
THE

House of Assembly Debates

(OFFICIAL REPORT)

SECOND SESSION 1976 – 81

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, 8th November, 1977

Pursuant to the adjournment, the House of Assembly met at 12.15 p.m. o'clock.

PRESENT

His Honour W. C. B. HINDS, J.P., (Speaker); Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW, B.Sc., LL.D.; Mr. R. St.C. WEEKES, J.P.; Hon. C. L. BOLDEN, LL.B., (Minister of Agriculture, Food and Consumer Affairs); Hon. F. G. SMITH, Q.C., S.C., B.A., (Leader of the Opposition); Dr. R. B. CADDLE; Mr. E. E. GREAVES, B.A., Ed.M.; Hon. B. A. MILLER, (Minister of Health and National Insurance); Mr. J. G. ODLE, (Chairman of Committees); Mr. M. C. C. WARD; Hon. H. B. St. JOHN, (Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Caribbean Affairs, External Trade, Industry and Tourism and Leader of the House); Mr. V. L. JOHNSON, B.A., M.A.; Hon. L. R. TULL, M.A., (Minister of Education and Community Development); Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW.

Prayers were read by Rev. Father Cayless.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE, Mr. SANDIFORD and Mr. SIMMONS entered the House and took their seats.

MINUTES

Mr. SPEAKER: There are the Minutes of the meetings of 11th October, 1977, the Minutes for 18th October, 1977 and the Minutes of the 1st November, 1977. I am advised that the Minutes for the 1st November, 1977 were circulated somewhat late; and if that is the case I believe that it would be fair that hon. members be given more time to consider these Minutes before we seek confirmation thereof.

Mr. TAITT entered the House and took his seat.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, I agree with Your Honour's statement. Subject to any objections, I beg to move that the Minutes of the 11th and 18th October be confirmed.

PAPERS LAID

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Minister of Labour and Community Services I beg to lay Reports of the Audit of the Accounts of the Child Care Board for the period 1st April 1971 to 31st March 1974.

GOVERNMENT NOTICES

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Minister of Finance and Planning I beg to give notice of a Resolution to amend the Note to Item I – Financial Institutions, under Head 109 – Ministry of Finance and Planning, of the 1977–78 Capital Estimates.

Secondly, a Resolution to grant the sum of \$63,857 from the Consolidated Fund and place it at the disposal of the Government to supplement the Estimates, 1977–78 Part I – Current, as shown in the Supplementary Estimates 1977–78, No. 19, which form the schedule to the Resolution.

On behalf of the Minister of Labour and Community Services I beg to give notice of a Resolution to grant the sum of \$109,000 from the Consolidated Fund and place it at the disposal of the Government to supplement the Estimates, 1977–78, Part II – Capital, as shown in the Supplementary Estimates 1977–78, No. 18, which form the schedule to the Resolution.

On behalf of the Rt. Hon. Prime Minister I beg to give notice of a Bill to repeal the Overseas Service Agreement Act and provide for the implementation by the Government of the Overseas Service (Barbados) Agreement 1977 and for related matters.

On my behalf I beg to give notice of a Bill to amend the International Business Companies (Exemption from Income Tax) Act.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' NOTICES

Mr. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, I beg to give notice of the following Resolution:—

RESOLVED that this House congratulates Her Majesty's Government on the far-sighted proposals contained in the speech from the Throne delivered this 1st day of November, 1977 by Her Majesty the Queen. In particular this House takes note of the Government's plans for the educational, housing, industrial and physical development of the nation.

Mr. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, I beg to give notice of the following Address:—

FROM
THE HONOURABLE THE HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY
TO
HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN

RESOLVED BY THIS HONOURABLE HOUSE that an humble address be presented to thank Your Majesty for the most gracious speech which it has pleased Your Majesty to deliver in Parliament on this day, Tuesday the first day of November, one thousand nine hundred and seventy-seven.

Hon. F. G. SMITH: Mr. Speaker, I beg to give notice of the following Resolution which is contained in the Minutes of the last meeting.

Mr. SPEAKER: Just a Minute.
12.25 p.m.

Mr. SPEAKER: In respect of the attempt by the Leader of the Opposition to bring a Resolution to this Honourable House in defiance, and I want to repeat the words "in defiance" of the instructions which the said Leader of the Opposition received through the Clerk of this Honourable House.....

Hon. F. G. SMITH: On a point of correction, I would like to correct that. I cannot defy you.

Mr. SPEAKER: Would the Leader of the Opposition please take his seat?

