

The Chairman: Thank you.
Bermuda.

Hon. Dame Jennifer M. Smith DBE, JP, DHumL, MP (Bermuda): Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I served in the upper house in Bermuda, the Senate, for nine years, so I have a little experience about it. It is an appointed house; it does have limited powers because it is appointed. It is the upper house but the lower house has all the power.

As the upper house the main role is, as a second chamber, to give a second and often a less confrontational look at legislation. I can tell you, that over the years that has been a very important role, not just because sometimes things have been pointed out in the second chamber, but sometimes government itself has forgotten something or omitted something and they have the opportunity in the second chamber to fix whatever it is they have found.

They cannot obviously thwart government business, nor can it hold up financial bills. But it can delay and in that delay give time for reflection.

One of the members of cabinet must come from the senate. It can be a maximum of two members but one must, and that is so that there is that connect between the upper house and the cabinet and the lower house, as a minister.

In our senate five members are appointed by the governing party; three members are appointed by the Opposition; and three members are appointed by the Governor who are deemed to be independent

members. Now that will show you that, at any time, if the governor's appointed members side with the Opposition they can actually overrule the governing party's senators. However, usually they side with Government and usually there is no thwarting of the business. But it is a delicate balance and it is that balance that allows the chamber its effectiveness.

The lower house tends to be more of a confrontational cut and thrust. Whereas, the upper house, who meet at a round table—and they often say that it is “that meeting at the round table” as opposed to across the floor, that leads them to having a more deliberative turn in their discussions.

We have found that the upper house is an important part of the parliamentary system. There have been, from time to time, discussions by people who have wanted to get rid of it, but that has never come to any real fruition because the public itself finds the difference between the two to be an important part of the discussion of the parliamentary system, and they get to understand it better. And I can tell you, having served there, that it also serves as a very good training ground for members who may be candidates in later times, and so both parties use it in that manner as well.

Thank you.

The Chairman: Bermuda, if I may ask you a question.

Do you have any instances where a senator disagrees with government policy?

Hon. Dame Jennifer M. Smith, DBE, JP, DHumL, MP (Bermuda): Do you mean a government appointed senator?

The Chairman: Yes.

Hon. Dame Jennifer M. Smith, DBE, JP, DHumL, MP (Bermuda): I can think of one occasion and that person was not reappointed. And that is one occasion since 1980.

But, you know, as people who belong to political parties know, when you disagree with Government you do that in caucus, you do not do it on the Floor of any House.

The Chairman: Montserrat first.

Hon. Joseph Henry Meade, MLC (Montserrat): Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

I have come from a jurisdiction, like most other dependent territories, where the unicameral system is in operation. I have a major concern having heard that in the independent territories there seems to be a variation in the operation and function of the upper house. My concern is, where there seems to be serious conflicts or differences between those houses, how is the conflict resolution situation dealt with? I need to know just how it is.

The Chairman: Would anyone care to answer that? David?

We are honoured to have Mr. David Thompson join our delegation from Barbados. David is the Leader of the Opposition in Barbados, and that is the best person who could answer that question for you.

Mr. David Thompson, MP (Barbados): I do not know about that. I have not thought about that. I think, perhaps, if I were to add to the discussion, I want to stress what may be viewed as some of the roles that senators play which are important in our parliament.

For example, having a senate has assisted considerably in a very practical way in us being able to get a quorum for the public accounts committee. Where members of cabinet have very heavy workloads and cannot perform those additional duties—and this may be so with other standing committees and select committees of parliament—senators basically perform a very important role in ensuring that we can get a quorum; that we can get those committee meetings going, and that the work of select committees and standing committees can actually function effectively.

I think the point made by Dame Jennifer about the role of the senate as an incubator is also critical. There are some people who will dive right into politics, but there are others who may need an opportunity to serve probably at the level of senate to gain the confidence and strength of purpose to get involved. Therefore, I think from that point of view the senate plays a very important role.

And it also gives the Prime Minister, in forming a government, the opportunity to line up individuals who may have special talents and abilities to bring them into the cabinet so as to widen the scope of options available to him. So I think those are important areas.

I cannot think offhand of situations in which there was a conflict between the House and the Senate. I can think of occasions in Barbados where the senate has exercised its delaying powers in respect of bills that it did not think were properly drafted, or had sections that they wanted reviewed. And they have the right under Barbados Law, I think, to exercise those delaying powers for six months. We have also had situations in which, as a result of objections in the senate, bills have been sent to a joint select committee of both parliaments for consideration.

In other instances, we have had, I believe on one occasion, a proposed constitutional amendment which was not able to proceed because of the failure to get the required two-thirds majority in respect of entrenched provisions. So, from that point of view the senate can also be useful where a government—and we have seen this happen in Barbados before—had a commitment to a particular action. In this respect it was, I believe, the acquisition of land which Govern-

ment had entered into an arrangement with a private individual and then changed its mind. And since the Cabinet had agreed they did not want the matter destroyed on the Floor of the House, it was passed there but the Senators were prepped and primed to have the matter dealt with appropriately when it got into the upper chamber. So it can work both ways, and I think those are some of the areas in which the senate performs a useful function.

Mr. Conrad Lewis: Mr. Chairman?

The Chairman: Mr. Lewis would like to make a comment.

Mr. Conrad Lewis (Belize): In response to Montserrat's question, we have to look at it within the context of the fact that government is elected to govern. And the constitutional arrangement—I am talking specifically of Belize—is such that the House or the elected government will always have its way.

We have prescribed in our constitution and standing orders that any conflict between the elected House and the appointed Senate is finally resolved by the House of Representatives by having its way.

The Chairman: And that is in your constitution?

Mr. Conrad Lewis (Belize): That is in my constitution.

The Chairman: Trinidad and Tobago, please.

Sen. Professor Ramesh Deosaran (Trinidad & Tobago): Mr. Chairman, this subject of the senate will not go away.

We in Trinidad & Tobago have had two constitution commissions and widespread public hearings, and in both instances, the result has been rather ambiguous, similar to the Privy Council issue.

But I believe in the near future, parliamentarians will have to fall necessarily on one side or the other in order to reach some determination as to whether the role of the senate should be: one of representation of various interests; or the accommodation for expertise in certain, specific matters of public affairs because a combination is not always possible; or whether you want a group of senators who can be so independent from the lower house, so as to help correct some of the mistakes and accidents which might have taken place in the electoral process, because there are some what we might call deficits through—

The Chairman: Could you explain that for us?

Sen. Professor Ramesh Deosaran (Trinidad & Tobago): Yes, that is what I am trying to do—through the electoral process in that you elect politicians.

And a politician in the Caribbean experience is one who can represent himself on the platform effectively; one who knows something in practice about human relations, how to win friends and influence people on the streets and so on. That might not necessarily be a noble price in terms of expertise, but somebody who is very useful to the party and who brings in the votes in the lower house primarily. And that has been said quite clearly by prime ministers, especially ours. So, in the election for the 36 people that we put in the lower house you can visibly see what a politician is.

I can afford to speak so because I am an independent senator in our senate.

[Laughter]

Sen. Professor Ramesh Deosaran (Trinidad & Tobago): I have been appointed under the Constitution (section 40, I believe) by the President in his own absolute judgment.

We have had instances—and it is good to know the experience of the senate across the Caribbean because, quite innocently, we confuse the theory of the senate with the practice we have been hearing. The theory being, as I said, the expectation that there will be a mature level of wisdom drawing from the concept of “senate” from its Greek origins, meaning wisdom; a group of bald headed, grey bearded men advising the rulers.

That has certainly changed in the sense that we in Trinidad & Tobago have an obvious duplicity of the lower house. And to support my friend opposite from Belize, I believe. If any senator, government or opposition (with due respect to the gentleman on my left who is from the Opposition in Trinidad) if at all he or she disagrees with the policy from the government or the opposition, that will be his last day in the senate—

[Laughter]

Sen. Professor Ramesh Deosaran (Trinidad & Tobago): —as has been very obvious in recent experience. But to cut a long story short (because I know this is going to be a very complicated issue) we have to decide.

From my experience as an independent senator, I think we need a senate, but from the delegate of Jamaica (she has put it quite clearly) we need to put it structured and constitutionally endowed. Otherwise, leaving it to the discretion of either the opposition leader or the prime minister, the temptations are too great to resist not having purely party loyalists way and above the required expertise to make the senate very valuable as it should be both in theory and in practice.

Thank you, Sir.

The Chairman: So, are you saying, then, that the senate should be drawn from professional people without party allegiance?

Sen. Professor Ramesh Deosaran (Trinidad & Tobago): That is the way I would like to go, but you will need a second level of discussion to make sure that the election results are also taken into consideration. As I said, if I elaborate on that, it will take us a very long time. But just to put the point that you cannot do it in a way to ignore the election results, neither can you do it in a way to elect the presence of the opposition as a check and balance in the Westminster-type system that we have.

From my point of view, you need a senate and it should be based primarily, if not totally, on the rule of expertise to help the legislative agenda and to bring better value in the context of the accidents that might happen in election process to the public interest.

The Chairman: Thank you so much.
Jamaica.

Senator Prudence Kidd-Deans (Jamaica): Thank you. Madam President represented—

The Chairman: Your name, Ma'am?

Senator Prudence Kidd-Deans (Jamaica): Senator Prudence Kidd-Deans, Opposition Senator from Jamaica.

She represented most of my thought process, but did I hear you say earlier on in regard to Barbados that you can be removed from the senate during the duration of parliament or at the end of parliament?

The Chairman: No, the duration—

Mr. Conrad Lewis: Any time.

The Chairman: Yes, any time.

Senator Prudence Kidd-Deans (Jamaica): Anytime?

The Chairman: Any time, yes.

Senator Prudence Kidd-Deans (Jamaica): Well, I beg to say that there is a difference in the Jamaican system in that even if you disagree with your “party” you are entitled to remain in the senate until the duration of parliament. You may cross the Floor and become an independent senator, if you so wish. But because the constitution provides, in our case, 13 for the government and 8 for the opposition, you could not add to either side therefore you would have to be independent.

Just to say that our senate is a little bit different in the sense that as Madam said, we can make recommendations to the lower house. And there are

times when we do stall because the debate is so powerful it causes the government to really look into certain matters for amendments to be made, and we get results from that. Sometimes there is a bit of cut and thrust and the hostility exists between individual senators on both sides. Notwithstanding that, however, these matters are reviewed and sometimes go back to the house and on a few occasions come back to us. That has happened before.

But, all in all, I would say that our Senate—but I think from the recommendations and the criticisms from the member for Belize and others that, in fact, perhaps we really need to look at reviewing our constitution and demanding from government that if we are to be appointed as senators we must do so with a certain knowledge that we have the right to review, as is theory, to review properly, situations that can improve the system of government.

Just recently, as Madam Senator said, we had a situation whereby all opposition and government members voted on an issue, save and except for one dissenting voice from the opposition.

Two years ago I voted against my own party by abstaining on a certain issue that was of importance to me, and I was not chastised for it or else I would have resigned on the basis of principle.

And I think that the time must come whereby we must not allow ourselves—because the very thing we are criticising the lower house for in terms of controlling us, we must have the guts, we must have the will and the fire in our belly to say that if we disagree fundamentally with an issue or a party or the government we must stand ready, even to resign on that principle. And I think that is the only way you can find these changes occurring in the old structure of parliament.

Thank you.

The Chairman: Thank you.
We have Bermuda.

Hon. Walter Lister, JP, MP (Bermuda): Thank you.

I would just like to speak to the question of senators and their appointments to the senate.

When I first went to parliament some years ago, there was a case whereby a senator had been appointed to the senate by the government of the day, and he disagreed with the government and therefore he voted against the issue.

There was no clause in the Bermuda constitution which gave the government of the day, or the premier of the day, the right to withdraw that senator. However, at the next opportunity, when there was a constitutional review there was put into the constitution that a person who is appointed by the government of the day or the opposition of the day has a right to withdraw that person from the senate at any time.

I think there are two questions that come into play here. There are times in the parliamentary proc-

ess where matters of conscience do come into play, and I think that is probably maybe an isolated case. But I think if you are sent to carry a message from the government you should carry the message of the government because you are representing the government, and if you are representing someone else you are not doing the job which you are sent to do.

But I still hold in the back of my mind that position of conscience whereby someone feels so strongly that they could not support the issue. I think then the government has to take a second look at that and say, '*Fine, if this is an isolated case and a sincere case we can go forward.*' But just to obstruct the message with the message you are carrying defeats the whole process of having a senate because you are sent there to carry the message forward from the government of the day.

I would just like to ask a question of some of those chambers, some of those parliaments with only one chamber. How did that come about in your countries? Was that the practice before you went independent? Those persons that are still dependent colonies, could you give just some insight as to how you operated prior to the present status?

In Bermuda the situation is quite clear. We had two chambers all the time, as long as we had been there, and so therefore we are continuing the same process. As most of you know, we follow the parliamentary process very closely as opposed to the republic.

The Chairman: We have Turks & Caicos and then Cayman Islands.

Would you like to answer the question?

Hon. R. Donahue Gardiner, MP, JP (Turks & Caicos): First to answer the question, in Turks & Caicos Islands (TCI) we have actually always had—since the days of the old vestry system—a unicameral system with both appointed and elected members. That arrangement was finally formalised in about 1976, and it was actually carried forward in our legislative council at the time.

So, to answer the question, yes, we have actually always had a unicameral system with appointed and elected members.

I am not sure if I should make my point or I should allow other persons to answer the rest of the—anybody else who may wish to answer the question.

The Chairman: Let us hear Cayman Islands.

Mr. Cline A. Glidden, Jr., MLA (Cayman Islands): Thank you. Cline Glidden from the Cayman Islands.

Obviously, being from a dependent territory or overseas territory and having a unicameral system, this discussion is quite interesting. What I really find interesting is the differences that we do have in the

region, and especially based on the stated fact that it was modeled from the Westminster system.

When we look at the Westminster system and refer to the “upper house” we tend to see that senators are usually selected as retired parliamentarians, very senior individuals that, like you said, sometimes are selected and appointed for life. We see that as being done because they are seen as the upper house to provide checks and balances over our younger more dynamic elected, in some cases less experienced, lower house.

We have heard here in the Caribbean that we have an upper house, in some cases, that is used for a training ground. And it strikes me as a bit of a contradiction in terms to say that we have an upper house to provide checks and balances that is being used as a training ground. So, you are training up to move down. That tends to create some confusion.

But it is also interesting, too, to hear that the premise that the senates tend to be selected on is that they are providing checks and balance, but then they are also under a mandate to carry forward the wishes of the government.

So, my comment is that it appears, in many cases, the senate is used to give the perception of providing checks and balances, but it is actually just a rubber stamping exercise, because we see that if you are not carrying out the wishes of the government then you are going to be removed. So, while those from the public are not in tune with how it is operating, one will assume that there is some sort of checks and balance there but the government has the mandate and the senators are basically in the category of either you cooperate and carry that forward or you will be removed by the government of the day.

So, the question would be as to what level of checks and balances under that system it would actually provide.

The Chairman: Montserrat.

Hon. Joseph Henry Meade, MLC (Montserrat): Thank you, Chair.

We also have the unicameral system historically as a colony. What we tend to find happening is that with the cut and thrust of politics, legislation will come before the House which is not necessarily proper legislation. And we may not have the wherewithal at that stage to deal with looking at what the minority side of the House has to say. So government can, in fact, pass legislation which is very incomplete.

One to two ways which we can deal with it in our unicameral system is to have a select committee of the House where we can bring in other expertise to look at the legislation in a non-confrontational manner. The senate, if we were to go that route, would then provide that non-confrontational discussion on bills which could then be passed back so that we will have better legislation coming forward. That is the way we see it in Montserrat. Thank you.

The Chairman: Could you get that in a system where you have a two-party system?

Hon. Joseph Henry Meade, MLC (Montserrat): Yes, because one would anticipate that once it goes to the senate, despite the fact that you have two parties, they are not discussing in public. It is not: ‘*Let us talk for the sake of impressing our constituents. Let us deal with it on the basis of what is before us*’ and looking at the legislation very closely and then taking it back to the law house. So it has some benefits from where we sit.

The Chairman: Belize.

Hon. Rodwell Ferguson, MP (Belize): Rodwell Ferguson, Belize.

Belize is now contemplating having an elected senate carrying of the way forward. But after listening to all the participants today, I believe I can go back and advise my Prime Minister of the way forward.

We were wondering if we can have a general election and parallel election for senators, but now I can advise him that you can have your general election first and whichever party wins then you have a general election for the [inaudible] vote for the senators, the majority party having the majority and the opposition having the minority. So I think I can advise him now what to do.

The Chairman: So if you have an election for senators and you have the opposition party with the majority in the senate and the government party in the lower house with the majority, what happens then with legislation?

Hon. Rodwell Ferguson, MP (Belize): That is why I am saying that after the election you will know exactly which party has the majority. Then that party will decide. The ruling party will put up so much candidates and the opposition party will put forward so many candidates and the entire country voting for them.

So anybody can represent a party and say, ‘*I want to go as a senator*’. But at the end of the day there will be only, for argument’s sake, four opposition senators and maybe 8 on the government side. But anybody can contest the election. You understand me?

Hon. Walter Lister, JP, MP (Bermuda): How many senators run from each party, the winning party or the opposition party?

Mr. Conrad Lewis (Belize): For Belize?

Hon. Walter Lister, JP, MP (Bermuda): For the government. How many senators?

Mr. Conrad Lewis (Belize): Six on the advice of the Prime Minister; three on the advice of the leader of opposition; one on the advice of the churches; one on the advice of the trade union and NGOs; and one on the advice of the business community.

Then the senate has the option to elect the president from within or without. If the president is elected from within, he or she has his or her original vote and a casting vote in matters relating to appointment of certain government officials. If elected from without, then the president only has a casting vote.

The Chairman: So how many government senators?

Mr. Conrad Lewis (Belize): Six [inaudible] senators; three opposition and three independent. So the government is not assured of a majority.

Hon. Walter Lister, JP, MP (Bermuda): Just to raise a point of clarity on the question that was just passed: Is the honourable member saying that following an election the government of the lower house then have an election of the upper house? But should not everyone or anyone be able to run for a seat in the senate or upper house as well? If that is the case, could you not end up whereby the senate is of one party and the government is another?

But the point I think should be stressed is that the lower house should be the house which controls the power at the end of the day.

Hon. Rodwell Ferguson, MP (Belize): Yeah, I agree with you 100 per cent, but as I said earlier, if the majority wins then they should be given the privilege to appoint or to elect the majority of senators.

The Chairman: Okay, Jamaica. And you will have to be short because we want to be really to time.

Hon. Syringa Marshall-Burnett, CD, JP (Jamaica): Syringa Marshall-Burnett, President of Jamaica Senate.

Although we have had legislatures for a very long time in the Caribbean, as independent countries and governance we are comparatively young.

I would like to suggest to all of us that we see our systems of government as works in progress and we are trying all the time to effect a better kind of governance in that we are not reluctant to test new ideas and to listen to what other people are saying.

I will give you one example. In the constitutional debates—and we had town meetings right throughout the country and so on—the people were asking for a larger senate, an independent senate. So, the prime minister of the day decided to name two persons that would be completely independent. Out of his 13 he elected 11 as government and he elected 2 and named them independent and said: *'You are there not to listen to government. You do what you*

want to do.' And we tested that for five years and it worked very well. One came from the public sector and one came from the university.

They were free to participate, to say what they want to say and vote where they wanted to vote, too. At the end of the day, we were very pleased with how that—maybe it is a reflection of the persons who were selected and so on, their maturity, but it worked very well and so we have actually tested that.

I am pretty sure that when the Constitution is finally revised in that area that we are going to have independent senators. They will not be named by the Prime Minister. They will be named by the Governor General or the President because we are also changing our monarchical system to a presidential system. But it will work so we must not be reluctant to test new ideas and to see what kinds of accommodation.

Again, another thing in the senate, if you can indulge me, a civil society and the general public have been able to come to the senate and delay bills because, you know, a bill was taking like three years. Since that the differences and the changes globally that had occurred had affected some of the content of the bill. So, the stakeholders in that particular area came to the senate and asked—the bill was already on the senate floor—if the bill could be delayed while they, you know, reflect and consider. That was civil society, the stakeholders. It was a financial bill and we had a whole slew of financial legislation. So the senate can put the bill in committee, just a committee of the senate—though we prefer the joint select committees—and give that stakeholder another voice, another chance, and so the bill was amended in certain very important areas.

So the crux of my statement is we should not be reluctant to think about new ideas, to try new ideas, test them to see if they work and let our system of parliament evolve in response to the needs of our own people.

Thank you.

The Chairman: Okay, thank you so much.

Very quickly, just one quick question I have to ask you. The two senators who were given freedom, I need to know, how did they vote when it came to voting?

Hon. Syringa Marshall-Burnett, CD, JP (Jamaica): They voted most times with government, but they did not vote with government all the time.

The Chairman: Oh, I see. Not all the time.

Hon. Syringa Marshall-Burnett, CD, JP (Jamaica): Yes, and they did not speak the government line, you know. Yes.

The Chairman: Okay.

Hon. Syringa Marshall-Burnett, CD, JP (Jamaica):

Well, one of the ways that we try to resolve our differences with the lower house is that we have caucus and so on.

The Chairman: Okay, thanks. Thanks.

Hon. Syringa Marshall-Burnett, CD, JP (Jamaica):

They never came to caucus.

The Chairman: Thank you.

Hon. R. Donahue Gardiner, MP, JP (Turks and Caicos): Mr. Chairman . . .

The Chairman: Quickly . . . One minute, please.

Hon. R. Donahue Gardiner, MP, JP (Turks and Caicos):

There is just one quick matter that I wanted to raise picking up on what my friend from Belize had said and I think Trinidad had mentioned earlier in regards to ensuring that the will of the electorate that is reflected in the elections take effect.

One of the things that we considered in our constitutional talks with HMG (Her Majesty's Governor) two years ago when we considered the establishment of a senate was how we would get persons to the senate. The line that we were leaning on going down was having parallel elections at the same time for the senate. However, elections to the senate will be by way of a party list, and so therefore the party that won the majority of votes in the general elections, for example, if they won 60 per cent of the votes, then the first 60 per cent of the persons on their list would then become senators.

Obviously, we did not go down that road because we thought that better not to actually have a senate. But that is where we were actually taking the discussions at the time.

The Chairman: Thank you.

Andrew, could you be very quick?

Senator Andrew A. Bynoe (Barbados): Very, very quick. Just to throw out two new ideas. Following on from the Honourable Marshall-Burnett from Jamaica, I want to throw out these two new ideas.

When we look at the senate, perhaps one of the things we ought to do is give the senate the power to petition persons so that we can get the best advice on certain matters.

The second thing is . . . I will throw this one out. I think that we do need a school for parliamentarians. There is a lot that we need to find out and revisit, a lot of history, that one parliamentarian wins an election but he does not know anything about the history, does not know anything about the laws when he come in and we make a lot of mistakes. We do need a school for parliamentarians.

Thank you.

The Chairman: Thank you so much, Andrew.

I am sorry that we have come to this point, but at this point I must ask Mr. Lewis to sum up. And you have two minutes, please, to do so.

Mr. Conrad Lewis (Belize): In any discussion pertaining to the relevance and effectiveness of a senate, I believe that it must be guided by three factors: one is the prevailing social political circumstances where we evaluate if the political culture is a subject political culture or a participant political culture.

In a subject political culture the electorate tend to defer to the wishes of government. Whereas in a participant political culture, the person, the individual person, strongly believes that he or she can make a difference.

In the same vein, we have what you call "non-stead actors", civil society. Do we have a civil society with the efficacy to ensure good and effective governance? These are questions that need to be asked.

Secondly, what is the type of discipline in all political parties? Do we have political parties where discipline is strict, where room for dissent is restricted? Or, do we have political parties where dissent is tolerated, where difference of views can be ventilated and then come to a consensus?

Thirdly, which I think is very, very important, is, we look at our structure. Is an elected senate or an effective senate relevant? Or can it work under a unitary system as compared to a federal system of government?

Let us take a global perspective and look at where we have effective senates under the federal system or under a unitary system of government.

I feel that these three points can offer us guidance in arriving at viable senates.

The Chairman: Thank you so much, Mr. Lewis.

[Applause]

The Chairman: Thank you, ladies and gentlemen. That was really an interesting debate. I am sorry that we could not go on all morning but, unfortunately we have to take our break now.

Before we go, though, I must really, on behalf of you, congratulate the Cayman Islands Branch for a wonderful day yesterday. I am sure we all enjoyed ourselves.

[Applause]

The Chairman: Thank you so much. We will be back here at 10.45.

SESSION 4

Chairman: Hon. Michael D. Lett, MP (Grenada)

LAW ENFORCEMENT AND INTERDICTION: REGIONAL COOPERATION

Presenter: Hon. Samuel W. Bulgin, JP, QC (Cayman Islands)

Hon. Edna M. Moyle, JP, MLA (Cayman Islands): [I am going to ask members] to please speak into the microphone. Once you have completed speaking or asking your question, would you please turn off the microphone for us. Thank you. I am certain we are not going to have any more problems with that for the rest of the conference.

The Chairman: Ladies and gentlemen, good morning. The next topic on the program is Law Enforcement and Interdiction: Regional Cooperation.

I am Michael Denis Lett, Deputy Speaker from Grenada. This topic will be discussed or presented by Hon. Samuel Bulgin, QC. After his presentation I will entertain questions and comments.

I now ask Hon. Bulgin to take over.

Hon. Samuel W. Bulgin, JP, QC (Cayman Islands): Thank you Chair. Good morning ladies and gentlemen.

I have been asked to provide an observation on the issue of law enforcement and interdiction from the perspective of regional cooperation. Of course, it is my pleasure to do so. I think that, as Henry VIII said to his 7th wife, *I shan't keep you long*.

[Laughter]

Hon. Samuel W. Bulgin, JP, QC (Cayman Islands):

The principle of regional and international cooperation has been accepted by our countries as fundamental to the growth and development of an individual territory as well as the region as a whole; accordingly, whether in respect of culture, economics, sports, education or other framework, the advantages of partnership are readily apparent. Certainly, in the field of law enforcement and interdiction they are no less so. Therefore, while historically this was seen as the purview of the national Courts and individual jurisdictions, it was quickly recognized that criminals know no borders. Research has shown that in terms of cooperation, the earliest attempts to provide assistance to foreign law enforcement authorities was by way of extradition treaties, one of which was signed as far back as 1844 between France and the Netherlands and which also spoke to the issue of obtaining evidence.

Of equal significance in this context is the fact that in 1959, the European Convention on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters was agreed in Strasbourg. This is described as one of the first major agreements on mutual assistance, the aim of which

was to ensure that States afforded each other the widest possible means of cooperation. Since then, this theme of wide cooperation has been repeated throughout such international and regional agreements.

Gradually, of course, this meant that assistance evolved in response to the need for more effective and practical assistance between countries, and so assistance between countries is no longer what I would describe as "passive paper assistance" within national borders. The need for robust, active and continuing assistance is now fully accepted.

A further significant development in the area of international cooperation and mutual assistance is that in 1988 the UN Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances was adopted in Vienna. The Parties to the Convention expressed their deep concern at the steadily increasing inroads into various social groups made by the illicit traffic in narcotic drugs. They quickly recognized that such traffic is an international criminal activity, the suppression of which demanded highest priority and that the eradication of this traffic is the collective responsibility of all States. The coordinated action within the framework of international cooperation is therefore of immense necessity.

In addition to the usual extradition and mutual legal assistance, the UN Convention also provides for other forms of cooperation. It stipulates that in appropriate cases and if not contrary to domestic law, the parties should establish joint teams to cooperate in conducting inquiries relating to the movement of the proceeds of drugs and instrumentalities.

It further allows Parties to conclude bilateral and multilateral agreements or arrangements to enhance the effectiveness of international cooperation.

Indeed, it requires each Party to take legislative measures to ensure that it has jurisdiction in respect of such offences extending to vessels bearing its flag or registered in its State. By extension, a Party which has reasonable grounds to suspect that a vessel flying its flag, or not displaying a flag for that matter, is engaged in illicit traffic may request the assistance of other Parties in suppressing its use for the purpose of illegal trafficking of drugs.

Adherence to this Convention has determined the basic models for our local drug enforcement legislation and is still a standard for law enforcement cooperation across borders. For our part, the Cayman Islands gave effect to the Convention by its Misuse of Drugs Law which provides the legislative underpinning for law enforcement action such as stopping, boarding, diverting and detaining ships of other Convention countries and which are engaged in illegal drug trafficking.

In order to further strengthen our ability for "functional cooperation", the Cayman Islands has also embraced the Shiprider Agreement as part of our domestic legislation. This Agreement, among other

things, enables US and Cayman law enforcement teams to work together in Cayman's territorial waters to combat drug trafficking involving the shipment of drugs usually from South America and elsewhere into the United States.

This Agreement—which was not without its fair share of controversy because, amongst other things, it provided for over-flights, ship-boarding and of course, ship-riding—was eventually embraced by just about all regional countries. This willingness by the region to coalesce measures to combat trafficking in narcotics, even in the face of mounting criticisms by some of our people, especially as it relates to the question of sovereignty, is tangible demonstration of our resolve to partner each other to fight this scourge of using our maritime waters for trafficking drugs. Indeed, statistics have confirmed that in a given year an average of over 100 tonnes of cocaine and marijuana have moved through the territorial waters between South America and the Caribbean en route to the United States.

On a regional level we have been developing our own systems and processes including those necessary for determining and refining the effectiveness of our mutual assistance pathways. This very important framework of regional law enforcement/interdiction is supported by several pillars of which perhaps one of the most important is that of mutual cooperation, not just between regional partners but also hemispheric, including the Caribbean and the Americas

Some have suggested that perhaps the most useful starting point from which to examine any regional initiative, including law enforcement is with the Treaty of Chaguramas which is the modern genesis of the Caribbean Community and Common Market (Caricom).

It was out of this ongoing desire for member countries in the region to move "lock step" that the idea to deepen and enhance the region's security gained momentum.

Indeed, after several discussions, attempts and vacillating, the Caricom community in 1997 promulgated the Bridgetown Declaration, or the Barbados Plan of Action as it is commonly referred to.

The Plan has as one of its central aims the issue of justice and security. In fact, the Plan expressly recognized the inextricable link between a stable and prosperous economy and the rule of Law.

It was in that context that Caricom formally expressed its concern with the growing strength and capabilities of transnational criminal organizations and the deleterious effects these could or would have on the economic and democratic systems of member countries.

From that recognition grew a resolve amongst regional partners to collaborate in combating transnational organized crime including the scourge of illegal drug and firearms trafficking. Of great significance is the fact that the Bridgetown Declaration was also

signed by the then United States President, William (Bill) Clinton, evidencing the partnership and support of the United States in providing technical assistance and training to the Parties to the accord.

The Plan in general deals with a number of broad areas with specific subgroups detailing the actions required and agreed. In the area of justice and security and by extension, law enforcement, countries have pledged to encourage transnational law enforcement cooperation and to promote multi-agency collaboration, on a domestic as well as regional level.

In the area of arms control, there were pledges for, among other things, the identification of a national point of contact in each country, including law enforcement officials to deal with firearm trace requests, investigative assistance and law enforcement intelligence.

It is worth bearing in mind that for any sustainable assault on criminal activity and transnational crime to be effective, we must be able to successfully prosecute the perpetrators, and that a necessary underpinning or a necessary component of this effort is the availability and willingness of potential witnesses and other participants in the criminal justice system. It was therefore no surprise to anyone that the Barbados Plan of Action contemplated and embraced a Witness Protection Programme.

To ensure effectiveness, the Plan also speaks to the recognition by the parties of the need for greater cooperation between security forces in the region to deal with illegal arms trafficking and other destabilizing threats. Not surprisingly, the parties to the Plan readily appreciated that no one nation could deal effectively with these threats. The above recognition propelled the regional parties to the Plan to commit to a Regional Security System (RSS as it is commonly referred to) and to permit member countries to bring in forces to assist one another as needed.

Mindful of the global position and that criminal activities transcend territorial boundaries, the regional parties also agreed to work together to strengthen maritime interdiction, thereby enhancing the ability of member States to cooperate in maritime law enforcement.

In more recent times, the issue of money laundering and the financing of terrorism as well as acts of terrorism have taken on increasing significance globally and by extension regionally. It is clear from reading the Bridgetown Declaration that the architects thereto were visionaries. It was this vision that readily informed the inclusion of terrorism and money laundering in the Plan. Given recent media reports we do not have to look very far to see why as a region we have an unrelenting obligation to pay due attention to these phenomena.

I daresay, the imperative to pay close attention to what is happening, particularly in relation to alleged terrorist activities, is even greater when as a region we stop to consider the potential impact on one of the main pillars of our economy, namely, tourism.

Indeed, according to one former Caribbean diplomat, if persons from this region were stupid enough to even hallucinate about getting involved in terrorist activities (such as the alleged JFK plot), Caribbean businesses and tourism could pay a huge price therefor.

A necessary off-shoot of the Bridgetown Declaration is the Regional Task Force on Crime and Security which is charged with the responsibility of examining the major causes of crime and recommending appropriate measures to combat issues such as illicit drugs and firearms as well as acts of terrorism.

One of the three main areas of focus of the Task Force is the pursuit of multilateral initiatives for international security and capacity-building through institutional strengthening, shared surveillance and other forms of assistance. The report on the framework for the Task Force was underpinned by more than one hundred recommendations of Attorneys General and Ministers of the region with responsibility for national security. The Task Force appreciated that security threats, concerns and other challenges in the hemispheric context are multi-dimensional in nature and scope and that its work, in order to be effective, must take account of this.

A recent development in this context is that in June 2005 CARICOM agreed to enter into a Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty on Serious Criminal Matters. The main purpose of the Treaty is to increase cooperation in mutual legal assistance among Caribbean countries in respect of criminal matters and to combat criminal activity. Approximately 10 countries have already signed the Treaty, which will eventually come into operation as soon as it has been ratified by at least five signatories. This, of course, will be a further important development in the area of regional cooperation.

Against this background, reflecting on what has been said so far, some of the relevant questions that might be asked are, how far have we come? What progress have we made? and What does the future hold for us as a region?

Some important achievements over the last few decades include the launching of the Caribbean Customs Law Enforcement Council ("CCLEC"), headquartered in St. Lucia and which comprises membership from the Caribbean and Latin America as well as Canada, France, Spain, the United Kingdom, United States and Netherlands and having as one of its principal objectives the provision of cooperation in the prevention and interdiction of illicit drugs and other prohibited and restricted goods through the region. CCLEC's effort is part of a multi-agency collaborative approach with other agencies such as the police, Interpol, the Association of Caribbean Police Commissioners, the RSS as well as the UN Office of Drugs and Crime.

Other important achievements include the enhanced regional interdiction efforts buttressed by the Shiprider Agreement mentioned earlier, as well as

similar bilateral and multilateral cooperation agreements. These efforts are being aided and strengthened by other initiatives such as training opportunities and typologies conducted by agencies such as our own Caribbean Financial Action Task Force and similar regional bodies.

Additionally, member States and associate member countries such as the Cayman Islands continue to participate in numerous ongoing regional initiatives that cover mutual cooperation in law enforcement relating to the interdiction of traffic in narcotic drugs, immigration control, fisheries protection, natural emergencies, search and rescue, customs and excise control, pollution control, natural disasters, prevention of smuggling as well as combating threats to national security. But perhaps the single most important achievement is the continued open channels of communication, and the dialogue and discussion which ensue.

And so, of significance going forward is the need for ratification of the Caribbean Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty in Serious Criminal Matters by all member States; further strengthening of regional criminal justice systems; the establishment of an effective criminal justice protection programme for vulnerable witnesses and, of course, the strengthening of our regional security system.

Ladies and gentlemen, if we can somehow manage to pull these different strands together into one cohesive effort and be able to garner and maintain the political will, I am confident that the Caribbean region will continue to be recognized as one village where the only threats to our stability continue to be those caused by the decibel levels of some of our music boxes, the occasional over-application of our jerk sauce and the inconsistency in the West Indies battling.

Thank you.

[Applause]

The Chairman: Thank you very much, Hon. Bulgin.

Our presenter has informed us that there is an increase in the drug trade and statistics have shown that over 100 tonnes of drugs are moved from Latin America to the United States—

Hon. Samuel W. Bulgin, JP, QC (Cayman Islands): Through the Caribbean.

The Chairman: —and that criminals know no boarder. Therefore it is incumbent on each one of us to get laws in place to deal with this situation.

Ladies and gentlemen, the Floor is now open for comments.

I recognize Jamaica.

Mr. Lenworth M. Blake, JP, MP (Jamaica): Yes sir.

During the Royal Cup, or prior to, great effort was made to put serious security in place for the hosting of this Royal Cup. Not all of our Caribbean states were involved in the hosting of the Royal Cup, but some of the arrangements that were put in place I believe should be extended to other states.

Do you have any idea if there is any plan to expand those security arrangements to other states for further security?

Hon. Samuel W. Bulgin, JP, QC (Cayman Islands): By other states do you mean regionally or beyond the region?

Thank you sir.

I am not aware of any immediate plans to extend, as it were, those security arrangements. As a matter of fact, there is one school of thought which would claim that some of those arrangements have been relaxed to a larger extent. If you recall the visa arrangement is one such initiative that has fallen away. But there are other underpinning arrangements that were worked out by the regional security systems. I think they operated out of St. Lucia at the time, and it has been considered prudent to keep those in place and, of course, to monitor the development as we go along and see whether there is need for it to be fine tuned and improved.

Of course, we are all optimistic because of what is happening, because of the revolving threats (if I might call it that), we need to be able to not just maintain but to look for ways to improve the security arrangement we have now.

The Chairman: I recognize the Turks & Caicos.

Hon. Arthur Robinson, MP (Turks & Caicos): Robinson from Turks & Caicos.

With respect to the Witness Protection Programme, as we all know the Caribbean is becoming smaller and smaller every year. The world now is pretty much a global village. In terms of protecting witnesses who come forward to testify against criminal entities and individuals, how do you see law enforcement throughout the Caribbean protecting those witnesses, I should say for the duration of their lives? Because you are not going to be able to prosecute all that is involved. There will be other elements out there pursuing these witnesses. Is there any plan? Is there a map for protecting one?

Hon. Samuel W. Bulgin, JP, QC (Cayman Islands): Thank you.

Truth be told, I do not think the Caribbean region is moving quickly enough to address this very worrying trend.

It is important for any criminal justice system to operate effectively that you have persons who are willing to come forward and give evidence and, of course, which would result in successful prosecutions. It is common knowledge among regional members

that we have a lot of instances where witnesses have been shot, killed or otherwise intimidated by accused persons or persons connected to them. So that has the potential to severely compromise our criminal justice system.

The Caribbean Community CARICOM, has been (for want of a better word) flirting with the Criminal Justice Protection Bill for quite awhile now. For whatever reason, they cannot seem to put it together; cannot get enough signatories to give effect to it. That is a worrying trend. So much so, that among the British or Caribbean Overseas Territories—Cayman, Bermuda, Anguilla, Montserrat, Turks & Caicos—the Attorneys General have formed a sub-working group and we are actively pursuing a witness protection programme among ourselves.

We are very much advanced in this effort and we have come up with a draft legislation and a supporting Memorandum of Agreement and, as we speak, it is being discussed by the heads of those countries who are here (I think except one) and it is hoped that coming out of that we will have a witness protection programme for the Caribbean Overseas Territories.

Just to allay fears of members around this table, the agreement and the legislation is crafted in such a way that if there are other regional territories that want to buy into that agreement, then there is scope for them to sign on and become a party to it.

But I think that part of the problem to do with the witness protection is funding, because it is an extremely expensive venture to move a witness from one territory to another. There were various methods being flirted. We have a common pool of funds where countries and territories put aside and so you could use that administrative programme. Or should you vote that as an appropriation in your individual national budgets?

But, as I mentioned about vacillating, each time we have a problem, each time we have a crisis, then you have a lot of talk. As soon as the issue dies out then, of course, the will sort of dissipates. So, I am hoping that out of this smaller initiative or effort we will have some sort of attraction where others will want to buy into this and then we can have for the first time a fully functional and effective witness protection programme for the region.

The Chairman: Montserrat.

Hon. Reuben T. Meade, MLC (Montserrat): Thank you, Chair. Reuben Meade, Montserrat.

I just want to ask the Honourable Member to address the last point in his presentation first, and that is about the inconsistent batting of the West Indies!

[Laughter]

Hon. Reuben T. Meade, MLC (Montserrat): So if you can give us a solution to that we'll be happy!

But on a serious note . . . well, I was serious on that one.

[Laughter]

Hon. Reuben T. Meade, MLC (Montserrat): On a further note, and linked to Cricket, is that we have the Sunshine Legislation in place which apparently worked reasonably well. It seems as though we have a history of anything that works well, we disband it immediately.

Do you see from where you sit, perhaps other members may wish to put their input, as to whether or not we ought not to continue with the operations which came out of the Sunshine Legislation in relation to travel within the region and in further collaboration among the inter-island agencies for drug interdiction and other law enforcement possibilities.

Hon. Samuel W. Bulgin, JP, QC (Cayman Islands): I am mindful of the fact that what happened as far as the Sunshine Legislation is concerned, as it relates to regional travel, was that some members saw it as a contradiction in terms because it came at a time when the region was sort of embracing open boarders, free travel among CARICOM nationals. Then you have a visa arrangement in place and, of course, that not only affected intraregional travel but at the time affected persons coming in from other countries.

I seem to recall that persons coming from Australia, for example, were terribly peeved about the fact that they had to apply for a visa to come to the Caribbean to watch Cricket. But then you also had concerns really expressed by various tourism interests in some of the countries and to what extent that impacted their bookings, their travel arrangements.

So, my simple solution is that like everything else, it has its good side and it has down sides to it. I think what needs to happen clearly given the discussion that ensued during the workup is that the stakeholders need to sort of take a second look at the arrangement and try somehow to strike a happy medium somewhere so that you can satisfy the concerns of, if not all, most of the stakeholders in the region—the tourism interests, the airlines, those who have other interests in the inter-regional movements and so on.

Talking about West Indies Cricket playing down the middle, I think that what needs to be done is that there should be further meeting of the minds to sort of come up with what is sort of a suitable compromise all around.

Thank you.

The Chairman: Trinidad & Tobago.

Sen. Professor Ramesh Deosaran (Trinidad & Tobago): Chairman, this witness protection issue is, in

my view a very complicated one. I will also indicate why it is so expensive.

First of all, there was a meeting with a CARICOM Task Force of Crime and Security, and the Guyanese delegation was very strong on the point, and to me quite plausibly so, that is, the protection on the witness himself or herself is certainly not enough in small communities as ours because of the families, spouses being left behind. And they did produce evidence to indicate that concern.

The reason for the expensive nature of the witness protection programme is that these trials take a very long time to materialize. We have cases across the Caribbean, and more precisely in Trinidad & Tobago, where serious murder cases, kidnappings, take six, seven years to complete.

So if you say that it is too expensive, we have, then, to look at that in terms of protecting the witness, but to me more seriously and urgently is to reform the whole judicial the administration of justice system in the sense that have early trials or some special consideration where there are witnesses for such serious cases and also look at a developing phenomena now which is witnesses are not afraid to lie any more and say they forget and they cannot remember.

That is happening with such disturbing prevalence in Trinidad that it is now at a crisis stage where the Director of Public Prosecution, who is the Chief Justice, and the Attorney General himself, who you would well know, have all admitted that our criminal justice system for those reasons is in a state of collapse.

So, how do you deal, apart from protecting the witness, with these more expansive but related concerns about the administration of justice itself in getting evidence?

Apart from early trials, in my view, I think we should look at the strengthening of forensic evidence. So, where the witness falls down, as is happening increasingly so, the forensic report, the DNA, fingerprinting and so on, would be in place to corroborate the evidence at the particular trial.

What I am saying is the focus only on witness protection will, in my respectful view (and I am sorry to sound so pessimistic), eventually turn into a field exercise for a number of reasons. If we have to preserve the integrity of the judicial system we have to strengthen these alternative means of prosecution primarily.

Hon. Samuel W. Bulgin, JP, QC (Cayman Islands): I do thank you, sir.

I agree with you that one of the perennial problems with the criminal justice system is the absence of adequate resources to deal with it. Some people say that the problem with that is that it is not necessarily a vote catching area so it does not necessarily command the level of expenditure and appropriation as it ought properly to.

But it is interesting that you mentioned the fact that there should be less reliance on eye witnesses' evidence, and more reliance on forensic evidence because as part of the initiative that I mentioned being pursued by the sub-working group of the Caribbean Overseas Territories Attorneys General is that we are looking at the provision of forensic services for our regional counterparts as well with special emphasis, of course, on quality assurance and turnaround time.

We do know that there is a forensic lab in Barbados and there is one in Jamaica. But there are all sort of problems beset in those labs—no fault of theirs—the sheer numbers that they have to grapple with and what it simply means is that the turnaround time for the analysis of exhibits can take anything between six months to a year. And if we have to send it to a [?] lab in Texas in one of those places, depending on the seriousness or gravity of the crime the US lab (which has its own problems) might just put it at the bottom of its pile.

But there is another problem with that. By the time you collect it, package it, store it, transport it to the US or across the region from here to Barbados, there is a whole issue of the integrity of the exhibit itself, the samples. And so what really needs to happen is that we need to have a sort of commitment among regional governments, as we try to do among the Caribbean OTs, to place some resources at the disposal of the persons who are responsible for the provision of forensic services so that we can have a reliable forensic system.

It would be good if these forensic labs are not required to operate on a basis where they have to make profit; because if you have to make profits it simply means that you have to concentrate on numbers and sheer volume. But if you can operate in such a way that there is a committed amount of funds being made available to them, then they can concentrate on turnaround time and quality assurance. I think we need to sort of, if we can muster the political will, commitment . . . I think that is the way to go.

I do agree with you that witness protection is extremely expensive. There is the concern about breaking up of families and, depending on the nature of the crime and the materiality of the witness's evidence they might have to be kept in the US or the UK for the next 15 or 20 years. And that has its concurrent costs and so on. So there really is room for improvement but there is also the need for political will.

Thank you.

The Chairman: The delegate from Bermuda.

Sen. Wayne M. Caines, JP, MP (Bermuda): Senator Wayne Caines from Bermuda.

I agree with the learned counsel on everything he said about the witness protection programme. That was something that was clearly on the agenda for the heads of the Overseas Territories meeting yesterday

and it is something that they are looking at as a regional concern.

Something else that is most interesting is that when we look at the administration of justice, I think that often times we let the citizens in our countries off the hook very easily. What I mean by that is that we have to educate the public generally on the responsibility of keeping law and order by giving testimony in court and that to stress to the populace that it is very important that often time the evidence is needed in court.

Something that we did in Bermuda and we found it quite helpful is that we set up a crime stopper system that was located in the United States of America. This is where persons could call into the telephone line and give information about crimes that they saw and offer rewards and everything was done outside of Bermuda. That has proved most helpful in the last few months getting people to give information about less than legal activities that have been taking place in Bermuda.

So I do think that when we look at the witness protection programme you cannot look at it by itself. That has to be done in tandem with other things locally and with people in the country to benefit everybody from being a part of the criminal justice system.

The Chairman: Barbados.

Sen. Andrew A. Bynoe (Barbados): Mr. Chairman, through you, I would like to come back to Senator Deosaran, from Trinidad, through you, because of his interest in criminology as a professor of that subject.

When we revisit your statement in terms of the administration of justice, the fact that it has fallen down at the official level, how serious would you reprimand the agencies that administer this arm of justice? Do you think that we need to address that much more than we have in the past? Please spend some time on that.

Thank you.

The Chairman: I would ask the delegate from Trinidad to reply to this.

Sen. Professor Ramesh Deosaran (Trinidad & Tobago): My colleague from Barbados, thank you for the introduction, but it is, Mr. Chairman, as I briefly alluded just now, a very serious issue. Because what the gentleman is raising the administration of justice really pertains to the entire security of the region in terms of drug trafficking, in terms of the narcotics trade and terrorism. How do you prosecute terrorists?

We have a situation where in every piece of legislation dealing with terrorism we are chipping away at our fundamental civil and human rights. The constitutions of our different Caribbean countries are being amended or modified in some way so as to deal with the threat, but at the same time our freedoms are being narrowed for law abiding citizens and all these

things are placed primarily in the hands of the administration of justice starting from the way the police investigate their work, the integrity of the police, and if you talk about the agencies it starts with the police service and it ends up with the judiciary which is protected by the principle of the independence of the judiciary and the separation of powers a situation which limits the rule of the Executive in seeking and posing improvements within judiciary itself.

Caribbean countries are not as fortunate to have someone as Mr. Simmons, which is one of our outstanding Caribbean jurists to make improvements and look at the delicate balance. But to speak from my own observations across the Caribbean we need to start with the police service as the primary agent in not only the prosecution process but in the evidence gathering stage.

And there is a lot of laxity there, both in terms of finding the evidence but in terms of preserving the evidence. Evidence disappears. Books, records, disappear. If I am asked to reprimand, I would say that executives across the Caribbean, from what I know, have been very lax in reprimanding the police agencies for such acts of indiscipline which could be attributed to the fact that the Executive wishes to be friendly with the police.

I chaired a joint select committee in parliament empowered to look at service commissions and the police service and municipal corporations and because of several acts, if you will allow me to elaborate, I think it is a very important issue. I may not be totally right. Other people might have different experiences but it is at the heart of Caribbean democracy. If you have to preserve it, the agents of protection and security must be in the front line to protect not only our civil rights, but our democracy itself now because that is where we are at now.

I acted a chairman of this Police Service Commission. I was chairman of the . . . in fact, by coincidence, this is the report from those meetings. It is going to be laid in our parliament next Tuesday. So I have to have an advance copy before they can formally lay it. It deals with the police service and the collapse of the police investigations and prosecutorial record.

I asked the gentleman, the chairman of the Service Commission, "With all these acts of indiscipline which you have noticed what are you doing with the Police Commissioner? Are you going to discipline him? Are you going to reprimand him?"

And he says, "If we do so it will not look well in the public eye."

We have another case to be quite contemporary, since he is speaking about reprimand and matters pertaining to the administration of justice, we have a chief magistrate who refuses to testify as a witness in a very politically volatile and public interest matter, which I will not elaborate on. If the chief magistrate lays a complaint against a chief justice, which

is what has happened, and when time for the trial the chief magistrate of a country refuses to testify for whatever reasons, what example does that leave for the rest of the country?

So when you ask me how do we reprimand public agencies and their officers, this is a case where the Judicial and Legal Service Commission found him in breach of protocol but they too—now this is my vital point to connect it with the case of the police commissioner—the Judicial and Legal Service Commission through the official minutes revealed that they too say that if they reprimand the chief magistrate *'how will it look in the public eye?'*

Now, such responses in themselves are breaches of discipline and the persons who pronounce upon such reluctance to intervene, properly and as they are legally empowered to do, should also be held accountable.

To cut a long story short, Mr. Chairman, and if I impose on your patience too much, one of my solutions is to make these proceedings and procedures more open to the public by using parliament, whatever the other downsides might be, to call the Judicial and Legal Service Commission, for example, to explain to the people some, not all, of the decisions and to have more open airings dealing with both the appointments and accountability from these agencies and their respective officers.

There will always be corruption. There will always be inefficiencies. But I think transparency can be used as the oxygen of democracy for accountability. And that accountability—if people expect to be accountable—would serve as a deterrent so that the maladministration we experience, at least in some countries, will be minimized because of the expectation of transparency and open accountability as a deterrent.

The conviction rate, for example, in our courts is very, very low—10 percent, in some cases 8 percent. So it means that out of 100 percent of police reports on serious crimes 90 percent of them go without any conviction. So all these things, when they converge, when we speak about Embracing Change in the Way we do Business . . . I think it is not only a matter of efficient government but it is a matter of very inefficient administration of justice.

And thank goodness, in some cases, for people like yourself who understand the issue and who are quite enthusiastic about seeking solutions, but the state of the Caribbean today in matters of security and justice . . . there has to be coordination, sharing of information and expertise at a more efficient and rapid rate than is now taking place.

So with those few remarks, perhaps I can stop at that point and . . .

The Chairman: Thank you very much Professor Deosaran. I think you have given us a lot of food for thought so that now when our committees meet at

probably the regional level they could look at the different points you have raised.

Are there any more?
Bermuda.

Sen. Wayne M. Caines, JP, MP (Bermuda): Thank you sir.

I think the Senator from Trinidad was absolutely correct. And he mentions certain things that I was just going to bring up. Training. I think training is very important not only for police but for prosecutors as well. I think that something we must highlight is the ability for prosecutors to travel from jurisdiction to jurisdiction helping each other on matters that might be a bit touchy in one area. They might be able to go from country to country in the Caribbean and work as a team with our prosecutors.

In Bermuda we have introduced a Proceeds of Crime legislation that has proved very helpful in the anti-drug situation in Bermuda. That is where if a person has been convicted an application is made immediately after the person's conviction and the Crown makes an application to seize their assets—if it is a boat, to seize the boat, to seize whatever the application is made to seize all of the person's assets after the conviction.

Talking about drugs, that is where you have to hit people and that is directly in the pocket. And that is something that we have done, our government, with the Proceeds of Crime legislation.

Something else we have done is we increased the fines, the ability for a person to get a US \$1 million fine for certain crimes they have done. So we have literally taken and started, not only with legislation, to take away the proceeds of the crime but to fine them very heavily.

Something that is interesting in the point that you brought out, sir, is that you must highlight when we are talking about accountability of the police, in Bermuda, the accountability for the police, that is the purview of the governor. So, as a country we do not control the police as it pertains to their day-to-day activity and to their accountability.

Something that is very important when it comes to training of police officers, of course, that is something that we can work on. But when it comes to *accountability* of the police, that is a responsibility, just so you understand how our jurisdiction works . . . that is something that the governor is . . . that is his purview.

Hon. Samuel W. Bulgin, JP, QC (Cayman Islands): Thank you Senator Caines.

The issue of training of police officers, prosecutors and, in fact judges where appropriate, is also a matter that we are looking at from our small working group perspective. It is very important that in order to have an effective criminal justice system you have, as a late Barbados Prime Minister said, all hands on

deck in this effort. We are certainly pursuing that as well.

The distinguished delegate from Trinidad quite rightly points out that there is a need for commitment and, as I understand, integrity in the system. There is an issue of those persons who are not prepared to take appropriate actions even where it is clearly required out of fear of bringing the system into disrepute or the particular agency into disrepute.

That in itself can result and has often resulted in breakdown in the very system they are trying to prop up. So when you get to the point where you become judges, lawyers, prosecutors, and so on, you swear basically to make unpopular decisions. That is what it is all about. I think that if you are getting to the point where you find there is a conflict you are wrestling with it, then they appropriate thing to do in those circumstances is step aside and allow those who have the will and the spine to do so to make those decisions.

Thank you.

The Chairman: Are there any more comments?

If there are no more comments, I will ask Hon. Bulgin to wrap up.

Hon. Samuel W. Bulgin, JP, QC (Cayman Islands): Thank you, Chair.

I would like to express my sincere thanks to our distinguished delegates who have tacitly contributed, and those who have provided very insightful comments. It is clear from the discussion that the issue of law enforcement and interdiction is very important and has to be underpinned by the framework to provide cooperation, sharing of intelligence, sharing of information, credible information. There is a necessity to ensure that persons who are involved or charged with the responsibility of administering the criminal justice system and our law enforcement agencies are provided with the appropriate training.

As a region, if there is one thing we can pride ourselves on it is the fact that we so far have judges with integrity, persons who are obviously above board in terms of their dealings and it would speak very well if we can sort of buttress that element of it with the requisite knowledge.

Having said that I must point out very quickly that it is not all doom and gloom. There is obviously room for improvement and I think with the necessary will, with the necessary commitment we can get there. It is regrettable that we are taking so long. The issue of witness protection has been knocked around for many years, Mr. Deosaran will tell you. But respective governments take the view that it is cost prohibitive and each time there is a crisis in the criminal justice system they have to vote blocks of funds to deal with it to address the issue.

We saw from the recent unfavourable publicity arising out of the Bob Woolmer pathology report in Jamaica that there is a need for a credible forensic

service within the Caribbean. Of course, unfortunately it takes issues like that to bring to the fore the need for us to move quickly and to be more proactive rather than trying to play catch up.

I am an eternal optimist. Might not have happened in my lifetime but I am confident that we will get there. I think we are a people with foresight, I think we are people with the commitment to provide resources. It is just that, regrettably, it has taken much longer than we would have liked.

Thanks again for your participation. I wish for you a continued productive and enjoyable conference.

[Applause]

Hon. Edna M. Moyle, JP, MLA (Cayman Islands): A request has been made, and I seek the leave of the conference that we continue with the next topic since we are an hour early. If it is not completed by lunch-time we will come back and wind it up which would give everybody a bit more time for shopping this evening prior to having the evening free. You could spend some time down town.

If the conference is in favour of us continuing with the next topic now before lunch time. . .

Is that fine?

Okay. If you will just give us a minute to get . . . I do not have to chair because the Deputy Speaker of the Cayman Islands is the Chair, but he has a 12.30 appointment and we get Speaker Arrindell as the presenter in place. We will continue with the next topic.

Thank you very much.

Mr. W. Alfonso Wright, MLA (Cayman Islands): Madam Chair, I could make one quick announcement . . . while we are waiting for the changeover, I know that many of you who were on the boat trip yesterday took a lot of digital photos and our official photographer was unable to make the boat trip and would like to have some of those photos.

She has equipment here to transfer, download, the photos from the camera. I would be extremely grateful if you could assist us with that so that we can make them a part of the photos that we are going to provide for everybody at the end of the conference.

You have seen her. . . Bina, would you stand up so that everyone . . . can you just lend her your camera for a few seconds or you can help her transfer them. But I think that there are some very important photos that we would like to include in what you all take back home.

Thank you.

SESSION 5

Session Chairman: Hon. Edna M. Moyle, JP, MLA – Cayman Islands

UNDERACHIEVEMENT OF MALE YOUTH IN THE REGION

Presenter: Hon. D. Gisele Isaac-Arrindell, MP, Antigua

The Chairman: Okay, if you just give us a minute, I will have to chair because the Deputy Speaker of the Cayman Islands was the Chair but he has a 12.30 appointment. We will get Speaker Arrindell as the presenter in place and we will continue with the next topic.

Thank you very much.

[pause]

Mr. W. Alfonso Wright, MLA (Cayman Islands): While we are waiting for the changeover, I know that many of you who were on the boat trip yesterday took a lot of digital photos, and our official photographer was unable to make the boat trip and would like to have some of those photos. She has equipment here to transfer or download the photos from your camera. We would be extremely grateful if you could assist us with that so that we can make them a part of the photos that we are going to provide for everybody at the end of the Conference.

Bina, can you stand up so that everyone [can see you?] Can you just lend her your camera for a few seconds, or you can help her transfer them. But I think that they are some very important photos that we would like to include in what you all take back home.

Thank you.

The Chairman: Well, let me thank the members of the Conference for allowing us to continue with the next topic but I would like to ask the Serjeant-at-Arms to invite the Youth Parliamentarians (there are a number outside who are awaiting the discussion on this particular topic) to come into the room.

This is a topic, I think, that is of tremendous interest to the entire Region because I think all of us are finding that our male youth in the Region are underachieving, and it is a subject that we must deal with and we must deal with it as a priority.

So, without any further ado, I will call on the Honourable Gisele Isaac-Arrindell to present this topic.

Thank you.

Hon. D. Gisele Isaac-Arrindell, MP (Antigua & Barbuda): Thank you, Madam Chair.

My topic this morning is a subject that has been occupying the minds of many professionals and concerned persons, including parents, teachers, min-

isters of religion, healthcare providers, employers, and policymakers.

I will tell you up front that I have no answers to the many questions this topic raises, and I offer no solutions to the problems I will acknowledge. What I hope to engender is a discussion that may lead to measures for amelioration where possible; correction where applicable; and a re-thinking throughout of whether underachievement exists at all or should be redefined.

Now, since behavioural problems in school have always been more associated with boys, we will take underachievement, in this instance, to mean lowered academic performance.

It is generally held that girls are doing better than boys. However, in our local instance (and I mean Antigua & Barbuda), recent figures cited for passes at the Common Entrance (or 12+ exam) were 52 per cent for girls and 48 per cent for boys; a mere 4 per cent difference and, certainly, too narrow a gap on which to base a conclusion. However, this has not stopped persons from doing so.

Going further up the academic chain, what I have found at home is that more girls than boys complete secondary school and go on to enter tertiary-level institutions. In fact, enrollment figures for the University of the West Indies at Mona show women overtaking men since the 1976/77 academic year.

But getting back to boys . . .

What we have found at home is that among those who fail the Common Entrance Exam into secondary school, many are actually learning disabled. While exact figures are not cited locally or regionally, international studies indicate that more boys than girls are diagnosed as suffering from dyslexia – particularly with language-processing problems; with attention deficit or hyperactivity disorders; and with various stages of autism. The causes of these learning challenges, experts conclude, are usually genetic; though they can be exacerbated by environmental factors.

Now, most of the Region's primary and secondary institutions are equipped to teach only the so-called "normal" child. Our syllabi and curricula are established in concert with regional bodies to create CXC and CAPE exams, for example.

While many hailed these bodies as a positive step since they make learning culturally, racially, and geographically relevant—unlike, some say, the British-based GCEs—the region has not been able to tap into and/or keep pace with the growing awareness of alternative teaching and learning methods available in the more developed countries.

Hence, owing to limitations on our educational resources, many otherwise bright or capable children—overwhelmingly boys—are shuttled through the post-primary system (now called "junior secondary") or simply allowed to drop out of school.

Now, the diagnoses may be new, but the problem itself is not. What used to happen in my youth and before is that the "apprentice" system was firmly

in place to catch young men and women falling through the academic cracks. Accordingly, by age 14, or thereabouts, girls were in training to become seamstresses, hairdressers, shop assistants and the like—relatively low-paying jobs, incidentally—while boys got a foot in the "trades": auto-mechanics, bodyworks, as plumbers, electrical engineers, carpenters, masons, cabinet making and so on, certainly better-paying jobs with the potential for self-employment.

Hence, male success or achievement was not limited to academics or to the professions or white-collar jobs. I put it to you, therefore, that this idea of male underachievement came about and gained credibility only as a result of female "overachievement" as measured against yesterday's yardstick.

It used to be in my day, before my day, and, in some places, even today, that bright and capable girls had their ambitions capped at landing a job in a bank, an insurance company, or with a multinational corporation like Cable & Wireless or one of the regional airlines — and, usually, that position could only be secretarial or clerical. Many times it was simply accepted as the social order that she would become the subordinate of a male who was less gifted academically. But then a woman's achievements were measured by the quality of the husband she managed to land; the size of her home; and the success of her children, particularly her sons.

In an Internet article "What's Wrong With Boys? Addressing the Underachievement Argument," Stuart Baird states that women's current achievements can be explained by "the removal of institutional barriers to success and the promotion of equal rights . . ." Yet, he continues, "women are still under-represented in the highest positions and women's pay, on average, trails behind that of men . . ."

"The newly found success of women is partial at best. A small identifiable group can be seen to have overcome the old biases and are now competing more equally with their male counterparts. For many women, though, success is little more than a part-time job and a second-class education."

But this paper is not about what happens to women. So, let's look at these boys who no longer find the trades a viable or a rapid opportunity to success.

As with others, our regional society's cultures, moral values and social traditions have increasingly fallen victim to First World countries through the pervasive influences of music, cable TV and films, advertising, the Internet, and easy travel. Accordingly, alternative sources of income—hence, "success"—have become, if not acceptable then accepted in a Caribbean society that is becoming increasingly materialistic.

As a result, the trappings of success—the large house; the luxury vehicles; the latest technology in cell phones and other gadgets; and the trendy clothes, et cetera—have become success, regardless of their source.

Boys learn early that crime does pay—and pays well, too—and, accordingly, will engage in illegal activity for the reward it brings them. And so we see primary-school boys selling weed and even harder drugs on the playing field, and secondary-schoolers engaging in gang activity and violent crimes.

Girls have further legitimised such illegal activities, in many cases, by favouring the so-called “bad boy” glorified in song and on screen, over the young male who embraces the traditional work ethic as the right way to climb the ladder. Thus, the female—the traditional keeper of the community’s values—has, wittingly or otherwise, contributed to this facet of male underperformance.

As further evidence of this, look at what now passes for culture on the regional music scene, now perceived as not only viable, but a preferable route to success for academically underqualified males. Violence and misogyny appear to be inherent to the success of many of our male stars’ musical careers; and judging by their popularity and financial compensation they appear to have hit on a winning formula.

Accordingly, more of our primary- and secondary-school boys identify with, and aspire to become, a reggae star like, say, Bounty Killer rather than a cricket icon like, say, Brian Lara. The fame is wider among their peers and the pay-cheque is certainly deeper.

Just a week ago, today, the OECS states concluded a CPA-sponsored workshop in Antigua. As I prepared to leave the dining-room on the final day, the seven-year-old grandson of a staff member came up to chat with me.

“My daddy is outside,” he told me. “You want to see his licence plate? It says ‘Pimp,’” he announced proudly.

“It does?” I asked, horrified.

“Yes,” he grinned. “And you know my name? Little Pimp!”

I rest my case....

As we speak of cricket, I am reminded of the underachievement of our team in recent years—and of our galling humiliation during the 2007 World Cup—and I contrast it with the players’ perennial demands for greater compensation.

I am reminded, too, of Chalkdust’s recent calypso, in which he pointed to the largesse heaped by the Trinidad & Tobago government upon the national soccer team, the Soca Warriors, after their World Cup outing. Not to imply that they had not achieved, that they had not distinguished themselves, but the veteran teacher was forced to ask where was the compensation, the recognition for those who, for whole lifetimes, had toiled in the fields of academics and in the performing arts.

Let me look now, since we are talking dollar and cents, into the socio-economic factors driving

young males’ underperformance, especially since Antigua & Barbuda recently received a draft report on a national poverty assessment funded by the Caribbean Development Bank.

According to Dr. Patricia Ellis, from the T&T based Kairi Consultant which undertook the survey, there are more women than men in the Antigua & Barbuda labour force. However, their work in the tourism and service sectors means that their wages are not only lower, but their employment may be seasonal.

Now, many of these women end up in these sectors because of their lack of academic qualifications, and, like their sisters worldwide, these lower-income women tend to have more children than those who are better qualified. Thus a cycle of low education and low employment is perpetuated and the academic and, later, professional success of students is often directly linked to their parents’ socio-economic status.

In Antigua & Barbuda, as in other states of the region, government provides free education and ancillary services (like textbooks and uniforms) throughout secondary level and greatly subsidised tertiary-level schooling. However, owing to our large immigrant population, our public schools are perennially squeezed for resources of space, furniture, equipment and, in some cases, teaching staff. Accordingly, where the system falls short, parents are expected to pick up the slack.

But expectations, especially among lower-income families, are often not realised. And so, the material resources that Baird speaks about—“accommodation and money available for school trips and cultural resources . . . and opportunities to learn at home”—simply are not there to complement what the system provides. And if the wider community is, on the whole, similarly lacking, he adds, the learning deficit is even greater.

But are we facing a poverty of pocket? Or a paucity of spirit?

In an Internet-based dialogue between two UK-based Caribbean academics, Lee Jasper and Dr. Tony Sewell, the latter comments:

“Much of our poverty is real, but I’m talking about a huge cohort of black boys who are not on the breadline but whose homes are impoverished. In these homes you will see huge television sets, cable TV, wardrobes with the latest designer wear; yet not one book.”

He concludes:

“The real poverty that our children face is a poverty of aspiration:”

Add to this lack of ambition the absence of men in Caribbean households. Dr. Ellis, in the Antigua-based study, said she “found many women in

common-law or visiting relationships with men, but the men neither resided in the home nor offered financial support to the household including the children they had fathered.”

Much has been written and said about the negatives of absentee fathers about children’s development, especially upon boys who, some posit, need men to teach them how to be men. But does this argument hold up, really? Have absent fathers not been a feature of Caribbean society since slavery, leading ultimately to a largely matrifocal community? And if the father’s absence is directly linked to boys’ underachievement, can it be also linked to their daughters’ mounting performance?

Errol Miller, in his book “Men at Risk”, indicates that a study of patriarchal East Indian families in both Trinidad and Jamaica produced the “same educational outcomes as far as gender is concerned.” Similarly, a study conducted in Barbados concluded that boys from female-headed households do neither better nor worse than those from families where both parents were present.

Other social commentators have posited that while the West Indian father was long gone, the mother was the constant in the home life of the children. However, with women having moved, en masse, into the workforce, children no longer have the nurture and stability they once enjoyed.

But this construct, too, is largely built on sand, for West Indian women have always worked outside the home—from slavery through colonialism, and later as immigrants in the United Kingdom and the United States, giving rise to the term “barrel children” who were left in the care of other relatives and trusted friends.

In fact, women working outside the home were, and perhaps still are, in no small measure, responsible for their boys’ continued academic studies and later professional success, since the girl-child was destined only to repeat her mother’s cycle anyway.

So what accounts for our boys’ underachievement in school? Is it outdated teaching and learning methods ill-equipped to hold the attention and fire the imagination of modern boys, as a Guyana Ministry of Education paper suggests?

Or is it, as Baird concludes, the underachievement of adults, instead, that is being blamed on the very boys that the system has failed academically and who cannot find opportunities elsewhere?

Or is the problem with a society which has responded to the challenges of globalisation by imposing standards and insisting upon qualifications that too many young males cannot meet?

Is the blame to be placed on the media and the entertainment industry for disseminating images and values that support the appearance of success without the attendant hard work?

How about working mothers, whose emphasis appears to be on the accumulation of possessions instead of on imparting values?

What of the fathers, absent for generations and abdicating their responsibilities for role-modeling, for financial support, for parental guidance?

Or is it the boys themselves who, with their lack of ambition, their need for immediate gratification, their penchant for hard cash for easy work, who have let down the side?

Who is it?

What is it?

This is the same system that also produces our stars . . . the scholars; the athletes; the youth ambassadors; the young scientists; the Junior Cabinets; the hope of our future

So you tell me . . .

Thank you.

[Applause]

The Chairman: Speaker Arrindell, thank you very much for that excellent presentation. I will now open the floor to comments and questions. *[pause]*

Hon. D. Gisele Isaac-Arrindell, MP (Antigua & Barbuda): You mean I have been so clear there are no comments or questions?

The Chairman: *[Laughter]* We women tend to do that!

[Laughter]

The Chairman: Belize.

Hon. Rodwell Ferguson, MP (Belize): Yes, Hon. Ferguson, Belize.

It is always said that women are the recovery stone but I guess only in terms of strength, yes, in physical strength.

In the past century women used to categorily stay at home and do the housework. Even as I was growing up our parents were concerned about the young men getting an education more than the young ladies. And there has been a turn over the years and parents realise that they must educate their female children because most of the time they go into the workforce and are married and they may become victims of a marital affair. And so then having a good education, they then become independent.

Now I realise that, you know, the aspect that men are the weaker person. And as we go along in this world, I can see that the women will be taking over. It is a stigma against the young men but it is reality.

So I guess we as leaders have to find a way how we can include these young men to prevail. It is a stigma against them and we have to find a way out.

That is my contribution.

The Chairman: Turks & Caicos.

Hon. R. Donahue Gardiner, MP, JP (Turks & Caicos): Yes, my name is Donahue Gardiner, Turks & Caicos.

There are just two points that I would like to make and they are very, very brief.

Is it not that boys underachieve: (1) because girls find “thugs” attractive; and (2) because society rewards, as the Speaker said earlier, persons when they misbehave or when they do or say things? For example, the music artists and the acting on television and in the movies, the rewards that society would actually go and see those movies or buy those CDs and therefore put monies in their pockets.

So, boys tend to want to be like them and follow them, and are they not the true causes that boys really underachieve and misbehave at an early age? Because if the girls did not like them they would not be doing it, and if they were not making any money from it they would not be doing it either.

Thank you.

The Chairman: Speaker Arrindell?

Hon. D. Gisele Isaac-Arrindell, MP (Antigua & Barbuda): I think that I agree that the entertainment industry plays a large role in glorifying and justifying and rewarding negative behaviours. I ascribe so much responsibility to them that at times I flirt with the idea of censorship on a national level. But as a journalist I am torn between the individual's right and the right of the society.

Where girls are concerned, the fact that they reward bad boys, as I said, I think that is a level of immaturity and I think that in that respect parents have a larger role to play in guiding their youngsters whether they are girls or boys as to values that are enduring rather than for the moment. I mean, we are all old enough to have remembered some bad boy or bad girl on which we had crushes, but then you grow up to realise that these are not the persons who are suitable to make life partners.

So I think, in some instances, the girls will outgrow that. I do not know if some of the boys will live long enough to do that, though.

The Chairman: I recognise Bermuda, then Montserrat and then Belize.

Senator Wayne Michael Caines, JP, BA LLB (Hons) (Bermuda): Senator Wayne Caines from Bermuda.

Most recently, as this is an epidemic most places in the world, the Bermuda government conducted a black-male study. And this is where the government of Bermuda in the last year got together black men from every segment of our community and from every economic background, and they conducted a study in Bermuda to get to the root of the problem

why so many of our young men were disenfranchised and found themselves on the periphery of success or on the periphery of making solid contributions to our community.

Most things that were said this morning are certain things that we all agree upon, certain things that are clear. We need to have more education in the schools, and coming from a colonial background there are many things that were not told to our young men over a period of years.

But what is clear and what we realised in Bermuda is that we had young men that were seeing success with a lot of international business and off-shore businesses coming to Bermuda but they were not able to participate in having a piece of the proverbial pie.

What we had to do was something that I would just like put forth this morning. We had to start holding international businesses that were benefiting from being in Bermuda accountable for their presence in Bermuda. So, some initiatives that we have started are that if there are new hotel developments in Bermuda, they have to make a pledge, before they start building, to educate young Bermudians to be a part of that endeavour. So, in other words, before you are granted permission to build in Bermuda, you have to send Bermudians off to school wherever your company is, or wherever your company is headquartered to train to come back.

Many Bermudians were getting involved in the hotel industry and they were coming in holding trades. And they would see the top-level management in these organisations and they did not look like them. So, rather than stay a part of this particular echelon they chose to leave.

Obviously, as a country that has a large portion of our income from tourism, we had to figure out a way of how to get our young people attracted to the tourism industry. And one way we have done that is by encouraging our young men to get back into the tourism trade and holding the people that are benefiting from our country accountable for making it feasible for young men to be a part of this system.

There are clear things that we need to discuss and we cannot discuss—and I disagree, and humbly so, with the gentleman from Belize—where we elevate the female and the successes of the female and say they are going to take over.

We have a symbiotic relationship with women, and if one of the persons in our partnership is not succeeding then we all fail. I have a young daughter and if she is raised right and she is given certain tools, well, then, who does she go to marry? She marries one of these young men who are not being developed, who are not being—and so you have a society that is being held back from going forward based upon the limitations of our young men.

Something that I do not want us to limit ourselves to at this table is something that we often do as

politicians. We do not mentor young people. Something that we have to hold ourselves accountable for is that when we are in positions and we have the opportunity to train and mentor young men and guard young men we do not do that.

One thing that the study in Bermuda showed is that a lot of our businessmen—black, successful businessmen—have not gone back and mentored, trained, guided young men so that they can see a clear path to success and the way that they can make it out. Often times, as has been articulated already, the young men do not see clear role models in their community, and that is when it befalls us, businessmen and politicians to go back in that community and make tangible ideas and examples of success so young men in a community can see that it is indeed possible.

I find it difficult when we highlight a lot of the weaknesses that we have in a community when all through the African Diaspora we have a lot of strong people. But it is our responsibility to empower ourselves through education, through training and through strong programmes that give young men opportunity, not just in professional endeavours, but also in the trades. There is a lot of money to be made; there is honour in the trades.

So, we as a Caribbean community have to accept, yes, we have problems but clearly there are ways to go about strengthening one young person at a time to make our countries as strong as they can be.

The Chairman: Speaker Arrindell, would you like to comment?

Hon. Gisele Isaac-Arrindell, MP (Antigua & Barbuda): Yes, I would like to comment.

I agree with most of what you said, but I have a little problem with a couple of things as well.

I do not believe on blaming colonialism and I do not believe in blaming slavery. I think they are just historical facts. And I think we have been not slaves long enough to assume responsibility for what we do, what we do not do, and what we allow to be done to us.

The initiative where persons or companies trying to get into the hotel sector in Bermuda have to make a commitment to training young Bermudians, I think it is admirable. But again I ask: Why do we have to be sent? Where is our innate initiative? Why do we not want it for ourselves? Why do we have to make it a condition that you must train us in order to get these concessions? Where is our part? Where is our responsibility?

I have to also say that in my experience most men—not only in Bermuda but most men—are not interested in mentoring. I do not know if it is a genetic thing where it is seen as a woman's role to nurture and bring young people along, but I have found no matter how deep the crisis, no matter how terrible it is . . . I mean, we have had situations in Antigua & Bar-

buda where young people have committed suicide and it is in the news and the talk shows go on to talk about land and who is getting land and who is getting concessions as if it does not matter. So I think in terms of development of young people that burden has fallen unfairly on the shoulders of women.

The last thing I want to address is, we talk about getting a “piece of the pie”. Maybe it is time we really find the pie. I think all pie is too much about money and material possessions and luxuries and a certain level of consumption. So maybe if we made it attractive for young people to be called decent men, hardworking men, good fathers, good friends maybe our values would be more in concert with our ambitions.

Senator Wayne Michael Caines, JP, BA LLB (Hons) (Bermuda): I agree strongly with you but I must say—and this is with the greatest of respect and absolutely no chauvinism involved—I think it is almost impossible, if not impossible, for you to speak of the role and the strength of men just by your basic genetic makeup. I say that humbly so.

I think that you have raised very valuable points, but when it comes to a man, there are certain things—and I say this with the greatest of respect—that will be difficult for you to understand the crisis that black men are having through the Caribbean Diaspora. You raise very valuable points, but at the same time, as a community we have a *number* of issues and certain things that are affecting men of colour through the Caribbean.

You said that black men are not interested in mentoring. I take great exception to that. There are a lot of men, just by their very presence, who are mentoring. We do have weaknesses, but one thing we must clearly say that as a community we have to look at what our strengths are and play to our strengths.

Something else that you said that was very concerning to me was the lack of the role that our history plays in the development of men.

There are a number of things that we have to understand. We have an initiative called the African Diaspora Heritage Trail, and this is where there was a clear linkage between the history of people of African decent and the way forward. If we do not understand our past, it will be very difficult for us to understand the way forward.

I do not think that colonialism should be used as a crutch. As a matter of fact, to use that as a crutch is a sign of weakness. But there are clear things that we can learn from our history that can benefit all of us when we can see where we came from, our roots and understand that our history did not start after slavery; that we indeed have a very rich and strong culture that we can learn from.

When we speak of understanding colonialism—the role and what they did to the black men during slavery and how we were separated—and understand certain genetic things that have happened to us,

that is one of the reasons why we are suggesting that understanding colonialism and the role it has played affects our deportment and development.

Hon. D. Gisele Isaac-Arrindell, MP (Antigua & Barbuda): I understand and appreciate all that, but remember our crisis is not only about black males, it is about males. So it is not only the black male who finds himself in a crisis, it is males. I do not want to restrict the discussion at all to blacks.

The Chairman: I will move on to Montserrat.

Hon. Reuben T. Meade, MLC (Montserrat): Thank you very much. I will seek to be brief.

Part of the difficulty which we see (and I am speaking from the context in which I come) is that when we look at the problem, the problem does not start when the guys get into teenage years. It starts from the home. Where do the kids spend most of their time? Between home and school.

At home, as you have indicated, it is matrifocal. They see the mother. And even when the father is present, in a lot of the cases—because the most successful families you tend to find that the fathers tend to do more. So let us focus more on the ones that tend to go astray.

The fathers come home. They either go drinking, go play dominoes (nothing against dominoes) and the women tend to do all of the work, including cooking and washing up the dishes, changing the kids and so forth. Some of the modern men are helping in that respect.

But when they leave home where the father is dysfunctional, they then go to school—and I speak for the case of Montserrat—and the majority of the teachers are female and they tend not to have . . . the female teachers, please forgive me. But boys tend to behave in a different way and, to a great extent, the female teachers do not understand the boys in the way that the guys would.

In the same manner, at home the boys may react to the mothers in a different way they react to the fathers. So if the men are missing in action, then the boys are likely to fall by the wayside. And once they fall early it is very difficult to pick them up later on.

The other one is one of mentoring and freedom. We tend to give the boys a lot more freedom at an early age, whereas the females are sort of, you know, *'I cannot allow my daughter to do certain things.'* But the boys are given cart blanche. They can do whatever they want. They can stay out as late as they wish and they can do homework if they wish, but the girls are always encouraged to do their work.

I do not think it is a matter of genetics. It is a matter of starting from the homes, seeking to get more males in the schools. And, additionally, even within the school system—and we have cases in Montserrat

where boys who go out and play cricket can be punished because they are doing male things whereas they should be sitting quietly in the classrooms. We do not sit quietly any place.

So we have to look at it in a broader concept in that we need to get the men involved—and the successful men as well must get involved—in mentoring, in having activities for the boys. For example, young cricket teams, getting the kids to go out and play sports and participate and seek to achieve, and when they achieve also give them the benefits of achievement, acknowledge that.

And within the homes the mothers and the fathers have got to ensure that there is no distinction that the boys only do boy things and the girls do girl things. We need to tie them together.

The Chairman: Speaker Arrindell.

Hon. D. Gisele Isaac-Arrindell, MP (Antigua & Barbuda): I think what you said there is a bit of a contradiction because you are saying we need to ensure in the home that the girls are not doing girl things and the boys doing boy things. Well, at the same time you are saying to me that boys ought not to be punished for cutting school to go play cricket because boys cannot be expected to sit quietly and learn, as if that is a girl construct.

Hon. Reuben T. Meade, MLC (Montserrat): No, sorry, with respect, I am not saying that they are not punished because they go and play cricket. It is just that in terms of this is what they do best.

Hon. D. Gisele Isaac-Arrindell, MP (Antigua & Barbuda): Play cricket?

Hon. Reuben T. Meade, MLC (Montserrat): If that is what they do, they do. For example, we spend a lot of time on the academics, and if a guy wants to play cricket or he wants to do woodwork or he wants to do something else with his hands, to a great extent, we do not encourage it because we want them to do history and English and maths and so forth when, in fact, their interest is not there. So then they become bored and go and do other things.

Hon. D. Gisele Isaac-Arrindell, MP (Antigua & Barbuda): But I think you are assuming that girls do not want to do other things other than academics.

I think the training that girls have had imposed upon them is what is accounting for girls' success now. Girls are taught you got to stick with it, you have got to sit and you have got to start it and finish it. And the chores that we are given as little girls—you know, helping to mind the younger ones, learning to do things that require attention or concentration and 'stick-to-it-iveness'—boys are not taught. So maybe if we taught our boys more so-called girlish pursuits or

girlish traits, that would help them to be actually more successful.