Hon. F. G. SMITH: You see, if you would direct your instructions to me rather than sending them through the Clerk, we would have better procedure in here.

Mr. SPEAKER: I hereby rule that the Leader of the Opposition is not in order.

BILLS READ A FIRST TIME

On motion of Hon. H. B. St. JOHN seconded by Hon. H. deB. FORDE, a Bill to repeal the Overseas Service Agreement Act and provide for the implementation by the Government of the Overseas Service (Barbados) Agreement 1977, and for related matters, was read a first time.

On motion of Hon. H. B. St. JOHN seconded by Hon. H. deB. FORDE, a Bill to amend the International Business Companies (Exemption from Income Tax) Act, was read a first time.

STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, I would like to make the following Statement with regard to Petroleum Quota Payments.

STATEMENT BY THE HON. H. B. ST. JOHN — MINISTER OF CARIBBEAN AFFAIRS, EXTERNAL TRADE AND INDUSTRY IN REGARD TO PETROLEUM QUOTA PAYMENTS MADE TO LANDOWNERS WITHIN THE WOODBOURNE AREA, ST. PHILIP

Petroleum quota payments have been made to landowners within the Woodbourne area for the period September 1966 to April 1976, as follows:—

Well	No. Landowners in Pooling area	Amount paid to Landowners	
		Oil	Gas
		\$ ¢	\$ ¢
Woodbourne No. 1	39	715.88	—
" No. 2	11	2,383.48	—
" No. 3A	4	6,881.47	—
" No. 4	1	19,953.60	70.66
" No. 5	2	15,381.05	—
" No. 6	2	105.48	—
" No. 7	3	6,306.44	—
" No. 8	2	15,413.32	544.05
" No. 10	1	14,384.84	2,374.70
" No. 11	1	427.51	—
" No. 13	2	—	3,070.85
" No. 14	3	6,201.15	250.57
" No. 15	2	5,662.73	43.40
" No. 16	5	1,034.34	41.82
TOTAL	78	94,851.29	6,396.25
GRAND TOTAL		\$101,247.54	

2. These payments have been made in accordance with section 8 of the Petroleum Winning Operations Act, Cap. 281 as amended by the Petroleum (Winning Operations) (Amendment) Act 1973-53 section 8(2) of the Act states:

"A petroleum quota payment shall be of such an amount as shall bear the same proportion to twenty-five percent of the royalties payable in respect of petroleum recovered from a productive well during the relevant period as the area of land owned by the person entitled to receive such payment, or who would have been so entitled if the ownership of the petroleum had not been severed from the ownership of the land, bears to the total area of land in the pooling area."

3. Forty-eight (48) persons within the pooling and drainage areas have not yet been paid quota payments as they have not produced the necessary evidence to prove that they are entitled to receive such payments. The amount due to these persons is \$24,948.09.

- A. Quota payments due to landowners for the Woodbourne area for the period May 1976 to September 1977 are being calculated and additional payments will be made as soon as possible.
- B. Surveys to determine the acreage of land owned by landowners in other areas such as Fisherpond, Gregg Farm, Lowthers, Prior Park, Society and Mount wherein there are productive wells are being undertaken.

4. The amount of royalties paid to Government by General Crude Oil Company for oil and gas from this area for the period September 1966 to April 1976 is \$504,782.55.
November 8, 1977.

RESOLUTION OF SYMPATHY RE DEATH OF MRS. JULIEN ODLE

Hon. F. G. SMITH: Mr. Speaker, I crave leave of you and of this Honourable House to pay tribute to the mother of the Chairman of Committees, the hon. member for St. George North who recently passed away.

It has been my privilege having been born in St. George to have known this lady for the greater part of my life. As a matter of fact it was also my privilege to have gone to school with some of her children, so that for a considerable length of time I have had an

opportunity to assess this lady who in many ways was a mother to me, and I think I can proudly say that I do not think throughout my life I have forfeited that respect or confidence.

Those of us who have had the privilege of meeting Mrs. Julien Odle would know that she was a lady of charm, a lady of humility, a devoted mother and wife, and throughout her christian life she took an active part in the christian affairs of the Church where she worshipped. She showed in no uncertain terms that she believed in God and she believed in human beings and in the brotherhood of man.

12.35 p.m.

She was married for 59 years, and that in itself shows stability of character and sense of domestic responsibility which I think today could well be emulated by most of us. Having raised a number of children who today are contributing in no small way to the development of this country, she must have passed away especially proud that her son is representing a constituency of the parish where she lived for most of her life.