And I have a question for you.

You are talking about the teachers, one of the drawbacks is that most of the teachers are female, but I think it has been for a long, long time that most of the teachers have been female. And if that is one of the things that accounts for the underperformance of males, then, who is teaching the successful males? Is it not the same females?

Hon. Reuben T. Meade, MLC (Montserrat): Yes, we do have successful males, but I think you would also appreciate the fact that in Antigua and Montserrat and in a lot of the other territories the majority of the persons who are falling by the wayside are the males. The majority. And—

Hon. D. Gisele Isaac-Arrindell, MP (Antigua & Barbuda): But not the majority of boys.

Hon. Reuben T. Meade, MLC (Montserrat): Well, I believe that the males come from boys.

Hon. D. Gisele Isaac-Arrindell, MP (Antigua & Barbuda): No, no, no. No. The majority of those falling by the wayside might be boys but not the majority of boys are falling by the wayside. It is not the majority. It is not the majority. Boys continue to do well. All boys do not under perform.

Hon. Reuben T. Meade, MLC (Montserrat): No, no, no. I think you are missing the point.

Hon. D. Gisele Isaac-Arrindell, MP (Antigua & Barbuda): No, I am not. No, I am not.

Hon. Reuben T. Meade, MLC (Montserrat): We are not saying that all—

Hon. D. Gisele Isaac-Arrindell, MP (Antigua & Barbuda): No, I am agreeing.

Hon. Reuben T. Meade, MLC (Montserrat): —boys under perform.

Hon. D. Gisele Isaac-Arrindell, MP (Antigua & Barbuda): No, but I am agreeing that most of those falling by the wayside are boys. But it is not most boys that are falling by the wayside. And I am contending that it is women who are teaching both those falling by the wayside and those who are not.

The Chairman: I will move to Belize.

Mr. Conrad Lewis (Belize): I will just slightly reinforce what our colleague from Montserrat mentioned earlier and also what the presenter just mentioned.

We must compare the raising of a child to bringing up of plants. From the time of germination

you water that plant; you fertilise it; you provide the proper involvement; et cetera; et cetera. That plant will grow to be very, very fruitful.

I think we are tripping over ourselves to find reasons for why it appears that males are an endangered species as compared to females.

The root cause, I mean, that is in the family. We are the ones responsible for the upbringing of our children. We discriminate in raising the girl as compared to the boy.

[Inaudible interjections and applause]

Mr. Conrad Lewis (Belize): It is unmanly to cry and we harden the hearts of our boys. But the girls are expected to be disciplined, to be well mannered, to be well behaved, and when they go to school they go to school disciplined so it takes a disciplined child to achieve in school. Whereas, on the other hand, the boy goes to school maybe not properly disciplined because it is not manly to cry, it is not manly to say sorry, excuse, et cetera, et cetera, so the boys become a victim of their upbringing. And once we ensure that our children are raised equally—what is expected of the girl is expected of the boy—then I think they will withstand the pressures of society.

[Applause]

The Chairman: Speaker Arrindell, care to comment?

Hon. D. Gisele Isaac-Arrindell, MP (Antigua & Barbuda): Amen.

The Chairman: Barbados. It is Barbados, followed by Bahamas, followed by Jamaica, followed by the Cayman Islands. Those are the ones that we have seen raise their hands so far.

Hon. Ishmael Roett, GCM, MP (Barbados): Ladies and gentlemen, I never thought that in my life that I would have heard anybody say that to have boys being successful that maybe they should do some girlish things with them. And that is a very dangerous—

The Chairman: Speaker Roett, can you speak into your microphone for me, please. Lift it to your—right. Thank you.

Hon. Ishmael Roett, GCM, MP (Barbados): Yes, I must repeat that, please.

The Chairman: Thank you.

Hon. Ishmael Roett, GCM, MP (Barbados): I never thought that I would have heard anybody say in the West Indies that to have boys more successful that you should do some girlish things with them. That did not sound like a very serious comment to me.

I must really agree with Belize that it is a total misunderstanding of boys in our society. Our boys, from the time they must be about 8 years old, are expected to behave like a man, to do mannish things, to make mannish decisions, and they are totally left by themselves. By the time they get to take exams, if a poor boy does not pass the exam he is an underachiever.

But I tell you, that same boy can take down in three years or two years time a car engine. That same boy could go and wire this building. That same boy can do things that we, the so-called achievers, could never dream of understanding or doing. Does that not say something? I believe what it says is that there is something basically wrong that we are doing with our boys in the West Indies.

I went to Cyprus and I noticed one or two of you visited Cyprus, I believe including the presenter.

Not you? Okay.

I noticed that we did not see any young men on the street, whatsoever. I got curious and I asked about it. What I was told was that in this country there is a programme which everybody goes to secondary school, and whether you do well or not you immediately go into a programme. And if you are an academic and you go on to university that is your programme, but university is part of the programme. If you have to learn a skill, that is your programme.

Do you see where I am coming from?

So they can supply all of their trades people. They can supply carpenters, plumbers. In fact, I must say they do export quite a few.

But in our society, if you are not an academic immediately you are really ostracised.

Hon. D. Gisele Isaac-Arrindell, MP (Antigua & Barbuda): I disagree. I disagree.

Hon. Ishmael Roett, GCM, MP (Barbados): You are named an underachiever.

Hon. D. Gisele Isaac-Arrindell, MP (Antigua & Barbuda): No. No.

Hon. Ishmael Roett, GCM, MP (Barbados): You are literally forced by some families and some parents to go out there and work, work. You hear that? Work to make money.

In the meantime, the girl is not called an underachiever but she can learn some skills to make some money. So classes are fun for her whether in nutrition or in something else, cake making or something. But the boy is always left on his own.

I believe also—just let me make this last point. I think in the West Indies it is time that governments really wake up. We have to make the decisions and the decision-makers are leaving these young men on the streets, all alone, and therefore the young men

must go out and seek for themselves. I think this is why we are having all the problems.

Which country in the West Indies has an organised programme of skilled development? I do not mean where you have to have a certificate or two to get in. I am talking about where you can go in automatically and learn something. I find that we leave them on their own too much and then we have such great expectations of them.

But there must be decisions made by politicians and recognised that there are too many programmes that involve, what we call in Barbados, cutting down grass and weeding and cutting down trees and so on, and then you send for the men. You know, where politicians every year come up with programmes, those kinds of programmes that you seek some labourers and therefore the men are available to do this work. And when it comes to firing they are the first ones to get fired. So the men are going to try and help themselves and protect themselves and try to find some kind of work.

I do not feel that governments are being as supportive as they can of many of these young people and having the kind of programmes. Of course, there are programmes. There are programmes in Barbados.

The Chairman: Thank you.

Hon. Ishmael Roett, GCM, MP (Barbados): We have—just one more minute, please.

We have one of the biggest polytechnics in Barbados but you must still get a certificate or two to get in there.

Thank you.

Hon. D. Gisele Isaac-Arrindell, MP (Antigua & Barbuda): I find that a lot of what you are saying is almost an apology.

The first question I have to ask is: who owns these young men on the streets? Does the government own them or do they belong to their families? I do not believe that children belong to government at all, so what influence do the families have on the outcomes of these young men?

The other thing is you talk about programmes. I know in Antigua (and I am sure many of the other Caribbean Islands) we have what you call a tech/voc programme where you teach technical and vocational subjects to those students, both girls and boys, who are not interested in the academic stream. So you can do woodworking and masonry and electrical engineering and all these things.

And this starts at the secondary level. It actually starts at the post primary level. So right after common entrance if you have decided, or if the results show you are not of the academic stream or you just do not have that interest, you have tech/voc programmes that you can go into right up to the tertiary level.

And I know that I am not speaking only for Antigua & Barbuda. I know a lot of the other islands because those islands that do not have it innately have been funded by lots of external agencies such as the European Union.

So I disagree that, you know, we are putting kids on their own from the age of eight.

And what kind of family allows an eight year old to be making decisions for himself?

So, again, I have to ask: who owns these boys? Is it the state or is it their parents?

I disagree that the persons who go into trades are seen as underachievers. I wish my husband were a plumber or an electrician because in the building boom we are having I would be a very rich woman and I could stop working! Every lawyer and every doctor and every politician is going to need a plumber because your toilet is going to get clogged one of these days.

So I do not think there is any disrespect or disregard or any label of 'underachiever' shown to those persons who work in the trades. I think we are all sensible enough to realise that these are necessary professions.

I think in Antigua & Barbuda we have too many lawyers, but right now we have to be importing tradesmen from Guyana and Dominican Republic and all kinds of places. So I disagree that tradesmen are disrespected and I do not agree with this whole ownership of young people by the state. Young people belong to families.

The Chairman: This is such an interesting topic, and we have so many people listed to speak.

I am going to take the lunch hour at this time and when we return: Bahamas, Jamaica, Cayman, Grenada and Saint Lucia.

We will return at 2 instead of 2.30 so we can conclude this very exciting topic.

Proceedings suspended

Proceedings resumed

The Chairman: Should I start this as I would start Parliament? Proceedings are resumed.

I think the next person to speak is Bahamas, but we are going to change the procedure a little bit in that we will not have the presenter back and forth with the person making the comments or asking the question. On the winding up she will deal with all comments and questions put to her during this part of the session.

Bahamas . . . who is going to lead off?

Mr. J. Kwasi Thompson, MP, Deputy Speaker (The Bahamas): Kwasi Thompson, Deputy Speaker.

I wanted to just make a few brief comments by saying that I agreed with what the Speaker was saying in terms of I do not believe it is a problem of

boys or the young male not succeeding. But when we look at those who fall or who are delinquent it is just that the majority of young people who are delinquent happen to be males.

I think that it is a problem that has to be addressed, not just by looking at one solution, but it has to be addressed by looking at the entire community bringing together the family, bringing together the government, bringing together the private sector to work together to address the problem.

For instance, I believe, as persons have mentioned, the family structure must be confirmed. Fathers must take their place, as well as mothers must continue to do what they have been doing.

We also must look at government programmes that are designed to benefit young people. For instance, there is a programme that is going to be started in the Bahamas where we have allocated a certain amount of funds to assist young people—and I am sure the majority would probably be young men—with startup businesses. So they would be able to access funds to start certain businesses, technical businesses, and they would be able to access funds to start those businesses.

We also need to look at the private sector where, as I believe the Senator from Bermuda mentioned, that we must have young men being mentored by older men. I think that is a necessity. I think there are older men who are willing to do it, and I think those who are not willing to do it must be motivated to do it because it is the only way that—and there is something that you mentioned and I wrote it down. You said it is a poverty of aspiration.

I think the only way you can address that is for them to see themselves becoming successful men, and the way that they will see themselves becoming successful men is if they spend time with successful men and successful men show them how they became successful and give them the tools and show them the tools that they need.

So I believe we need to look at a cross-section of different solutions, including the church as well in our community, because in most Caribbean communities the church is very vibrant. We need to look at all of these aspects together in order for us to bring a real solution to this problem.

The Chairman: Second speaker from the Bahamas.

Mrs. Verna Grant, MP (The Bahamas): Good afternoon. Verna Grant. I have several comments, Madam Chairman.

Regarding the underachievement, I believe not in every instance it is the same situation because as a parent and a mother of three sons, I found that the male counterpart of the home was vital. Because he was there and he mentored and he was able to bring the children, or the boys, up in that male dominant type of environment it made a great difference in my children.

It is not always the same case in all of the parents because there are a lot of single parents in our community where the mothers are forced, in some cases, or they decide that they want to be the male and the female in the home. And so, I believe that has created some problems in our society where our children are really confused, you know? They do not know if they are male or female sometimes.

We have a lot of freedom of choice and so you have males raising male children, who are partners or you have females raising females and male children. And so, there is no direction per se as to where our children are going and our future; where our generation is going.

And so I think we have a lot of stem problems but I believe that it is imperative as parents and as representatives for our communities to find ways to encourage our males particularly to become involved. I feel that we need to stick with them. We need to show them love. We need to encourage them constantly.

You know, it was suggested that we do not have to force our children or we do not have to make them do anything, but it is imperative at times where we have to force them. We have to show them that love and we have to be consistent with our discipline.

I do not feel like I am bringing my daughter up any different than I am bringing up my sons. They know how to do everything a female knows how to do but they are very masculine.

So it depends on your knowledge of how you raise your kids, but I think the schools, the church as was suggested, community at large needs to help to foster and not talk about our children or our male children as worthless. *'When you gonna raise you come and you be just like your pa. He's no good and so you ain't no good.'*

You know, we really put a stigma on our boys and we make them feel as if they are not significant in a lot of ways. So I think we really need to change our mind or our approach to how we see our male children and try to foster more love and concern and more consistency.

Thank you.

The Chairman: Bahamas.

Mr. D. Shane Gibson, MP (The Bahamas): Yes, Shane Gibson from the Bahamas.

I share in some of the grain in some of the comments made earlier as well, particularly with the presenter when we were talking about putting the pressure on developers and investors to finance and spearhead programmes whether it is training or educational programmes to do things that really we should be doing ourselves.

I served for a while as Minister responsible for Labour and Training in the Bahamas. Of course, even though I did the same thing where we insisted that

developers who wanted to bring in workers would first agree and commit to a certain level of training and education for workers, I always felt sort of hypocritical because although we put pressure on them to do these things I thought that was our responsibility.

And so, they come in there with a major project and they want to invest \$500 million, \$1 billion, and we tell them, *'Yes, you can do it but you have to commit to training our people,'* when, in fact, when they come there should be persons trained already. And so, where this problem did not happen overnight, of course, it is not going to be resolved and solved overnight. I think we have to use a sort of multidimensional approach.

One thing that comes to mind, particularly with me, is one day when my constituency called me and said they have these 15 young men who are all looking for work, and so I rushed down on a Sunday afternoon and met with them. Some said they wanted carpenters, masons, labourers. So I got on the telephone right then and I called two contractors and they said, *'Okay, send the worker on Monday morning at seven o'clock.'* And you would never guess how many of them actually showed up. Not one. Out of the 15 not one of them showed up. But before I left they were putting their hands up saying *'I need a slow five. I need a slow ten. Give me something to put in my pocket.'*

So I believe that the problem goes way beyond that. I mean, we started a programme when we were in government for at-risk young men where we are addressing some of these concerns, but I believe it starts long before then. I believe it starts in the home. It is the family responsibility.

I think too often we put these responsibilities on the government. What is the government doing? I believe that the government should set the atmosphere, but at the end of the day, it is the family's responsibility, because while we are dealing with these at-risk young men we still have the same type of young men being developed in our society. So I believe in the mentoring programme, I believe that we need to put on more positive programmes.

I always tell my constituents that unless we are able to find a way to continuously put on positive programmes in our constituencies that will captivate the minds and the energy of the young men, then we will continue to lose them because we wait until after the fact and then we try to find a way of solving the problem. I believe if we could put preventative measures in place, put positive programmes in the communities where after school the young men are going to have positive things to get involved in, I think it would make a whole lot of difference in terms of how they eventually develop.

So I agree it is not a simple problem, very complex, but at the end of the day I do not think that that responsibility should be placed on the government or the investors or developers coming to your

country. I think that as a community that is our responsibility.

The Chairman: Before I call on the next speaker I am going to ask the Conference to bear with me for one moment while we make a presentation to Dr. Shija because he has to leave at this time, if you do not mind.

**PRESENTATION TO CPA SECRETARIAT
SECRETARY GENERAL,
THE HON. DR. WILLIAM F. SHIJA**

The Chairman: Dr. Shija, on behalf of the conference, I beg to present you with a small token of our appreciation for your presence at this, your first, Regional Conference in this area.

[Applause]

Hon. Dr. William F. Shija (London): Honourable Speaker, honourable distinguished members.

I wish to say again it is the will of the Lord. God has given us this time and He has put everything under His will and arrangement.

The arrangement is that we have come together, we continue to discuss together, we continue to share for the benefit of the people that we belong to.

I wish to assure you that I have benefitted a lot from this Conference, particularly meeting you personally, because now I can claim I know you.

I wish to take this image with me with a lot of good feeling so that I can continue to be at your service in London where I welcome you very much.

Should you happen to come to London, please visit us so that we can continue to communicate. Otherwise the emails are open, the post office mails are open, the telephone lines are open, and any other means of communications should be put open to the benefit of activities of the CPA.

I wish you all the best and greetings to everyone when you go back. God bless you indeed. I appreciate.

Thank you.

[Applause]

Hon. Dr. William F. Shija (London): On behalf of the Secretariat, will you please receive this token of our appreciation.

The Chairman: Thank you.

[Applause]

The Chairman: I now call on Jamaica.

Hon. Syringa Marshall-Burnett, CD, JP (Jamaica): Thank you, Madam Chair.

I am sure we all agree that this continues to be a most interesting and provocative discourse on something that matters greatly to all of us.

There used to be an old saying that it takes a village to raise a child, and I think many of my generation grew up like that and I have seen that community and family responsibility shrinking. So I want to agree with all the colleagues that are emphasising the importance of family.

But many families need support and perhaps this is one area where government can intervene in terms of assisting families, whether that be a single-parent family. And believe me, sometimes both parents are there physically but are not there emotionally. Sometimes it is even too destructive that they are both there for the children, that it is better that they are not there. With the rise in things like domestic violence, it certainly does not all go well for a family's ability to bring up their children properly.

Professor Chevannes, the professor of sociology at the university, has been very concerned about this whole business of fathers and boys. As a matter of fact, he started an organisation called Fathers Incorporated.

He has been looking at it scientifically, doing surveys, and he has found that you start from prep school and both girls and boys are starting out very fine and they pass through what we call the GSAT phase. But somewhere between 3rd and 4th Form something starts to happen which he has not been able to unravel. It would seem as if whatever the challenge is that happens there, that is where the girls seem to zoom passed, as it were, and the boys, you know, begin to stagnate and fall back, those who do because as you say, Sir, the majority of them.

So I do not know what further light he may be able to shed on that but he is quite interesting because he has been following this.

On the other hand, **Ruth Dobar**, of blessed memory, she is our psychologist and she passed away just recently. She was our prison psychologist and found that the IQ of the young men—and I am ashamed to say that our prisons are full of young men—was extremely good. She found very high IQ among the young prisoners and she felt that somewhere along the line they need a challenge, something to really embrace the intellectual skills that they have and probably were not getting that and probably just got bored with the school system, among other things.

So I think there are many, many elements to this very recalcitrant problem that we need to look at—strengthening the family to be able to deliver and encouraging the family to have consistent values and to treat the girls and boys similarly.

I was fortunate. I was an only child for my mother and father, and so I got—but even then, you know, my mother is from a large family and I remember when if there was one child to educate it was a boy if there was only sufficient money. And that was

the common order of things and nobody got excited about that because that was the accepted order of things. Since that order has been changed a lot of people have been getting excited since—that is that not only the boys but everybody should have this equal opportunity to grasp what is available.

But I have always thought too that where you see delinquent children look if there are any delinquent parents because they have their genesis and they have their origins.

And we need to strengthen the family unit, strengthened by the church, strengthened by the PTA, strengthened by the family, by the community in order to be consistent and as one plank in meeting—not the only plank but one very important plank in meeting this very recalcitrant problem that has overtaken us in the Caribbean.

The last data, for example, from UWI I think is like 70 per cent girls enrolled in tertiary education and 30 per cent boys. I remember the days when they were saying 50/50 and we have seen it, you know. And to me, there has not been the kind of interventions that were necessary to prevent that.

One more point. We have just had the GSAT examinations, the royal rule to secondary education, and there are all these tremendous scholarships and I am very glad that they are there and hopefully we have more of them. But I do not see any scholarships coming forward to the kids who are clever with their hands or want to do other kinds of things. What if I wanted really to be a motor mechanic that can pull down these electronic cars and what not? Is there a scholarship for me? Is there a scholarship for those areas?

And we still consider the achievers, the academics. We still consider them. We still have that bias, I would almost say discrimination, that if you go passed your seven O levels and so on, that is the one that gets the scholarship. But somebody wanting to do something alternative, just as important, requiring quite a degree of intellectual ability but it is probably more work with the hands, we are not placing as much emphasis. And I would like to see that we begin to look at this aspect of education, we look at education in a much more rounded fashion and begin to place some emphasis there that children who have these kinds of abilities are encouraged as much as our children who are going into secondary education.

More recently because of the CARICOM free movement of certain skills and so on, we have now begun to look at skill training much more in-depth in Jamaica and I know there are many programmes now to ensure that those who have a skill are also certificated. It is not the certificate first and the skill after. All those with a skill do get some formalised recognition of the skill. So maybe that is a small but very important start.

These are my comments to this rather recalcitrant problem, as I call it. Thank you.

The Chairman: Cayman Islands.

Ms. Lucille D. Seymour, MLA (Cayman Islands): Thank you very much, Madam Chair.

I wish to offer some comments on this phenomenon which we have called the underachieving youth. I noticed it has turned into boys, so I wonder whether I should address male and female at the time. But let me just share a few things with you from the Caymanian experience.

In the old days when I grew up our boys, our youth went to sea; that was their right of passage. They went at about age of . . . some at 12 and some at 14 and, surprisingly enough, when they came back they came back as men.

Now, I do not remember anybody ever telling me there was a woman on the ship. They were all men on those ships, and I can speak firsthand because my brothers all went. And the most times they had to start from the lower level and then work themselves up and they were taught by these men and they had to do all the things—get the bedrooms right, cook, do all those things. They came back very well equipped, nice boys. A lot of them found themselves with more education because in those days they did not have as much education as we have today. So, that is one point.

But in those days we did not have the phenomena that we have now, because our fellows at the time went to the level that they could go, which was Standard 6, and they did well, a lot of them with that education did extremely well. But today we have our boys with not those rights of passages that our boys had in those days.

And I was wondering—and these are just my thoughts—whether perhaps we do not need rights of passages for our young men, our young boys, so that they can become men. This is what I was wondering.

I would also say that when I grew up, I grew up in a very interesting era where the emphasis was on developing young men, developing boys. Girls really did not aspire and get those things that they have today.

Then I also grew up in the feminist movement, and this is strange, that came up in the US. That was the beginning for girls to move. Some may not agree with it. But they made demands. They made demands on things they wanted for the girls. The girls must get education, the girls must get this . . . and it was gotten.

And so I would say today perhaps we need to make the demands for the boys now. We need to make those demands that this is what we want for our boys.

I am saying these things casually, but I also want to say that the child . . . I believe Shakespeare said the child is the father of the man and the child is also the daughter of the mother. What that means is

that we need to re-look as women—and I know this might not go down well, we need to re-look as women how we raise our boys.

I say this because I have experience of raising a boy, and I will tell you something. It is not the same as you raise girls, you know.

I am giving you my experience. One of the first things that I had to do was to learn what he liked and use those things that he liked to make him into a wonderful child and to use them as the carrot. I will just say shortly what they were. One was fishing, one was reading and one was soccer.

Now, I could get away with the fishing, I cannot play soccer and I can read. But I had to go and learn soccer. I had to know more about fishing. And what I did with the fishing was whenever there was a distraction from his peers—and believe me, in the secondary school that happens—I would always say, *'Listen, remember we had to go fishing with Uncle So and So'*. And whatever it was that the peer pressure was it went out the way because the liking of fishing superseded going with his friends.

I thought I would throw that out.

But I would also like to come back to women, and not disparagingly, but I believe that we need to look at how we raise our sons. My experience is this: when we have our daughters by default, by default, we say to them: *'Look, you are going to help Mommy, right? You are going to help Mommy do this and when you finish that you are going to do this and when you finish it you are going to help Mommy.'* And it is all in a game, but you know what we are doing? We are helping them to organise their life and helping them to focus and to multitask them. That is what we have done with our daughters by default. But we have not done that with our sons. We have not.

Madam Chair, that is my contribution.

The Chairman: Thank you.

Mr. Rolston Anglin, Cayman Islands.

Mr. Rolston M. Anglin, MLA (Cayman Islands): Thank you, Madam Chair.

Madam Chair, I think this is my third Regional Conference and in some way, shape or form this topic always comes up.

As a couple of contributors said a bit earlier, we tend to focus greatly on what interventions the state is going to make. And where I think the battle is won or lost—and in a lot of instances, as it relates to young males, more so lost—is indeed parenting and parents' ability to cope with the new age, the new information age.

We offer degrees in institutions in everything imaginable. Yet the most important job, if I would call it that, of parenting is something that is assumed. We assume that people will naturally become responsible parents.

Interventions are great and they work in some instances. The reality, though, is that even with inter-

ventions you will see persons who are at risk but they come from families that are at risk. And even the interventions do not work because, at the end of the day, they still go back to that family. That is still the family unit that they have to function in, and I use function very loosely.

When we look at the Caribbean—and I was fortunate enough to grow up in this current age, this current age that saw the beginning of the hip hop culture and as a young teenager I was a part of a break-dancing troupe. I will never forget my poor mother when she used to see me leaving home with the high top shoes and the shoe laces that were fluorescent.

The bottom line is our parents have a distinct inability to deal with the issues that face their children. Parents very rarely go to the places their children hang out. [Some parents] do not know the turf their child hangs out at; know what is happening; know who their friends are; know who they are chatting with online. A lot of parents do not even know how to turn on the computer.

So when we start talking about our youth, as governments, as parliamentarians, the reaction always is you want to put some programme in place. You want to put some club in place. You want to fund some organisation. I am not suggesting that we stop that, because I think that is very important, but we do need to look at the whole issue in the public education system, in my view, of what it is, what sort of information do you continue to disseminate to people at appropriate times in their lives?

I started off by saying we offer to [portion not recorded] area imaginable except parenting. The most important function of a human being is the legacy. It is passing those values on to the next generation so that your country can be stronger. And there is no degree in that. The reality is the majority of people in any society are still going to be what you call the average man, the grassroots man.

So, Madam Chair, I would just like to offer the fact that we do need to continue to insist on role modelling and trying to encourage good role modelling because it ultimately has to be at home.

Now, in Cayman we have started the National Parenting Programme. When they come to your district you always have to go as a representative and it is always the "good" parents that come out. It is the parents who really are doing a great job that come out. And we need to start to reverse that trend as governments as well.

We need to start to find ways to reach the people that need the help; to reach the constituents who are struggling; to reach that single mother or single father or, indeed couple who are struggling to raise their children because, ultimately, that is where the battle ground is going to be won or lost. That is where the prisons are being filled, from those particular families in the mean.

One thing that we have started in Cayman that I think has been something that is good is the

recognition of the vocational area and the technical area and started to offer scholarships to institutions like the New England Institute of Technology. That is an important paradigm shift.

I went to a high school graduation last night, 271 young people graduating from a small little Island like this, and that is just the government high school. As I sat there and I watched constituent after constituent, I started thinking to myself where are they going to be in 10, 12 years time, those specific individuals.

Ultimately, it all comes from our homes and how it is that we are going to try to cause there to be a shift and cause there to be the types of information available to parents so that you can really understand your children.

I get to see some unique things in that my father, who is now in his 60s is raising his grand nephew, and my father knows nothing about the information technology, nothing about computers. He is talking to this young man about education but, ultimately, he still does not truly understand what motivates and what moves him. All you hear him say is, *'Ah, you listening to that foolish rap music again.'*

Until we are able to really understand what our children are going through and until parents are better equipped and able to really understand what it is that is happening, you know, I think this is going to be a real challenge, not just in the Region. It is not just in the Region.

The Chairman: Grenada.

Hon. Michael D. Lett, MP (Grenada): Thank you, Madam Chair. Michael Lett, Deputy Speaker, Grenada.

This topic is a heated topic. In Grenada the principal and staff of a primary school recognised that the boys were underdeveloped and that they were wearing the pants under the buttocks, moving into drugs and other negative aspects. So, what she did was organise a week of activities for the boys. The theme for that week was, *"Making Positive Boys; Making a Positive Difference"*.

It all started off with church service on the Sunday where parents, students and teachers attended the church service. The boys went with their ties, their pants in the correct position and their jackets. The parents were surprised to see how some of the boys behaved.

On Monday morning the boys were responsible for assembly. They had a theme song which they used for the entire week: "I Have a Dream, a Song to Sing." Many of you all might know this but they sang that song at the assembly for the entire week.

They were responsible for carrying out the inspections of the different classes and they did a good job. They visited homes for the aged and chatted with the shut-ins.

They had many speakers come in to give their motivation talks. They had a building contractor, they had an author playwright, a dive instructor, a lawyer, a hotelier, a doctor, a farmer and somebody from fisheries in the Ministry of Agriculture. So, these motivational [speakers] were able to help them out so that they could think of getting involved in the different jobs in the future. Some of them visited the hotels and saw the areas that would open up for them when they left school.

But all in all, it was very, very successful and other schools have decided that they will follow suit.

Thank you very much.

The Chairman: Saint Lucia.

Hon. Dr. Rose Marie Mathurin (Saint Lucia): Thank you, Madam Chair.

I want to share a bit about the Saint Lucian experience, and I want to do so from being an educator myself having taught at a teachers' college for the last 20 years, being the mother of 6 kids—3 girls and 3 boys—so I can understand gender and gender differences.

Let me just give you a little bit about our context. The Saint Lucian education system has examinations, national examinations at grade 2, at grade 4, at grade 6, at grade 9, the equivalent of Form 3. You do CXC's at Form 5 and 'O' and 'A' levels.

We have found that from as early as grade 2—and these are commission studies—the boys begin falling back. However, by 'A' level there is no difference in performance. There may be lower enrollment so that we have less boys getting to 'A' level, but the performance of girls and boys at the 'A' level college, insignificant difference. And we begin to see that from 5th Form because the CXC's show that the boys' schools and the girls' schools normally tie for first and second place; one one year and one the other year.

So it really began to speak to us about the different learning needs that males may have and not necessarily achievement. It really depends on the parameters you use to define that achievement, and so we commissioned the study about five years ago looking at the learning needs of male students in the system.

Recommendations . . .

That study was repeated in Grenada, Saint Vincent and Dominica. So, there is a compilation of the similarities of that report. It is on the Net actually.

One of the things it spoke to us—and I suppose because I am from the teacher's college. It began to speak to us about the different teaching and assessing methods for male and female students. So I have male and female student teachers and I need to teach them differently.

Let me just relate to you one incident that happened. We were trying to do an experiment in physics and we were looking at the flow of electricity

and we gathered all the male student teachers together and said, *'Listen, plan this lesson.'* And we asked all the female students, *'Plan this lesson.'* And both of them delivered the lesson.

The female students came up with beautiful charts, a few activities but beautiful charts. And the male students decided that they were going to teach that lesson by making everybody hold hands and that the two people at the end would push their finger in the socket.

It spoke to us immediately and I can relate to you so many different ways in which the males taught so very practically and the females had a different way of teaching. So there are lots of issues that can be addressed here because female teachers teach male students.

Be that as it may, it spoke to us about re-examining our curriculum at the teachers' college because, honestly, we have a gender-blind curriculum at the teachers' college. We just teach boys, girls, men, women, female. Whatever happens, we teach.

So, we are beginning to now look at gender equality in our curriculum because it obviously speaks to different methodologies, different learning and we have to assess them differently.

I want to say that Saint Lucia is borrowing and patterning Jamaica's Heart Foundation qualifications. We have tech/voc schools. Yes, we have tech/voc schools but we send them for CXC examinations; that is an academic exam. So where is the tech/voc?

So we are now biting into Jamaica's Heart Foundation vocational qualification so that they are taught in a vocational curriculum and they have vocational exams. So that is one of the ways we are trying to look at speaking to the differences.

I want to say too that maybe—and I agree that the family, the church, et cetera, must be part of examining, defining and redefining the problem. One of the things is I think we have to look beyond education as well.

Saint Lucia just had—and I am sorry to say it again, but Saint Lucia just had a screening for diabetes and we came out as the number one country for diabetics. I mean I want to say it softly when I say it is only in the Region but it is not only in the Region. Saint Lucia is the number one country for diabetics.

Now, more than that the screening began from adolescents of 14 years to adults and we found that there is a higher incidence of male diabetes from 14 along the adolescence. So, does that speak to their ability, their performance? What is it speaking to?

We are now doing the screening from seven months, I think, to 14 years. But it speaks to something. Are there other issues that impinge on the males' ability to perform in an academic environment?

I am saying so to say that also I want us to re-examine, define, use different parameters to examine achievement because males probably need to be assessed differently.

I recently opened a school for children with learning disabilities. I run two programmes. I run a full-day programme for the children with dyslexia and **mylotism**, et cetera, and I run an afternoon programme for children from secondary schools who have reading disabilities.

In my full programme I have 19 male students and the school is not a boys' school, it is just that a lot of the children who have the learning disabilities are males.

I run an afternoon programme for secondary students with reading disabilities and my 27 students are all males. It speaks to something else other than just academic performance.

I just recently submitted a report to the EO for special needs. Now, I do not think it is my school only that has more males, I think this is something that we are not looking at. We need to examine why there are more males with learning needs. Secondly are health or other issues and factors that we must consider in assessing male performance.

The Chairman: Thank you.

Final speaker, Montserrat.

Hon. Joseph Henry Meade, MLC (Montserrat): Thank you very much, Madam Chairperson.

I am speaking from the background of 38 years of teaching and 40 years within the context of a nuclear family. I would like to submit just a very simple solution towards the whole problem of male under-achievers.

I think within the context of a nuclear family the life and example—and this is coming possibly from the Christian background in which I was brought up—must lay flat what we would like, or the message that we would like to pass on to our children both mother and father equally. This must be supported by the values that we instill or teach those boys and girls.

However, I must admit that there are certain nuclear families perhaps that might not have the ability to carry out these functions effectively in order to see results. This is where, as previous speakers have indicated—especially Jamaica who used the term “it takes a village to raise a child”—the community, the church and the school come in; where some families like the single family is not capable of carrying out what is required in terms of getting the true value out of their children, the boys in particular. So we need to develop that community spirit.

I know that when I was growing up as a boy that you could not pass down the street and not say “Good Morning” or “Good Afternoon” to members of the community. If you did anything wrong within the community you would be strapped or beaten by members of the community and you could not dare go home and make a complaint because you would get another beating.

So this sort of camaraderie seemed to have disappeared for some reason from our communities of

today. But I think we need to go back to those basics—the community, the church and the school—in order to build the kind of child that we would like to see coming through in today's world.

And where these programmes through the church, the community and the school fail, then here is where I think the government's involvement (even though some speakers are not quite in favour of government's involvement) is necessary because we put them there to look after our affairs, our business.

And this is part of our business where our boys are not doing as well as we would like and where the family structure that should provide the sort of background and training and development for our children is not available. Government should come in and exercise their control and right in establishing whatever is required to ensure that the true value of our children is met.

This is very brief and I think that if we follow this route that we will see marked significant changes in the performance of our boys as well as our girls.

Thank you very much.

The Chairman: Before I call on Speaker Arrindell to summarise this topic, if this Conference will allow it, one of the Cayman Islands Youth Parliament members wishes to make a few remarks. I know it is outside the normal procedure, but I seek the permission of the Conference if you agree to this.

Mr. Wright, can you introduce the young member of the Youth Parliament, please.

Mr. W. Alfonso Wright, MLA (Cayman Islands): Thank you, Madam Chair.

They have elected a representative among themselves, Ms. Elizabeth Charles, who in our last Youth Parliament was our Minister of Finance.

Elizabeth.

Ms. Elizabeth Charles, Youth Parliamentarian (Cayman Islands): Good afternoon. I am representing the Youth Parliament. We had actually discussed this topic in our meetings during our own parliamentary time. After discussing it together we all agreed on one thing: the foundation is very, very important. We all agreed that it began with the family.

The family is the one that stimulates the growth in the boys from such a young age, before they even know what a government is. And we think that it is the family's duty first off to help to promote a sense of self-worth in the male youths.

We do agree that a lot of importance does need to be placed on the different learning styles. You know, some people do learn better practical and other people learn better reading. We all know that.

Another issue that we think that the government should maybe try is to employ different organisations and say to these organisations, *'Okay, we are going to help fund you and place it as your responsi-*

bility to start an abundance of extra curricular activities for these youths.'

The way we see it as youths ourselves is that people who are more involved in these activities from a young age, beginning with a young age—because as we all know the problem does not start when they are in their teenage years, it starts from younger. People who do begin with these activities when they are younger, and it is made in a way that they can continue with these things up until they are in their working ages, tend to be less involved with activities that would not be condoned by the law.

So we think we [should] employ these organisations and say, *'We are making it your duty to do this, to find a way to get the youths interested in it also.'*

We have heard a lot of [talk] about the media and as we all know there has been a shift in the culture. We as youths place a lot of importance on different things that maybe a lot of older people would not have during their time.

But why not use the media? Why not exploit the media for our benefit? You have the Live Above the Influence ads, you have stuff like that that are quite great and they reach the youth. Why not use the TV, why not use the different music programmes, all that stuff? Tell them, *'You know what? We are going to use these different programmes to send positive messages to the youth, to the males in particular, okay?'* Because that is who we are aiming for right now. So we definitely think that the government should try to exploit the media rather than simply thinking that the media is not good.

When I was speaking about funding different organisations, one of the organisations that you have is the Youth Parliament. We think what better way to reach youths than through other youths? Why not place funding on organisations such as this and have the youth say: *'Okay, you know, we are going to put you in charge. You know these are your people and you guys have a future, okay? Find different ways to reach out to your youth. Speak to your youth in your ways. Tell the youth, 'You know the different styles of exactly what is happening with the computers, everything that is going on, technology. You know it. You are into it. Why don't we provide you guys with an aid and help you to help your friends, you know?''*

That way you are also encouraging us and as a result we are encouraging each other and we are managing to balance out the weights because other youths will say: *'Okay, well, you know, they have something positive going on and they are still cool. So we are going to try and do the same thing.'*

I think that is most of our points. But we were saying also, you know, that Bermuda has a great youth parliament. You could use their template — use their parliament as a template to build on it and kind of use it as a cornerstone to kind of help foster the growth of the youth, specifically with the males.

Thank you.

[Applause]

The Chairman: Thank you, Ms. Charles.

I now call on Speaker Arrindell to summarise this particular topic which she could speak I guess for another hour and a half, but since everybody wants to shop she is going to make it very brief.

Hon. D. Gisele Isaac-Arrindell, MP (Antigua & Barbuda): I promise to make it brief. Not two minutes but brief.

There is so much that has been said today that has merit, that has scope for development, that is applicable to the problems we are seeing. I think however that what we are lacking collectively as states, as a Region, perhaps as a world, is the will to do what needs to be done. There is so much to be done and it is so easy to just let it slide. I think that some of us may be guilty of thinking, *'Well, we are soon off the scene so let them handle it.'* But I think if we do not handle it now we are going to wish that we were off the scene even sooner because life is just going to be intolerable.

I think what we need more than ever as parents, as people who make policy, is a political will to do the hard things that have to be done. And if we do not do the hard things now they will become the impossible things.

Some of the things that I would like us to look at, or I would like to bring to your attention, just when we broke for lunch one of the young men spoke to me about incentive scholarships and so on. How does a nation plan? How do the youths know what direction they should go in? What does a nation need?

In Antigua & Barbuda our national scholarship programme is based on government priorities. The Ministry of Planning tries to look four years down the line to see what sectors will need beefing up, what industries are likely to come on stream and they offer scholarships in those areas.

For instance, tourism and agriculture are always at the top of our priority list because agriculture is something that I think all governments are interested in. We know we will never be able to feed ourselves entirely, but if we can cut down on our imports that is one of the things the Antiguan government has been trying to do: encourage agriculture and tourism because it is our main industry and because we are interested in having our locals occupy the middle and upper levels of management, not just to be the waiters and the bellhops and so on. So those two areas—tourism management and agricultural—are always at the top of our priority lists. So what government has done is link scholarships with national needs.

Again, in education I heard, I think, two speakers referring to the fact that the parents who most need the interventions are the parents who get at least—you have something at school, you have

something in the community, there is aim towards parents and helping families in trouble and they are not the ones who turn up.

Last December at one of our primary schools over 120 report cards remained not picked up. Parents just did not turn up to pick up their students' report cards. I am thinking that in instances where this happens maybe what governments need to do is tie in incentives, parents' privileges to certain responsibilities. *'We have got free school books, free uniforms. You do not get it unless you attend 'X' number of seminars. Or, you know, the several things in the healthcare industry that you are entitled to, your clinic visits and so on. You do not get those privileges unless you pick up the responsibilities that go along with parenting.'* I do not know if that is something that we can do or whether that will infringe on people's rights but I think desperate times call for desperate measures.

Another area that government has tried to beef up its activity in at home is the sporting and recreational complexes. The present government has undertaken a drive to rehabilitate the sporting fields, the basketball courts and so on, to equip them with lights so that, you know, kids can play after dark, just to give the kids some place where they can expend their energies in a positive way rather than going into alleys to do other non-constructive things.

One of the things I want to say here that we have not said too much about before is the role of the church. Now I, for one, believe that the church is not a building, the church is a community. And I am always appalled when I go to baptisms and I see young women going up with their babies on their own. I am thinking what is to become of these children who from birth the fathers are rejecting them, because if you cannot to get church for you child's baptism, what are you going to get there for?

And so, I think that when we have our daughters going up with their babies on their own, we are already putting those children behind the eight ball. We are already saying to them, unwittingly, *'You are a reject.'* I do not know what you can do with something like that other than educate our girls to be more discriminating in the men that they choose to have relationships and kids with, because if nine months after you and your child are already on the outside, I think we are already sending two people here on a downward spiral.

Parents, a lot of us, send our kids to church, we do not take them to church and for some reason, especially with boys, after they have made their confirmation their church days are over and it is okay with parents. I have heard parents say: *'Well, he is confirmed. You know, I cannot do anything else with him'* as if we have done our duty, as if at 12 and 13 and 14 years old we are leaving them to make decisions that we as adults have not even gotten the hang of yet.

I think we really have to do something about getting our kids back in some kind of . . . I do not want

to call it a church mode, but making church relevant in our lives, not just as a place to go on Sundays but as a place that we institutionalise inside.

How we do that I do not know because I know varying religions have various ways of worship, but I think it is very, very important. I hear my brothers and my brothers-in-law and many of those of that age and generation talk about going to church with their parents in the evening and serving as altar boys. I mean, these are boys who grew up to be fine men, and I think that it has something to do with the values that were inculcated at that age.

Back in Antigua I am part of a women's group called POWER. We are a professional organisation for women in Antigua & Barbuda. In August we are planning to have a back-to-school session for parents.

As somebody said, you have to get a diploma or some kind of qualification to do almost everything in this world, but you can just go and have a whole human being—1 or 2 or 3 or 10 or 15! And nobody ever gives you one formal class, no booklet, no nothing on how to bring up these kids. And these kids become not only your problem, if you do not do it right, but the problem of all of us.

So, we are hoping to have, with the blessing of the Ministry of Education, a back-to-school day for parents in which we are going to have lessons, we are going to have assembly, we are going to have recess, we are going to have lunch, whatever you want to call it. We will be taking parents to school and trying to give them a crash course in some of the areas that we seem to be falling down in.

The second-to-last thing is that I hear people talking about maybe we ought to lower the bar in some of our educational institutions to allow some of the failing males in. I think the thing is not to lower the bar but to raise the applicants. I think if we keep "dumbing" down soon from now we will have a society of fools.

And this is my final word: nobody is going to tell me that the descendants of slaves, endangered servants and outcast whites cannot do anything that they put their minds to.

Thank you.

The Chairman: Thank you, Speaker Arrindell. I must say I think this is going to be about the liveliest session that we are going to have for the entire conference.

I would just like to remind you that tomorrow morning we start at 9 am and the Sixth Session is "Disaster Preparedness and Recovery". Presenters are Grenada, Honourable Michael D. Lett, MP; Cayman Islands, Mr. Osbourne Bodden, MLA; Montserrat, Hon. Reuben T. Meade, MLC.

Nine am tomorrow morning. Thank you all.

Mr. Wright, you want to say something?

Mr. W. Alfonso Wright, MLA (Cayman Islands): Thank you, Madam Chair.

My apologies for what may have appeared to be a little meeting here within the other meeting, but we were discussing the possibility of informing the delegates that there is a local establishment that has a Caribbean night tonight and it is called The Mango Tree. While the CPA Organising Committee has not organised anything for tonight like we did last night, Delegates are on their own. But this is a nice location if you want to step out a little bit to get a little of the local flavour, get off the West Bay strip. You are quite welcome to do that. It is not a CPA sponsored event, but we can provide transportation for you if you so desire.

So, right after we dismiss if you could see any of the two gentlemen to my immediate left and let them have some numbers so we can know how to organise ourselves.

We will probably be leaving the hotel somewhere around 8.30 or 9, and we are hoping that if we do get it organised that we can have one trip out, one trip back. We do not want to be shuttling all night long.

So let us know if you are interested. Thank you.

An Hon. Delegate: Excuse me, Madam Chairperson.

The Chairman: Yes.

An Hon. Delegate: Can you really say exactly what this night is about? I mean, what is Caribbean night?

Thank you.

Mr. W. Alfonso Wright, MLA (Cayman Islands): It is a local establishment. It is partially outdoors, some covered area, with some Caribbean music. Food is there; you can dance; drinks are there. There is a sit-down restaurant as well. You can dance if you want.

The Chairman: It is a typical restaurant that caters to things that we from the Caribbean . . . the music, the food, the dominoes and whatever else that we want to do that is within limits! *[Laughter]*

Okay, that concludes the business but I would like to say, Mr. Wright, I have had a number of Delegates say to me they would like to mail a letter from Hell. Can we arrange that for those members who would like to get that postage stamp on an envelope to send back home saying "mail from Hell in the Cayman Islands"?

Mr. W. Alfonso Wright, MLA (Cayman Islands): If they provide the letters, Madam Chair.

The Chairman: The post cards you will get them done.

Mr. W. Alfonso Wright, MLA (Cayman Islands): The post cards and we will get them mailed.

The Chairman: Okay.

Mr. W. Alfonso Wright, MLA (Cayman Islands): We can take them down there, have them stamped and get them mailed.

The Chairman: Thank you very much, ladies and gentlemen. See you at 9 am sharp tomorrow morning.

SESSION 6

Session Chairman: Mr. Cline A. Glidden, Jr., JP, MLA

DISASTER PREPAREDNESS AND RECOVERY

Presenters:

Hon. Michael D. Lett, MP (Grenada)

Mr. Osbourne V. Bodden, MLA (Cayman Islands)

Hon. Reuben T. Meade, MLC (Montserrat)

The Chairman: Morning, Delegates. Hopefully you all had a nice free evening and were not exposed to too much of a local good time by our colleagues. But hopefully you enjoyed yourselves and are ready for another productive day.

This morning the Sixth Session is “Disaster Preparedness and Recovery”, and as you all will see we have three countries presenting. We have a presenter from Grenada, from the Cayman Islands and from Montserrat, and they all have different levels of experience with different natural disasters, and I am sure we will find it very enlightening.

Before we get started I have been asked again to remind everyone of the microphone etiquette, to make sure that everyone speaks directly into the microphones. And also, we have been requested to remind you to try to remember to give names. Since the Sessions are being recorded we wanted to be able to give everyone the correct credit for the contributions that have been made. So, if you can remember to give names prior to making your contribution.

With those short comments, I would now like to call on the presenters. I understand that there has been an agreement for a swap between the Cayman Islands and Grenada, and so now I will call on Mr. Osbourne Bodden to do his presentation.

Mr. Osbourne V. Bodden, MLA (Cayman Islands): Good morning. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I figured we would be off to a bit of a late start this morning because a few of us indulged last night, but I think everyone enjoyed themselves. There are a few seats empty, but I am sure they will be drifting in. I

see the man from Bermuda is representing. He represented well last night.

Anyway, first of all, I would like to thank the Honourable [Michael D.] Lett, MP for letting me go first because I have two resource people with me and they are busy people and both have to get back to work.

First, I would like to introduce Dr. Carby, the Director of Hazard Management Cayman Islands; and we also have Mr. Orrett Connor who wears many hats, but after Hurricane Ivan he became our Recovery Manager. He is ex-Chief Immigration Officer; he is current Deputy Supervisor of Elections and he is also current Cabinet Secretary, the only job that pays him.

I thank them for coming and assisting with the preparation of this presentation. I hope you will find it informative.

Basically, the presentation is going to be broken down into three parts. We are going to give you some definitions, then we are going to examine the three elements of the Cayman Islands Preparedness Plan—that is, institution, plan and legislation—and then we are going to outline some changes that have been made as a result of the Ivan experience.

Disaster Preparedness we consider to be activities and measures taken in advance to ensure effective response to the impact of hazards, including the issuance of timely and effective early warnings and the temporary evacuation of people and property from threatened locations.

On the other hand, recovery is decisions and actions taken after a disaster, with a view to restoring or improving the pre-disaster living conditions of the stricken community while encouraging and facilitating necessary adjustments to reduce disaster risk.

The most frequent threat facing the Cayman Islands I think we all know to be the threat of hurricanes. Of course, Hurricane Ivan was the highlight of that whole experience. So, we have had major effort placed on hurricane preparedness, but we also have plans now that have been developed for oil spills, mass casualty events, epidemics and aircraft accidents.

The presentation will focus on three areas of the Cayman Islands preparedness efforts and changes to them as a result of their most severe test – Hurricane Ivan.

We have the institutional organisation, our National Hurricane Committee. The plan is known as our “National Hurricane Plan” and legislation that assists in this area falls under our Emergency Powers Act.

The National Hurricane Committee comprises an Executive Group of Senior Public Officers and 16 sub-committees which cover various emergency functions. Chairpersons and members of the sub-committees are from the public sector responsible for management of the hurricane threat. Disaster management is the direct responsibility of the Governor, who also has an Executive Group which includes the Leader of Government Business and Chief Secretary

[Referring to presentation chart] This chart shows you the status quo of the National Hurricane Committee.

As I have just mentioned, we have the Governor, the Leader of Government Business and Cabinet. SIEC stands for the Sister Islands Emergency Committee. Then we have our National Hurricane Chairman and it falls down to National Weather Service Coordinator. Then you have the four sub-groups under the Chairman: Support Services; Emergency Response; Human Concerns; and Infrastructure. The breakdown follows under each of those, which is quite clear from the presentation. Of course, you guys will all get copies of this later on.

The National Hurricane Plan covers all activities required for immediate preparations for a hurricane and immediate post-impact response. It details actions to be taken at "Alert" phase—that is, 48 hours before impact—through to the "All Clear" by all elements of the Committee.

It also sets out the roles of the Governor, Cabinet, Speaker of the House, the Leader of Government Business, Leader of the Opposition and MLAs. This is important because it integrates elected officials, policy makers and technical experts into the Hurricane Preparedness and Response process.

In relation to the legislation, the Emergency Powers Law and Revisions gives the Governor and, to a lesser extent, members of the National Hurricane Committee authority to implement actions necessary for managing the threat. Invocation of the Emergency Powers Law provides for control of civil disorder.

Hurricane Ivan, September 2004—and I am sure Grenada will speak to this as well, but we have to go into some detail because this has certainly been our greatest and worst experience to date.

[Referring to presentation photos] This was the image that people saw (I guess we were not seeing anything at this time) when Ivan sat upon us for those few days.

Just to give you an idea of what some people were going through at the time, this is a shot from central George Town. I am not sure exactly where that is.

[To a Delegate] Can you tell me where that is, roughly?

I cannot make it out. That is probably up around where we drove you on the tour around the schools. This is in that area.

The water was flowing in from the south and through the North Sound. Basically, the whole area of George Town was under water.

We had many beachfront properties that looked like that and some still do, unfortunately, after Ivan, where water and boulders and other debris just simply smashed through and left the structure hollowed.

That is a parking lot at the Triple C School, again, to give you an idea of the amount of water that was on the ground at the time.

There are many stories of people standing inside of their homes up in their lofts or on a kitchen counter or something and the water rose to just where they were about to go under. The lucky thing for us during Ivan is that when it started to recede it went quickly.

There are many people who went through very traumatic experiences with water 6, 8 and 10 feet in some cases. Lots of stories.

Just to give you after that visual presentation some idea of what Ivan did to the Cayman Islands, the estimated loss was in the region of 138 per cent of our gross domestic product. The impact on the productive sector: US \$1.3 billion. Infrastructure damage: US \$586 million. Housing: US \$1.6 billion. Housing: 83 per cent of total stock damaged. Now, that is not to say 83 per cent wiped out, but certainly within that 83 per cent we had varying degrees of damage. For instance, my own home sustained minor damage but it would be included in that estimate. So, those figures are quite stark and I think should make you realise what took place here in Cayman.

The estimate on our tourism dollar: \$338 million direct loss and a total of \$556.8 million. And this is the figure, I think, that gets everyone, the impact of Ivan on the Cayman Islands is estimated at US \$90,000 per resident.

The National Hurricane Committee and Plan allowed the Cayman Islands to prepare for and mount an initial response to Hurricane Ivan. However, the plan does not address recovery, so a recovery coordinator—and that is Mr. Connor, who I introduced earlier—and committee had to be appointed.

These three important factors I think are what got us where we are today: the close cooperation of the private sector; the high level of insurance—although we experienced many trials with insurance companies and many claims of underinsurance and terms that people had never heard before, but the truth is that without the insurance dollar we would not have been able to rebuild Cayman—and, of course, a lot of hard work and determination on the part of all who resided here at the time.

It is important to note that the Cayman Islands still, up to date, has not got any money from overseas.

Right now we are in the process of getting some money from the European Union which has been in negotiation for some time. I understand that the money is getting closer and closer, but I think up to today one of the newspapers says the money is not here yet.

That money when it gets here is going to be, I think, in the region of—I think we are getting it in two installments and it is supposed to be in the region of \$6 million or \$7 million. It is going to go to the National Recovery Fund which was set up after Hurricane Ivan

and they are going to be in charge of dispensing and dealing with the allocation of those funds.

One of the things that we did as a country from the general reserves, we set up district funds at the time and money was distributed in that way aid was distributed through that medium through the Cayman Islands Development Bank and through the National Recovery Fund. People were asked to submit their claims—these were for uninsured people. It was processed by committees, and contractors then were hired, and the work proceeded on that basis.

Unfortunately, as is the case, whenever there is adversity there are those who take advantage and there were a lot of scams that went on, a lot of construction companies set up overnight and there were a lot of people looking to benefit from the downfall of the people who really needed the help.

So, all of the money unfortunately did not go where it should have went and therefore we did not get maximum value for all of that money that was poured out by the government at the time. But thank God we have learned from those mistakes and we are trying to make sure that going forward that is not the case.

The invocation of the Emergency Powers Law effectively placed all power in the hands of the Governor. This was a bone of contention because we were not in government then. In fact, my colleague here in the Opposition, Mr. Glidden, and Mr. Rolston, who is not with us yet this morning, were members of government at the time and they found themselves being quite impotent the way the structure was. No one had ever foreseen anything like Ivan coming and, basically, these things leave you speechless when they do happen if you are not prepared. We ended up with a situation where the legislature seemingly was without a role and the government was impotent.

Ivan was a devastating experience but it provided the opportunity to increase the country's resilience to future events and the Cayman Islands government decided to take this opportunity and grasp it with both hands.

Now, we move on to the institutional structure and this is where now the full-time office, the office of the Hazard Management Cayman Islands (Director Dr. Carby is here) has been set up to coordinate the management of all threats facing the Cayman Islands. The office will be responsible for all aspects of hazard management – prevention, preparedness, mitigation, response and recovery.

The National Hurricane Committee is being expanded into the National Hazard Management Council which will also have an executive arm.

[Referring to presentation chart] This is what we are hoping come December/January the new structure will look like, where the Governor still sits at the top but Cabinet and the Legislative Assembly will play. From here on, there will be a structure that will allow a consultative approach.

We will have the National Hazard Management Executive, and we have the Hazard Management Council, and we have the Sister Islands - Cayman Brac and Little Cayman. And then, of course, we have the four main committees at the bottom: Preparedness Committee; the Mitigation Committee; Operations Committee and the Recovery Committee. It is a lot less cluttered and I think it should give us the result that we are looking to achieve.

The National Hurricane Plan was reviewed and updated to include lessons coming out of Ivan. The two notable changes were the Joint Communication Services Sub-Committee established to give a unified voice to information coming out of the country.

That was another thing that we had. There was no coordination at the time and different stories were going out and no one quite knew what was happening in the Cayman Islands.

[The Joint Communication Services Sub-Committee will] consist of representatives from Government Information Services, tourism, and the financial sector. This group is responsible now for all public announcements.

[The plan also includes] the new Sub-Committee incorporating the private sector established and chaired by a member of the private sector; and all government ministries and departments instructed to develop continuity of operation plans to ensure functionality post impact.

Legislation.

The bill to establish an agency has been drafted. It includes: provisions for declaration of disaster areas without invoking the EPLaw; legislation specific to hazard management being written (the draft is not yet completed); and a mandatory evacuation clause amendment to Emergency Powers Act, which allows the state to enforce evacuation order.

In summary, the preparedness measures in place for Hurricane Ivan served the country well, but also showed the need for additional measures to be taken to ensure preparedness as well as recovery.

The Government has seized this opportunity to implement a more comprehensive approach to hazard management.

I thank you.

[Applause]

The Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Bodden.

Since we have three presenters for this, I am not sure whether the members feel like they would want to do all three and then we do the questions after that.

Is that agreed?

Great.

I will now ask the Hon. Michael Lett, MP, from Grenada to do his presentation.

Hon. Michael D. Lett, MP (Grenada): Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Disaster Preparedness and Recovery: A Grenada Perspective.

The introduction.

Small island states are particularly vulnerable to the aftershock of natural disasters because of their smallness in size and the population, limited economic resources and activities and limited economic bases. In fact, many small island states, such as Grenada, exist on what could be considered shoe-string budgets, and are heavily burdened with monumental national debts. This increases their vulnerability to economic tail-spin following any serious experience of a natural disaster. Such an occurrence can cause panic and chaos if we are not careful to put in place measures for rapid stabilisation and recovery. This is inevitably a major challenge for each of our governments.

National Disaster Management Agency.

In confronting this challenge, Grenada has established a Disaster Management Agency, which has a full-time office for disaster management with a staff complement of 18 persons. It is part of the Portfolio of the Prime Minister, who is also the Chairman of the National Emergency Advisory Council (NEAC).

The National Disaster Management Agency (NaDMA) is the body responsible for coordinating all disaster-related activities on the Island. It coordinates a management structure which includes key persons from Government departments, the private sector and non-governmental organisations (NGOs).

NaDMA is guided by a national disaster plan. It outlines the roles and responsibilities of all parties during an emergency situation. When there is a national emergency, the headquarters which is converted into the emergency operations centre is activated to ensure that there is stability of command.

There is a national disaster office also located at the National Disaster Management headquarters. It carries out all disaster management functions for the government. The National Disaster Office is headed by the National Disaster Coordinator, who acts as secretary to the National Emergency Advisory Council.

Plans and Procedures.

Since Hurricane Ivan in September 2004, Grenada has embarked on a number of initiatives, some new and others consolidated. The Island has seen a revision of its national disaster plan and the emergency operation center manual.

Furthermore, much energy was expended in:

- The design of the NaDMA notification procedure;
- An emergency operations centre and procedures;
- A damage and needs assessment plan;
- A Grenada integrated relief management plan;
- A model contingency planning framework for Grenada;
- A mass casualty management plan;

- A volcanic eruption emergency response plan; and
- A shelter management policy.

Community preparedness.

The Hurricane Ivan Experience has taught us many lessons; as a result, our district management structure has been revisited and is firmly established. District management personnel have been appointed to district committees throughout Grenada, Carriacou and Petit Martinique. Carriacou and Petit Martinique are two smaller islands off the shores of Grenada.

To be more accurate, besides the 17 district disaster committees which have been formed, there are some 128 sub-committees and 77 community disaster management teams established.

Public education and information.

In order to enhance our capacity for an efficient and effective public education and information system, Grenada has moved to appoint a Public Information Officer and has developed an information plan. The unit has embarked on an increased and enhanced public education campaign through:

- Public service announcements;
- Press releases;
- Media briefing/interviews;
- News letters;
- Disaster prepared lectures conducted country wide; and
- The development and distribution of brochures and fliers.

Communications.

Attention is focused on the establishment of an efficient communications network. Towards this end, a unit has had modern equipment installed. NaDMA now engages its staff and district communication officers in training. This includes exercises in the testing of equipment at community and emergency operation centre level. The National Emergency Telecommunications Committee which existed prior to Hurricane Ivan became non-operational but has since been re-established.

Training.

The National Disaster Management Office continues to facilitate and provide training for its staff and personnel from the national and district committees. Training is provided locally, regionally and internationally.

Some areas of concentration at the national level have been:

1. Shelter management;
2. Internal damage assessment;
3. Damage and needs analysis; and
4. Training for trainers

Quite a number of other areas are focused on at the district level.

Hurricanes Ivan and Emily.

Grenada was challenged in 2004 when Ivan, a category 3 hurricane, struck the Island. This happened 49 years after a near similar Hurricane Janet reaped havoc across the tri-island state. The lapse in time between these two hurricanes would have no doubt being a good reason for a great measure of complacency to creep up on the population. Added to that, because Grenada does not lie in the normal hurricane path in the Caribbean, it was common belief that the danger of a major hurricane striking the Island was sort of remote.

This thinking was further dispelled when less than one year later, in 2005, another hurricane, Emily—this time a category 2 hurricane—struck completing the earlier destruction caused by Hurricane Ivan.

Hurricane Ivan is considered as the sixth most severe hurricane to strike in Caribbean history. The damages caused to physical infrastructure on the Island amounted to US\$1.1 billion, representing some 250 per cent of the country's gross domestic product.

Thousands of houses, schools and commercial and government buildings were seriously damaged or destroyed. The agricultural and tourism sectors were severely devastated.

Ninety per cent of the Island's housing stock was either seriously damaged or destroyed. The cost for rebuilding schools, for example, was estimated to be US\$104 million. Some 30 persons lost their lives as a direct result of the hurricane, while several others were injured. Moreover, the majority of Grenadians were traumatised up to several weeks following the hurricane.

With the hurricane behind us and the destruction a lingering reality, the government and its people were challenged with the odious task of collectively charting the course to recovery.

Disaster recovery.

Luis Capio in his *Caribbean Net News* commentary of June 9, 2007 under the caption "Caribbean platforms for disaster reduction" wrote, and I quote:

"The World Conference on Disaster Reduction" (WCDR), calls on all nations to "support the creation and strengthening of national integrated disaster risk reduction mechanisms, such as multi-sectoral national platforms" as the main way in which to mainstream risk reduction approaches into currently existing emergency preparedness, response and recovery programmes, as well as integrating disaster risk reduction into countries' sustainable development planning. Thus, emergency response leaders and personnel would be influenced by a risk reduction approach, whilst disaster risk reduction experts expand their horizons to include the social, economic and ecological spheres of sustainable development. Development policy-makers, in turn, would be called upon to include a risk reduc-

tion approach in all sustainable development efforts."

Instead the measure employed by the Grenada government was to establish the Agency for Reconstruction and Development (ARD) which has task and responsibility for coordinating and monitoring the country's recovery and rebuilding process. According to the Grenada government the ARD is mandated to collaborate with all entities involved in the reconstruction process, including donor agencies to mobilise financial, human, technical and other resources required to facilitate recovery.

The agency is managed by a board of directors reporting to the Prime Minister and the Cabinet. The ARD has defined five operating departments:

1. Economic Recovery;
2. Physical Infrastructure;
3. Social Recovery;
4. Finance; and
5. Project Development

The government itself tells of its role in the recovery process as it engages in negotiation with several international, regional and local financial institutions for a restructuring of its national debt which is estimated to be in excess of \$1 billion.

The government has also passed legislation which requires the already burdened labour force to make a monthly contribution of 3 per cent of salaries above \$1,000.

From all indications the Grenada disaster recovery process, as far as houses are concerned, has made some movement. While recovery in the tourism sector can be perceived as encouraging, the agricultural sector is still a distance from takeoff. The business sector and the general population have exhibited signs of settling down, but it will be still a long while to recover to a level close to what it used to be prior to the period before those recent disasters, especially because there is still serious concern for greater fiscal prudence.

There is absolutely no doubt that any recovery effort on the part of a small island state depends a whole lot on the type of mitigation measures that are in place before the disaster strikes.

The work of the National Disaster Management Agency is recognised as being extremely crucial, but how it affects the recovery process is determined by the effectiveness of its mitigation efforts.

Conclusion.

Preparing for a disaster can reduce the fear, anxiety and losses that disasters cause. We know that a disaster can be natural, like a hurricane. It might also be manmade, like a terrorist attack or chemical spills. As part of any disaster and recovery plan, one should take cognisance of the risks and danger signs of different types of disasters.

Our experience has taught us that no matter what kind of disaster you experience, it causes emo-

tional stress. The intensity of this stress could be lessened if care is taken to effectuate a well thought-out preparedness plan. As a consequence, the recovery after a disaster can take a reasonably long time more so if there is not in place that organised procedure for redemption.

Thank you.

[Applause]

The Chairman: Thank you, Honourable Lett. We now invite the Honourable Reuben T. Meade, MLC, from Montserrat to do his presentation.

Hon. Reuben T. Meade, MLC (Montserrat): Thank you.

I think you have had most comprehensive couple of presentations, and I do not think it is necessary for me to go over what they have presented. So what I will do is scrap my paper and just do a little slideshow of the other hazard that most of us are not familiar with and that is volcanic eruption.

Like the other territories, we also are blessed with hurricanes every year and we had Hurricane Hugo in 1989 and the experiences are slightly similar.

In the case of the Cayman Islands where the Governor took over and sidelined the government, I think the government ought to be strong enough and tell the Governor, *'Sorry, the people voted for you and therefore you are responsible for the welfare of the people and not the Governor.'* Just be a little stronger on that and it works sometimes.

[Inaudible interjection]

Hon. Reuben T. Meade, MLC (Montserrat): It takes a little time for the governors to understand these things but they eventually understand.

[Referring to presentation photos] I am just going to scan through these very quickly.

These are generally the hazards which we face in the Caribbean and elsewhere – hurricanes, storm surge, flooding, earthquake, volcano, landslides. Then you have the other human made ones. They are not all man made but they are human made. Women create some of them as well so let us not . . .

[Laughter]

Hon. Reuben T. Meade, MLC (Montserrat): They are not all manmade. Women also have to take their fair share.

This is the eruption of the volcano. What we are looking at here is . . . the volcano at the top that is that little white part there. At the bottom that is where the volcanic material goes out into the sea and whereas we started as 39.6 square miles, we are proud to say we are over 40 square miles now.

[Laughter]

Hon. Reuben T. Meade, MLC (Montserrat): That is all Montserrat volcano observatory which was built for monitoring volcanic activity.

This is an indication of what most people from outside consider to be an eruption. This basically just forms a mountain and then it collapses and when it collapses it creates a lot of ash and extremely hot material which flows down the hill as fast as 60 miles an hour so it is very difficult to outrun.

This again is part of a dome collapse. The white stuff is a very hot material which came down and it stopped just about there.

This looks fantastic for people from outside. To us it is just a natural occurrence. That material can get as high as 30,000 or 40,000 feet in the air. We are required to provide that information to the International Aviation Authority because that is extremely destructive to aircrafts. As a matter of fact, we had an Air Canada flight mistaking one of these at night for a cloud, flew through it, lost an engine and, fortunately, was able to make it to Grantley Adams in Barbados. [There was the] loss of an engine, severe loss to the windscreen and to the fuselage. It is extremely corrosive.

Now, can you see those two guys looking at this thing? They look very comfortable but this is a major collapse going into the sea.

This is what it looks like going into the sea. That happens on a fairly frequent basis. That happens to the east of the Island. We do not worry too much about it.

When it happens, depending on the wind direction that material can go as far as—we have shut down the airport in Puerto Rico, Columbia has called us to complain that we have destroyed some of their crops. We do not know which ones we destroyed but . . .

[Laughter]

Hon. Reuben T. Meade, MLC (Montserrat): The Americans might help us if they recognise which ones those were.

But this is just your pyroclastic flow going to sea. Depending on wind direction it takes the ash to different parts. For those on Montserrat, all we do is just shut our doors, go inside, take a good cry for two days, then come outside and clean up afterwards.

That is Montserrat and the green area is now the occupied part of the Island, the southern part which is the—I am a typical man, I do not know colours. The non-green area is the area which has been affected by the volcano more severely and is no longer occupied.

That is just an ash cloud dispersing.

This is a shot of Plymouth and part of the occupied community. That is just the light ash after it is filtering itself out.

Those are vehicles covered with ash. Again, we just get the hose out. You hose them down. Again, you cry a little before you do that but you hose it down and you just move on.

This is a mudflow coming down one of our rivers. This is one of the valleys coming off the volcano. During periods of heavy rain you will have lots of material coming down and it is not such a nice place to be, like this guy. He parked his car in the wrong place. He actually went across the river with some tourists, did not take the appropriate precautions as he should have. It was raining very heavily that day and he should have recognised that if he went across he was likely to lose his vehicle. That vehicle washed down the river later on that day.

That is a volcano. That is Plymouth, which is completely destroyed. The CDB-built jetty in the foreground there is still in good nick but cannot be used, and that is Plymouth and the environs totally under ash and tephra material. That is, despite all of that, still green.

Lessons learned.

Complete and hazard—well, you can read it so there is really no need to go through them.

The other part is ensuring that there is appropriate disaster legislation to support response activities and we will get into that in the discussion later on.

That is the volcano at night when it is very active. It looks like a coal pot or barbecue grill on fire. So that is not a markup shot; that is what it actually looks like when it is very active.

That is the little Island of Montserrat.

Now, when we look at disasters, to a great extent, the Caribbean focuses principally on volcanic risk. We are of the view that the region itself is not yet fully prepared for the other risks such as the tsunamis, mass transportation and other human induced and technological hazards.

It is our view that the region must be able to identify and monitor all hazards and the corresponding societal and economic vulnerability and the extent of the potential negative effects. We must be prepared for all likely hazard occurrences and be able to manage an effective response to minimise losses and hasten recovery.

Thirdly, reduce risk wherever possible and ensure development itself does not build future risks. Development is not sustainable if it builds future risks.

I will just go into the two summary items.

The recommended course of action based on the presentations from my other colleagues and the presentation I would have made is that the vulnerability and risk reduction must be integrated into regional governments' policies, national development, objectives and plans. All major public and private sector projects should incorporate appropriate vulnerability, assessment and risk reduction components. Let us

not wait until we have the volcano, the hurricanes or the aircraft crashes or the oil spills to determine how we are going to go about getting it done. We must think that these are possible and we must also plan for them.

We must also as governments look at the full involvement of the NGOs (non-governmental organisations), the private sector representatives of civil society and the public sector in the disaster management system and structures and in all phases of the disaster cycle — mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery. Again, the emphasis here is that it must be beyond hurricanes. We have to look at all the risks.

Thank you very much.

[Applause]

The Chairman: Thank you, honourable members. I know that we have gone a bit and we expect this to be a lively session, but having three presenters I am sure we can appreciate the time is a bit tight for that. So, we will try to do our best to move it right along.

I am sure after that very visual presentation there are a lot of questions, so someone can start off. Maybe not.

From Bahamas.

Mrs. Verna Grant, MP (Bahamas): Good morning. Verna Grant from the Bahamas.

One question regarding the Cayman Islands hurricane.

At the time you had indicated that funds from outside of the country have yet to come in. Can you explain that, please, because I am wondering if any of the CARICOM nations or the CPA have participated in contribution at all, or are you saying no one has contributed?

Mr. Osbourne V. Bodden, MLA (Cayman Islands): No, what I am saying is that we have had no external aid to this point. For instance, after the hurricane we had the Bermuda Regiment come and assist us. We had members of CARILEC come in and assist with the restoration of power and that type of thing. We had a British warship that had left Grenada after their experience and was on its way home, stopped by with what supplies they had left and their tired personnel. And that is really all we had.

We have done this through the resources of the Cayman Islands and right now the European Union funds are quite imminent, I understand. They should be here very shortly.

Mrs. Verna Grant, MP (Bahamas): Why I am asking, Sir, Mr. Chairman, when Grand Bahama, or the Bahamas experienced their hurricane within the past three years, we too had devastation of that magnitude, flood and everything just as you have had, and we created a NEMA office, which is the National

Emergency Management Agency. That was created as a result of our hurricane.

The funds were contributed to us too, as well, from other nations within the world and I am sure maybe a few of the Caribbean countries. I am disheartened to hear that we have not gotten any of those funds into the Cayman Islands.

My question, then, would be: do we have such an organisation, or have we created an organisation within CARICOM or within the CPA to help to alleviate some of these problems in our various countries within the region?

Another question would be: are we training anyone or any particular branch of people to come and assist with these natural disasters? For example, you have Hazmat teams all over. Are they trained to come and say: *'Well, we have 100 that can come from the Bahamas to help you. Whenever there is a disaster you make the necessary preparation or we bring whatever is necessary'*?

I guess you understand what I mean. Do we have anything in place, or can we create something so that we can help each other, because it is awful when you think that we are all here together but then we are not really helping one another in disasters such as this?

Thank you.

Mr. Osbourne V. Bodden, MLA (Cayman Islands): Your point is well taken and I certainly cannot answer directly.

What I can say is that one thing we have just recently embarked on—for those of you who were at the regional conference in Barbados last year, I mentioned during the Question and Answer period that the Cayman Islands was about to sign up for a regional disaster fund. I am happy to say that that is now a reality. I think a number of you here may be aware, but I am sure a lot of countries are now a part of that.

It is where you pay a first-time fee. I think it was about . . . help me, colleagues. Was it \$2 million we paid the first time and then . . .

Okay, I have just been presented this by Mr. Connor. Colleagues, feel free to jump in at any point because that is why I have you here.

It is the Caribbean Catastrophic Risk Insurance (CCRI) and we paid the premium, I think, which is \$2 million for the coverage that we would like. And this gives us, in the event of a disaster, a lump sum payment of \$59 million.

So, certainly, that is a major improvement from anything that we have had before Ivan and that is a regional corporation. So, I can speak to that at this point and I am happy to say that the Cayman Islands are now a signed-up member.

Doctor Carby, maybe you would like to jump in on the regional response teams of the Caribbean. I think you know about that.

Dr. Barbara Carby (Cayman Islands): Yes, there is a regional response mechanism, the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Response Agency (CDERA) which is an arm of CARICOM and which is headquartered in Barbados. CDERA coordinates assistance to its member states both before and after disasters.

A lot of their work actually goes into preparedness and strengthening member states preparedness capacity. But post impact, they will also coordinate the assistance package to affect the countries.

For example, for Hurricane Ivan several CDERA member states would have sent personnel to Grenada—I know Jamaica did—and sometimes they are able to coordinate external assistance from donor countries to member states.

I think the problem with the Cayman Islands is that, you know, the Cayman Islands is perceived as being a very rich country and not actually needing external assistance of finances. I think that is one of the reasons that there was not a lot of input of financial resources post Hurricane Ivan.

The Chairman: Thank you, Dr. Carby.

I recognise Turks and Caicos.

Hon. R. Donahue Gardiner MP, JP (Turks and Caicos): Yes, thank you. Donahue Gardiner, Turks and Caicos. Two issues, perhaps, first, a small comment.

As regards to Turks and Caicos' position that Cayman Islands and Montserrat spoke in relation to the governors' powers, we have actually moved on a little in terms of our constitution and we have actually created what we call a National Security Council.

That National Security Council is actually made of the Governor, the Premier, the Minister of Finance and two other parliamentarians that the Premier may choose.

In dealing with anything, even once the Governor has declared that a state of emergency exists, that body becomes the governing body of the territory and the Governor is required to act in accordance with the advice of that body on everything that he does that actually falls under the recovery and preparedness efforts.

I am just wondering, though, when we spoke of the Cayman experience whether—because I thought the Cayman Islands actually did a very good job in recovering having seen what I have in the last several days. But also, not really knowing the magnitude of what happened here, would you opine as to whether the lack of response from the region and other places is due to the fact that many people did not know, I guess, because of our own efforts of not really telling the story in the international and regional communities? Perhaps the reason why there has not been that kind of response is because people did not really know the magnitude of the damage.

The Chairman: I can respond to that.

I think, initially, the concern was there was a bit of shell shock right after the storm and we were looking at the best way to start the recovery process. We were able to make contact very quickly and we started to—when we say we did not get a lot of foreign assistance, we did get private assistance. We had quite a few individuals who live here, own property here or had family here that were flying planes in and getting in.

The world today, I am pretty sure that if I use Turks and Caicos for an example, I mean, I know a lot of people who went to school here and have friends here and know. I do not think the region being the way it is that we can honestly say that an event happens in the region that we do not know the extent. When we all have experienced hurricanes, when we hear that it is a category 4 or a category 5 hurricane that has made a direct hit, I think we all know what to expect.

But having said that, we got some assistance but Cayman also has a bit of a unique position in that we are still a territory. We have had cases where we understood, for example, that the United States have made an effort to assist or asked about assistance, but it would have gone through the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. And at that point in time, even if we look at the assistance coming from the UK, like my colleague said, we got a ship that had been sent to Grenada that was on its way back. The guys were telling us when they got, *'We have been working for two weeks in Grenada and we are tired and we cannot really too much to assist.'*

So a lot of the international aid would have been funnelled through the UK and not directly to Cayman. So we cannot say what impression was given at that stage as to whether the feeling was use the aid somewhere else or give the aid somewhere else. But as far as we are concerned, we made appeals.

As was mentioned we are waiting on a European Union payment. That was made shortly after the storm and it has taken this period of time for administrative purposes to get those funds and we still do not have them yet. But requests were made. Maybe we did not do a good enough job of informing the world, but at that stage we were more concerned about trying to recover.

Mr. Osbourne V. Bodden, MLA (Cayman Islands): Just to make two short comments by myself and Honourable Meade.

I agree with everything my colleague just said, but I think we do learn from these events. And certainly, immediately after the hurricane, I think there has to be something in place where the word really gets out and shows the true picture as to what is on the ground. I think that was what was lacking and certainly affected us to a certain extent.

Honourable Meade.

Hon. Reuben T. Meade, MLC (Montserrat): Thank you, just a couple of comments:

One, we need to remember that Cayman was struck second. I speak on behalf of the southern Caribbean, the CARICOM and especially the OECS states. The immediate reaction after Grenada was hit, our resources were mobilised and sent to Grenada in the most part, so by the time that the hurricane struck you, you were second in line. Again, given the limited resources which we have in the region, having focused so much attention on Grenada, which was very severely struck, then you came in as a rich second cousin.

The other thing—and it is part of the presentation which I wanted to make—is that, yes, we focus on hurricanes after they happen. And if our preparedness and mitigation and response mechanisms are in place, then the management system must, of course, include your call down – Where can you call? Who do you expect to react? Who do you get in touch with? That mechanism has to be in place before a hurricane hits or any disaster. So that has to be part of your hazard management plan.

The Chairman: I have Bermuda.

Hon. Dame Jennifer M. Smith, DBE, JP, DHumL, MP (Bermuda): Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Much of my comments were covered. I wanted to talk about CARICOM because at the same time as the last regional conference they actually were having a disaster preparedness seminar in Barbados. I know that Bermuda has an emergency measures organisation that is the first reaction upon any disaster, but I think my colleague wanted to make a point.

Hon. Walter Lister, JP, MP (Bermuda): My name is Walter Lister and I am from Bermuda.

I could never figure out why a storm would originate off the coast of Africa, travel 3,000 miles here to the Caribbean, and then find Bermuda, which is only 21 square miles which is 1,000 miles north of the Caribbean. I am not sure why that happens but anyhow, I do not think we are going to solve that problem today.

But we have an emergency measures programme which is chaired by the Minister of Labour and Home Affairs, the Commissioner of Police, the Colonel in charge of the military, the Deputy Governor and other relevant government departments. They meet in advance of a pending storm to prepare the country for whatever may come.

However, I just want to address something which Bermuda is looking at following a storm, and that is being able to try to put—and I must confess, in my other life I was an insurance executive so I will speak to that another time—people in the position after the damage as they were before. There is a legal term for that which I will not use now.

But what we looked at is having a fund whereby the government would put so much money into the fund, and those people who were uninsured would be able to come to the fund, specifically for the housing, have their house repaired, and we would make funds available up to a certain figure. But then what we would do is put a very low-cost interest rate on these funds, but a lien would go on the house so they would pay it off. It is not a gift but it is somewhat to assist people who find themselves in a very difficult position.

What the thought was is that with the low-cost interest rate, if, for example, a senior citizen who could not afford to pay the cost, it would stay on the property and the person who assumed the property following that would pay the expenses before they assume the property.

But it is an idea which is being floated and is being looked at because often times we find there are people in the communities who are underinsured and cannot address that particular problem.

Regarding Cayman, I would like to say that it did get out to the world, I mean, to many people because shortly after the event I received on Internet many pictures of Cayman. I had just been to Cayman a matter of weeks before. I think you had two storms that year, and I came in between the two storms.

The first one, as people said, you know, it got by. It moved just before it got here but the second one made a direct hit.

I have experienced in Bermuda being in a house and being hit by a storm and it is a very scary feeling, very uncomfortable.

I remember we had one called Emily which was quite some years ago, back in the 90s. I had a big glass window and [Emily] struck the glass window just at the end of the storm. It was a very organised storm and it lasted an hour to two hours but the winds were very, very fierce.

We did not have a chance to prepare for it, quite frankly. It struck a plate glass window and it went up into the wind. It went to the roof and took off a portion about the size of one of these square pieces here, and when going to another part of the house for protection another piece of something came through the roof so water was coming in.

It was an extremely uncomfortable experience but, believe it or not, the storm ceased almost effectively after that had happened and so there was not water damage of any great extent.

But from my experience being in the insurance industry and dealing with people who have suffered damage to their homes, it is quite a responsibility. It is very traumatic to many people.

But in Bermuda I think the way of building of houses, we do not have a lot of house damage meaning that where people—we do have some homes that people cannot live in but we have not (let me put it in these terms) to date had a large number of people

having to move out of their homes. We have had some people, yes.

But I think it is true to the fact that the structure of the homes, which are the cinderblock and slate which is a very heavy, heavy slate roof on top which weighs thousands and thousands of pounds and these things sort of try to stay in tact a lot longer. As you know from experiences, those houses which are built of cinderblock stay in place. But we have on top of that the very concrete roof almost and that protects the house very, very much.

So although we have experienced a number of storms, we have normally bounced back relatively in a matter of weeks because of that structure. The greatest loss I think is loss of power to the house and that is one of the things sometimes people are out for weeks on end, but that is something which people can live with. Of course, you know, there are lots of branches all over the roads where people go right away. We have a department which addresses that in a very short period of time.

So the experiences we have had thus far, inside a matter of days the streets are operative and we can pass from one place to the other. So that is just the experience I would like to share with this group on disaster preparedness.

Thank you very much.

The Chairman: Thank you.

Just to comment on that, in Cayman we have similar building codes and similar building plans. Our experience was that we did not have major roof loss or building loss either, but with the significant storm surge that we had some eight feet of water. So, like you rightly said, people could tend to live in their homes still but they had significant destruction within. But the structure, in most cases, was able to stand up.

Hon. Walter Lister, JP, MP (Bermuda): Storm surge is very limited in Bermuda because I think it is maybe a little higher than . . .