The family must be indeed saddened at the loss of their devoted mother, and her husband must miss the companionship to which he had grown so accustomed. I myself can imagine the great God saying: "Well done, thou good and faithful servant, enter into the joy of thy Lord." She has served her community well and contributed to the community not only in a personal capacity, but by leaving behind a generation which will have the opportunity to emulate the virtuous and excellent qualities of their mother.

On behalf of the Opposition and of the House, and on my own behalf, I would like to extend to her sorrowing relatives the sincere condolences of this Hon. Chamber. We hope that she will rest in peace and that light perpetual may shine on her.

I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: I would like to associate myself with the remarks of the Hon. Leader of the Opposition. I, too, like the Leader of the Opposition have had the opportunity of knowing the mother of the hon. member for St. George North, and I fully endorse the remarks made by the hon. member as to her character. We on this side would like to join in supporting this Resolution.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: Mr. Speaker, in rising to speak I do not try to improve on the sentiments expressed by the two previous speakers. Unfortunately, I was not in the Island at the time of the passing of Mrs. Julien Odle, and since I found myself from an early age

under her influence, travelling up the hill past the Rectory in a buggy, because I was the smallest of the group and the others had to get out and walk or push the buggy — though the time came when I had to get out and push too, while the hon. member for St. George North enjoyed the dignity of holding the reins of what I would call an educated mule.

I regret that this event took place during my absence from the Island, and lest my absence from the final rites be misconstrued, I wish to endorse the sentiments that have been expressed, and I second the Resolution which has been handed in to the Clerk of the House by the Leader of the Resolution.

Mr. SPEAKER: I, too, would like to be associated with the fine sentiments and remarks expressed by both sides of the House for the deceased Mrs. Odle. She was known to be a lady in every sense of the word. Her contribution to society is demonstrated in the upbringing of her children and the good she has done to many in the districts immediately surrounding her and further afield.

With those few remarks I can only ask hon. members to rise in their places for one minute as a mark of respect to the memory of the deceased.

House stood for one minute.

Mr. ODLE: Mr. Speaker, I believe I am in order to say thanks to the hon. members for the kind remarks of sympathy to me on the recent passing of my mother. I myself feel very sad about it. I was with her to the end, and I must confess that she above all other people has had a profound influence on me, and I think it is only fair to say that when people express kind opinions of me I must say these are things for which I must thank my mother. I again wish to express my thanks to the hon. members for the fine sentiments expressed.

PERSONAL EXPLANATIONS

Hon. F. G. SMITH: Mr. Speaker, I would like to make a personal explanation on the question of this Resolution for the record.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Hon. Leader of the House is well aware that he owes it at least to the Chair to apprise the Chair if time so permits.

Hon. F. G. SMITH: Well, Sir, time does not so permit, as I came up the stairs and got a message on your instructions as I was going to the Senate Chamber. So I would certainly have explained to you why you could refer to my defiance of you. I would say if it had happened long before I would certainly have informed you. But I would just like you to understand that it was

not a question of defiance but a matter of how I received this message as to what you have alleged I defied you on.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Hon. Leader of the Opposition wants to offer a note of personal explanation. I wonder how controversial is the matter of which he wants to make mention?

Hon. F. G. SMITH: It is not going to be controversial. All I was saying is that I came into the Chamber, came up stairs and saw the Clerk at the head of the stairs. I was on my way to the Senate Chamber and he called me and said, "I want to have a word with you." And he continued "the Speaker says you can move your Resolution as an amendment to the one that the hon. member for St. Philip North moved because it was handed in before yours." And I continued my way to the Senate Chamber. I received nothing in writing even though my Resolution was handed in last Tuesday. It seems to me this was a very off-hand way to treat the Leader of the Opposition on a Resolution on which Your Honour would have to give a ruling. I would therefore just simply ask that in future if Your Honour has a ruling, to let it be communicated in writing rather than by this haphazard word of mouth method which obtained today. That is all I am saying.

12.45 p.m.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Speaker, I understand that the hon. member for St. Michael North East has asked, not in written form, for leave of absence for three weeks, and I now formally ask that he be given the leave.

Mr. SPEAKER: If there is no objection, leave will be given. There being no objection, leave is accordingly granted.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

Hon. C. L. BOLDEN: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that Order No. 3 be the first Order of the Day.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: I beg to second that.

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

Mr. SPEAKER: Order No. 3 is the instant Order of the Day.

RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE SUGAR INDUSTRY (REHABILITATION, PRICE STABILIZATION AND LABOUR WELFARE) ORDER, 1977

Hon. C. L. BOLDEN: Mr. Speaker, by an Agreement made in 1956, the levies on sugar and fancy

molasses manufactured in the island authorised under the Act were allocated between the Rehabilitation Reserve Fund, the Price Stabilization Reserve Fund, and the Labour Welfare Fund.

The basic levy on all sugars and fancy molasses manufactured in the island was fixed at \$13.20 per ton of sugar and 290 wine gallons of fancy molasses up to 1973.

The basic levy on all sugar and fancy molasses manufactured in 1977 has been fixed at \$40.00 per ton of sugar and per 290 wine gallons of fancy molasses.

The amount of levy allocated for payment to the Crown will be for the benefit of the Labour Welfare Fund and Provident Fund in the following proportions —

Labour Welfare Fund	\$12.00 per ton
Provident Fund	\$13.40 per ton.

The total production of sugar and fancy molasses for the 1977 Crop is 117,910,675 tons and the levies to be collected are in respect of this tonnage.

The Order was made, Mr. Speaker, by me on the 20th October, 1977 under the Sugar Industry (Rehabilitation, Price Stabilization and Labour Welfare) Act, Cap. 270. The Resolution now seeks the approval of the House in respect of this Order.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: I beg to second that and reserve my right to speak at a later stage.

Hon. F. G. SMITH: Mr. Speaker, I shall not be very long because this is an annual Resolution, but it deals with sugar and we in Barbados, who have lived in the country, will know how sugar is produced in this country. I should imagine that the sugar can reaped this year must have been planted nearly a year or fifteen months ago. When one hears someone boasting about having the largest sugar crop for more than several years ago, one would imagine that the sugar cane reaped this year was planted in September. It would be obvious to anybody, who wished to boast about sugar cane which was reaped this year, that it was planted during the Democratic Labour Party's time, either in terms of acreage or in terms of rainfall.

All that happened in 1977 is that the crop which was planted during the Democratic Labour Party's time in terms of tonnage or acreage, was reaped by you. It is no sense getting in the Market Square and boasting that you had the largest sugar crop over the years. You had nothing to do with it except that you tried to stop people from burning the canes, as we have been doing for years. If, in spite of the burning of canes, you could still get the largest sugar crop over the years, then it is no tribute to the Barbados

Labour Party. It is that the Democratic Labour Party has, constantly, been pressuring and putting forward agricultural production, and either planted more canes, or had such a good crop of canes that you can get and boast in the Market Square about the economy and that you have reaped more sugar this year than was ever reaped. You are behaving as though the canes you have reaped were planted after the 2nd September in Barbados!

I would expect the Deputy Prime Minister, who is from a sugar-planting family, to understand how sugar is grown, but when he was boasting in the Market Square one would have imagined that the canes were planted in September and reaped in February under the Barbados Labour Party Government. Give Jack his jacket. I am glad that you have reaped more sugar than has been reaped for years, but you had nothing to do with it. It was planted under the Democratic Labour Party. I hope that you will be able to reap more next year, and then you will be able to boast that canes planted under you produced more.

Mr. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, there are a number of points that I would like to make on this Resolution. I should first like to state that this Order, which deals with the Sugar Industry (Rehabilitation, Price Stabilization and Labour Welfare) Act, Cap. 270, has the effect of throwing into focus and into discussion the whole question of the sugar industry and the role which the sugar industry plays in the economy of Barbados at the present time and most certainly in the future.

There is no doubt that sugar has played an important role in the economic life of this country ever since it was produced in Barbados somewhere in the 1630s, or somewhere towards the year 1640. There is a saying that the role sugar plays in the economy of the country is so great that if the sugar industry, at any time, catches a cold the Barbados economy sneezes, or, the other way around, if the sugar industry sneezes the Barbados economy catches a cold. The same thing can be applied to every territory in the Caribbean where the sugar industry is an important industry. For example, let us take Guyana, Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago. I will come back to this matter at a later stage but, as I said, there are a number of issues which will arise in this particular debate.

The Resolution deals with the sugar levy, and you will recall, Mr. Speaker, that, in 1975 when the levy was raised from \$13.20 per ton to \$40.00 per ton, there was a lot of discussion on the matter. Now, looking at the debate on that particular Resolution, there are a number of revelations to which, in this particular situation, one must refer.

12.55 p.m.