The Chairman: Cayman.

Hon. Walter Lister, JP, MP (Bermuda): Cayman, yes, thanks.

The Chairman: I just want to say I have Antigua, Bahamas, Jamaica and Barbados.

At this stage I will call on Antigua.

Hon. D. Gisele Isaac-Arrindell, MP (Antigua): Yes, thank you.

What I wanted to say is in terms of coverage and getting the message out to the outside world. If you do not control the media you do not control the exposure you get.

In 1995 when Antigua was devastated by Hurricane Louis, I was living in the United States. You

would watch TV for hours hoping to hear of something that was happening at home, but the US media concentrates on the US territories so we knew everything that was going on in the US Virgin Islands and everybody else was just catch as catch can. And when those islands do not have either electricity or telephone to get the word out themselves, really, it is a very hit-and-miss affair. So sometimes we really do not know.

Hon. Walter Lister, JP, MP (Bermuda): Could I just add one little point on that matter?

Those people who are computer savvy (and I think everybody is in this day and age), we must take upon ourselves to go and get the information.

You can go to any country, for example, Antigua—I listen to Antigua radio; I listen to Jamaica radio all the time—and you can hear exactly what is going on in that country and you can get that information yourself, what is needed.

One minor point that I left out is that we do have a radio station, which is an emergency station which comes on only after the commercial radio stations have gone off, to inform the people in Bermuda as to what the situation is at that point in time.

Thanks.

The Chairman: Thank you.

We do have an emergency station now as well.

I recognise the Bahamas.

Mr. D. Shane Gibson, MP (Bahamas): Thank you. Shane Gibson from the Bahamas.

Like our colleagues from Grenada and Cayman, we also had a ravage of, I think, 3 hurricanes within a 12-month period in the Bahamas. I think it was 2004 when we experienced Hurricane Francis, Hurricane Jane and then came back in 2005 and had Hurricane Wilma.

Of course, Hurricane Jane and Hurricane Francis, I think, hit every single island in the Bahamas, every island. At that time, I was the Minister of Housing which was responsible for all of our recovery programme, and luckily we had a pretty good response from the international community, as well as from a lot of the local banks, offshore banks, insurance companies as well who assisted us financially.

I must say that our largest country donor was the Turks and Caicos Island who donated some \$200,000 to our recovery effort in the Bahamas which was well appreciated and well received. Turks and Caicos.

Of course, the US sent us—or tried to send us some \$50,000 which we told them that they should perhaps donate to the Red Cross because the Red Cross could more effectively manage \$50,000. We thought it was really an insult for them to send us some \$50,000 when we looked at the millions of dol-

lars I think that congress had just allocated for some of the Caribbean countries.

But we were lucky in that we were very organised. We had our name in place already, a National Emergency Management Agency and, of course, since then we have passed additional legislation to give them more teeth and to make them more effective.

I was fortunate that I was in New Providence Island of New Providence where Nassau is located. We had some of the outer bands that came across to New Providence but my colleagues here to my left and right were both in Grand Bahama where they got the brunt of the hurricane. So I did not experience it myself.

But in Grand Bahama we had to spend some, I think, \$12 million alone on reconstruction and that is only for private residents. The total for private residents in the Bahamas, I think we spent some \$24 million. That did not include the repairs of the public infrastructure. As a matter of fact, today we still have some of those infrastructures out, like some of our sea walls, some of the roads that were damaged.

But we got assistance from CARILEC with our electrical recovery and we were able to put something in place for all of the residents who did not have insurance. We were able to assist all of them through either giving them building materials or giving them assistance with manpower. We extended duty free concession. Of course, on the immediate aftermath we assisted them with food and water and all that kind of stuff.

Of course, whenever you are going through these types of assistance, as we all know, one of the things that slows you down significantly is abuse. We found that individuals were going to three and four different locations receiving assistance. As a matter of fact, we found individuals who actually were able to construct brand new houses from all the building materials that they were able to get from the government through going to the different centres. So that is one of the things that we had to put some additional precautions in place to make sure that we minimised those types of abuse.

But, basically, I understand and appreciate, you know, the kind of impact that these disasters can have on the economy.

One thing I would like to know is whether or not it would make more sense for us in the region to sort of ensure ourselves. I know it is going to be difficult for places like Cayman and Turks and Caicos, particularly Cayman because, like you said, unlike some of the other colleagues, I knew exactly what was happening in Cayman. I knew the extent of the impact because it was all over the Internet.

The only thing that came to us at a point was news stopped coming after a while and what they said was that residents in Cayman did not want the news to get out because they did not want it to have a negative impact on the industry – the financial services and

tourism and all this stuff. That is the word we got back after a while. But initially we got all of the detailed information, so I find it very difficult to believe that anybody would not know what was happening in Cayman.

As a matter of fact, at one point they said that Cayman just went off the radar completely. You could not see anything at all. It was just the ocean out here, that is how bad it was. So everybody knew the extent of the damage.

But I was wondering whether it would make sense for us in the region, at some point in time, to sort of ensure ourselves because it was very unusual to see hurricanes hit the number of islands that they did in such a short period of time. Normally you would have a hurricane that would go across the Bahamas, maybe across Jamaica, across Grenada but not all during the same time.

I can tell you that the \$200,000 that we got from Turks and Caicos made a significant difference in the number of persons who we were able to assist. So if we could sort of put together a package where in case something happened again in the future we could draw from it and I believe that that would go a long way in the Caribbean.

Thank you.

The Chairman: Thank you.

Mr. J. Kwasi Thompson, MP, Deputy Speaker (Bahamas): Mr. Chairman, one question.

The Chairman: Sure.

Mr. J. Kwasi Thompson, MP, Deputy Speaker (Bahamas): Kwasi Thompson from the Bahamas.

Just to follow up from my colleague, I believe Mr. Bodden indicated that elected officials had a specific role that was spelled out. I was wondering if you could just elaborate a bit more on what the role of an elected official would be in those circumstances.

The Chairman: We are going to have Dr. Carby feel that question.

But just to say that we have learned from the problems that we had with Ivan and we have made some improvements. So what she will give you is a new and improved version.

Dr. Barbara Carby (Cayman Islands): The role of the elected official actually starts before impact, and one of the things we are asking them to do is to gather data on vulnerability in their constituencies or the areas for which they are responsible. So we would start out beforehand having an idea of the most vulnerable persons and the most vulnerable areas of their constituencies. In that way you can actually plan how to allocate resources because, you know, a hazard will not impact everybody equally. So we focus on the most vulnerable.

They are also part now of the Executive Arm. Somebody mentioned a National Security Committee. That does exist in the Cayman Islands. Also, there is now a Hazard Management Executive which is chaired by the Governor which includes elected representatives. So, they will be briefed and updated all along in the process, and we will rely on the elected representatives then to form a bridge to the persons that they represent. So they will act as conduits of information to persons and bring information back from persons.

Of course, they will also from hereon in be involved in any strategic decision making. They will be collocated with the Governor in that headquarters and anything to do with strategy and policy they will be integrated into those kinds of decisions which have to be made in managing the crisis.

The other very important role is that they will provide a unified voice for the country. For example, in the lead-up to an event you would have the Governor making an address, you would have the Leader of Government Business also making an address, and we expect those addresses to more or less be along the same lines. Similarly, afterwards, both the Governor and the elected representative would address the country. One of the jobs of the Joint Communications Services Sub-Committee is to draft the key message points for those addresses.

So the elected reps and the governor and the senior technocrats will sit together now and say, *'What are the key message points we need to go out to the world about what has happened to the Cayman Islands?'*

So just to summarise, as we go forward what we have is, really, a far more integrated and unified approach between the Governor, the elected representatives and the senior policy makers and technocrats so that we are all saying the same thing. And there is a much better flow of information among the parties as we go forward.

The Chairman: Thank you, Dr. Carby.

Mr. Orrett Connor: Mr. Chair, just to add to that as well.

On one of the organisational charts you would have seen a slot for district committees. Members of the Legislative Assembly will also be involved in choosing representatives of those district committees who in turn would be their representatives in the particular district. They would serve both in the aftermath of a disaster as well as before the disaster strikes in terms of preparedness.

The Chairman: Just to say, and I am sure we are all cognisant but as politicians one of the challenges that we have—and we saw this during Ivan and even some threats that we had afterwards—there was an attempt to try to congregate the leaders of the country

along with the Governor so those decisions could be made.

But as you all know, it is expected that even though you are leading the country you are also supposed to be in your constituencies during that time providing services and leading and being in houses of refuge and all the other stuff that goes on during that period.

So, you know, we all have similar challenges and we are trying to work through them together so I just wanted to make that point.

Now I would like to recognise Jamaica. We have Jamaica, Barbados and then Anguilla.

Mr. Lenworth M. Blake, JP, MP (Jamaica): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My name is Lenworth Blake from Jamaica.

First I am very pleased to see Dr. Carby here this morning. Doctor Carby before coming to Cayman was the head of our office of disaster preparedness and management and I am very, very glad to see you here this morning.

We have had our fair share of disaster in Jamaica during the same period 2004/5. Ivan did not spare us either. Doctor Carby was there to take us through the bad experiences then, and I can tell you she did a tremendous job in Jamaica.

One of the problems I see facing some of the countries in the Caribbean and the Region is the lack of ability to have a reserve fund put aside for these disasters. Most countries just do not have the ability to put aside a reserve fund to take care of disaster.

The other thing that I would like to see happen if it is not happening is that disaster mitigation and prevention should be forefront of our regional political discussions. I think every agenda that is prepared for our Region leaders to discuss matters disaster preparedness should be on that agenda.

My colleague would like to continue.

Senator Prudence Kidd-Deans (Jamaica): Yes, Mr. Chairman, just to add to what my colleague said. Jamaica's loss has been Cayman's gain in having Dr. Carby, so I too would like to give my support because Jamaica really prospered based on her expertise. Doctor Carby is very calm but deliberate in her attitude. ODPEM (Office of Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Management) has lost a great person in Jamaica.

However, the lesson learned from her and her team is that Jamaica no longer takes for granted the whole question of things like hurricane disaster.

Since Ivan there is a constancy of information given even before the hurricane period, before 1 June, and we give constant tips on how to deal with a hurricane. And the citizens themselves, unlike first time whereby people ignored [portion not recorded] the span between hurricanes used to be like 30 years, 15 years, they recognise that we are in a different weather zone or climatic conditions and, as such, Ja-

maicans have gone leaps and bounds in terms of preparing themselves. For instance, in a case of water, just about every person in Jamaica is buying water tanks, generators, so the country is teaching its citizens to get themselves equipped rather than total dependence on government. So they have their listing of hurricane materials that they need to have from as early as April/May, like water tanks, generators and all hurricane equipments that are needed.

Another thing that I noticed that Cayman said in terms of getting support, it had to go through the British office. Can you make a recommendation? What is the point of having a governor? So that you can cut the red tape, that you can get some assistance.

Another problem, another note of concern is that we need in the Caribbean to understand that when a hurricane season starts it does not necessarily mean that you might just have one hurricane hitting you. You might have at least two or three. Like, in 2005 Jamaica suffered from the remnants of Hurricane Dennis one week, and by the next week within seven days we had Emily breathing down our necks. So, when you are in a hurricane season anything can happen so the preparedness should not be for just the possibility of one hurricane but for a series of hurricanes.

And what we need to do is any other members in the region trying to assist one another, like in the case of Turks and Caicos, do not give the \$200,000 to one, give them \$50,000 and wait to watch the season and see what it is like and disburse your funds all over so that each one helps one.

Thank you.

The Chairman: Thank you.

I just need to say our time is pretty much completed and we wanted to wind up with Dr. Carby. So we are going to have Barbados and then Anguilla and Dr. Carby wants to share something with us at the end,

Sen. Andrew A. Bynoe (Barbados): Andrew Bynoe, Barbados.

I think Bahamas touched on this, but I would just like to bring it to the table again. I believe that we ought to set up some sort of mechanism to ensure that there is fair distribution of money and supplies during our recovery programme because I believe that sometimes the politician could be a little overwhelmed towards supporters of his party. And there could be some unfair distribution of supplies on that occasion. I did not hear among the various agencies being set up one specifically looking at that aspect, so I will put that on the table.

The other thing is, yes, we do need disaster funds and so on and, yes, individual countries have set up their own disaster funds and there is also the regional disaster fund. But I believe that an aspect of this fund should be the resuscitation of business. I

think big business is capable of getting itself going again, but it is the small businesses that need attention.

I believe that, again, we ought to specifically look at how to restart the small businesses, all the small people within the communities who have been hurt. For instance, Montserrat, I have been told that a lot of people have left Montserrat and gone elsewhere. But here, perhaps, is an opportunity within Montserrat to keep those people at home by giving them the opportunity through an agency to restart their business life.

And these are the two points that I would like to make. Thank you.

The Chairman: Thank you so much. I will now call on Anguilla.

Hon. Keesha Webster (Anguilla): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am Keesha Webster from Anguilla.

My question is to Honourable Meade from Montserrat.

I know that when the volcano first erupted you got a lot of aid from countries, not financial, but, for example, in Anguilla we focused more on assisting in the evacuation – for example, not imposing any work permit requirements for Montserratians coming to the Island.

But can you tell us what kind of financial aid you received and are still receiving, if any, from whether the UK or members of the Caribbean?

Hon. Reuben T. Meade, MLC (Montserrat): Thank you.

Because of the significant loss of property and we had so many people in shelters, I think every Caribbean country from Bahamas, Belize, all the way through, contributed to building at least one house in Montserrat. Back then we were building just wooden houses because those were quick and fast to erect. But they were built as well with hurricane conditions in mind. So that was something which came through. The Caribbean Development Bank provided \$1 million to assist in that programme as well.

The reason why we focused a lot on the CARICOM countries for those funds is because the British simply refused to provide funding for that. The British government provided funding in 1997 after 19 people were killed, unfortunately, because that is when the pressure from the press actually started hitting home.

The British basically wanted to evacuate the entire island because it was easier to manage, but there were those of us who decided we are going to remain no matter what because the north of the Island was safe.

The British, however, has over the years provided since 1997 quite a bit of financing in that they cover practically every aspect of the volcanic situation.

Government's budget is 50 per cent financed by the British government and the entire capital programme.

CARICOM and, of course, the other OCTs have been simply fantastic in terms of the support which they have provided for us.

I remember talking to P.J. Patterson in Jamaica and P.J. asked what I needed; I told him I needed prayer. And he said every time before they open Cabinet meeting they prayed for Montserrat. But on top of that he still sent us JA \$1 million which was allocated to the micro-enterprise sector because they needed a lot of support along that line.

The reason why so many people moved to the UK is that the British government as part of their evacuation policy paid the passengers of those who wanted to go to the UK whether they could afford it or not. They even evacuated and chartered planes to take people 100 years of age to the UK. That is how ridiculous they were getting when those people were happy to remain in the north of the Island which was considered safe.

So, all in all, the support has been tremendous from all around, but it is just a matter of the British policy in relation to how we challenge them and how they challenge us in the management of the situation.

Mrs. Verna Grant, MP (Bahamas): Regarding the Montserrat eruption, are you still having ash problems or is it still now active, and do you feel any of it at all on the north side where you say most of the residents are?

Hon. Reuben T. Meade, MLC (Montserrat): Yeah, the volcano is still active. For the past three months the dome has not been growing. Unlike what a lot of people feel, it is an eruption that goes with a big bang. That is not the case. It is a continuous eruption.

The dome grows sometimes as fast as 10 cubic metres per second, and when the sides of the mountain get too steep then it collapses and creates the kind of effect which you are seeing there.

We basically suffer from the ash in the north. Antigua gets it, Nevis gets it, Puerto Rico gets it. We just clean it up and life goes on.

We have done quite a bit of medical research in terms of the medical impact of the ash and we have not seen any signs of silicosis or any such occurrences because the exposure to the ash is really not over a continuous period but short spurts. Once there is a likely eruption, the people with asthma are asked to go to the hospital so that they could be treated. But after the ash people even from the UK who have come to Montserrat claim that their attacks of asthma in Montserrat are less than in the UK.

The Chairman: Colleagues, we have gone passed our allotted time. With the permission of the Confer-

ence, Dr. Carby, a geologist, as was mentioned, who was the Director General in Jamaica for nine years in the Office of Disaster Preparedness, has a few comments she wants to share with us.

Is that okay with Conference?

So at this stage we would like to ask Dr. Carby to go ahead and that will be the windup for the session.

Dr. Barbara Carby (Cayman Islands): Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to the members for your indulgence.

I just wanted to underline something because, basically, I am really a technical person at heart. I want to underline points raised by Mr. Meade and Mr. Blake.

We really need to look at how we reduce our risk as a region, and to reduce risk you must reduce vulnerability so you need really to ensure that there are adequate risk and vulnerability studies done for your countries.

Based on those studies you can go ahead and say what mitigation measures will be put in place to reduce that risk. I mean, recovery is good, you have to do it. But if you could actually reduce your risk, reduce your vulnerability, the amount of money you are going to spend in recovery is going to be less.

So as parliamentarians when you have to debate your bills in your different houses of parliament, please support the bills which stress mitigation, risk reduction, vulnerability reduction. It really is the only way we can achieve sustainable development in the long run.

The other thing I wanted to say is that there is a new fund which has been launched by the United Nations. It is called the Central Emergency Relief Fund. I happen to be on the advisory group to the Secretary General for this fund. This fund is available within 72 hours of any disaster for urgent lifesaving activities. And all member states of the UN qualify for this fund.

So I want to make you aware of it so that if something happens in your country, you cannot get funding from another source, but you have urgent needs that you can talk to your United Nations Development Programme representative and ask them to put together a project to access the CERF funds and this can be available within 72 hours. So I want you to be aware of that.

I was asked to speak a little bit about the whole matter of children and public education for children. This is very, very important.

One of the most effective ways we found of getting the disaster preparedness message across is actually through a programme in the schools. If you get your disaster programme in the schools going, you get your earthquake drills going, you get your fire drills going, you give the kids the information, they will take it home and they will insist that Mommy and Daddy or Grandma or Uncle or whoever do the things that they

learned in school. So that ongoing public awareness programme, also a focus on schools and the school population, is very, very important.

Just to say that in the Cayman Islands there is a book called Hurricane-Proof Kids! and that is focused on children up to about the age of 12 years old. It is an activity book that they can go through and learn about hurricane preparedness in a fun way.

Psychological effects I was also asked to mention, a very, very important and under-recognised area in disaster management. But there are counselling agencies available through churches, through schools, through your social welfare departments. So young children, in particular, can be traumatised but so can your emergency workers and so can older persons. So this is an area that we need to pay attention to. We need to write psychological support into our national disaster plans in terms of our human welfare management.

A very good point, Sir, about the relief plan. Your national disaster plan must include documented procedures (passages) for accepting, managing and distributing relief. I would suggest that the elected representatives be an integral part of the development of that plan so that they can be comfortable with it, that they can have faith in that plan and know that that plan will ensure equitable distribution of resources after any disaster. I think if our elected representatives can be assured of that, then they would feel much more confident and not feel that they have to interfere in the relief process. So I take your point and I heartily endorse it.

That is it from me, Mr. Chairman. Thank you very much.

The Chairman: Thank you, Dr. Carby.

[Applause]

The Chairman: Members, thanks for your attention even though we have gone passed our time. Now, we are going to take the refreshment break. We are hoping that we can come back here hopefully by 5 minutes after 11 which will give us around 10 minutes so we can get started and try to get back on schedule as much as possible.

Thanks, members.

SESSION 7

Chairman: Hon. Dame Jennifer M. Smith, DBE, JP, DHumL, MP (Bermuda)

TERTIARY EDUCATION TOWARDS A NEW REGIONAL APPROACH

**Presenter: Cayman Islands
Dr. Hassan Syed, President of the University College of the Cayman Islands**

The Chairman: I crave your indulgence, as the person to present this subject, the Hon. Alden McLaughlin, Jr., JP, MLA, Minister of Education, Training, Employment, Youth, Sports and Culture, on the subject Tertiary Education Towards a New Regional Approach has been injured in a cycling accident he is not fully recovered and he is unable to be here today. In his stead, we have the very esteemed Dr. Hassan Syed, President of the University College of the Cayman Islands (UCCI) who will do the presentation.

I have to tell you that Dr. Syed is a certified professional accountant, a professional engineer. He has a Masters in Business Administration and a PhD in Computer Science. He has worked in tertiary education for the past ten years and serves on various international bodies such as ITU, CTU, IEEE, CompTia. I do not know what any of those letters mean.

He has worked as a senior executive with fortune 100 companies in North America, Asia and Europe. In addition, Dr. Syed has published widely on tertiary education, ICTs and he has a book on ICT strategy in the Caribbean coming out shortly. He is a regular speaker at regional forums and I think we can all accept that he is an esteemed academic and well worthy of addressing us this morning.

Dr. Syed.

[Applause]

Dr. Hassan Syed: Madam Chair, honourable Delegates of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association session, ladies and gentlemen.

On behalf of the Minister of Education, it is indeed my pleasure and honour to speak with you today. I do have a prepared speech that I can deliver, but another option is just to speak with you and share my thoughts because what I propose to say to you is perhaps something that all of you as parliamentarians and as policymakers already know because we see that there is really a strong policy consensus at regional, national, international levels on the importance of tertiary education as one of the critical pillars of human development.

Sometimes we look at education in very narrow confines. That actually allows us to segregate educational development in isolation and perhaps not as part of the overall national agendas for social development.

It is very difficult to carry your higher education agendas if within your countries and within your regions there is no parity in terms of access to social and economic development.

We keep hearing about globalization. Everybody talks about globalization. Globalization, globalization, everybody wants to talk. It is a very niche word. If most of us understand that globalization is a phenomenon that actually looks at cross-border movement of people, knowledge, skills, sometimes even money.

It does have a lot of benefits for developed economies, but for regions like the Caribbean it has some serious repercussions. And all of US policymakers know that we all grapple with things like brain drain. Some of our smartest and the brightest talent moves away to developed economies.

I have had the fortune of working with a lot of Institutions in the Caribbean through my colleagues at ACTI and we all talk about the choices that our students make if they have the economic solution to move away. My very, very dear friend at the University of West Indies, Professor Nigel Harris, is a very enlightened man. He himself went to Yale.

So, we were having this discussion recently about the role of a regional institution that would actually draw upon common frameworks for tertiary education in the region and one of the things that we talked about was that if some student, any student—and I see some of my students sitting there on this side listening to what I am saying. If a student has the economic means and they have a choice to choose between university educations, would they prefer to study at University of West Indies, or would they pick a university in the United States, Canada or the UK?

This is a question that all of you should ask yourself because perhaps most of you have children or university-going children that if you have the economic means and if you were to choose a university would you choose to send your child or somebody you know to a school in the Caribbean, or would you send them to Harvard or Yale or Cambridge?

So, if the answer is that you would actually prefer to send them abroad then there absolutely is a case to be made to look into the tertiary education policies at the region.

There are tons of studies out there—UNDP, CITA, US Aid, all of them they do these regional studies. UN does a regional study every two or three years. I was speaking at the European Union last year and one of the studies that we did we looked at indicators for tertiary education penetration in the region and the average that came out is +/- 9 per cent. So, 9 per cent of our adult population, which includes your K-12 high school leavers, actually make it to tertiary education.

So, the question here is how do you define tertiary education. What is tertiary education?

Is it the traditional capstone of the hierarchy of an educational system, or is it something else?

Of course, most of us know that in the developing world the higher education or tertiary education

or university education is like the Ivory Tower—that is that everybody wants to get there.

So, in the modern definition of “tertiary education” it is not defined as a traditional capstone of higher education. It is a network of institutions that includes your universities and colleges, which includes your corporate sector that truly provides training and all other institutions within the country that offers any kind of post-secondary education. So, it now has a much broader agenda. So tertiary education is no more just universities and colleges.

Now, we have seen in the past few years universities like MIT, universities like University of Waterloo in Canada and so many other leading universities. They have started to open their campuses in Asia.

I taught a course for Rotman School of Business recently in Hong Kong. It was three-day seminar delivered to students in Hong Kong. This programme is run by Rotman School of Business. The ranking of Rotman School of Business from the University of Toronto is number 12 in the world. So, they run this programme in Hong Kong. Why do you think they would do that? Because they understand that knowledge, just like every other economic aspect, is globalized now.

We need to learn from each other if we are supposed to create sustainable policies so schools like MIT have opened a campus in Shanghai. MIT runs a course in Shanghai, and the University of London is running a business programme in Sri Lanka. So, this is how knowledge is being shared.

I have been a member of ACTI now for over two years and at these conferences some of my very enlightened colleagues from all presidents and principals from different institutions in the Caribbean, we talk about how can we synergize what we do. I am sorry to say that we have no—we have lots of very good sort of programmes and policies existing on papers—but we have not a single initiative that allows students from, let us say, Cayman to go down to Bermuda and exchange what business studies are we doing.

Cayman and Bermuda lead the world in hedge fund industry. We lead the world. Reinsurance business in Bermuda is one of a kind. Our banking and financial sector in Cayman is a unique model in the world. But do our students from these two countries know what is happening? They do not.

So, even on the issues of environment there was recently a Sustainable Tourism Conference held in Cayman and I met some ministers from different Caribbean countries. It was really ironic to see that there is not a single regional research initiative going on that would look at the sustainability of our environment.

So, we have all these institutions, we have all these institutions, tertiary level institutions, but we do not do anything. We rely on research done from the outside sources. There is something we call “Central Caribbean Marine Institute” in Little Cayman here in

the Cayman Islands, and the funding for that institute actually comes from the United States through Stanford University. So, we as a region do not invest in that.

We had a scholar from Belize who recently came to Cayman, Dr. Tollos [?], and we discussed a programme that we will do with them in Belize and in Cayman. These are all fragmented. These are all very fragmented sort of initiatives which are going on and we are not really looking at a cohesive regional policy that would address the human capital development of the region. We here in the Cayman Islands, one of the most prosperous countries in the Caribbean . . . when I took over as the president almost a year ago, one of the challenges I saw was that our tertiary institution here, which is the University College of the Cayman Islands, had about 800 +/- students. The focus of our programmes was academic. So, you come and you do a degree. I started looking at the programme and I spoke with the business sector and I say, “Why don’t you hire our local graduates? Why don’t you hire them?” Obviously, the answer was very simple. The corporate sector has no say in the knowledge that we deliver.

The corporate sector is not a charitable sector; they have businesses to run. You must have seen that even in countries like the United States when they came up with their whatever policies for H-1B, expert workers visas when they visited them, the businesses moved to the countries where they had the knowledge workers. They moved to India, they moved to China, they moved to Ireland, they moved the businesses because businesses are in the business to make money. Yes, they are very sympathetic to your social agenda as you as parliamentarians and politicians and policymakers put forward, but at the end of the day they will like to run their businesses.

So, what we did was we went to the businesses, we said okay, since you will hire somebody that you think is qualified to work in your organization what would you like to see? So, they sat down with us and we came up with a new system—which is not new by the way, it started in 1957. This research started in 1957. This is called a competency based education system.

So, what really is a competency based education system? A competency based education system is that what you teach to your students is not a bunch of curriculum and books and lectures, it is basically units of knowledge that they can apply. I will give you an example. All of you know about Microsoft, this tiny small little company called Microsoft. All of you know about Microsoft? Yes? All right.

Computer science is a very interesting field because, you know that is my field so . . . If you go to a university—and one of my very distinguished colleagues here, he is from the University of Waterloo, one of the most distinguished schools in Canada, we were just talking about this a few minutes ago. If you do a Bachelor’s degree in computer science from any

university whether it is in North America, whether it is in Europe, whether it is in the Caribbean, regardless, if you do a four years' degree in computer science and you come to me, if I am an executive and you come to me for a job I probably would not give you a job. I would tell you to go away and come back with an industry certification. Industry certification.

Microsoft was amongst the first companies, technology companies in the world to come up with a competency-based learning system. So, they started turning out something which is called a Microsoft Certified Systems Engineer, MCSE. I am sure all of you must have heard about this acronym. Microsoft Certified Systems Engineer.

This, my distinguished colleagues, is a diploma. It is a competency based . . . It is just a diploma, that is all it is. You can do a Microsoft Certified System Engineering course in 14 weeks. It is a diploma. But if you walk into a tech company with an MCSE you may not get a \$70,000 job but I can guarantee you that you will walk out with a \$55,000 job—no degree.

No degree. It is a 14-week diploma. Why? Why? You see, the question is why? Why would you give somebody a job for \$55,000 - \$60,000 with a 14-week diploma and why would you not give somebody a job with a 4-year degree in computer science? Why? You think businesses are crazy? They are not.

The only reason that this person gets a job right away is because he has got recognizable competency. He has a piece of paper that tells the business to a guaranteed level that he can do the job from what is written on the piece of paper.

We give transcripts, you know. We always have transcripts and degrees. It lays out tertiary score; this is what we have done. We have transferred grades from here, the States and Canada and blah, blah, blah and everybody accepts them. But at the end of the day the employers do not accept them.

I am sure all of you as parliamentarians . . . a lot of people come to you and say *'I have got a degree, I cannot get a job. I have got a degree, I cannot get a job. Why is that?'* Because there is a disconnect. There is a disconnect in the way in which we are dealing with applied knowledge.

So, what we did at UCCI was simply tweak the system. We moved away from a curriculum and content driven learning to a competency based learning and what happened? You see what happened. So, everything is, you know, the government wants to know the effect and I work very, very closely with my Minister of Education and I am very fortunate to have a Minister of Education who actually has a vision, a very, very clear vision. And we saw that from 860 students in ten months we are 2,500 students.

Do not know what happened?

In ten months. It is the same country, same population. So what happened?

Certainly, the students know that if they walk out with a competency based education from UCCI they are going to get a job. The employers know that when they employ a person with that particular competence the person will be able to do the job.

So, we started programmes like, you know, Partners in Education. We have 75 companies working with us right now with the University that take our graduates and they go with these work placement programmes and all. So, what I am trying to say to you is that what I am talking to you about, this transformation of the tertiary education level, it can no longer be an academic driven degree-awarding institution. You have got to look at it as a critical element of your human capital development within your countries and it is a partnership between the political directorate that actually makes the legislations, that actually puts down the laws.

The economic world will have to realise that they have to come out of their comfort zones and actually talk to people and be accountable for what they do in the corporate sector itself that has to come up with its obligation to accept graduates that actually have competency diplomas. So, it is a triangular partnership.

Now, all this is very good. I want to talk a bit about, you know, what is happening in the Caribbean and why do we have such low, why do we have such low tertiary level penetration. Why is there 9 per cent in the region? Why is there 50/60 per cent in the US, Canada and the UK? Why is it there? Well, some of the things that we looked at, for example, I am sure all of you know were the University of West Indies, there were three campus countries, right? They have got 15 non-campus countries, so between all of that the total student population, the full-time student population at the University of West Indies is 18,000 give and take at all the three campuses.

In the three campus countries, which are Barbados, Jamaica and Trinidad & Tobago, the K-12 cohort that comes out every year is about 200,000 students. Two hundred thousand kids come out of here, high schools in these three campus countries, and only 8,000 to 12,000 get absorbed into the University of West Indies. So, what does that tell you?

It tells you that the policy which is set is to award the brightest and the smartest, right? So, you take the top pick and you put them through higher education.

What happens to the rest of the 90-odd per cent? Where do they learn? Right? Where do they go? Do they go on the street? They get entry level jobs, perhaps get into drugs, try to make a few bucks here and there. And so, you see your crime numbers going up. You see a delinquent population roaming the streets with no choices, so that means a system that does not allow the Average Joe to have access higher education is actually going to produce certain predisposing factors to criminality, isn't it? Yes?

So, for example, the average cost of putting somebody in Northward in Cayman is about—I may be wrong—\$50,000 give or take, right? All right. Five zero, \$50,000. Right, thank you so much, Sir.

Average cost of putting a student through two years education at UCCL is give and take \$2,700. So, what is the choice? What is the choice?

So, the point I am trying to make is that as long as the policies of our educational institutions are to only reward the smartest and the brightest, and we keep discarding the average person on the street you will not have a population of people who actually have choices in life.

So, some of the things—I mean, if you . . . again, I am giving an example because I went to a higher education in Canada so I am going to give that example. The access to government funding for higher education is not based on the fact that you have got all As in your transcripts. It is based on your financial need. Anybody who has a desire to learn can get the money from the Government to learn. Right?

So, that means that on side of your financial assistance to the people maybe the policies need to be that you have got to recognise the average person. You may not be the smartest and the brightest but you still have a chance in life. Right?

So, there is another factor that we have to see in the Caribbean which is not happening.

ICTs . . . I saw somebody make a remark about everybody knows about computers these days, and I am sorry to say that I would like to differ because I have done a lot of research on what is happening in the Caribbean in terms of information and communication technologies. Yes, people do have an *idea*, but people do not *know*.

We are in the process of trying to deregulate the telecom sector in the Caribbean. I am not going to make a statement over here about that but all I am trying to say is that until and unless your deregulation policies are not based on universal access in public interest it will turn into a money-making process for the regulators. The licensing fees become a most attractive feature of the deregulation process.

Yes you see everybody getting a cell phone now in the region, but you do not see many people having access to broadband. The cost of technology itself, I have got somebody at UCCL who have difficulty paying for their current fees and you expect them to go out and buy a \$2,000 computer? It is impossible. You can have broadband, but if you do not have access to technology what do you do?

So, besides doing some programmes, for example, we now give our students a \$350 laptop. And my students can actually confirm, yes.

You can ideally get a \$350 laptop if you are a student at UCCL because we built the first Wire Max network in the region. We are the first higher education institution in the region to build a Wire Max, and for those of you who already know, or for those of us who are like me, let me just explain what Wire Max is.

Wire Max is a true broadband standard where true Wire Max mobile technology allows you to get on to broadband without having to plug into a modem or a cable or anything, right? So, you are anywhere on the Island and you can access Internet. So, we are the first higher education institution in the region to do that.

I was recently invited by the vice chancellor of the University of West Indies because they have a predicament. What happened was that they got into this really big, huge technology project, and I am not going to say the number but it was a huge project and the project failed to deliver after spending millions of dollars. They found out that they did not know what ICT governance is. So, they had to call in somebody like me, unfortunately, and I worked through them and now we are trying to come up with a governance policy.

Sometimes when people invest or countries invest into things like ICT what they do not understand is that one-third of your budget actually just goes towards the governance and upkeep of the system—security, all that stuff.

IT projects are very, very different from your construction project because they never end. For example, this is now 2007. You can implement, let us say, an organization like Microsoft Office, Word, Excel, Power Point, stuff that you have. You can implement and roll out—on Microsoft Office if you roll out a product in 2000 which is a licensed product so you bought a product, you give everybody that Microsoft Office 2000 product. Come 2007 you have to roll in the new product, the version 2007 which is, again, more cost. So, it is a never ending project.

So, it is not just a point of introducing somebody to a computer or putting a computer in front of them. It is actually an ongoing exercise now. Every two or three years you have got to come up with the money to actually evergreen the whole thing. So, when you engage into these projects at the national level some of these issues are really neglected. What exactly do you want to come out of this project?

So, what I have seen at the tertiary level in the region is that 1) we do not have a research base. There is no collective regional agenda for the higher education institution to research into our social economic problems. You know, we hire consultants upon consultants and upon consultants who come in and they do a lot of work and that is all very noble work. But how much do they understand?

You have got your tertiary level institutions, which are part of your countries. Why can we not do that work? Because we understand we are part of the country, we understand the issues. So, there is a need to have a collective, cohesive regional agenda for research into our social economic policies.

The second thing is that if we want to see our human capital development and if we want to compete at the regional level and if we want to make sure that you do not keep on hiring experts upon experts

upon experts to run your economies, you have got to create a national human capital development strategy which is integrated with your tertiary education policy. Otherwise Cayman will have to keep importing accountants and your economies will have to keep on relying on foreign workers to come in and sustain your economies. So, the second element that is required is to have your human development capital strategy and your tertiary education strategies linked.

The third element that you need to do is to even have a national and a regional agenda for ICT. You have got examples like UCCI here in Cayman which did not take millions of dollars to build a Wire Max network which is something that you all can do in your countries. Perhaps there is a case to be made that this can be taken as a regional model and you can implement it. So, rather than actually going away again and getting tons of consultants to come and do your job you can implement this model.

So, I think what I am really trying to put across to all of you is that if the region has to move forward, if you want your own people to be the guardians of your economic frontiers and if you want to take control of your economies, then the only way to do it is through a cohesive regional tertiary education policy. I can assure you that within your region you have enough people with enough experience and expertise to help each and every government come up with tangible policies if we all start working together, if the tertiary education institutions in the region can work with the legislators—you—people who are making policies. If we can align ourselves with your policy then we can work together then we can see a cohesive tertiary education agenda for the region

Thank you so much, ladies and gentlemen, and thank you for your time.

[Applause]

The Chairman: Thank you very much Dr. Syed.

Members, I expect you to raise your hands.

I recognize in this order, Barbados, and do I see any others?

Dr. Syed has certainly thrown out a challenge. He has shown us quite clearly that there is a need. He has lamented the fact that there is no strategy involving students of the region to share knowledge nor a single regional research program, and he has highlighted the fact that things have changed, a degree no longer guarantees a job and that if we will not do something about our systems allowing the ordinary students access to tertiary education we are creating a scenario where they have no choice. I think there are certain areas for you to comment on.

Any other hands before I . . . sorry, Barbados and then Antigua. I also think it is pertinent to the discussion we had that Antigua led off, so I am glad you raised your hand. Thank you.

Barbados.

Senator Andrew A. Bynoe (Barbados): Thank you.

Dr. Syed, my question is not really normal to other questions and so my colleagues have perhaps had that kind of question. But mine is would you . . . because I am so enthralled, in a way, with your presentation would you have any objection for us to use your presentation for public discussion in Barbados where we are grappling with certain aspects of our educational policy, et cetera, where over the media we can broadcast your speech and for discussion purposes. I believe this, from our point of view, to be very useful in pointing us, really, in the new direction. Would you have any objection?

Dr. Hassan Syed: Not at all, absolutely not.

Senator Andrew A. Bynoe (Barbados): Thank you very much sir. I am going to request a copy of the speech. I will guarantee you that it will be broadcast in Barbados for public debate and discussion on the subject.

Thank you.

[Applause]

The Chairman: Thank you Barbados.

Antigua.

Hon. D. Gisele Issac-Arrindell, MP (Antigua): I have so many I do not even know where to start!

I will start with training.

I appreciate what you are saying about island states training their personnel to take up leadership roles in government and industry and so on and so forth. But I think that in real terms national agendas clash with regional agendas.

For instance, in Antigua & Barbuda we have a policy where we grant national scholarships based on national need. The only real responsibility that attaches to you receiving this is that you must return to Antigua & Barbuda and give at least three years' service—public sector/private sector, it does not matter, you must come home and work for three years.

In the meantime, while you are off training to fill these needs, we have a situation where we have thousands and thousands and thousands of immigrants from the Caribbean, particularly Guyana, which seems to train its people for export. And under these regional initiatives we are trying to have almost a borderless society for professionals.

Where does that leave your nationals?

Dr. Hassan Syed: It is a really interesting question that you have asked. A lot of countries actually grapple with this.

If I can be slightly candid with you, and be slightly blunt, there is not a single economy in this

world, and I am talking about every advanced economy, that actually can sustain itself based on its own people only. That is a fact.

You just acknowledged that Guyana is producing people that they export, right? So that means that they do have a policy that they can train enough people to go out and work, right?

If we on the national level understand that there is a certain demand, for example, let me give you the example of Cayman, because I live here, and I have actually been to a country and I met with the principal of their community college there and we talked on certain issues.

Accountants are something that we need here in Cayman, right? And every year 120 entry level accountants are required by just the top four firms—every year. Our local population cannot produce more than 30, 35. So we still need 90 of them. Right now we are producing zero. So, we have now started a program that will produce 30 of them next year. So there will be a point where there will be a balance between the ex-pats and the locals, right?

When you start awarding foreign scholarships and you say you put a condition that they have to come back and work for three years, maybe there is a case to be made that if you look at your own local tertiary institution, so let us say, for example average (I am talking about Cayman here), that if you send any student from Cayman to, let us say the United States (and I am not talking about the type A universities, like type C universities in Florida and stuff), they cost about \$50,000 to \$70,000 a year. At \$70,000 you can actually educate at the local university here between maybe 30 to 40 students.

If there is a certain need in your country for certain specific trades in certain specific areas, if you start building your local tertiary institution and it can actually produce that kind of people—it will not happen right now, but in the next five to six years you will actually have your locals getting educated in the home institution and actually fueling the economy.

When you send somebody abroad and they come back, they normally go through . . . and I am not saying anything against foreign education. It is very important. It is very, very important. But perhaps sometimes what they have learned is not really pertinent to what you want. So, unless you do not balance what you produce in your own home country, in your own tertiary institution and you do not build that capacity there, this thing is going to go on.

Every three years people will go abroad so he or she went for a tourism degree, comes back three years; they push the envelope and they finish three years, and they are gone because they do not want to stay in the county any more.

So you have to build the local capacity. Your local institution has to offer at least those international quality programs that you really need to run your economy. That is the only way to go. So perhaps you may have to re-think about how you are disbursing

your tertiary education dollars. Are they building the capacity?

For example, a professor teaching at your local community college. Are they of the caliber of a person that, you know, that same person is offering something in the US and Canada?

Hon. D. Gisele Issac-Arrindell, MP (Antigua): Well most of our graduates come from the University of the West Indies.

Dr. Hassan Syed: Right.

Hon. D. Gisele Issac-Arrindell, MP (Antigua): That is where we put most of our money because it is a regional institution.

Dr. Hassan Syed: Right.