You will recall, I am sure, Mr. Speaker, the tremendous amount of opposition which was raised particularly by the members of the then Opposition who now form the present administration, the present Government, to the effect that — if I could summarise the discussion — that the levy was unfair, and a whole set of other issues were raised. One therefore would have thought that the first opportunity which the present administration would have had to deal with this particular matter, that one would probably have seen them doing the kind of thing which they were advocating in 1975, but to expect them to do that would be, I think, expecting the impossible, because if you were to just read the debate, particularly the speech of the then Leader of the Opposition, you would recall the Leader of the Opposition at the time, the hon. member for St. Thomas, making reference to the talk about the twists and turns of human nature.

If I may quote from page 5485 of the Official Gazette dated 14th October, 1975, he said:

"There are few occasions in social or parliamentary life, or indeed, life of any sort that illustrate the twists and turns of human nature more than those occasions when you hear a reformed drunkard extolling the virtues of teetotalism, or a proselyte at the gate extolling the sanctity of the new God."

I am sure, without any particular argument or any kind of other presentation, that that argument can of course be applied to the present administration. But what is of even more importance is the kind of attitude which was displayed at that particular time on the whole question, as I said, of the levy, and one would, listening to this and taking the situation as it now exists, one would have looked for a different approach, but that is not to be.

I want to say, Mr. Speaker, that if you look around the Caribbean, and particularly taking into consideration the kind of industrial relations which seem to be obtaining in the sugar belt in the various countries — take, for example, what is happening in Guyana and in Trinidad and Tobago — one would see some very interesting factors emerging. That is, that there is a very serious instability in the sugar industry as a result of the very low wages which the workers in those particular countries seem to be obtaining. The situation in Barbados is somewhat different, because we in Barbados have not, thank God, experienced the kind of instability in the industrial relations sector and in the sugar industry that has been experienced in other territories, and this in my view, Mr. Speaker, was as a direct result of a realisation and an effort, and indeed a contribution on the part of those of us who have had the responsibility for getting good wages, and who are

constantly trying to upgrade the wage levels and working conditions in the sugar industry. We have been able to ensure that there is some measure of stability in the particular industry which is of tremendous importance to us.

And what is even more in this particular area is the fact that it would seem as if the industry is attracting more workers. If you take the 1977 crop, and indeed the trend which started in 1976, one would see very clearly what was happening, that is that more Barbadian workers were being attracted and going into the industry, and the fact of the matter very simply is that it is as a result of the higher wages levels and rewards which were being obtained in the sugar industry that led to this particular situation. I am sure that one would recognise the value and the virtue in this particular arrangement, particularly when one sees and hears attempts to capitalise and to mechanise the industry to such an extent that there are a whole set of economic and financial factors which could spell some kind of doom for the industry, and indeed from the kind of economic situation which has developed in Barbados as a result of this — that is, that all of the cane cutting machines and loaders which come into Barbados have to be paid for by capital, and if we are talking in terms of the balance of payments situation, you will see that this in a way affects that particular situation.

I am not at all saying that we should not capitalise or mechanise the sugar industry, but it has got to be taken in very considerate and well thought out plans, because in the final analysis a lot has to depend on the people — and we in Barbados still have to depend fairly heavily on the sugar industry, and I think that this is being brought out more and more — so that we have therefore to try to ensure that the conditions which obtain in the sugar industry, both from the point of view of the rewards which are gained and also from the point of view of the way in which the industry is capitalised, we have to look at that very very clearly.

Now, the Minister of Agriculture must have some idea of the Government's plan for the sugar industry, and I would certainly like to hear him on this particular point, because in introducing the Resolution he merely referred to the notes which we can all read and understand, and one would have hoped that he would have been in a position to give us some insight into the future planning of the industry, because as I see it there is going to be — at least, the way how the trend is going — there is a tendency for an even greater concentration of sugar factories, and I think that this seems to me to be a fact of life, that is, that there is going to be a reduction in the number of sugar factories

in Barbados and this is something which we have to look at very carefully and plan.

Then, of course, one also sees that there is a general concentration of plantations. Again, I think that the Government must have some particular policy on this particular issue, because it is of tremendous importance. Bearing in mind all the time, Mr. Speaker, that the industry provides occupation for a large number of people, and it has always provided occupation for a large number of people in Barbados, the future and the well being of workers in the sugar industry must be guaranteed. As a matter of fact, I think that one of the very important things which have happened to the sugar workers over the years was the Bill which was introduced in this Assembly, I think, some time in 1964 or 1965 which provided a minimum guaranteed period of employment, that is, to ensure that the plantation owners and the people in the Sugar industry employed the people on the plantations and gave them a guaranteed period of work for a week. This is very important, because I think it demonstrated some concern for the well-being and the welfare of these people.