And so I am not really bad mouthing anybody here, but, again, UWI is a regional institution and all of us in the English speaking Caribbean—the 15 of us—actually give money to UWI every year to run the programs. How much say to you have in their applied knowledge? How much say do you have?

How much of that applied knowledge do you drive as a country? Because you give money every year.

How much of it are they fulfilling in terms of your national?

So there is a link between the national and regional agenda. The regional agenda of UWI should be the national agenda of the 15 countries that pay the bill, but we do not. Right?

Hon. D. Gisele Issac-Arrindell, MP (Antigua): Yes, but I still want to follow up on a regional problem because if we have a region without borders and people come to make their homes here, right, they are voting, and if you start showing a preference for nationals instead of regionals, these are the same people who have the capacity to vote you out of power.

Dr. Hassan Syed: The point comes back again to if your national policies or national higher education policy is addressing your national human development needs, then your nationals will be able to compete with the ex-pat. Are you getting my point?

If there was somebody here who had the same skills and qualifications as me, do you think I would be able to get this job? No.

Once you do not have your local national able to compete with the global-knowledge worker, the ex-pats will win. It is a simple question. So, your national agenda really is that if in time you do not produce your own people of that caliber, people will come in and they will vote and people will move. I mean you cannot stop this phenomenon.

Hon. D. Gisele Issac-Arrindell, MP (Antigua): We cannot even call them ex-pats any more. I mean, we

have a system in CARICOM and my CARICOM brothers and sisters know—

Dr. Hassan Syed: Single-market economy, yes?

Hon. D. Gisele Issac-Arrindell: Yes. Where as long as you have a university degree you have the same rights as a national. And it is a real, real problem.

I mean, in Antigua & Barbuda what we have been telling our students is that they do not have to stay in Antigua. You can go to St. Kitts or wherever and get a job and when people say *'I'm Antiguan. I want to stay home. Why should I get a degree and then have to go to St. Kitts to live, when people from Guyana are come in here and taking jobs?'*

Dr. Hassan Syed: Right.

Hon. D. Gisele Issac-Arrindell, MP (Antigua): So I understand what you are saying, but the practical application of it is a real challenge.

Dr. Hassan Syed: But this is exactly the point that, you know, if you feel that Antigua's agenda is not being addressed at the regional level, and of course you are putting this question to me, of course I might not be in the capacity to answer this where it is a regional agenda, but, really, if you feel that, you know, this aspect of the policy which is being pushed to a single market economy . . . or if the agenda of the University of the West Indies is not in your best interests then perhaps the other policymakers should put it out on the table and discuss it and say, you know, we have to address it. We have to correct it.

I hope it answers the question. It is a delicate blend answer. But that is all I can say at this point.

Hon. D. Gisele Issac-Arrindell, MP (Antigua): Yes, that is the answer Dr. Syed. Thank you.

The Chairman: Any other members?

Don't all put your hands up at once. Wait a moment.

Okay, Antigua.

Hon. D. Gisele Issac-Arrindell (Antigua & Barbuda): Education, traditionally, has been a rounding tool. Education is supposed to make you a better thinker to make better choices; you are a better human being and so on and so forth. I see education becoming utilitarian. You go to school and you get a diploma that says *'I can do . . .'* What about the development of the mind? Because we have people with capabilities but no moral sense, no sense of citizenship, no appreciation for the arts. Where does that part of education fit in in this new dispensation?

Dr. Hassan Syed: Madam Chair, do I have a few minutes to answer this question?

The Chairman: Yes you do. Because people are just going to listen to you.

Dr. Hassan Syed: I teach management, so I am going to take the long road to answer your question. Sorry about that. I do apologize.

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, right? The building point of *Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs* is basically to have a sense of belonging, right? Social needs. Okay.

There is something, and I am not going to take the entire period for this, but I am going to take a considerable period because we did a paper. I was at MIT and we did a paper on hierarchy of learning. Indeed, we did the two models.

We found out that society . . . there are five stages of any human being, any society's hierarchy of learning. The first stage is inspiration.

What is inspiration? You as a society, as people, for example, all of you are parents, hopefully, and you all have your families. If you look at a family that has children which are responsible, go to school, become somebody in life because you as a person have inspired them in some way. You have inspired them. You say: going to school is good; getting the truth is good; having a character is good; taking responsibility for elections is good. So you inspire them and you go on inspiring them every day. So this is happening at the home and then your little community and then your little city and your country, and so you have organizations like Rotary, Lion's Club. So there is a constant inspiration in play within the society that inspires people so this is a big base. This is a big, big, big body.

If you get inspired properly—and some of you will be inspired by my talk today so you will go back and you will do something, some of you will be engaged.

The second stage of learning is engagement. You get inspired, and if you are inspired properly and constantly you get engaged. So your engagement will lead to a certain action and that certain action, the third stage, is education.

Education, by no means, is just reading a book, or doing a course, or getting a transcript; education is your social awareness, the ability to grasp art, citizenship, knowledge, wealth. All of that is the third stage of learning.

So inspiration leads to engagement; engagement leads to education; and education leads to employment. And so, if you are employed what do you do? You start inspiring other people. You start engaging other people. So this is what the cycle of lifelong learning is—it is just not training; it is you as a society, as a country, as a house, as a home, as a family. You know families in your countries in your neighbourhood where there was really maybe a high school graduate father and maybe a totally illiterate mother who pro-

duced five, six, seven kids, who are really high achievers in life. You must have seen some examples, right? It is not that something really drastic happened; it is just that the parents were able to inspire and engage their kids and they went through their whole lifelong learning cycle.

So, if you and this is more of a . . . I will not say Utopian idea, but definitely it is a classic example of how you as legislators and parliamentarians and people who draw up policies, if you can engage your society and the country into an inspirational mode where you actually have mechanisms to inspire people, then it will lead to engagement and education and employment.

So, in social welfare states (and here I give the example of Canada) if you look at the 2006 UNDP Report they are saying that in Canada they have actually been able to bridge the gap between the lowest income groups and the highest income groups. If you are somebody who makes, let us say, \$200,000 a year in Canada, and I am somebody who makes about \$28,000 a year, I am the lower income. My child can actually go to the community centre and the same school district, do swimming, tennis, reading, dancing, whatever; and your child (who is the \$200,000 child) can do the same thing for the same price. Same access.

So, they have tried to actually look at the inspiration stage of human beings, and this is all part of the human development strategy that a country can have. If you can bridge that gap where you constantly inspire and engage people you have a pretty good chance of having a population which is educated and is employable because they will come back for more. They become the agents of change.

We all do research and we all try to inspire people and we talk about that. When you do good unto someone you expect that that person is going to pass it on, right? If that is not happening in your society, or it is not happening in your country, then perhaps no amount of schooling or no amount of lecturing in the classroom is going to change anybody.

I have a student comes to my class for like one hour, 90 minutes, 120 minutes. For the rest of the day if they are exposed to a society that just kicks them around and says *'you're a loser, you're a loser, you're a loser'* . . . yeah, so that person is going to be a loser, right?

This is a very important aspect. I have dealt with students here who were told coming out of high school that they could not read, that they are not well educated. We have around 1200 students in our UCCI who will be told by the high school that they could not do a CXC and these schools are doing phenomenally well in our program.

We are right across the fence and I heard that some of you were actually traveling around UCCI and you took a tour. So the high school is right across the fence. I get kids who come to me with their parents and they will say *'this kid is a behaviour problem, a*

discipline problem, this problem, that problem.' We have never . . . we do not have security guards, we do not have any behaviour problem at UCCI. Why?

Right across the fence they have all these problems; they cannot read, they cannot learn, they cannot do anything. Suddenly they come on this side and they start performing.

Why?

Inspiration!

If you are somebody that everybody says *you can't learn, you can't learn, you can't learn*, I walk into your life and I say *'listen, I am really interested in you. I really want to know what you want to do in your life.'* And I give you the time of the day. What would be the difference? Would you be inspired? It may take you a longer time, but you will be inspired. That is the only difference.

So education, if it is being used as a tool to sit somebody into the classroom and talk at them you are not inspiring them.

Hon. D. Gisele Issac-Arrindell, MP (Antigua): True!

Dr. Hassan Syed: Because for the 12 past years of their lives they sit in a classroom and they do not learn. If you are going to do the same thing, they are going to do the same thing—they will not learn.

Citizenship, sense of responsibility, looking towards the future requires a slightly different approach.

In developing countries where you have all these problems—and I am going to say it loudly because all of you are extremely responsible parliamentarians and you know the policy . . . one of the issues that I am grappling with in this country is the black male population. I have less than 10 percent in the sciences.

My goal for the next one year is to bridge that gap and bring in at least 25/30 percent. That is what I am working on. And I know we will be able to do it because we are interested in these kids at the inspiration level. Forget about education at this point. I do not care. What I care about is if I can inspire them then there is a likelihood that they will get engaged and they will get educated.

So what we try to do at the tertiary level is not to really insert them into a classroom and lecture them. That is not what we do. We try to inspire them.

Each and every segment of the society has to be dealt with in a different way. If you are experiencing these problems in your country and your youth is not performing, perhaps there is a different approach you may have to take.

That is my answer; I hope it answers all the sort of questions you are asking.

[Applause]

The Chairman: Thank you.

Okay, delegates, now that you have been engaged and inspired, who would like to speak?

You're enthralled. Okay, wonderful.

I am going to recognize Bahamas and then Antigua.

Hon. J. Kwasi Thompson, MP. Deputy Speaker (The Bahamas): Kwasi Thompson from the Bahamas.

I just have two questions: First, I was very interested in your point about the tertiary education being in line with the policy of the country, or policy of the government. Can you give some examples of how a government or a tertiary education can be designed and some practical examples of how we can put the two of them and connect the two of them?

The second question is in reference to the inspiration. As legislators how can we . . . you know, we usually see a person who inspires as those who are in the churches and motivational speakers and teachers and so on. How, as legislators can we put in place things that will inspire people?

Dr. Hassan Syed: Thank you for your questions.

I will give you two examples that our legislators here, including the Minister . . . the same problem that we have in our high schools and we have low achievement grades. He spoke with me and he said 'You know, we need to transform the education system here in Cayman and you are doing a wonderful job with that.'

So we talked about a program. And this is how legislators can help, right?

And he said to me that about 60 students from John Gray High School this year (our local Government High School) will graduate without any CXC's—zero. Traditionally in a university setting, we have matriculation requirements. You have requirements to admit people into your program. So this is how you align yourself with the legislators' policies.

You put together a program, and you interview these 60 students. We looked at their aptitudes and we looked at their deficiencies and [asked] Why can they not write a single CXC even in maybe music? Why can they not do it?

Then we put together a program. We did an analysis. We did counseling. We came to know that most of these kids are really interested in sports and they really love to do stuff with their hands. They cannot do math, but if I put them in front of a computer they can slave at any challenging game you can put together. So we put together a one year program for them. The first year is basically just building the basic numeracy skills using ICT and sports. So while these kids are still enjoying their high school they take partly classes at university and partly in high school. In the second year of their program they will be at UCCI in which we will encourage them to get into professions.

We run six programs which are all competency driven. So these are the examples. For the high schools the Ministry, the tertiary education institution, which is independent, we all work together. So the Minister has an agenda that he wants to educate this portion of the population and he wants us to address this problem so we are addressing it, right? So there is one of the examples.

Second of all you spoke about the inspiration. Mostly when you see universities, you know we like to basically publish little brochures and course content and blah, blah, blah, and if you walk in through my door I will service you and I will explain to you what the program is. If not, well it is your problem. You never came to me.

Mr. McLaughlin wanted us to look at the larger community and say '*okay what can you do?*' So we went to the business sector and said '*okay, can we do something together?*' So the Rotary in Cayman put together a summer program, again, which does not have any age group. So we are going to be sort of going to different communities and saying '*okay, if you want to learn anything, it doesn't matter what, and the government is going to subsidize it, the Rotary is going to subsidize it, you can take a course at UCCI.*' So it is a programme.

Similarly, this laptop program that I talked about, again, they are doing a lot of stuff in K to 12 like the computer sector but it has its limitations in terms of its budget. So he asked me how I could help him. So we went to HP Compact, we went to Microsoft and they put together a program in which these companies subsidize our laptops for our students. So rather than a \$1200 cost the company would charge us, we just pay them \$350. So, there is a lifelong commitment to learning. This is a project that we will be holding out to the entire community starting with the University. So that is a project.

The legislation is actually driving. They got the strategic objectives and then we become the delivery arm.

You must have heard about the Civil Service College which is starting in Cayman. It is a new project. The same thing was that they were actually going to outsource the whole thing, and I spoke to the Minister and said '*you know, it makes more sense if we set up a faculty; public administration would cost you less, you would use the amount, you would still want to train your civil servants, but we can do it.*' So we came up with a program. There are so many things. It is just a matter of sort of slightly having an open approach to sort of working with the legislators.

I hope that answers your questions.

The Chairman: Thank you Dr. Syed.

I would just like to add in terms of Bermuda and you asked specifically how can tertiary education service the national need. We are a hub of insurance and reinsurance. And in a public/private partnership

students who want to study the area of insurance go to Bermuda College for two years. Then, if they pass, they go into what was the College of Insurance in New York, it is now St. John's University. This is a public/private partnership where the private companies sponsor this.

When they graduate from St. John's they are guaranteed jobs at one of the sponsoring companies and this is a very, very successful industry and it has given us some middle level management personnel in the reinsurance and insurance business.

Antigua, before you, I am going to recognize Montserrat and then I will come back to you because you have already had two opportunities.

Hon. Joseph H. Meade, MLC (Montserrat): Thank you very much, Madam Chairperson.

I have been very much enlightened over the presentation by the learned doctor who seems very competent in the field of computer knowledge and education and very much impressed in regard to the competency based system that he has enlightened us on, especially training for the workforce, for the work-a-day world. This is something which I find to be very enlightening and impressive and something which we, in Montserrat who in fact seem to be concerned more about university education, whether that fits into the requirements of our needs in Montserrat is another issue. So I have been very happy over that presentation with regard to competency based system where we train people to fit into the work-a-day world whether it be indigenous Caribbean or even on the global scene.

While I have just mentioned that, I would like to move into the question that I would like to ask you: What kind of accreditation, sir, do you have for your non-academic program and what sort of certification, if any, does your graduate receive?

Dr. Hassan Syed: We have six majors, as you call them, the technical/vocational areas here at the University. First is obviously accounting. This is very important for our economy. So the ACC Association ran a one-year program called CAT "Certified Accounting Technicians". This programme is run in conjunction with our local accounting association, it is called CISCA—Cayman Islands Society of Certified Accountants.

Students do one year of co-op along with the CAT programme, which is recognized in the UK and recognized by the CPA Association and recognized by our local accountants. So that is one.

Second is that we used to run a hospitality and tourism programme here in Cayman. We have now aligned it with the CHA (Canadian Hospitality Association) and CARIBCERT (Caribbean Certification) which is our Caribbean standard. It is a five level standard that we have. So we started that programme.

This program is partially funded by the Ritz Carlton, the Marriott, where you are sitting, and the Holiday Inn. So our graduates actually work in these places and they get these certifications.

The third programme is our electrical certificate programme, which is certified by City & Guild, so they certify the programme

The next programme is a computer technician's course, which is certified by CompTia which is an international body for all ICT.

And the last is our construction programme which is certified through our local licensing board for plumbing and construction.

So all of the programmes that we run here are all internationally certified by professional bodies—not by universities, but by professional bodies. So that is what we are offering here.

The Chairman: Thank you.

Antigua.

Hon. D. Gisele Issac-Arrindell (Antigua & Barbuda): Actually, Montserrat's question leads into mine.

How do you overcome the mindset that foreign is better? Because we have these exams and certifying bodies in Antigua as well, yet there are some people who would rather do an online course, a distance course from some university that nobody has ever heard of, you know, thinking that if it is a foreign qualification it is better.

The same thing with consultancies. We have a local who is capable, and even the government sometimes is put up to have somebody from some larger country than a third world certified person to do a consultancy. How do you get past that?

Dr. Hassan Syed: I think a couple of things that we have done, for example, firstly, it is the student body. With our own students we have like school ambassadors and these are our students who actually go and talk with the students. So they talk to community meetings, they highlight them, and some of them are sitting here at this very important meeting.

These guys are our best ambassadors. They talk to other students, they have got cousins, they have got friends in high schools because they are the same age. So that is one.

Secondly, it is really working very closely with the Ministry. If I have open communication with the Ministry and legislators, for example, I meet with different ministers, I meet with different heads of the organizations here and I tell them this is what we are doing. This is what I am capable of. I have 32 faculty members and that is from some of the top schools in the world. So we go and tell them this is the expertise we have in house, would you like to use any of them.

Of course, we do the larger community through our newspapers, media and we constantly inform people. We hold open houses, we go to busi-

nesses and we have something at the University called PAC—Professional Advisory Council. This council sits with me, and this is another Board of Governors. Every president of every professional body on this Island is a member of that council. So they go back to their fellowships and tell them what is happening at UCCI. And this is the community, right? So if the community knows that there is something that brings value to the country and there is something honestly being done, they buy into it to the mindset changes.

I gave you the example that 10 months ago this was a fledging school; people did not have any insight into it or care about it and its students. In 10 months we were just opening up the school, just opening up ourselves for accountability. We listened to our students. They had like a laundry list of complaints when I took over. The community had, everybody had complaints. So either we could just shut down and start defending ourselves or put the thing right. And we did—we put the thing right.

So we are now open, completely open. You can walk in and say *'this is what we think is wrong with you'* and we will listen to you. And if we can we will address it we will address it.

I think this is one of the best ways to really change the mindset, is to open yourself up.

The Chairman: Do you think the fact that you are not a local has anything to do with it?

Dr. Hassan Syed: I have lived in six countries, right? And I can assure you that whichever country I have lived in and worked in I always felt like a local because if the mindset is there that 'this is not my home and this is not my country' then you cannot do anything. You have got to have ownership.

[Applause]

The Chairman: Okay, I am not going to beg, if I do not see any other hands I am going to think . . . okay, I recognize Osbourne Bodden, and then the Bahamas.

Mr. Osbourne V. Bodden, MLA (Cayman Islands): Just a small comment on what Antigua was talking about just before that about the local perception of foreign being better.

It is interesting to know that does not just exist in Cayman, because I always tell people the story of my grandfather who had local beans in a sack that he could not sell. When he wrote "imported from the US" on them they all went. And we have this mindset, obviously, in the Caribbean that once it is foreign it is better.

It is a hurdle to overcome, but what we are doing, and Dr. Syed can speak to this . . . but we do recognize the need for students to see the wider world and the big world out there, that is, university life away

from Cayman. So what we are doing at the moment is you have an option; you can complete your studies here, but a lot of students are encouraged to go off and do their associates here, and then go off and finish their bachelors or whatever overseas. Or second degrees if they wish. And they also have the option of coming back here and doing a second degree because we are capable of offering that now as well.

So I think that we are on the right track. I know some of what Dr. Syed has said has been done so quickly it will make you think that it is not all true. But I can vouch that this system has been turned around and is really, really producing results.

We also are very proud that we have the Cayman Islands Law School which provides tertiary education, and students from within the region actually come and attend the Cayman Islands Law School.

We also have the International College of the Cayman Islands, which is US based. That has been around a long time, about 40 years. Again, it suffered for a long time from lack of government recognition and, as a result, society recognition; but some of our highest profile people in the community are graduates of ICCI. So now we have all of those on line and I think that, for a small island doing tertiary education, is really something to be proud of.

The Chairman: Thank you.

Mrs. Verna Grant, MP (The Bahamas): Thank you, Madam Chair.

I just wanted to comment, Dr. Syed (I think that is how it is pronounced), your presentation made me so much more aware of some of the educational systems in our country. Currently, the Bahamas is doing very well. But I could identify some of what you have said, and some of which you have spoken. But there are still a lot of areas in our local educational system that need to be brushed up, that need to be up to date, I guess, for persons who want to get into certain things.

Our country, particularly in Grand Bahama, we have an industrial area and so many are members who are part of the industry are not savvy to industrial work. As you spoke it made me realize that we need to teach our children from now, or have programmes in place in our College of the Bahamas where we do not have to bring foreign workers in, but teach them. I realize you have to bring foreign workers in to teach because if we do not have it among ourselves, someone has to come in and teach.

You have inspired me now to go to our people about what I have learned today. And, as was requested, I would like to have the tape, if possible, so that I can let our Minister of Education hear what has been said today with an idea of some of the things that he would like to expand upon.

Thank you very much, sir, you have truly inspired me and enlightened me. Thank you.

Dr. Hassan Syed: Thank you very much.

I just want to add what to what our MLA was saying. Again, I have to recognize that Minister McLaughlin has done a tremendous job. One of the things we just recently tried talking about is that it is very important for our graduates to actually get exposed to foreign education. One of the things that we are doing is that the plans are there for that of course, and with his permission I will still say that we have these partnerships with different universities, in the States and Canada and the UK.

What we are aiming for is to create . . . one position is to element in all our programmes, and, as you complete the basic courses here and then we can send them abroad. Here they do can their associate's degree, they do two semesters abroad; they are exposed, then they come back. That way the government dollars which are spent on scholarships can really extend to a much bigger population base than just two or three people. That way they get the best of both worlds—they get educated here and they also can get credits abroad. But that gives everybody an opportunity to get exposed to foreign education. I just wanted to mention that as well. So, it is also in the by-plan that we are discussing.

Thank you very much for your comments.

The Chairman: Thank you.

The Chair recognizes the Cayman Islands.

Ms. Lucille D. Seymour, BEM, MLA (Cayman Islands): Thank you very much, Madam Chair.

Speaking of our Law School, we should be very proud. We are also happy to know that in this very midst we have one of our former students from the Turks & Caicos Islands. We welcome him.

[applause]

Ms. Lucille D. Seymour, BEM, MLA (Cayman Islands): But I would like to say to you, Dr. Syed, you represent the Minister very well, with the same passion. I know that he was waiting anxiously to see who would represent him. I must say, sir, that you did an excellent job.

[applause]

Ms. Lucille D. Seymour, BEM, MLA (Cayman Islands): I also wish to point out to you, if you agree, that eventually we in the Caribbean should see tertiary education as the ultimate for all the children. I wish you would comment on this.

Dr. Hassan Syed: Thank you, Ms. Seymour.

First of all thank you for your kind remarks.

Tertiary education for everyone in the region, of course, and it is small island states, like I am thinking how exposed we are in the region to what is hap-

pening globally in terms of the economic situations. But any day we can actually ensure that our indigenous population does not get marginalized, they do not end up on the other side of the social divide, is to really, really open up our higher education opportunities to everyone.

A thing that is really going for us is the small size of our populations, and in Cayman (give and take) 30,000 indigenous population. This is such a great opportunity for all of us here with the smaller populations to open up your activities. You are not dealing millions of people. But even in large economies, like Canada and the US, where you have millions of people and 70 percent/80 percent really get exposed to higher education or tertiary education.

Unless you do not really put together your regional and sort of like pave the way for access to higher education, you may end up seeing a greater number of your smarter and the brightest moving away. They have to see light at the end of the tunnel. They have to see opportunities in their own countries otherwise they will move.

I talk to tons of young people, not only in Cayman, but all through the region. Most of them have this opinion that if they go out of the region they have more opportunities than they have at home. So, yes, higher education is the only way, really, that you can start bridging that gap in terms of human capital needs.

Thank you.

The Chairman: Thank you.

Any other speakers? [pause]

Dr. Syed, I certainly think that you are well aware by now that members here found your talk most inspirational and most engaging. I think that we have all learned something, and I trust that we will put this to work in our respective countries. I thank you very much for taking the time out to come and address us.

[applause]

Dr. Hassan Syed: Thank you, Madam Chair.

Mr. Osbourne V. Bodden, MLA (Cayman Islands): Dame, I would just like to say that he is under patent and under armed guard.

[laughter]

The Chairman: He is going to be poached?

[laughter]

The Chairman: Members, you will see from your programme that lunch is at 1.00, and that your programme says 2.30. I think we are going to move that, certainly, up to 2.00, and I might suggest that you may

want to start your 8th Session now, at least with your presentation, and then you can continue the discussion after lunch. It might let you out a little earlier this evening and give you time to prepare for the reception at Government House.

SESSION 8

Chairman: Hon. Gisele D. Isaac-Arrindell, MP

THE ROLE OF THE CIVIL SERVANT: EMBRACING A NEW CULTURE OF GOVERNANCE

**Presenter: Sen. Professor Ramesh Deosaran
Trinidad & Tobago**

The Chairman: [The Role of the Civil Servant: Embracing a New Culture of Governance] will be presented by Trinidad & Tobago's representative, and to my left is Senator Professor Ramesh Deosaran. Thank you, Sir. I got it right the first time.

[Senator Professor Ramesh Deosaran] will be speaking to us on a topic that I think is dear to all of our hearts, especially those of us who after taking office may have met a less cooperative or sometimes downright hostile civil service. This is going to tell us how we ought to have dealt and should be dealing.

Professor, the Floor is yours. Thank you.

Sen. Professor Ramesh Deosaran (Trinidad & Tobago): Madam Chairman, thank you very much.

Madam Speaker, other Presiding Officers, Members of Parliament and the administrative staff—first of all, I want to extend on behalf of the Delegation from Trinidad & Tobago our deep appreciation for the hospitality and all the support services that have been so well rendered to us. We were very proud to see that our own Clerk, Ms. Jacqui Sampson, is also the Regional Secretary to the CPA.

Madam Chairman, this is a relatively mundane subject. It is truly important because, for several reasons which we might touch upon this afternoon, it really sits at the heart of both, and more precisely governance, the processes used to execute government properly. In fact, Madam Chair, a public service bureaucracy could make or break any government by many ways, all of which are totally legal.

I note that on the agenda it is "The Role of the Civil Servant Embracing a New Culture of Governance," but in our country, and in several other countries of the Caribbean it is now called "public service". For some reason, not necessarily nostalgic, I really prefer the word "civil" because it seems to me, not only as a legislator but more so as a citizen, a lot of civility has gone out of the services provided by the governments.

The irony, or I should say the dilemma, is this: that while the services might break down in terms of the non-delivery of hardware (for example, getting certain materials from the government), the procedures are also abysmally deficient. But, as I said, the dilemma is the public servant does not get the blame; it is the government that has to stand totally accused in the public eye and, more fatally, in the electorate's eye.

Even though the buck stops at the minister's desk, there is a big distance between the citizen and the minister. Between both is this public servant who from the evidence is becoming less and less civil in executing the duties which are properly prescribed both in the regulations and in several other ways.

But if we should step back to recall the emergence of our public service from the British tradition we should recall how it has moved quite effectively under the King's patronage into a very professional arm of government—supposedly so. So we should be asking ourselves what are some of the things that went wrong that are causing citizens to be so upset with government through the inefficiency of the executing agency called "the public service".

I wish to make such recollection in the British sense. A quotation by Stafford Northcote Trevelyn. . . and that report in 1953 really laid the foundation for what is now known as the modern civil service in Britain, 1953. It is important to use it as a frame of reference so that we can better understand how far we have come, how better we have grown, or how worse we have become. The quotation goes like this:

"The great and increasing burden of public business could not be carried on without an efficient body of permanent officers occupying a position of duty subordinate to ministers and yet possess efficient independence, character, ability and experience to be able to assist, advise and, to some extent, influence those who, from time to time, sit above them."

There are some key words there, the word *influence*.

So when we speak about a separation of functions—that is, a government is supposed to make policy and the public servant is required to execute—I do not think there is a very sharp line of demarcation; because a lot of input in policy comes from the public servant, especially if there is a minister, with due respect, who is new in that arena and who perhaps lacks not only the experience in a particular ministry, but a public servant just below him, a director of a unit, or, more precisely, the permanent secretary. I know the gentleman on my left was a former permanent secretary in Grenada; he is now the distinguished clerk of his House.

This is dramatically expressed in a show, "Yes, Minister", the number of ways—quite legal—that

a senior public servant could entangle his or her minister with such smooth diplomacy that the minister only realises what happens weeks afterward.

So, while we speak about the public servant, or the civil servant, I would want to take not a legalistic approach but a behavioural, cultural approach. For example, I would want to make reference to not the public service culture only, but to speak about the political culture in which the public servant functions. In other words, there is an interaction between those two cultures.

To put it more emphatically, we could not expect a public servant to carry out his or her duty properly above board if the political environment is not conducive or does not facilitate such a delivery. In other words, I would take an interactive perspective, and I believe a lot of management science rests on that perspective—the relationships between units and the people inside those units.

So the era of the public servant being a quiet, humble, congenial, almost invisible entity, those days are far gone. We have a more robust organisation, and they are properly unionised across the Caribbean. And that is good, because if you want to embrace a new political culture you have to make sure that the conditions and the salaries provided for these public servants are not only adequate, but in this globalised environment these things have to be competitive—especially if you are asking the public servant to behave as if he or she is working in the private sector.

That is an important point because at IDB the Inter-American Development Bank did a study on the public service in some countries of the Caribbean, and it was clear that the expertise available in the public service is certainly not commensurate, compatible with the demands made upon government whether it is in terms of poverty reduction or environmental protection, especially matters of national security—social security.

All those areas are not new, but they are new in the way that there have been demands upon the government, and a minister has to respond either in terms of policy or his speeches in parliament resting on the expertise of his or her public servant. There is a big gap in the expertise available and the demands upon government, and that is an important point if we have to move to embrace the new culture of governance.

I would like to spend a few minutes to explain what I believe is the term “culture”. When we use the word “culture”, as you are quite aware it seems to ring in our minds singing and dancing in the clothes that we wear. But when you speak about the culture of an organisation you are speaking about the expectations which reside in that organisation, primarily the expectations that one worker has of another, or the expectations that the supervisor has of his worker, or the expectations that the worker has of his or her supervisor.

The word “culture” in an organisation means primarily the expectations that one has of others. A

dramatic way to explain this is simply in terms of punctuality.

When I first started to work I was a teacher at an elementary school. In my first days I reached there early. School was supposed to start at 8.30; I was there at 7 o'clock because in my mind a school, as an institution of education—a place where example is supposed to be set, a place where the mind as well as the heart and the brain ought to be shaped—I took my responsibility very seriously. A teacher is a public servant too, in that general sense.

I reached seven o'clock only to have to wait quarter to eight for the watchman (as he was called) coming in slowly to open the gate. So that is my first expectation that got broken—do not come there too early. Even when he opened the gate teachers filtered in five past eight, ten past eight. And eventually, when they saw me coming early they said, *‘What happened? You are the new watchman now, or what?’* And they made remarks which almost caused me to fall in line to what was really an irregular tendency on punctuality.

But I held my ground. I suppose it takes courage to resist your peer group in the workplace because the culture can be so strong. The opposite can happen. If an organisation—and this is where people argue to insert the private sector norms and expectations on to the public service so that questions of punctuality, performance audit, measurement of work, all of those things, will also be done in the public service, and that is one of the most serious challenges.

How do you break a culture, or, to put it more eloquently, how can you get a culture to escape from itself; meaning how can you use the culture that is the problem to generate a new dimension, a new culture? That is not only a matter for organisations, it is a matter for large societies because most of the conference topics that we have been hearing, including the one on education, are how to get a culture to change itself.

Because this will not come by magic, it is the people who are part of the problem that will be called upon to generate the new culture that we are seeking to accomplish. And that dilemma, sort of a chicken-and-egg situation, poses the challenge for new leadership, new visionaries, new passions, and new kinds of inspiration which, if history is to be repeated, will not come from the vast majority but from the few who can generate this and rise above the culture that we expect to change.

Apart from expectation what shapes a culture is something you call “the consequence for an action”. If in the school to which I referred just now there was a strong arm of discipline by the principal to ensure that all teachers came at eight or before eight so as to make sure the yard is clean and the desks are in order . . . if there is a consequence to follow from unpunctuality the culture could change. But if there are no consequences for irregularities the culture becomes institutionalised; the habits become rooted and endemic to the organisation.

That is why when I was asked by my friend from Barbados to talk about the administration of justice, the major point I have found is the lack of consequence, the lack of something happening. After the breach is committed, if nothing happens, what you are really doing is making the bad habit a cultural product because it will be repeated. The bad habit will become rewarding, fulfilling in some way for the offender, but we ought to apply serious consequences for breaches of procedures or the law.

That is why in some countries in the Caribbean they are becoming so lawless. I remember the Governor General of Jamaica making a very dramatic statement that Jamaican society is becoming "ungovernable". And so it is in other parts of the Caribbean because (I refer to the police and the courts) if we do not apply sanctions we are not being repressive or oppressive. But the rules are there to be obeyed and I think a lot of that is not happening in the public service. Some people blame the service commissions, some people blame political favouritism. Whatever the blame or wherever the blame rests, this lack of discipline in the public service efficiently and fairly applied is, in my view, missing in very critical areas.

So after a while you have a culture that becomes difficult to change. And when one old government passes by and a new one enters it is a new government but it is like new wine in old bottles. You get the same standard of services and the people want to say, *'Well, what else is new?'* We have said that in Trinidad, and it is unfair to the new government because they try. They meet with the caucus and the Cabinet, but in terms of executing the policy . . . sometimes through inefficiency and the bad culture I spoke about, but sometimes some of the public servants themselves have become so politicized, that you have a culture of resistance to the new government.

Now, in order to embrace this new culture of governance I think we need to improve the expertise support to government. That is one. I will go briskly because time should be a factor in my delivery. Secondly, to improve the technological support, and that is why I say the environment has a lot to do with the way in which the public servant performs. I have been to offices where the air conditioning is perpetually broken down, where there are no proper filing cabinets, or the telephone system is awful. You cannot even make a proper presentation to junior staff, so how can you expect the public servant to feel comfortable and to feel confident to deliver the service that he or she is supposed to deliver?

The question of accountability should explain itself. I think public servants now should be accountable to their supervisors much more than before. But a critical gap in this accountability, ladies and gentlemen, is the question of staff reporting. The staff reporting in the public service is quite bad, to put it gently. In many of the public agencies, there is very defi-

cient staff reporting. If it is reporting it is always *'Excellent'*, *'Excellent'*, *'Excellent'*, and when the matter reaches the court or some protest is made about inefficiency by that public officer and the evidence that the tribunal or the service commission, or in the case of judicial review, has and the only piece of evidence is the staff report, so how can you complain against a public servant when the staff reporting has not only been inadequate but misdirected for different reasons which we might go into during the discussion?

But that is a bad habit that supervisors and their supervisory agencies have developed. Everybody must feel nice or is very good and *'Excellent'* until the time comes when the Frankenstein catches up with you.

So the question of improved management in that particular way and in constant evaluation of the public servant, if you want to embrace a new culture, ladies and gentlemen, this a culture of measurement because it is a measurement that will provide the basis for fear evaluation.

Ask me: how is the public servant job evaluated? It is different from the private sector. You can count how many cars are assembled, you can count how many sheets have been sewn, you can count how many pencils have been manufactured; but how do you count the work fairly and properly of a public servant? There are ways to do it. There is more than management science can tell you how to do it fairly. But to me the most glaring one, the most upsetting one for the taxpayer is what I said earlier: the inefficient delivery of services.

Madam Chair, when I need to have my driver's licence renewed, I hate to admit—I am ashamed to admit it—but I have to call the head of my district office and make friends with her because I cannot go and wait in a line from eight o'clock till after lunch, because they take your picture and you go in another line to collect a form and you have to go and let the form be vetted and then go in another line. When I am finished lining up . . . well, I have a lot of other things to do. I do not mind lining up but then a different line. But you have four or five lines. And I look at the people who are not disposed as I am to make the request. I say I am ashamed because I also carry mangoes for her sometimes, but that is not the way to run a business. In fact, she is very happy when she sees me because she knows. In fact, I feel I am serving the public servant more than the public servant is serving me.

But the little example could tell you how the system becomes corrupt by inefficiency, and it is worse than that. It entrenches inequity in the system. Because I am in an advantaged position I can exploit a favour. But I always look around at all the poor people (poor in generic terms) waiting in the line properly because they have nothing else to offer. Perhaps they do not know about the mango secret or they might try that too.

But I did more than that. I raised the matter in parliament and I was general about the licensing officers and the hardships that consumers have. And I got the government to call a retreat to deal with services. That was about two years ago. But I must tell you nothing has changed, which shows you the difficulty.

In fact, the government knows about the problem and they have tried to get each minister to deliberately put a position paper on improving services, but yet the services remain the same. One of the reasons being the office to which I refer (and this is a general example, I am merely using this to highlight the point) . . . that place is a fire hazard. You have boxes of forms piled up and the clerks have to find their way as if it is a maze and the office where the supervisor sits is dilapidated. It is very congested. In fact, it is not fit for efficient delivery of services. It is an old office and our motor cars, the number of motor cars has quadrupled in recent years but yet the service infrastructure has remained the same.

So when you speak about the public service delivery—that is one aspect of it—but it has to be conjoined with the political and environmental culture in which the public servant has to function.

But this is to me a key issue: delivery to the public services, to the public, and if you want to embrace the new governance that is the front line issue. Otherwise anything else you do— if the public is not satisfied at the tax office, at the customs office, at the immigration office for passport renewal and, in this case, for licensing or registry, if you are a lawyer and you have to do business in the court—if those things are broken down, as in my view they are generally broken down across the Caribbean, I do not think the public will have confidence in both the government and in governance. And the system will become illegitimate and it will invite corruption, and I think that will not be the best thing for a civilised society.

I ask myself when I am in Miami . . . I go to the washroom—clean like a whistle. I have to wait in line, but I know—my turn will come. I know it will come. You see a new way of operation, a new infrastructure for service delivery. You go to London and the airport is the same thing. Then I come to certain points of entry in the Caribbean and it is like a madhouse—two, three lines, people breaking the line with no sanctions, with no consequence. And to cut a long story short, we cannot live this way if all the things we have been speaking about have to be afoot like tertiary education and globalisation and so on. And you are right.

This morning I did not take part in the debate because I thought the lady on my right put it well that you can have your technical/vocational education and totally screw and tighten your bolts, but you really need the education of the mind to direct that energy. And the moral sense and civic duties, to me, are very outstanding criteria required for Caribbean development. But that for now is another story.

Another troublesome issue embracing the new governance, you see, is the question of the monopoly. It is said that competition creates a better quality of service and of product, but government services have no competition. There is one, and only one, licensing office. There is one, and only one, customs office. So the lack of competition creates lethargy and an inefficient system.

Now one might suggest, *well, let us privatise*. That is an option. But as long as some of these services, if not all, remain monopolies and without consequences, sanctions and disciplinary action and performance audits, I think all the aspirations we have about Caribbean development will not be as expeditious as we all hope because the public service is, as I said, at the heart of the government process. You cannot escape that no matter what your manifesto says about eradicating poverty and bringing on all these new facilities. If the public servant is not disposed, capable or empowered to deliver those services it can make or break your party.

After I itemise these I will come to some of the issues, a particular one being how independent can a public servant be from the executive. But if I do so I want to put a corollary to the bad delivery of services. If there is bad delivery of services there should be a streamlined, effective way of accommodating complaints from the public—but even that you do not have. Even in accommodating and treating with complaints from the citizens, there is no effective machinery to do that, from my experience, across the Caribbean.

[If you] want to win votes (for those of you who are humble enough to take my advice) you get your public service to improve their efficiency in the front desk and to attend to public complaints quickly, write a letter, give a telephone call, invite them to explain the problem. It will work wonders, perhaps much better than your manifesto. But try it and you will see. Try it and you will see.

I see my colleague from Trinidad is taking notes on that point because we have an election . . . when is it? This year? We have an election this year.

So, responsiveness and trying to retool the public servant.

A lot of public servants have been there for 15, 16 years without any retraining opportunities and the technology comes and it goes. My experience—I have been in parliament for almost 10 or 11 years now, but apart from that in my dealing with public servants from the university, we have to deal with them on commissions and committees and so on. Some of them still cannot use the computer, and even if they have access to it there is this mental block. That should not be. I mean, public servants especially should be retooled and get the confidence to use the new machinery, the new technology.

Ladies and gentlemen, I want to come now to some, what I will say, fundamental issues affecting the public servant. Those issues I have enunciated I am

quite sure they are familiar to you, but I would want to elevate them to a new level of urgency because the public servant's, or the civil servant's, primary duty is to serve the public through government policy, and if that is not done, well, the whole system loses its legitimacy and the government in power would have difficulty.

The first issue is the independence of the public servant. I do not know if the word is independent or he or she must be neutral, because to be independent would require a number of things, some of them impossible.

I believe that a public servant should also be respectful of the Opposition. In my view, and in my experience and observation, once a minister leaves or he gets thrown out or not elected, there is an apparent disrespect for that former minister, and they would complain to me as an independent senator. Sometimes they would say they cannot get a document from the ministry. They want a document which sometimes is a public document, or they want some data or information.

I think the public servant feels that he or she must serve only the government. I believe it is something that is in the new culture. The public servants would recognise that the old government also includes, to some extent, the Opposition—to some extent, not everything. There are some confidential matters, of course, but I would like to see a greater respect by the public servant for members of the Opposition. And that is not entirely so in my view.

We have to look at the context in which this public policy execution takes place. If we say the public servant must execute government policy faithfully and loyally. What happens when a policy is clearly a misguided policy, or policy is based on improper data, or is contrary to some regulation? What does the public servant do? The union is there, but what does a public servant do? I will leave that question for the discussion period because the answer could be relatively elaborate.

But you cannot expect, therefore, the absolute execution of duty at all times because the public servant must also have not only a conscience but be aware of the regulations since the permanent secretary, in the particular instance, is the accounting officer for the particular ministry.

There have been many instances like this that have come up and the minister gets very annoyed because what the minister is thinking about is not what the public servant is thinking about. The minister, by definition, is thinking about the next election around the corner and all his projects have been lined up and he wants to deliver this to put it in the manifesto. But the public servant now, for whatever reason, faces a backlog and has to be careful that the policy is framed within the context of proper regulation. That is the enduring tension, the perpetual tension, and perhaps I will leave it for discussion period.

In particular instances, if policy could be on the environment government wants to build things quickly. They want to make things, and sometimes at the risk of environmental quality, civil rights sometimes, and I think important areas in national security where public servants are called upon to do certain things that are clearly out of the regulations. So your loyal civil servant, your loyal public servant, that loyalty obviously should have limits. But how do you make known your disagreement with the minister and not be transferred or victimised later on?

Another issue is trying to enforce or insert private sector criteria and standards of performance in the public service. The private sector is quite different from the public service. The private sector has the Service Commission, the lines of authority and the regulations are quite different between the two. Sometimes I think it is unfair to expect a public servant to behave like the private sector, but yet we want him to perform at a high level of efficiency similar to the private sector.

I am not sure, but I sometimes wonder if security of tenure is a good thing or a bad thing as against contract officers. It is felt that because of the security of tenure, relatively speaking, which public servants have, they can get away with many things that those in the private sector will not get away with.

Security of tenure is necessary because it preserves the right to a job and it insulates, in the particular case of the public servants, from political interference. So it is necessary in the public service, but sometimes we have to wonder whether that tenured security is advantageous or disadvantageous in terms of performance and accountability.

You see, especially at the senior levels, if public servants display independence and sometimes professional integrity too robustly, I think the chances of promotion get dimmed. This is my view by observation.

In some countries, in our country particularly, the Prime Minister has a veto. There can be no appointment to a permanent secretary's post or director's post, commissioner of police . . . Many key senior posts cannot materialise unless the Prime Minister approves. So if you play robust and manage, and you feel you know the regulations more than the minister; or, you are not carrying out these little gray areas, or you are not bending the rules a little bit, I do not know what the implications are in such a context.

So we have service commissions as the insulator, but sometimes I wonder, to be argumentative and provocative, what really is political interference? It has taken on a meaning that is all bad, but sometimes a minister feels he has a right to intervene in the public servant's work to get it done right, because even the public servant himself or herself may not be doing the thing as quickly or as properly as he or she should. And that is another point of tension.

In other words, what I am trying to say is that the words “political interference” should not necessarily mean something that is totally unwarranted, because a minister will feel he has to represent the interest of his electorate or constituency and he needs to get this thing done without breaking the rules. If the public servant wants to spin him around, for whatever reason, I think the question of political interference takes on a rather legitimate configuration.

There have been many complaints about service commissions. In Trinidad one minister after the other has complained about the inefficiency and the lack of enforcing discipline. I have the last Public Service Commission Report with me to indicate how many times they have been complaining about public servants but without any disciplinary action taken.

We have a system of judicial review in Trinidad & Tobago and now you have a backlog of cases where public servants, if they feel they are being unfairly treated for one reason or another . . . the cases go up for judicial review which takes a rather long time. And many of these cases are won incidentally more so by the public servant than by the state, meaning the service commission.

Now, another route that the government, in our case as an example, has taken to bypass the public service and to express their frustration with the public service is to set up what is called “public purpose companies”. These companies are occupied by contract officers for limited periods but they fall outside the public service regulations, outside the Public Service Commission, and it is an ambiguous situation now (Harry, am I right?) whether they can be called before parliament or the State Enterprises Committee and so on. So government is to have a private sector arrangement with tax payers’ money where the question of accountability is virtually absent or much less so than if these were public servants.

I merely highlight this case, both contract officers that are causing turmoil in the public service, because they feel these contract officers are getting better conditions than the normal public servant and that is causing some dissention within the ranks of the public service. The government reasoning is that, well, we want efficiency and these things are not doing properly.

Another route that the government is taking to bypass the public service is to set up these public purpose companies in the way that I just described. So things are happening and things will continue to happen with the public service as you try to embrace new culture.

Finally, there are two or three suggestions that I have for the way forward. Having thought about this now in recent years—because the committee which I chair meets the public servants regularly, we inquire from them about performance, about reasons for what they feel is unfair—I am wondering whether each ministry should not have its closed-shop arrangement now where, for example, the Ministry of

National Security you have officers belonging only to the Ministry of National Security where the intellectual capital and the intellectual institution of wisdom grows but is contained within there so you could not transfer an officer from this ministry to that ministry quickly, having to start all anew again.

There is a double side to that which perhaps it might arise in the discussion, but we have got to have a tighter containment of performance and public service and that is one route perhaps that we can think about. Rather than having a large public service as we have, at 60,000 people, let each ministry have its own cadre of workers, permanently appointed there rather than having a whole public service demarcated by ministries. That fluidity really affects, in my view, professional development.

The question of promotion opportunities where you can deal with that by reconfiguring the different ministries, but we could not—I think the service commissions across the Caribbean are having a great difficulty, I know ours is, in managing so many thousands of workers properly.

I also believe as a second consideration, if you want to embrace the new culture of governance, is to strengthen the role of parliament in calling upon the government as well as its public servants to be accountable at public hearings. And I also believe there should be better working conditions for our public servants, not only in terms of salaries but really the conditions under which they work in terms of even toilets, air conditions, some of those mundane things, are not the best for a humane environment.

I believe I would like to close there and leave the discussion open so that we can get more deeply into some of these issues.

Madam Chairman, I want to thank you very much for your introduction and to the audience for listening to me. Thank you very much.

The Chairman: Thank you, professor, for that education.

I feel as if I went to civil service school, and so thorough was your presentation that of the four things that I have jotted down to ask you, I now only have one. So thank you very much.

I will open the Floor for questions.

I recognize the Bahamas.

Mr. D. Shane Gibson, MP (The Bahamas): Shane Gibson from the Bahamas.

Well, I can tell you that you said a mouthful! When speaking it almost sounded as though you were speaking directly to the Bahamas.

I just came out of a term in office as Minister of the government and, boy, I tell you it is extremely difficult to get civil servants to perform the way they should. And I do agree that governments are partly to blame as well simply because in most cases they do not have the political will to do what is right.

I can tell you that I found it amazing that everybody is just interested in pushing a bunch of papers. So whenever they do not want to get something done, they just make a note and send it on to the next person; and I can tell you they go round and round sometimes for months. As I watched that British sitcom "Yes Minister" that is exactly how the government operates. You know, nobody will ever say no; everybody is always "yes Minister" but when you check six months later nothing is being done.

In my mind I am still trying to figure how we can really get the civil servants to respond the way they should. How you can really get them to improve in efficiency when there is no accountability, no consequences if they do not perform. Trying to terminate a civil servant is like trying to pull a wisdom tooth with a thread! You know? It just cannot happen.

I agree with the rundown public infrastructure. I often say to myself *'It is so simple: if the infrastructure needs repairs—then fix it.'* And you go and you talk to line staff and they would complain about these things. If you work in the environment you would see it for yourself. But when you talk to senior civil servants it is like they do not have any interest in trying to make it better; the only thing they are interested in is trying to promote themselves.

And so I really do not know . . . you know? I am listening trying to hear how you all go about doing it but at the end of the day I guess it comes down to political will.

And this thing about political interference. . . I always ask the question: If I am responsible for a Ministry, and I give instructions for something to be done, how can you call that political interference? I can understand if I am responsible for the Ministry of Housing and I go to the Ministry of Health and I give them some instructions of which I should not do, I can understand them calling that political interference. If I am the Minister responsible for housing and national insurance and I tell the Director of National Insurance I want him to look at doing certain things, or carrying out a certain job function, I mean how can you say I am interfering politically?

Of course it is used very loosely depending on what their objective is and who it is and I agree, we just came out of a tough-fought election in The Bahamas and I can tell you that for the first time in the history of the country you saw the police force politically divided; you saw the civil service politically divided; you saw the defence force—which should not be. I mean the police staff association actually showed up in the colour of one of the political parties on their shirts. The Commissioner gave specific instructions—this is not to happen—a week before the election before the advanced polls. But they showed up to the advanced polls in the colours of the political party they supported.

Now, at the end of the day nothing happened. They are still on the force, the association still does

not know what they are supposed to do. The demand of the Minister of National Security certain things, went on the radio, I mean . . . The police staff association in particular is not supposed to be partisan. And so they have taken on a new twist now in politics where I do not see where you can possibly govern under these circumstances.

So I am really trying to listen here today to hear how we can go about really reforming because you always hear about the public sector reform. I understand it is an ongoing thing. The problem did not happen over night and it will not be resolved over night. But what I can tell you is that it seems as though every day they are getting deeper and deeper into this and it seems as though there is no way out.

So I am really listening to try and see how . . . and like I said, we need the political will. I agree with that. It must start with us.

You know, you have civil servants sitting on the job for 15, 20, 30 years. I remember asking one, I just walked in and I put my finger across the desk, it was dust, so I just asked somebody standing there 'there is dust on the table.'

She said, 'Well, you know, I decided I wasn't working hard any more, I'm working *smart*. So if I clean that today, I will not come back until the next two or three weeks.'

It is that type of mentality.

How do you really break into that? How do you do it?

Sen. Professor Ramesh Deosaran (Trinidad & Tobago): Well, that is what I say. The political culture is also non-aligned in the sense that there are rules. I wanted to bring our Public Service Regulations, but I did not want to burden the audience too much. There are rules to be applied.

You have a parliament that is duly elected to the majority government, bring the new laws you require to straighten up your system too. But the implications are twofold: In the first place, you cherish the police as a political constituency, to be very frank about it, so many ministers and governments are reluctant to move as they should into the police service. I am not speaking by guess, I am telling you across the Caribbean, right down to Guyana. Secondly, the public servants too, large constituency. That is the reality of democratic politics.

You can speak about governance, about transparency, accountability and all the smoothies, but the reality of a democratic government is the electorate first and foremost. And you will find that electorate comprises significant elements, like the police service, the public servant and others like that, against whom governments, it is clearly witnessed, are afraid to move.

My view has been a dangerous one: the best government is the one prepared to lose the next elections to do what is right when they are in power.

[desk pounding]

A Delegate: Exactly.

A Delegate: Hear, hear.

A Delegate: That does something for its country!

Sen. Professor Ramesh Deosaran (Trinidad & Tobago): And of course that is a dangerous view.

But if you want to get the culture you are speaking about, and if you want to embrace a new culture, you have to change that old culture by taking the political risk associated.

But the virtue in that . . . it is like children: When you correct a child, a child gets offended, but a child gets a new respect for you. That is why many of our politicians are not respected as they ought to be in the Caribbean because they are too permissive and they allow a lot of things to degenerate before their eyes because they do not want to lose this or that constituency.

The Chairman: I am going to cheat here and claim privilege.

Professor, do you think term limits would help us in that respect?

Sen. Professor Ramesh Deosaran (Trinidad & Tobago): Do you think what?

The Chairman: Term limits.

Sen. Professor Ramesh Deosaran (Trinidad & Tobago): Term limits?

The Chairman: Yes, because then you have nothing to lose because if you have maybe two terms in office you know you are not running a third time. Maybe the second term is when you effect all these changes.

Sen. Professor Ramesh Deosaran (Trinidad & Tobago): It might be a good idea. Or you could do it when you now come into office. If you now come into office, and you have three or four years again to smooth things out and then they will understand you did it for the general public.

The two term thing is such an anti-democratic thing, you know? I do not know. Unless there is good argument. If you make a case I will listen to you, but just to ask me that in a vacuum I cannot arbitrarily tell you yes or no. You have to make a case.

But in the current situation I would prefer a more practical route. As soon as you get into office straighten up the system.

A Delegate: Hear, hear.

Sen. Professor Ramesh Deosaran (Trinidad & Tobago): Because you are in office and you have a majority. And you will get the respect you deserve which is absent, to me, in Caribbean democracies. People do not respect us because they feel we are just a bunch of talkers and we are catering to the lowest denominator in society, the lowest elements—and they know that. So it is a game. And they exploit us, you who are going out for elections, and the game is played by the manifesto promises which never materialize and the electorate where only 60 per cent go to vote (if the average in the Caribbean is used), and so democracy is virtually a game of mutual exploitation rather than one of rectitude and straightening up the system.

The Chairman: I recognize Trinidad & Tobago.

Mr. Harry Partap, MP (Trinidad & Tobago): Thank you, Madam Chair. Harry Partap, Trinidad & Tobago.

First of all, let me compliment Professor Deosaran on what was a lucid and in-depth analysis of the public service and the civil servants in the Caribbean. Particularly in Trinidad & Tobago from the information you gave it resembles so much what is happening back home.

It is quite true that if the public service, the civil servants, want they can force a government to sit out a five-year term with nothing done in terms of the manifesto. That is quite true.

At first I thought it was political that they would sort of impose their political will on the service but in 1986, when we had a change in government, the NAR Government sat out for five years and they could not do anything at all. In fact, the former Minister of Planning and Development, who is now the leader of one of the political parties, said very openly, "I spent five years and I did nothing." He was able to say so because of what the public service servants did to them.

When the UNC came into office in 1995 a similar problem was had. It was so critical that one of our Ministers had decided "I will just ignore the tender's board" because the tender's board will just sit there and they will not do anything, they will not pass anything, they are not going to approve any of the projects; and he threatened to bypass the tender's board.

Then came the PNM back again into office and they suffered from the same problem. As you mentioned, they had to appoint companies to look after building schools, to look after a wide range of public service activities they had to do.

So we do not do it because it is political, we do not know. What I can tell you this evening is that if all the public servants were like the parliamentary staff things would have been so much different.

A Delegate: Hear, hear.

Mr. Harry Partap, MP (Trinidad & Tobago): I can tell you that our parliamentary staff—and Ms. Jacqui

Sampson is there and I know that she feels that I am trying to ingratiate myself. But note they have been treating both the Government and the Opposition in equal terms. There is a neutrality which I could not understand. I cannot understand that they will sit in parliament and the banter will be flying all over and they will be as serious as ever, not taking part in the activities which I thought is quite good—something which I could not understand. They act with a certain amount of professionalism and so on.

Now, it means then that the public service could do the work. They could but I do not know what is the specific cause.

You mentioned staffing, staff reporting. I will tell you what happens with staff reporting because I also was a school teacher and we had to do the staff reporting for the teachers who were then considered to be public servants.

If you marked a member of staff at the lowest level on that order of boxes, the lowest level, you as a principal of the school are called in and you have to explain why you put a low mark down. The only way you can get away from that is if the teacher or so made a mistake or so, you have to record that and you have to get them to sign your log book. If you do not do that, you cannot put a low mark in for them. You have to put somewhere between, so is the principal simply saying *'Well, I think two is going to be in between so we are going to put that'*

So we have to change the culture. I do not know how we will do it. It is so difficult to understand how it is to be done. But I worked as a minister in the government and I had any amount of problems to get the job done. We have to find ways. I am sure all of us will suffer from the same problem, so we have to find ways to reach them or get the parliamentary staff to teach them!

The Chairman: Thank you, Sir.

Sen. Professor Ramesh Deosaran (Trinidad & Tobago): While you are thinking about that question, the NAR Government to which he referred came in in 1986 and they had serious problems with the public servants. But in the last year of their tenure, the NAR cut the public servants' salaries by 10 per cent.

Am I right, Harry?

And they lost the elections after that.

The Chairman: I recognize Bermuda.

Mrs. Shernette M. A. Wolffe (Bermuda): Good afternoon. Shernette Wolffe from Bermuda.

I just want to make a few comments.

Our Premier has a model of thinking that he challenged all of the civil servants to think outside the box because he feels that if you always do what you have always done you are going to get what you have always got.

Often times what happens in Bermuda is that public servants do not blow their own horns often enough. And there is currently a Bermuda government mantra or motto and it is called "At Your Service." So every Wednesday on a popular jazz radio station a director or department head or the permanent secretary from various government ministries will discuss for about an hour new initiatives, new programmes that may be occurring in their ministries because sometimes the public is not aware of the delivery of services that are available and they are quite excellent.

Another thing that has also become mandatory is under the theme "At Your Service" is that there is required a mandatory frontline training for all frontline staff. So anybody that is on the front line is required to be trained.

The other thing I wanted to mention was regarding the radio programme. Simultaneously they have asked for government employees that when the radio programme is on they are to be listening to the radio or they can access the programme via the government website. And those are just the few comments that I wanted to make.

Oh, and also, in terms of expediency of service and delivery of service, for a transport control department one does not have to go to the vehicle or licensing bureau to license their car. You can do everything from your home from your computer. You do not even have to go into . . . so that has also helped us. That is something else there.

And certain ministries are more progressive and more corrective than others. But our Ministry of Transport and Tourism, in particular, which is also under our current premier—because our current premier is very proactive, he wants things done expeditiously. They award government employees, they have awards banquets for government employees and so far everybody is pleased with that.

But in terms of parliamentary service, that is another matter.

Thank you.

The Chairman: I recognize The Bahamas.

Mrs. Verna Grant, MP (The Bahamas): Thank you, Madam Chairman.

I just as a regular person prior to getting involved with the government have always been dissatisfied with a lot of the services rendered by the public sector in my neck of the woods. I have always thought and hoped that if I ever got into government that I would change that; I would fire a lot of people.

My mother was part of BaTelCo, which is the telecommunication there, and their philosophy is always 'it does not matter what we do, we will never get fired; we will never lose our jobs.' So their attitude has always been one where the culture, I guess, as was mentioned, is that mindset that: 'It does not matter

what you do to me I will always be here. It is now you as the government that will constantly be changing. When you go, I will be here; when you come back, if ever, I will still be here.'

I have always thought that it was so necessary to teach our civil servants that they really are for the service of the people and their attitude to me sucked, for want of a better word.

So I hope that our culture here, well, in the Bahamas, would change where our civil servants will be disciplined, they will be able to be chastised and even terminated if their services do not improve.

It is too often that we allow mediocre behaviour. As a result of that you will continue to get mediocre government without any changes. That is just my comment.

The Chairman: Thank you Bahamas.

Any more questions or comments?

In that case, I have one of my own.

I do not know what it is like in the other islands, but I know in Antigua & Barbuda many times attempts made to discipline public servants are met with a sure-fire way of resistance, and that is the sick leave. I do not know if that is the case anywhere else.

Yes?

No?

And how is that dealt with? I am curious to find out.

Jamaica, I saw you nodding?

A Delegate: It is a trend.

A Delegate: Sick out!

A Delegate: Sick out!

The Chairman: I recognize Montserrat.

Hon. Reuben T. Meade (Montserrat): I am not dealing with the sick leave issue.

One of the things which I found within my administration in Montserrat before they threw me out . . . I came into the public service from a temporary stint. I came into the politics from a temporary stint as a permanent secretary. So at least I had some basic knowledge of how the other side worked.

But what we also found very useful was that, for example, when your tenders' boards and certain departments and ministries are not doing the things to allow the other ministries to do things is that we used to get them together at least once a month, all ministries, all department heads, in one meeting with their ministers. And the theme was you tell the other ministry why you are not doing something and you sort it out there and then and if need be, we lock the door. At the end of the day what we found was that you are having a lot more collaboration among the ministries and departments because they were meeting so often.

As you find it currently, you have a situation now where under the British system the governor is the head of the public service and the governor decides on discipline and so forth. I am finding within the new administration that civil servants are reporting ministers to the governor, and ministers are reporting civil servants to the governor because they do not believe that they are part and parcel of the same thing.

And what I think should happen, and I can only speak for the smaller territories, is that we need to bring people together more rather than writing memos and all these other things. Come together, talk through issues, try and sort things out and then you can do a file note as to the action that was agreed rather than waiting to sending things back and forth.

The other technique which I learned in Barbados is MAD—Maximum Administrative Delay—and that is the dotting the "I's" and crossing the "T's." If I need to hold you up I go through a very legal maximum administrative delay tactic, which means that nothing happens. And I tend to find that happening (I hope there are no British people here) . . . I find the British tend to do that with politicians when they do not like them and their programmes. They go through a Maximum Administrative Delay tactic as well to reduce the aid flows and slow things down.

But there are ways and means of getting around them and I think we need to work more closely with the public servants and see whether or not we can get them on board through regular meetings and discussions.

The Chairman: Thank you Montserrat.

Professor.

Sen. Professor Ramesh Deosaran (Trinidad & Tobago): I have a question here which is on paper. I will read it for you: "How large or small is your percentage of non-established workers in your public service in Trinidad & Tobago?"

Harry might intervene here because Harry was a former Minister of Labour and he might know something about the statistics in this regard.

Read it again for you?

"How large or small is your percentage of non-established workers in your public service. . ." I have a figure of 15 per cent to 20 per cent.

Mr. Harry Partap, MP (Trinidad & Tobago): Yes, I think you are right on that. What you mean is those who are not permanent?

Sen. Professor Ramesh Deosaran (Trinidad & Tobago): Yes, not under the regulations and so on.

Mr. Harry Partap, MP (Trinidad & Tobago): Yes, around that.

Sen. Professor Ramesh Deosaran (Trinidad & Tobago): And are there effective means of circumvention of the established service?

Well, I do not need Harry to tell me the answer to that. The answer is yes.

They are used to circumvent the public service, which I find strange. I think the public service should retaliate, or perhaps demand some more specific reasons because what you do, you hire (very important) additional workers to do the same things that your regulated workers are hired to do. So you are paying twice for the same service, and as the Chairman is saying, if the regular workers are paid to do work that they are not doing, the government now is hiring workers to do the work that the public servants are supposed to do.

But as I always tell my senate, you can do it if it was your money. But it is not your money; it is the tax payers' money you are doing this thing with. So it creates to me a measure of fiscal irresponsibility on one hand and a tolerance of low efficiency on the other hand.

Your question is a vital question. What are politicians and parliaments and governments prepared to do in the face of such circumstances and win the next election?

Mr. Harry Partap, MP (Trinidad & Tobago): Yes, thank you, Madam Chair.

On the same point, when we were in office we were trying to get around that problem at the ministries. We had decided that we would appoint deputy permanent secretaries but these would come from outside of the public service. Then we discovered that you could not do that because the public servant will not take instructions from someone who is outside of the public service so that fell through.

The Chairman: If there are no more questions, we will—

We have Jamaica, and then after Jamaica we will yield to our regional secretary who wants to say something on behalf of the public servants.

So, Jamaica and then Jacqui.

Hon. Syringa Marshall-Burnett, CD, JP (Jamaica): One of the interesting phenomena I will say in Jamaica is the consumer, the public, who is disaffected greatly by inadequacies and inefficiencies, slowness, whatever, of the public service agencies that have to interface with the public directly. They are not reluctant to take to the 13 airwaves morning, noon and night and report them by name, you know? They will try to get the name of the person or the agency. I know that most, if not all, of the ministers make a daily track of what the issues are that are coming across the airwaves and which are the areas that are of concern.

I am not sure if it was only financial or for greater efficiency, or for a number of reasons, but we have some agencies that are called “executive agencies” and I can think of one that used to give an enormous amount of trouble where the public had to get certain documents and would need them very quickly on an ongoing basis. This agency has been made into an executive agency—that is, it has to earn its own money; it has had to operate with fiscal accountability; it is still a government agency but it has to report to the Ministry of Finance. I am thinking of one but there are several, but this particular one.

The service has greatly improved but I noticed recently we have been coming more and more into the public glare again for inefficiency. People call up and say, ‘We tried to get the birth certificate, you know, a month ago and we paid this money and we have not gotten it.’ But for a while it was really getting top marks for the quality of the service and so on.

Being one of these agencies means you are really operating in a “private sector mode” in terms of fiscal accountability and all the other things that go with that.

To reiterate I do notice that over the past six months or so this year there has been an increasing number of complaints again about this particular agency. There are other agencies that are doing similarly.

So perhaps the consumers, who have to interface with so many of the public agencies, like the licensing and so forth, are taking a much more active—the consumer energy, consumer focus is taking a much more active participation and demand in the kind of service that they want and this probably has some efficacy in some areas, at least even momentarily if not permanently.

Thank you.

The Chairman: Thank you Jamaica.

And we will now hear from Jacqui.

Ms. Jacqui Sampson, CPA Regional Secretary (Trinidad & Tobago): Thank you very much, Madam Chairman.

It is not usual that I join in discussions, but I felt it was necessary on this occasion to say that I know a lot of members here agree that quite a lot of public servants do, in fact, perform quite well and that a lot of them are efficient. Invariably, the ones that the public interface with are the ones that tend to give most of the trouble.

My counterparts in the public service, I would admit, quite a number are, in fact, failing but I have found them to be a very hardworking bunch of people and I mean this.

In every country in the world there are problems with public service and the problems we face, I think, are compounded because we are small. And

because we are small it is assumed that we do not need certain types of services.

For example, when I joined the parliament I came from the private sector. I never worked in the public service before. I met a parliament staffed by approximately 11 people serving 67 members of parliament. It was an impossible task and therefore there were areas of failure. I recognized immediately that it was a managerial problem.

And so in many of the public services throughout the region the problem could be a managerial problem. Yes, I agree with Professor Dosaran, it is a political issue as well but we probably are prepared, or would be prepared, to pay the private sector three times the amount that we pay currently for the same work that the public sector performs.

In time we were able to recruit because the very first thing I had to do was to put in place a strategic plan, a long-term strategic plan made up of annual objectives. In time we recruited a managerial team—a director of human resources, a director of finance, a director of IT—and, eventually, we were able to effect improvements.

I agree with Professor Deosaran, we have had to employ a lot of persons on contract, not only because we recognized we could not have found the right types of skills within the public service, but because, yes, it is easier to discipline and manage persons on contract. The public servants that I have interacted with very many of them are very hard working. But the system within which they work is very constricting and as a consequence you will have failures. If you do not have proper managerial systems in place, if you do not have strategic plans, if you do not have annual objectives that you can match to your budgets you are going to have problems.

We have had so many of those training programmes for front level counter staff and service this and service that, but the turnover is so great in the public service. By the time you train that bunch they move, so you have to continuously be training and training and training. And if that is not matched with the proper managerial structure then you are going to have the complaints that we are hearing.

But I am telling you they work very hard for how much they are paid and for the amount of work they are required to do. I have found that public servants that I interact with in the public service, many of them are very, very hard working.

So I am hoping that at the end of sessions like these wherever they are held public servants will begin getting the tools that they need in order to effect the improvements that are desired.

Thank you.

The Chairman: Thank you very much, Jacqui, for representing.

If there are no more questions I will ask the professor to just do a little wrap up.

That is fine?

Sen. Professor Ramesh Deosaran (Trinidad & Tobago): Well, just one or two gentle remarks.

I think there is a serious responsibility on the executive to help reshape the public service. As I said, it is not only a lack of a performance, but the conditions of work (let me emphasize) must also accompany the demands from the executive and the public.

I believe it will be done and it should be done and I do not think we should waste any more time in trying to tackle it with the proper procedures and policies.

Thank you, ladies and gentlemen, for listening to me and for engaging the discussion this evening.

[Applause]

The Chairman: Thank you again, Professor, for that very enlightening and reassuring look at the public service, reassuring in that we know that there are remedies that can be taken. Let us just hope that we can find the political will to take them.

Thank you.

Sen. Professor Ramesh Deosaran (Trinidad & Tobago): Thank you, Chair. Thank you.

The Chairman: I now return this meeting to Speaker Moyle.

Hon. Edna M. Moyle, JP, MLA, Speaker of the Legislative Assembly (Cayman Islands): Okay, just before we separate and go our separate ways we remember we have the Governor's cocktail party this evening at 6.30, but you can go downtown and make yourself at home between now and then.

The other thing is that I would ask members, for the Annual General Meeting tomorrow we need a venue for the Presiding Officers and Clerks Conference that is supposed to be held this year. So any country that would like to offer but must get in touch with some member of government back home between now and tomorrow afternoon, we would appreciate that when we have the AGM tomorrow that we have a venue for the Presiding Officers and Clerks Conference.

As Jacqui is informing me, it is a limited expense to the hosting country because delegates pay their own airfares and their own hotel accommodation.

Thank you very much. See you at the Governor's residence later on this evening.

SESSION 9

Chairman: Senator the Hon. Syringa Marshall-Burnett, CD, JP (Jamaica)

CLIMATE CHANGE, WHAT TO EXPECT IN THE FUTURE

Presenters: Hon. Keesha Webster in collaboration with Hon. David Carty, MLA (Anguilla) and Dr. Gary Goodyear, MP (Canada)

The Chairman: Good morning Honourable Members, colleagues. Although not everyone is here, I think we should get on with the business of the day which promises to be, again, another interesting day in terms of our topics and our speakers.

The Hon. David Carty, Speaker of the Anguilla Legislative Assembly, has sent his paper which will be presented by the Hon. Keesha Webster, Deputy Speaker. We will have two speakers today and it is my pleasure to introduce them both to you so that we will not have any break in transmission once the presentations begin.

Hon. Keesha Webster is the Deputy Speaker from Anguilla. She will be our first speaker. She has participated in several CPA Conferences and the CPA WTO Trade Workshop in Kingston, Jamaica.

The Hon. Dr. Gary Goodyear is an MP of the Conservative Government in Canada, and has been a parliamentarian since 2004.

They will both address us on the very important topic "Climate Change, What to Expect in the Future." Certainly this is very essential to us here. We contemplated disaster preparedness yesterday morning and climate change is one of a piece of that same aspect of the changes in our lives. So, without further to do or ado, I will certainly call upon the Hon. Keesha Webster to make her presentation on "Climate Change, What to Expect in the Future." Immediately following her, the Hon. Dr. Gary Goodyear, will continue with his presentation.

Thank you.

Climate Change on the Commonwealth Caribbean

**By Hon. David Carty
Speaker of House of Assembly, Anguilla**

Hon. Keesha Webster (Anguilla): Thank you Madam Chair.

First of all let me extend apologies for the absence of the Speaker from the British Virgin Islands. Unfortunately, she was not able to attend the conference and, therefore, our Mr. Carty has graciously accepted to send a paper on this topic since it is his pet topic.

Now, I must indicate to you that this is not a topic on which I am knowledgeable. Therefore, any questions you have I will redirect to the good doctor or to Mr. Wright who, I am told, is an expert in this area. Here is Mr. Carty's address:

On behalf of the CPA Branch in Anguilla I would like to thank the regional council for giving Anguilla the opportunity to make a presentation on this very important subject "Think Globally, Act Locally."

I am sure you may have heard the environmental slogan made popular by the path breaking Bruntland Report entitled "Our Common Future." The slogan is indeed a profound admonition which is at the core of my remarks today.

Global environmental processes at work are not someone else's problem, they are indeed global, and nature and natural processes care not a wit for law or political organization, let alone political affiliation. Whether we are republican or monarchist, independent or an Overseas Territory, the nature of our planet will have an effect on us in one way or another whether our location is in the Caribbean or on the steps of Outer Mongolia.

Long before the global village became a reality with the economic forces of globalization strengthened and inter-connected by the technological advance of processes like the Internet, nature already had us "wired", connected and inseparable. But that nature is beginning what appears to be an irrevocable change because of human activity which, for the first time in the history of our planet, is having a direct impact on the planet's environment.

We are all now familiar with the term "global warming." So what is global warming? And why do humans aggravate the problem? At the risk of boring you, let me try and briefly explain the scientific theory behind the phenomena.

Scientists blame the problem of global warming on what they call the greenhouse effect. I may be wrong but I do not believe green houses exist in the Caribbean. They are manmade structures which are not green, commonly used in temperate climates by agronomists and horticulturists as a tool to aid them in the growing of plants, usually tropical plants, which normally cannot stand cold weather.

The houses are usually made of glass so that light essential for photosynthesis and plant growth can enter the structure. But when the sun's rays come through the glass and heat the ground and the plants within the confines of the house, the same glass prevents that heat from dissipating back out into the air outside. In effect, the green house traps the heat.

We now know that there are gases in the atmosphere which tend to trap and hold heat. These gases are carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide, and a few others like CFC's and HFC's, but this is not a science class so we will not go into that in detail.

These gases are called greenhouse gases because like the green house, when the rays of the sun strike our planet much of this heat is normally radiated back out into the edges of our atmosphere where the cold of space removes their heat, except for when there is a proliferation of these gases which inhibit that dissipation of heat, hence the terms green-

house gases and greenhouse effect. The bottom line is the temperature of earth begins to rise if there is a proliferation of greenhouse gases.

In 2001 the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (the IPCC) stated that in the 20th century earth's climate had warmed by approximately 0.6 degrees centigrade. This may not seem like a lot until one notes that most of this increase took place in the last 30 years of the 20th century. Carbon dioxide is produced primarily from combustion through natural fires and machines, et cetera, and human and animal respiration. Methane is produced from fermentation in the intestines of ruminant animals like cattle, pigs, et cetera.

So as the planet's population nears the six billion mark not only are there more humans breathing but there is rapidly growing combustion particularly in the developed world for more and more power plants, factories, offices and residential complexes which use heat and air conditioners; cars, trucks, jets, you name it, all the trappings of modern society. Carbon dioxide is the end result. But even among the poor in the under developed world who consume 32 times less than do those in the developed world, their poverty drives them to cut down more trees and forests for fire wood and heating, contributing to the production of carbon gases in the atmosphere.

Likewise, as we have become more prosperous and demand more steaks, hamburgers, pork and poultry products, more and more ranges and ranches worldwide are springing up to rear cattle and to satisfy our carnivorous tastes. What is even worse is that many of these ranches are being developed in areas of pristine rain forests like the Amazon where jungles full of biodiversity are sacrificed for pastureland and herds, and cattle.

So, more people, products and production, more carbon dioxide and carbon monoxide, more animals for food, more methane, more greenhouse gases, more heat.

It is no longer debatable that humans are part of the cause in global warming. The IPCC put that debate to rest in February this year. But what really counts is not the number of people who live on the planet, but their activities and lifestyles that impact the environment. The resources consumed and the wastes put out by each person vary greatly around the world being highest in the first world countries and lowest in the third world countries.

On the average, each citizen of the US, Western Europe and Japan consumes 32 times more resources, such as fossil fuels, and puts out an estimated 32 times more waste than do inhabitants of the third world.

But low impact people are also becoming high impact people for two reasons: Rises in living standards in the third world countries whose inhabitants see and covet first world lifestyles; and immigration both legal and illegal of individual third world inhabi-

tants into the first world driven by political, economic and social problems at home.

Immigration from low impact countries is now the main contributor to the increasing populations of the US and Europe. But please bear in mind that the hard work of development done by all our island states and the incredible success we have achieved thus far makes us as much a part of this problem as anywhere else.

That statement usually provokes a state of denial. After all, we are so tiny we believe nothing we do can make a positive or negative difference; or we may think we have no large factories or industrial plants that cause most of this mess. We have cool ocean breezes and a bright blue sea to insulate us from all this. As we have said in Anguilla since 1978 we are "Tranquility Wrapped in Blue".

So what does global warming mean for us?

To start with much of our success in promoting one of the best regions for tourism on the planet rests on the beauty of our marine resources and particularly our reefs. Reefs are the composite of millions of tiny animals. Yes, a reef is an animal which grows very similarly to your potted plants at home. A coral polyp thrives by absorbing micro algae and sheltering it inside its skeleton. The algae, in turn, produce sugars which the corals use as food.

Now for some disturbing news: The *Los Angeles Times* of October 25, 2005 reported that the extremely warm waters fueling this season's record hurricane season are stressing coral reefs throughout the Caribbean and may kill 80 percent to 90 percent of the structures in some areas. These colourful under-sea landmarks—homes for tropical fish and magnets for divers and snorkelers—are turning white, or "bleaching" in an area extending from the Florida Keys to Puerto Rico and Panama because of warmer than usual water that has persisted in the Atlantic for months.

Reefs worldwide suffer from five main threats:

1. Fishing by dynamite
2. Clouding or coloration from excess sediment
3. Pollution
4. Over fishing
5. Temperature rise

This point is the critical point. Reefs require clean clear water that is warm but not too warm. Scientists believe that an average increase in ocean temperature of 1 or 2 degrees Fahrenheit is enough to create bleaching and a rapid die off of coral.

If we lose our reefs the blue wrapping around our islands is in trouble and will begin to turn into an ugly shade of grey. As the life goes out of the reef its colours disappear. The eco-system collapses and as it dies its function as a natural barrier to wave action begins to collapse allowing erosion to intensify on our beaches. If meteorologists are correct, as I believe they are, the new cycle of devastating storms which

began in 1995 has put us in the front row seat of this weather performance.

When the curtain went up in 1995 we in Anguilla were forced to see, listen and feel the performance of hurricane Luis. Since then, other islands have seen new and dramatic scenes like Grenada and here in the Caymans with hurricane Ivan. If the cyclical predictions are true it means that we must continue to brace ourselves for another twenty-five or thirty years of this drama before the act ends. This has all been linked to global warming.

This point leads neatly into the second ominous threat that we face from global warming, which is sea level rise.

In just the last few years three alarming global phenomena have been noted thanks to our ingenuity as a species:

1. Satellite imagery noted that the usual rate of summer melt off of the arctic ice pack had increased by an alarming 22 percent over any other summer period since such data was recorded. More of the Arctic Ocean was exposed last year than ever before making it almost possible to sail without the assistance of icebreakers around the top of North America.

2. Frozen tundra in Alaska and Siberia which had been frozen for millennium had begun to melt, not only indicating yet another example of global warming but in addition exposing peat moss beds which were now free to release greenhouse gases from decaying matter into the atmosphere. These gases had formally been trapped in what was in effect cold storage.

3. The projections of deforestation in the Amazon basin—the planet's greatest natural gas converter and store house of biodiversity—had been radically revised upward, and some 18 percent more forest was being lost annually than was first estimated.

In case we have forgotten, trees and plants breathe carbon dioxide and thereby help to absorb this most significant of greenhouse gases. The more plants and trees we remove from the surface of the planet the more the imbalance in favour of carbon dioxide will tend to tilt. The Amazon is the most prolific user of carbon dioxide on the planet.

These three alarming indicators of global warming were reported after scientists from the IPCC cautiously predicted sea level rise of between 10-30 centimeters in the 21st century. Some estimates claim that we can predict that if the world's glaciers and polar caps continue to melt at present rates the sea level rise could be 20 centimeters or more by 2025—that is 18 years away.

Bear in mind that sea level rise does not just mean a rise in the level of the ocean; it also means an increased capacity for waves to cause more erosion since they now have more height and thus added hydraulic force to assault the land. If we add the destruction of the reef to this equation and remove that natural barrier which typically mitigates or lessens wave

action, then the corrosive power of the ocean becomes even more intense.

I do not need to remind you that in all cases, with the possible exception of Trinidad, our main sources of income and engines of economic growth are our hotels and other tourism plants of which 95 percent sit on low lying coastlines. If sea level rise occurs we are in deep trouble. Our very geographies are threatened and the linkage in our economies, even in those elevated islands of the volcanic eastern Caribbean, will be massively disrupted as farmers lose markets and jobs in the tourist sector begin to disappear.

Certainly, the relatively low lying limestone islands of our region like, Antigua, Turks & Caicos, the Caymans and my own Anguilla, will suffer inconceivable changes. I do not wish to sound alarmist, but such alarm helps to make the point that this issue is real. So what is to be done?

If President Bush, on behalf of the most powerful nation on the planet—which consumes more resources than any other—refuses to accede to the Kyoto Protocol, how on earth do we make a difference?

If China's GDP growth continues to sustain a 10 percent plus annual growth and they begin to consume as much or even more resources than the USA over time, what prayer is there for the few of us in small Caribbean islands?

To a very large extent we are completely at the mercy of these powerful nations and we can only pray that their collective genius and or entrepreneurial skills can find a way to wean the planet off the use of fossil fuels and towards more reusable and sustainable sources of energy.

But we must also recognize that as Caribbean peoples we are ambitious for our families, our nations and ourselves, and rightly or wrongly our conception of development is one that includes a high and growing element of consumerism which is precisely where most of the problem lies. Our successful tourism product demands the best from services and supplies including transportation, sophisticated lodgings, food et cetera. And as a consequence of our growth we ourselves demand more and better services.

So I take the position that this issue with its scientific and economic complexities is also a moral issue. If we view the planet as a highly diverse but interconnected single ecosystem, then we cannot be mad enough to think that humanity is somehow divorced from the system. So, I would suggest that if we accept the premise of the argument that defines the threat and, as I have shown in a small way the science of this is accumulating rapidly, then we must recognize that like humans everywhere, we are part of the problem. Blaming the developed world for their consumption patterns, while certainly valid, or excusing over population on the ravages of poverty or the tenacity of culture gets us nowhere.

Therefore, as parliamentarians, we must demonstrate to the rest of the world and to our own people that we intend to not just be a part of the problem but now a part of the solution. Our Governments and Oppositions must rise and begin to articulate this issue from a moral and economic perspective.

If automotive technologies improve, especially with the price of gasoline being what it is today and new hybrid cars which use both combustion engines and electric power become more readily available, can we agree to review the duty on such automobiles?

Can we agree that the duty on gasoline powered cars remain the same but significantly reduce that duty for hybrids?

Can we reduce them even further for cars that are entirely electrically powered?

Can we get our automotive technicians and mechanics thinking along these lines?

Can we get our electric companies to begin serious investment in hybrid alternative sources of energy like wind and photo voltaic and cleverly market those efforts to the benefit of our economies and sense of self respect?

Can our growing consciousness persuade us to insist that our governments take more notice of regional and international fora dealing with climate change? And add our voices through whatever means possible to the growing case for new attitudes and policies globally on this issue.

Island nations, particularly the Maldives worldwide, are awakening to this issue. Are we joining them?

Can we try and understand that issues of physical planning may have more to do with vitally important matters of conservation and sustainability as with a perceived threat to individual freedom?