1.05 p.m.

We have therefore to look even deeper now at this question of the involvement of workers in the whole area of sugar production and the sugar industry. I would like to say, Mr. Speaker, that this whole question of participation is of extreme importance. It is true that sugar workers have been participating in the industry for a long time; but we have to move the participation to a higher level.

Certainly, the move by the Government to set up a Committee to look into the question of workers participation is one which we commend; but we hope that the participation which will be eventually recommended will be meaningful and not a token participation. We would expect that greater participation will be given in this kind of exercise for workers to participate in a meaningful way in the industry and also to reap some of the benefits that accrue to that particular industry.

The sugar industry is still in the hands of private people, and sometimes when problems arise in the industry one gets the impression that the sugar industry is owned by the State from the point of view of what one expects the State to do by bringing some kind of order and rescuing the industry from its problems. I believe that we are making a major contribution on behalf of these workers who should be more ostensibly involved. If this is to be so, the avenue must be created for this sight of involvement. We therefore hope that the Minister will be able to give us some indication of

the future of the industry and the role that he sees the Government playing in this and the way in which he would like to see the industry develop from the point of view of ensurance that the returns or profits from the industry are shared in as equitable a manner as possible. I would therefore welcome the Minister's statement on this question of the levy and on the decision which was taken up in 1975 and the decision which is being taken up now. It seems that we have a lot of reformed drunkards — speaking metaphorically of course — in Parliament.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Speaker, I do not think that there will be anyone in this House or indeed in the country who will doubt the serious commitment of the Government to Agriculture and indeed to maintaining the sugar industry as the main plank of the economy of this country. This is probably not the time to remind hon. members, and particularly you, Mr. Speaker, of the "no cane blade" speech.

That speech was not made by anyone on this side of the House; and those who speak *sotto voce* may well recall how they waxed and waned in those days in establishing an economic philosophy for the country. I am glad that the Democratic Labour Party now recognises in Opposition the necessity of keeping sugar as the main plank in the economy of this country. There was a time when they did not seem to believe that.

When the hon. member for St. Michael South Central can boast about canes planted prior to 1976 producing a higher level of production, he should equally be ashamed that it was during the Democratic Labour Party regime that sugar took a downward trend in relation to the amount of tonnage produced in this country. There are several reasons why it should have been higher, and one is if the Democratic Labour Party had shown consistency in this regard. The amount of land wantonly, recklessly and carelessly taken out of agriculture and allowing friends of the Democratic Labour Party to make millions of dollars in speculating goes down as one example of economic imbalance in their thinking. If they had read the Physical Development Plan for this island they would have seen that in this land use policy they breached their own development plan which they were putting forward.

Indeed the hon. member for St. Michael South Central will well remember that he has commented on the inconsistency in releasing areas such as the Belle — a good production area — and out of agriculture and out of cane production in order for it to be cut up for a few speculators, friends of the Democratic Labour Party. The same thing happened with Blowers. The same thing happened with Edgecliff. The same thing happened

at Cane Garden, and we could go on *ad nauseam* about the reckless land use policy followed by the Democratic Labour Party; and if that policy had not been followed, perhaps the crop in Barbados would have been higher and we would have had a better balance of payments position.

I think that some hon. members did not recognise some of the points that were being made. Last year we had a battle in trying to persuade the people of this country to stop burning canes. The hon. member for St. Michael South Central will well recall these events because I think that it was in the context of the burning of a field of cane near to St. Philip Church that he had to take a turn in being glad for the Anglican Church and how it had suffered as a result of a cane fire.

Hon. F. G. SMITH: Mr. Speaker,....

Mr. SPEAKER: On what is the hon. member rising?

Hon. F. G. SMITH: On a point of order. The Hon. member is certainly misrepresenting me. He knows better than that. He is an intelligent person. At no time did I say that I was glad. I said that I was not aware whether it was a punishment from God why the Church caught afire. That is what I said.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: To make a negative statement of not being aware is obviously casting aspersions and creating doubts in the minds of people in a derogatory sense. That is the type of politics that you and your party have been so accustomed to.

Mr. SPEAKER: Will the Hon. Attorney General please address the Chair?

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: am addressing the Chair. I was not referring to you. I was referring to the hon. member and his party. I will get back to the Resolution. There have been positive steps taken by us to come to a decision to give alternative suggestions to deal with agriculture. We have sat in this House between 1971 and 1976 and heard the present Minister of Agriculture give a lecture to the Democratic Labour Party on Agricultural policy, and what should be implemented in relation to that policy. I have seen them time after time make mistakes in their agricultural policy, and hence we have now to wipe out the mistakes of all of these past years and virtually start from scratch and try to build up what they sought to destroy.

1.15 p.m.

Sir, I am saying that it is only fools who have nothing to say that would not get up and be counted.

That is the point I want to make. But if I may come back to cane burning, I am saying that if Barbados had not had the amount of destruction of cane as occurred last year that not only would the crop have been larger and the production higher, but the earnings would have been more significant. And perhaps this is a timely occasion to remind Barbadians once again of the necessity to recognise the importance of sugar in the economy, and in their own interest to take steps against destroying what is after all a very vital part of the livelihood of so many of us in Barbados.

The hon. member for St. Lucy made reference to the participation of workers in the industry and he made it specifically in the context of the sugar industry. If I may be general about this, I think his statement is a half praise, that he must commend the Government for taking steps towards bringing about or starting a Committee to consider workers participation, but he hopes that it will not be token participation. Sir, the setting up of that Committee is part, as the Minister of Labour who is absent said, of the Government's manifesto and a serious commitment to the people of this country, and we will honour this commitment, and we will honour it to the full. We are not so light-hearted as to place in the manifesto something as serious as workers participation and then to discard this or indeed to come with any form of tokenism. But there is always a great danger in anticipating the outcome of committees and commitments, and it is perhaps about that that I want to speak. The Government has shown its full good faith in setting up a Committee representing many of the diverse interests involved in industry in this country because of the fact that it believes in participatory democracy, the Government was under a duty to have represented on that Committee several different interests, be they workers' or employers' and it has done so; but you get the sort of carping and attack on the Government's intention that is unworthy of anyone who is objective, the sort of carping and unjustified criticism coming from people who should really have the ability to think and do not seem to manifest that ability except in a very prejudiced manner about their own points of view, and cannot see any good faith on the part of anyone whatsoever.

I wish to take this opportunity therefore for the benefit of the public and the hon. member for St. Lucy who has just spoken and for those outside who may write to emphasise that this Committee has a job to perform objectively; its recommendations will be seriously considered by the Government and the Government will in due course bring those recommendations to Parliament, and on the basis of the recommendations and any other further representations that will be made will pursue this programme of workers participation in industry, and indeed in the

economic life of this country both in private and in the public sector as well.

There is one point that perhaps the Minister of External Trade would wish to talk on. He did not make the point but I myself would like him if he has an opportunity to elaborate on it, but hon. members can be assured that the Government, particularly the Ministry of External Trade and the other Ministries working alongside with him have taken all steps to put forward the point of view of this country at the recent renegotiation of the International Sugar Agreement, and we have been able to secure for Barbados some of the benefits of a small producer of sugar so that we are entitled to hold 70,000 tons without being subject to quota, and to sell that 80,000 over and above our commitment to the EEC and under the ACP/EEC Lome Agreement, and over and above our commitment to Caricom and our own internal stock we are entitled to have this sort of amount. It was one of the best things that we could have achieved and it called for concerted effort on the part of the Minister of External Trade in Fiji and in the various bodies which he attended as well as on behalf of the old diplomatic effort of the Government in this regard in safeguarding Barbados' vital interests in the overseas sugar market. Only up to last week after consultation with the Minister of External Trade our Ambassador at Washington had to hand the State Department a particular diplomatic note on short term measures being taken by that country against exporters to the American market which would have affected our position, and on a daily basis everyone of our Missions as well as the respective Ministries of External Trade and of Agriculture is monitoring the position of the world sugar Market, the developments in sugar technology to see where these will affect us, and we are making sure in the interest of Barbados that we obtain the best price for the sugar in this country so that the very sharing of which the hon. member for St. Lucy spoke could be maintained, and more than that, so that there will be an incentive to Barbadians to grow more sugar and therefore be able to sustain the level of employment or increase the level of employment in the sugar industry as well as sustain the earnings coming into the industry from this source of supply.

I think it is timely that this should be said. The wider matters of policy are matters for the Minister and he will know whether or not he wishes to make a particular statement in answer to a specific point. Just to set the mind of the Leader of the Opposition at rest when he wants to make a political point that is no point at all, one has to point out other counter-balancing points that are strongly against him. I would not like to describe him as a "Johnny come lately" to the sugar field; he appears to be one of them in this regard. I am glad that he is being converted like

Saul on the road to Damascus, and we will make sure that he remains in the Opposition so that he will learn. In fact, you are going out in five years' time, so you say. You are going out in one way or another. You are either going out by resignation or you are going out because you are going to be knocked out; but yet we think you are still not too old that you cannot be taught to learn the value of certain things on economic facts, and that is the reason why every time the hon. member speaks in this House to score cheap political points without adverting to the total position, he will be corrected. I thank him for the first time for sitting down and listening to me replying to him and having the courage to remain today. He has at least learnt that rather than making a speech and running away as he so often does.