We need to talk as a people and not shout. These and many other issues can be explored if as a people we take a new approach to the whole aspect of conservation as it impacts sustainability in small places. Indeed, the essence of my presentation is that the issue of conservation in all its variables must become an ethical imperative in all spheres of life from government policy and planning, economic enterprise large and small and individual everyday activities.

So I end where I began with the suggestion that the slogan "Think Globally, Act Locally" is more profound than it first appears. I have deliberately laid out some harsh possibilities to demonstrate why we need to appreciate more fully the fact that our planet is an interconnected ecosystem and that we are not immune to a changing global environment.

But if we live and breathe we can think creatively. And our parliaments must raise the levels of debate to a greater degree of sophistication while still being rooted in that same moral imperative which gave rise to leaders of the past who wanted more freedoms and opportunities for our people. That new

imperative must be to define what is right and good for the wellbeing of our planet and to take action.

Thank you.

[Applause]

The Chairman: I now call upon the Member from Canada to address us.

Dr. Gary Goodyear, MP (Canada): Bonjour, mesdames et messieurs.

Merci beaucoup, Madame la Présidente.

Thank you Chair and Delegates. It is indeed a great honour to be here and present Canada's approach to global warming and our fight against climate change. In the interests of time this morning, allow me please to get right into my remarks on perhaps the biggest threat to confront the future of humanity today.

Canada may be a small contributor as well to global warming—our greenhouse gas emissions represent just 2 percent of the earth's total. But we owe it to future generations to do whatever we can to address this world problem.

Frankly, up to now, our country has been engaged in a lot of big talk and very little action. A decade ago the previous government committed our country to the Kyoto Protocol. They said Canada would reduce its emissions to 6 percent below 1990 levels beginning in 2008. And then, for the next 10 years, they did practically nothing to achieve this goal. Instead, they maintained policies that pushed emissions in the opposite direction.

In fact, friends, when we came to government last year, Canada's emissions were 33 percent above the target, and rising. Not down 6 percent—up! Which of course meant, that with only a few months remaining before the targets for Kyoto kicked in, it had become impossible to meet the Kyoto commitment without crippling the Canadian economy. The new government would have had to shut down every single automobile, ground every plane, stop every train shut every light bulb and refrigerators and so on. It was simply not possible.

So the new government vowed to develop a real plan—a plan that would be practical, affordable and sincerely achievable; a plan that would deal with our growing economy and our population; but also a plan that achieves real, absolute, mandatory—through law—regulations to reduce greenhouse gases and position Canada as a leader in fighting climate change.

Now, there are elements to our plan that could work not just for Canada but for many countries around the world including some of the large emitters that did not accept or sign on to Kyoto, like China, the USA and India.

Clearly, if we really want to stop climate change, all the big emitters need to step up to the plate and must accept real targets, but all peoples in all countries of the world as well must join this fight.

It is urgent that we start work now, and Canada is stepping up to the plate in a big way and we are happy to be a leader in the new era of opportunity to prevent global warming in the post 2012 period of Kyoto.

This plan of ours, which is complex and far reaching, is well underway already and will put us on track to absolute greenhouse gas reduction of 20 percent by 2020. And let me be clear, friends, Canada's long-term target of a 60 percent to 70 percent reduction of 2006 levels of emissions by 2050 is consistent with cutting global greenhouse gas emissions by half over the 1990 levels—a goal sought by the European Union.

The approach that we have chosen, basing emissions reductions on units of production in the short run allows growing and developing economies to engage in significant greenhouse gas reductions without putting themselves at immediate risk of economic collapse. In the long run, all countries must embrace ambitious absolute reduction targets, so that the International Panel on Climate Change's goal of cutting emissions in half by 2050 can be met. It is up to every country and every citizen on the planet. No government alone, or without the cooperation of its citizens will achieve success.

We in Canada know that we cannot afford to have the world divided on this issue, to pit right against left, Europe against America, or the developed countries against the developing world. We need a plan that takes into account both different starting points and different national circumstances, but that moves us all towards a common result.

Now, there will be much debate in the weeks and months ahead over the best course of action for the world after the end of the Kyoto Protocol in 2012. But in the meantime there is much that we can do, and in Canada we have already started. We are involved in a number of international partnerships that are working on new and exciting technologies—from carbon sequestration, to renewable fuels, to clean coal—that will lead to significant emission reductions.

We are looking into new technologies such as gasification processing for our garbage and trash, solar, wind, wave and geothermal energies are all being looked into, even using corn to fuel our cars and buses.

Last year the Canadian budget 2006 set aside \$4.7 billion for the fight against climate change. In 2007 we set aside an additional \$4.5 billion, for a total of over \$9 billion since our government took office 17 months ago—\$1.5 billion to the Provinces to come up with their own independent plan; \$2 billion invested in renewable fuels such as bio-fuels, which is corn, bio-diesel, the use of old oil. We provide \$2,000 incentive to people who buy fuel efficient cars and a gas levy of folks who chose to buy non-efficient cars.

Thirty-six million dollars has been set aside to purchase old cars because, as you may know, 33

2007 cars produce the same amount as just 1 1980 automobile.

We have introduced a ban on regular light bulbs. We have better surveillance, millions of dollars put towards surveillance off our coasts to ensure that we catch people who are spilling oil or illegally dumping their bilge content. Two billion dollars into efficient energy sources for transportation including hydrogen buses, and incentives to increase ridership on transportation such as subways and so on.

We set aside \$300 million for people who can capture that money to increase the efficiency of their homes by purchasing newer furnaces, insulating their attics and so on. Three hundred million dollars was set aside to ensure conservation of sensitive lands, and just this year alone, a quarter of a billion dollars was set aside for university research, research such as the University of Guelph (not far from my riding) who are experimenting with the use of food fiber, plant fiber as a binding agent in asphalt for our streets and roads further reducing the need for fossil fuels.

Let me conclude, by saying that technology is obviously the key. Our human ingenuity will, as in the past, develop alternative forms of fuel energy as well as cleaner and greener ways to use carbon. And Canada will be at the forefront as a green energy superpower.

It is a long, ambitious and noble list of challenges we have set for ourselves. We ask the world to join us, every country, and every citizen. Just one light bulb turned off, one air conditioner set lower, is a valuable step in the right direction. It is not the size of the contribution, but it is the size of the commitment that will determine success or failure.

Thank you very much.

[Applause]

The Chairman: We thank our presenters for two very informative, interesting presentations that have certainly been, well more than informative. I would say educational. And now we are going to invite you to share your comments, your observations, ask your questions and our panel plus others in the audience who are able to respond will carry this discussion further.

I will give you a moment to collect your thoughts before the hands go up.

Yes, Grenada.

Hon. Michael D. Lett, MP (Grenada): Thank you Madam Chair.

After listening to these two important papers delivered I think it is the duty of us in the small islands to look at this seriously. And our voices will be heard.

At the moment, the United Nations has a committee set up of small island states of which Grenada is Chair. It comprises the Caribbean, Pacific Ocean, Indian Ocean and the Atlantic Ocean group-

ing. A lot of requests were made to the G8 to discuss the climate change and, as usual, they ignored the voices of the small island states. I think on the 6th of June when the G8 met this topic was on the agenda. But over the years the small island grouping had been making noise and they have not been taking us on.

As we listened to the paper, by the year 2050 when we have sea level rises taking place, small islands of the Caribbean will no longer exist because the rate of increased water level will . . . some of these islands, such as Cayman, will be submerged and will no longer exist. We have to take this very seriously.

The whole ozone layer has been damaged by the gases that are emitted from factories, cars and other things, and the culprits are the larger countries. The ice plate in the north is melting and if this trend continues our water level will, as I said, rise drastically. So it is the duty, as I said, of each and every one of us.

In Grenada we have set up a Climate Change Strategic Action Plan. The chairman of that committee has been going around the island having meetings and sensitizing the people of what is going on. We noticed that the water authority is complaining that in the long dry season they have a water problem. But we think it is because of the changes in the atmosphere that causes the drop because a lot of our trees are no longer existing. We have erosion, less water conservation and we are experiencing the changes at the moment so we have to take measures to prevent that.

I thank the presenters for the papers they have delivered I think it is very, very important.

The Chairman: Thank you Grenada.

Yes, Montserrat.

Hon. Reuben T. Meade, MLC (Montserrat): Thank you.

I find it rather interesting that the countries leading the discussion on climate change, the United States in particular, are the ones who are principally responsible for the dilemma that the world is in. If we look at China, for example, China possibly is emitting more greenhouse gases and doing a lot more destruction than most of the world combined, despite the rapid growth. But the United States is still willing to trade with China and encourage China, whereas we tend to look at the smaller contributors to the problem as the ones where we are seeking to control what they are doing.

Let us take for example, Brazil and the Rain Forest in Brazil. The Americans and the Europeans has a plan to go into Brazil to cut timber and they set up a floating timber mill in the Amazon. That was quite some time ago. What has happened to the forests in the United States and elsewhere? While they are seeking to protect the rest of the world by going into the so called newly developing countries and control their emissions, they are doing very little at the home

front. So I think we need to focus our attention . . . I do not know how much pressure we as a group from the CPA can do on that, but the larger territories or countries that emit most of the greenhouse emissions need to make a more dramatic effect.

I just want to conclude by saying that God has a very strange sense of humour in that over the past few years most of the hurricanes are targeting one of the greatest contributors to greenhouse gas emissions—the United States.

Dr. Gary Goodyear, MP (Canada): Madam Chair, may I comment?

I do agree completely, although I think for any other reason the contribution or commitment from the Caribbean islands and the smaller countries not only will contribute and help clean up greenhouse gases around the world and contribute to the fight, I think another benefit is to show the larger countries, like the United States and China, that you are going to put pressure on them that way.

I certainly hope that our conclusion from this meeting would be to write to the United Nations and put your voice with Canada's and some of the other countries to pressure the United States and places like China to step up to the plate.

We see in Canada, talking about forestry, a large part of our country . . . in fact, I can tell you that 90 percent of Canadians live within 100 miles of our borders. So our country, which is geographically the size of the United States, with just over 30 million people, they are all living within 100 miles of our borders. It is a massive expanse of land that is forest. What we are seeing is a doubling of the forest fires every year. As the forests become dryer they burn for much longer and the largest contributor, the largest source of greenhouse gases on the planet is forest fires.

So we in Canada are taking a very strong approach to controlling, recognizing fires early controlling the burn; if we can put them out sooner, that is what we want to do. Sometimes there is a natural need for burning. But what we would like to see if using the forests that are getting older and getting to that stage, using those resources for the products that the world needs and then replanting, reforesting the area because new trees consume more carbon dioxide than the older trees anyway.

Everybody has to participate in this. I believe every person on the planet has to take responsibility for it. It is a difficult thing to get a handle on. It is a difficult thing to change people's behaviours.

In Canada we still see despite disincentives to buying big fuel-guzzling cars, we still see that the number one selling cars are the four wheel drive SUVs and so on. So I think that we have to set and impress by example. I would certainly encourage that the parliamentary associations here, the Commonwealth Parliamentary Associations write the UN and keep the pressure up. It is a valuable contribution.

The Chairman: Montserrat.

Hon. Reuben T. Meade, MLC (Montserrat): Just one additional point, and it is a point of gratitude.

Cuba, for example, has made substantial contributions to islands such as Dominica and Antigua (those are two that come to mind readily) in terms of getting them to convert to the more energy efficient light bulbs because Cuba has donated literally almost a million light bulbs between those two countries. I think it is commendable that Cuba can do such a thing when countries such as the United States, who look at their own vested self interests, would not make such contributions to the region.

So thanks and hats off to Cuba.

The Chairman: Cayman Islands.

Mr. Cline A. Glidden, Jr., MLA (Cayman Islands): Thank you Madam Chair.

I just wanted to make the point of expressing my appreciation for the two presenters, but also to say, as was said by one of our colleagues, that in most cases the islands or the territories in this region are very small contributors but tend to be faced with the most drastic ramifications based on the whole issue of global warming.

While as a region most of us are small territories and cannot . . . I mean especially individually, but even collectively it would be pretty much insignificant in the whole scheme of things. I think we may want to take this opportunity from the region to remember that we do play a part of the larger CPA and at the plenary in India it may be a suggestion to take forward the position of this regional group to express it on a larger stage where we have more of the world players and more of the contributors at the (in this particular case) Parliamentary Conference that will be held in India in September.

So, whether we need to do it by some sort of motion, or whether we need to designate someone to do a presentation, it might be worth our while for all the members in the region to try to make an impact at that stage.

Dr. Gary Goodyear, MP (Canada): Madam Chair, if I can just add to that.

The Chairman: Yes.

Dr. Gary Goodyear, MP (Canada): I think there are two ways to go. Of course, I think we have to have our own initiatives on each island as Canada has done. I did go into some detail on the failures of our previous government because it was one of the reasons why I got into government—the failure of the previous government. We are looking at Canada's contribution and how we can assist other countries but we are taking

our own initiatives as well in hoping that folks will follow.

One of the things . . . I mean we have done so many things in Canada it would take me hours—but I would be more than happy to share them! We are regulating everything from lawnmowers to DVD players. If you can imagine the small contribution that a DVD player has on the greenhouse gas effect, you would wonder why we would even do that. But the reason we do that is . . . for example, we have banned these regular light bulbs and in Ontario alone, which is a large area, of course it is, but that ban alone will save 6 megatons of greenhouse gases. Just banning light bulbs and forcing folks to buy the more efficient bulbs.

We are worried about indoor air pollution which is not covered under Kyoto or greenhouse gases. We have about 9,000 Canadians die every year from cancer caused by Radon gas produced by microwaves and fridges. Most folks do not know that even when your TV is off, when your computer is off, it is consuming energy. Most of those appliances consume between 25 watts and 40 watts to remain off. Canada is attempting to regulate a 1 watt challenge that no appliance can be sold in Canada unless it consumes less than 1 watt when it is off.

If you can imagine if we could get the world to stop buying lawnmowers that barrel out smog and pollution and burn up fuels, if we could force our marine folks to produce more efficient motors for boats (we have a large boating community in Canada). . . as I said earlier in my comments, it is not the size of the contribution it is the size of the commitment. And everywhere you look that you see you can improve, I would encourage you to do that. I would encourage you that when you meet to encourage your friends to do that and together that type of movement will embarrass the larger emitters into stepping up to the plate and doing the same thing.

We do not have a lot of time. This is a crisis. I would encourage folks to start today in whatever way you can to move forward on reducing the emissions, reducing smog. Our smog days in Canada in Ontario have gone from four days, smog alert days, which encourages seniors or folks who have asthma or other respiratory distress issues, to stay indoors on a smog day. We had four of them in the early 1990s. We are averaging almost 50 smog days every summer now. And Kyoto did not deal with smog, so that is another reason why Canada has taken a different approach. We are reducing pollution as well by 50 percent in the next few years.

So I would encourage people to look at indoor air pollution, outdoor air pollution as well as greenhouse gases and work to reduce all of them at the same time.

The Chairman: Yes, Mr. Wright.

Mr. W. Alfonso Wright, MLA (Cayman Islands): Thank you, Madam Chair.

There is also a theory with global warming that may cause us in the Caribbean region especially to come to terms a little bit better with the aspect of global warming and that is the theory that the warmer the earth gets, the more likely we are to have hurricanes.

I think that that brings it home. We know what hurricanes are like and what that does to our way of life here in the Caribbean. If we need another incentive to decide to pick up the baton and fight this global warming issue it is the threat we have of hurricanes in our area.

The Chairman: Bermuda.

Hon. Walter Lister, JP, MP (Bermuda): Thank you. My name is Walter Lister and I am from Bermuda.

Just addressing the topic I share very briefly. The question comes to us as to what can we do in our own individual countries to do our little bit to assist this failing atmosphere. In Bermuda for many years we have allowed only one car per household and, of course, I think this has twofold purpose for Bermuda because it is a very small country (1); and (2) I think when the decision was made global warming was not one of the things that affected the world as it is today. But it has its effect on global warming.

The other point is that more recently the present government invested in public service transportation at great investment for having fast ferries go from one end of the island into the city on a regular basis every day. This, in itself, has caused the government to have to add greater parking areas for persons who use this public transportation.

Each island has a responsibility. We all have responsibility to do what we can in our own individual little areas, and that is what we are doing in Bermuda, trying to encourage persons to use public transportation and it is working very well. And all of those persons who were vehemently opposed to the idea you see them at the head of the line getting on these fast ferries. So, sometimes you make a decision and it may not be popular in the initial stages, but if you stick with it and you believe you are right, and I think the question of global warming is very obvious so that I think at the end of the day Bermuda is doing its little bit in a very small way to try to assist.

The Chairman: Are there any more comments? Any more observations? Experiences you would like to share before we wrap up?

While you are thinking about it, going, going, gone . . . I am very glad Dr. Goodyear mentioned the business of smog days and respiratory problems because the health implications of global warming is one that I think we have [not] paid enough attention to in the Caribbean and already it is with us. We have seen tremendous rise in Jamaica in upper respiratory track

infections and complaints at all age groups—children, middle aged and the elderly—especially at both ends of the spectrum. Asthma is like an epidemic, one has to say, at both ends of the spectrum.

So it is important that we look at all the aspects. Certainly we cannot afford, after fighting so hard to be where we are in our respective countries and in our region today to just give it up to erosion and these kinds of environmental degradation. But the health status of our people is also suffering. It is time we really look at this connection.

I also want to say that in Jamaica we have benefited from the light bulb gift from Cuba and are using it. Just about every Parish has been visited and given these bulbs.

So, I wanted to make those comments while the last contributor might have been thinking. . . . And if there are no further . . . I am sure you would like me to express our appreciation to our presenters. Certainly those papers I feel are most educational and something that we should take home and make further use of in many ways, not only in committees but maybe in educational programmes.

We have heard what the possibilities are and we are seeing some of the effects already. I think we have been exhorted not to underestimate the strength of our combined voices and if we look at our history we can see where our combined voices and our consistent approach has often borne fruit and, indeed has brought us to this time and place.

We have heard of good examples, for example Grenada, with its public education program. That is certainly one to be emulated if we have not begun yet, or to strengthen ours. And we have heard what Canada is doing in diverse ways to deal with the problem, which is certainly going to have some effects for the Caribbean, some positive effects for the Caribbean.

I can only urge us that we make common cause with our partners that we support Canada's direction, that we use our UN opportunities, that we use our CPA opportunities, and in this most important aspect of our lives and our future and our children and our grandchildren, that we be committed and we be relentless in our commitment.

I thank you for yet another very important and interesting presentation and discourse.

[Applause]

Hon. Edna M. Moyle, JP, MLA (Cayman Islands): Just going back to the Cayman delegate, Mr. Glidden, who suggested that we make this a topic for the conference in New Delhi, two of the workshops at that conference are going to be "Climate Change and Global Warming: Policy Issues and Solutions" and the other one is "Global Water: An Energy Use Towards Sustainable Development."

Now, I do not know if we (and I guess Jacqui can guide me on this) could ask for someone from the

region to present a paper at the plenary. I know in Fiji, Grenada presented a paper. The gentleman was asked to present a paper on "Hurricane and Disaster Preparedness." So we will talk about that and see if we can get someone from this region, from the Small Countries Conference, to present a paper on behalf of this region at the actual plenary, the bigger conference.

As Chairman and Host, I am going to forego refreshments this morning, since we did not get started until about 9.45, so I hope members have their water at the table. We will go on to the next topic, if the conference so agrees.

SESSION 10

Chairman: Hon. J. Kwasi Thompson, MP (The Bahamas)

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION: LAND-FILL AND DISPOSAL OF REFUSE/BEAUTIFICATION

Presenter: Mr. Rolston M. Anglin, MLA (Cayman Islands)

The Chairman: I am Kwasi Thompson from the Bahamas. It gives me great pleasure to be able to chair this session today.

All good things must come to an end so we have arrived at the final session, or the final presentation for this conference. I would like to introduce the presenter. He is Mr. Rolston Anglin. He is a member of the Legislative Assembly, a member for the West Bay region. He will be presenting on the topic "Environmental Protection: Landfill and Disposal of Refuse/Beautification"

I am going to welcome him to begin his presentation now.

Mr. Anglin.

Mr. Rolston M. Anglin, MLA (Cayman Islands): Thank you Mr. Chairman. I would like to first thank my organising committee here, at home, for making me the man that is the last to bat. Having been to a few of these conferences, I clearly understand the role of the man that is the last up because by this point people are all conferenced out, people have had quite a few late nights, they have had a lot of functions to attend and, inevitably, we will have those who have slipped out early either to return home or perhaps do some last minute shopping just before they leave the particular country they are in.

Having said all that, I will ensure that my comments are brief. I hope the comments I offer will principally serve the function of causing delegates who are here to perhaps have a re-think and reinvigorate some interest in this whole area, an area that is

quite often not thought about. After all, for most of us, when it comes to waste disposal we are just happy for when the garbage truck comes by, gets the garbage out and we do not have to see it any longer.

Having said that, let me just start off: "Environmental Protection" is one of those topics that cause most politicians to bristle. We understand what most people and groups who are passionate about the environment are saying, however when we juxtapose the entire issue of environmental protection against economic development in our island countries it becomes a real political minefield. For those who are skillful enough to navigate this terrain and survive, we always perish the thought of the next battle that we know will come.

Today my presentation is going to look at two intimately related topics, both of which impact the environment; but I am going to do so with a more positive spin than is sometimes the case. Whilst I will inevitably have to look at environmental degradation, it will certainly not be my focus. I have deliberately chosen this tact because we want to operate on the basis that all of us, certainly the vast majority who are still here at the conference, would be much more interested in how we can protect the environment whilst we dispose of society's refuse and potentially landfill the by-product in an environmentally sensible manner.

Oh yes, we of course want to win those all-important political points so we want to also look good while we beautify the facilities.

What thoughts conjure up for most of us when the word "environment" is mentioned? Coral reefs, mountains, rivers, mangroves, and rainforests . . . I could go on and on. The bottom line is that we all think of Mother Nature and things that are natural.

In our world, as we s-rive for a better life for our constituents, the war between development and the environment is ever present. Waste tends to be one of those things that is "out of sight, out of mind".

Let us now look at refuse: Refuse is defined as items or materials discarded or rejected as useless or worthless. In the main it is trash or rubbish. There are many ways to describe this type of waste, but the most commonly used is municipal solid waste ("MSW").

There are typically two types of MSW, household and commercial. And when I say household I am principally talking about traditional garbage and, secondly, yard waste. Commercial [waste] can range anywhere from office garbage, the byproduct of restaurants, construction site debris, industrial waste, et cetera.

Whilst most modern societies have become quite adept at producing increasing volumes of MSW, managing it in a sustainable manner has not kept pace.

In most jurisdictions, the government is responsible for the disposal of MSW. Typically governments charge a fee in exchange for its collection and

disposition. Governments use different methodologies to process their MSW.

Most citizens in modern communities see MSW as refuse and not a resource. I have purposely used the term modern communities. This is because in each country there will be varying demands placed on government depending on the location, size and sophistication of its various communities. For example, most capitals are more modern and densely populated than extremely rural or sparsely populated areas. Of course, both have distinctly different needs. I will focus principally on what we would term "modern communities."

Increasingly our constituents are demanding that we come up with sustainable solutions to manage MSW. In the modern waste management industry, the term 'incineration' is understood as the burning of waste without the recovery of energy or materials. As such, incineration is increasingly being banned in Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries.

The term "Waste-to-Energy" (or WTE) means the use of modern combustion technologies to recover energy, usually in the form of electricity or steam, from mixed MSW that would otherwise have been landfilled. All new WTE plants in OECD countries must meet strict emission standards by incorporating modern air pollution control systems. Hence, modern WTE plants are vastly different from incinerators.

WTE also reduces the volume of the original waste by up to 90 per cent, depending upon composition and use of outputs.

Modern WTE is considered to be a source of partly renewable energy by the USA Federal Government and 15 USA states that have established renewable energy programs. Also, some European countries that have established renewable energy programs consider energy production through WTE as renewable. To determine the per cent of WTE output that qualifies as renewable, there must be a measurement of the percentage of the feedstock coming from biological sources (for example, food, paper, fabric, wood, leather) and from fossil fuel sources (namely, plastics).

More modern WTE facilities result in usable fuel commodity, such as hydrogen or ethanol, upon the completion of process.

There are a number of new and emerging technologies that are able to produce energy from waste without burning the waste directly. These technologies are considered to generate renewable energy and are widely perceived to be more publicly acceptable.

Some of these thermal technologies include:

- Gasification
- Pyrolysis
- Plasma arc waste disposal

I will not attempt to get into the technical details of the varying technologies. If any government

is going to venture down this path it is advisable to do extensive research and hire a reputable consultant if necessary. Of course, every operator will swear by their technology and will be able to show you a plant that is in operation. This is one of those cases where governments need to be extremely diligent, because what you see may not be what you will get! Even though a technology may be in operation, the prevailing circumstances may not be the same as your own.

Locally we are researching the use of mass burn WTE facility. A landfill will serve as the final resting place of the by-product from the WTE plant and any other items not processed by the plant or not reusable (or otherwise disposable). That solution, though, is going to be principally dedicated to the main Island of Grand Cayman. Cayman Brac and Little Cayman will have different policies due to their unique circumstances.

The necessity to have different strategies for our three Islands is a crucial point as it is applicable to other island chains as well as larger countries that may have to employ a multifaceted approach to accommodate the varying circumstances of different communities.

We have determined that given our MSW levels and implementing a predominately reusable, that is, recycling strategy, would not perhaps be sustainable. Our past, present and projected future MSW levels support the input levels required for small WTE facility.

I mention past MSW levels because we have determined that we cannot move forward without inevitably looking back and dealing with our ugly past. That is to say, we intend to mine the present dump and it will become part of the WTE facility input. We see this approach as the most prudent method of rehabilitation of our present dump.

Our approach is designed to transform our refuse into a resource. The byproducts we believe to be manageable given our small landmass. The energy produced is considered a key national resource, albeit small in amount. It is intended to provide a relatively clean source of electricity while reducing our reliance on imported fossil fuels. It is envisaged that the emissions from the facility will also be more environmentally friendly than that of the present electricity producer.

We quickly acknowledge that recycling is the highest point on the "reuse" pyramid. It will not be ignored but be included in our overall strategy. Approaches to recycling range from purely voluntary systems all the way up to mandatory systems where legal penalties are in place for non-compliance.

All of us should at a minimum be encouraging recycling in our various jurisdictions. There are real economic implications to instituting recycling programs and there needs to be high levels of citizen involvement to accrue the desired benefits.

Some of these implications would be ensuring that the program is well understood by the citizens and this, of course, involves time and public relations. It would be necessary to develop a collection system that is efficient. This usually would involve different coloured garbage bags and/or collection bins. Government may very well have to step up to the plate and provide these to the public free of cost.

Collection of recyclables is different from regular MSW. This also would necessitate acquiring new collection equipment (that is, garbage trucks). Regular garbage trucks that most systems use are often rendered unusable for the collection of recyclables.

Here in the Cayman Islands we may not generate adequate MSW to generate an economically feasible recycling program. There are many methods employed to establish a recycling program. The design of the recycling program must fit each jurisdiction's overall waste management strategy.

Recycling will have other benefits to our overall strategy. Firstly, it will allow for an optimal burn as the input will be sorted at the source. Secondly, it will allow for the exclusion of certain items that we will not want to be processed through the main system.

We must not forget that we have to engage the private sector in the process, and this is critical. They often produce uniform waste in large quantities which make it possible to gain certain efficiencies. For example here locally our Chamber of Commerce is exploring a bottle crushing program. This would eliminate significant numbers of bottles at what is our present landfill and the future waste energy plant, and these, of course, would therefore not have to be processed through the main system. A useful byproduct of this will be able to be sold to local asphalt producers for use in road building. And they have already approached local road builders who have indicated they will be willing to use the byproduct. This would truly be a win/win situation for all involved.

I would like to turn quickly to the whole issue of landfill because after we have established whatever system it is that we will employ for the disposition of our refuse, there will inevitably be a byproduct.

Landfill is defined as a site at which refuse is buried under layers of earth; or the material so disposed of. As an aside here I would suggest that, certainly in the Cayman example the latter definition is what applies in the main, that is, we have basically a dump within a dump so over the years we have continually dumped items in the landfill. Then, as some of those have decomposed and we have mixed natural earth with it, that, then, is used to continually cover over the refuse itself. This has led locally to our Minister responsible for the subject to dub our present landfill as "Mount Trashmore." It is indeed one of the highest points on this very flat island.

Any of our garbage not recycled, or otherwise disposed of or used must be land filled. Landfills can

range from an open pit dump to a sophisticated and well engineered final resting place for items that we do not have the capacity to process any further. This is where we as legislators should come in.

We need to ensure that our landfills are regulated, or "sanitary". To do this we should ensure that appropriate standards are set for the design and operation of landfills. This is crucial as the landfill is one of the most important aspects of the entire waste management process. Consideration should be given to mandating liners, leachate treatment, and landfill gas (LFG) collection systems.

This approach would control liquid effluents in the landfill and capture methane generated from decomposing MSW.

Unfortunately, in today's world all too often the local landfill is little more than a dump. The implications of this are obvious. Such an occurrence is extremely costly in environmental and economic terms.

When I was looking at this as a topic, the whole aspect of beautification certainly did not, in my mind, sit well with the topic itself. However, in today's world we find that people want and desire to have major facilities fit into the surrounding environment, and people generally do not want dumps to look like dumps any more. So, when it comes to this whole issue and getting public buy-in, one of the key considerations should be to have your facilities fit into the surrounding area, but also use local plants and local flora for hedging and for basically making your solid waste facilities look good.

Certainly, one would not want to incur extravagant costs in this regard because ultimately this part of the exercise is really not adding necessarily greatly to the overall goal, which is the protection of the environment to ensure that our disposition and management of refuse and the ultimate land filling is done in an environmentally sensitive manner.

We in Cayman quickly acknowledge that when we look at our example and our experience, going this route might not seem from the outside to be one that would be the ideal solution. However, given the alternatives and the past experience, we simply see very little alternative.

Mr. Chairman, I will quickly acknowledge that I have not covered many of the technologies that are out there. There are composting technologies that incorporate sludge from sewer treatment plants and those types of technologies in other territories and countries may very well be the more ideal type of solution.

At the end of the day, whatever solution you come up with has to suit the consumption patterns of your country. Once you have done the research and looked at what is out there you then have to come up with a long-term sustainable program that will ensure that this whole issue of refuse disposal will not be the usual 'dump it in the ground, dump it in a pit, keep throwing earth over it and hope for the best'. Ulti-

mately we have to have a sustainable approach and we in small islands— whose landmass is certainly not increasing—need to ensure that we try to come up with a methodology that indeed is going to be sustainable.

I hope that my comments at a minimum will cause us to have a re-think of what it is that we are doing in each of our territories and try to make sure it is a process that is continually evolving and one that is continually monitored.

Thank you.

[Applause]

The Chairman: We do wish to thank Mr. Anglin for his very relevant contribution. It is a topic I think that is very important to us as island nations. He spoke about governments being responsible for disposal of their refuse; about how do we best move from waste to energy. He also spoke about recycling, which is very relevant in modern-day communities. He included the private sectors, and in addressing landfills, as to how we regulate them, and ideas for beautification.

We want to thank him for being a man of his word. He spoke the same way that I am— and that is very short!

Hon. Edna M. Moyle, MLA (Cayman Islands): You don't know the joke about that part!

[laughter and inaudible comments]

Hon. Edna M. Moyle, MLA (Cayman Islands): “*Madam Speaker, my contribution will be very short . . .*” and two and a half hours later he is still talking.

[Addressing Mr. Anglin] You did well today, though.

The Chairman: We want to open the floor at this point to comments and questions.

We don't have any questions or comments. I guess he fully covered all of the . . . Bermuda.

Hon. Walter Lister, JP, MP (Bermuda): Thank you. My name is Walter Lister and I am from Bermuda.

I think the honourable speaker opened his remarks by saying that the residents were so happy to see the trash truck come and see the trash truck go. But often times we think that is the end of the process; but usually that is the beginning of a far longer process of disposing of trash, garbage and that sort of thing.

Having lived a long time, I think, I can remember the days in Bermuda when garbage was burned in the backyard. Then came the time of taking the trash to the trash fill.

However, more than 15 years ago the government decided that it would incinerate trash in Bermuda. Therefore, the whole process of disposal of trash took on a new approach. So we now incinerate

trash, and what we have done at the end of the day with all of the ash that comes out, which is the final product, we mix with cement into cement blocks and are creating additional land.

We are a landfill and we will use the cement and the cement blocks to put in an area not far from the airport actually, and you would not really know it was a landfill the way they are handling the process. It looks very neat and of course Bermuda being a small island every bit of land is very very important.

The byproduct of that is that with the incinerator we create additional electricity which we sell to the Bermuda Electric Light Company, so therefore we do get some economic return in the process.

But before that, I think we need to deal with ourselves and the way we use trash, the way we buy products off the shelf packaged up so attractively. I think these marketers have something of a responsibility too because every month you see a new product on the market packaged up with all attractive packaging and all of this has to be disposed of once you buy the product itself.

I was speaking to Wendy early this morning and we were reminding each other that in days gone by we went to the store and we would take a cloth bag with us, put our products in the bag and take it back home. Today we go empty handed and they give us an additional bag which you have to take home and dispose of. I think this speaks to the quality of life which we live and the affluence of our society. If we could only look back and try to struggle to get back to those days where we bought only what we needed.

Sometimes you go to the refrigerator and it is so darned full that you cannot find what you want! And that is really sad when you look around the world and you find so many people who do not have anything at all. It is really a sad day.

We have to get back to the days where we buy exactly what we need, and we use what we need because we are the contributors to global warming. No one else does it. We are the contributors and we have to continue to analyse ourselves. And we try to analyse everyone else, put it over on somebody else, the larger countries, well as smaller countries we have responsibility too and we have to do what we can to sort of alleviate it. And yet, we must continue to put pressure on those larger countries who, I feel, sometimes abuse the system terribly. And at the end of the day, each and every one of us is going to have to pay for it.

But I think that the incineration, the way we have gone, it serves Bermuda well. I do not know if it serves other countries well. I do not know; I do not speak for other countries, but I can only speak to Bermuda and the way that we have used it, and it seems to serve us in a very good way.

One other point: Recycling is another point that is very important. We have a recycling collection once a week and we use the different coloured bags. People have to buy the bags. I think the honourable

speaker was saying earlier that government should be giving out these bags. I think people have to take responsibility for themselves. Government can only do so much for people.

[Inaudible interjection]

Hon. Walter Lister, JP, MP (Bermuda): Yes, fine. I will come back again if there is time. Thank you.

The Chairman: Thank you very much, Bermuda.

Mr. Anglin, I do not know if you want to respond.

Mr. Rolston M. Anglin, MP (Cayman Islands): Mr. Chairman, I was just taking a few notes. I do not know if others have indicated they want to contribute and I could sort of do a quick reply at the end. If there is no one on the dock, as it were, I would reply at this point. Perhaps that will give others a little more time to formulate their thoughts.

The Chairman: Does anyone else have any questions or—

The member from Montserrat.

Hon. Reuben T. Meade, MLC (Montserrat): Just a very minor comment as usual.

When we started the conference we started with water being served in glass mugs. This is a major contributor to the problem.

[Laughter]

Hon. Walter Lister, JP, MP (Bermuda): Well, I would just like to elaborate on that point because it is funny the honourable member raised that point. During breakfast Wendy and I spoke about a number of topics, and one was water being sold when in actual fact God gives it to us free every day.

In Bermuda we have a water collection system whereby all the roofs are painted white with lime, which is a purifier. And the water falls on the roofs and is stored in the tanks below and pumped back up to the houses, the kitchens and wherever it is needed as required. That has served Bermuda for centuries and people have done well.

Now this thing comes along and everybody wants to buy water. I refuse to buy it because if you take the water from the tank and you have control over it all the time and you have boiled it for an hour or so, why would you turn around and spend \$1 on this quantity of water to drink when, in actual fact, you have the same power within yourself to create a quality of water which is safe?

Now, I do not know what happens in other countries because there may be areas where you do not have control over the water, you do not know where the water comes from and therefore, for safety

reasons, you may decide to buy water. But if something has served you for centuries and the people have done very well, because a modern something comes along you decide it is popular to buy water. That is the point I was making earlier about our fluency of life and our lifestyles, you know.

I just want to say something else that has happened in Bermuda. The banks or hotels are now going forward in the recycling of products as much as they can in those specific areas. The shredding of papers and all of these sorts of things contribute to recycling products. At the end of the day, small communities have to really recycle if they are going to survive or they will be smothered by the modern affluency that we live and practice every day.

Thank you very much.

The Chairman: I believe I did see the member for Jamaica.

Mr. Rolston M. Anglin, MLA (Cayman Islands): Mr. Chairman, perhaps while members collect their thoughts or, more appropriately, as we draw closer to wrapping up our affairs, I would just like to add a few comments. And I am very thankful for the two contributors to the debate.

When we think back, and even I am old enough to remember in Cayman when people made use of everything. If you purchased stuff from the store, usually whatever it came in wound up being used for something.

When I was growing up no one went to the gardening shops and bought flower pots. They used their old large coffee tins that served as your flower pot for your gardening. Smaller tins, I can remember vividly drinking out of instead of a fancy glass or cup purchased from the store at considerable expense verses the container you had.

The speaker for Bermuda has hit the nail on the head. As we have "advanced" (and I put quotes on that) as societies and have become more sophisticated as societies, so too have our ways of life changed from being what we professed it to be. We all say that the environment is important. None of us, I would dare say, would get up in any chamber of our parliaments or on any campaign trail and tell the people that the environment is not important, that we should not care about our consumption patterns and we should just do anything and just let Mother Nature be degraded. None of us would say that.

But the point made was, when we look at our lifestyles we certainly do not encourage and we certainly do not go about life in a way that is more sustainable because in a lot of instances, quite frankly, it is not as convenient, and in a lot of instances we simply follow whatever the local trend is.

The one point that I would like to add to was the whole issue of recycling. I thought long and hard about suggesting government be involved with the programme, to the extent that you provide some of

either the garbage bags or the bins. What I have found (and certainly what some of my experiences have been) is that in most countries recycling programmes have been so difficult to get going and to have any tangible impact. Take the United States of America, for example, nationally there is still less than 30 per cent involved in recycling programmes.

So, in my mind, I think given your circumstances you have to play this by ear. If you need to spend some money upfront to get the programme going, I say it is well worth it. Certainly long term you would want it to be a matter of pride and a matter of lifestyle change for people because, let us face it, once you start asking people to start being the sorters, as it were, of garbage at the home or business, you are asking them to change their lifestyles and the way they do things. People are very, very used to just putting it in the bag and by the curbside, or however it is done in various countries, and you just close your eyes and just hope for the best.

We do need to try and work with the private sector and ensure that the private sector—and if you need to, give incentives to the private sector—themselves start to just naturally recycle. We too in Cayman have a large, thriving financial services arena, and that is an area that we know we will be able to get good cooperation, especially in the areas of paper, printer cartridges, et cetera. Right now those items are all just thrown in the pot and wind up at the landfill. But we believe that long term we will be able to deal with those sorts of matters.

Another thing, and in a lot of more modern communities it is very popular to send something to the dry cleaners. Perhaps we need to talk to our dry cleaners and get them to put some incentive programme to get the hangers back because every time you go, at least certainly in Cayman, they take all your products off your hangers and then they put them on these wire hangers and where do they wind up? Inevitably, a lot of people simply bend them, put them in the garbage bag again, throw it by the curbside and hope for the best.

I think the challenge, as I said in my opening, I know I am the last speaker and this is the time that is most difficult, I find, in these conferences. What I hope for, though, is that all of us would think carefully about this whole issue and when we go back to our respective territories and countries, come up with something that we can do, whether it is moving a motion, moving a bill to try and somehow come up with methodologies that are more sustainable. I do not think we will ever get to that place where we get this perfect, but I think most of us would quickly acknowledge that in our respective territories and countries there is more that we can do and that more will have a very relevant impact to our future generations.

[Applause]

The Chairman: Thank you very much. I also want to thank all—

Mr. David Clelland, MP (United Kingdom): Yes, the UK.

I just wondered since this is our last session and I have had to sit here quietly all week, if I might say a word just before we break.

First of all, I would like to thank the Cayman Islands CPA Branch and Government for their hospitality this week. I would like to thank all of you for the friendliness you have shown to me and my wife. We have very much enjoyed meeting new people and making new friends.

My role here has been as an observer and therefore it has been my job just to sit and listen, which as you know, as members of parliament it is extremely difficult when you are very interested in the subjects being discussed. And the subjects you discussed this week are, in fact, very relevant back at home. The whole question of disaster preparedness and recovery is something which is very much on the minds of people back in the UK even as we speak, as again, unusual weather has been affecting our country. That in itself is not unlinked to the whole question of climate change which is not unlinked to the whole question of refuse disposed and how we treat refuse.

Another subject you discussed this week, which some of you might find surprising is being discussed very much back at home, and that is the question of the role of the second chamber. The House of Lords is being reformed and we are looking at the future. Some of our members do think we do not need a second chamber at all; some think it should be fully elected; some think it should be left the way it is. I have my own very strong opinions on that but I cannot go into them here.

With all of that going on, I have also tried not to be too distracted by events back at home because, as you know, I am going back to a new government and who knows what changes next week.

But thank you again for your hospitality and your friendliness. I have very much enjoyed this week.

Thank you.

[Applause]

The Chairman: Thank you very much. . .

Hon. Edna M. Moyle, JP, MLA (Cayman Islands): If there are any executive committee members of the region, would you please come to the head table before we start our Annual General Meeting which is the last item.

But before the observer from the United Kingdom disappears, I would just like to thank both you and your wife for having been here with us. We are glad that we were able to provide a hospitality that both of you will be able to take back home.