Dr. CADDLE: Mr. Speaker, so far we have heard a lot of wideranging things on aspects of the sugar cane industry which indeed may not be pertinent to the matter before us. Unfortunately the Minister of Agriculture has not indicated what is the present level of those funds, either the Sugar Industry Rehabilitation Fund, the Price Stabilization Fund, the Labour Welfare Fund or the Provident Fund.

1.25 p.m.

And one of the questions I want to put to him is how adequate will be these new levels in meeting the commitments which arise either directly or indirectly out of these funds. It is obvious that in recent times the price of sugar on the international market has been falling, while in Barbados the cost of production is going up; therefore people are finding it more and more difficult to produce sugar without some form of subsidy from the Government. I would take it that the purpose of these levies is to provide money in some way or other for those people in the sugar industry to meet deficiencies which might arise from a fall in price on the international market, and again I pose the question as to how adequate are these levies in case of a shortfall; if in the absence of information relative to the present levels of the state of these various funds it is difficult to say with any amount of certainty whether or not these levies will raise the amount of money which will be available in case of need. For example, in the case of the Sugar Industry Price Stabilisation Fund, when sugar prices fall — and very often in the past they have fallen to a very low level which has been embarrassing to the sugar producers — will they be able to get money from this fund which will enable them to offset some of the losses resulting from a low sugar price?

I move away from that to deal particularly with the Welfare Fund. I have an interest in this because I have met a lot of workers over the years, and

especially this year, and I find that they are people who have been working in the sugar industry and who retire long before the age of 65 and are now seeking a pension from this fund. The people who are operating this fund very often tell them to go to the last doctor who declared them medically unfit and get a certificate to the fact that their early retirement was due to some medical condition. Now, in Barbados people wish to stop working — especially sugar workers — not because a doctor has determined that they can no longer work, but due to the feeling that they are unable to continue much longer in that type of work. And this is particularly so among sugar workers. They find that rheumatism, high blood pressure, heart disease, diabetes, asthma and other things take a heavy toll on them and they decide to call it quits whether or not the doctor determines that they are medically unfit. Now you have a problem there. People are ill with these various complaints but they take it in their own hands to decide they are not going to work any longer. Now when they apply for this pension they are told to go to a doctor, the last doctor who determined that they were medically unfit. You will quite understand that in some circumstances it is difficult for these people to get a medical certificate because they retire voluntarily and without the direction of a doctor. In other cases, especially in the rural areas where people depend heavily on the district medical officer for the provision of medical services — and as you will know in many cases these medical officers change, they either retire or they die — and there are cases where people have gone to a medical officer in a rural area and have been determined to be medically unfit, and then that medical officer retires, dies or leaves the Island; and when the worker applies for a pension and is asked to produce the medical certificate from the doctor who said that he was medically unfit the worker encounters difficulty because that particular doctor is no longer available. I just mention those two examples because they occur often enough and are of great concern to people who are seeking to obtain a pension. I am not telling the Minister of Agriculture how to settle this matter. He will have to determine that for himself. But I am drawing it to his attention that there are many people in the rural areas meeting difficulties in this connection, and I would like him to look into the matter and see what he can come up with to alleviate some of the hardships these people are encountering in trying to get a pension. It is a situation which has been going on for some time, so I am not blaming him for it, and it is a matter not easy of solution. But I believe he can do something about it and maybe put his Great Combination to work and produce some solution.

As regards to whether the cane blade issue is something to rehearse and rehash, I would like to

point out that we have to take a very serious look at sugar, especially when one looks at the changing world conditions confronting small producers of sugar, such as Barbados. One has to look very carefully at this and contrast this with industrialisation as another area which is likely to produce jobs and money and development for the people of this country in a way even better than sugar has done in the past. Problems continue to affect the sugar industry in countries all over the world, and with the rapid production of sugar beet in European and other countries, and more recently from hybrid corn which is said to be able to produce sugar better than sugar cane, one has to be very concerned about the future of sugar cane not only in the small countries but in the big ones as well. And I think that rather than go on talking about the presence or absence of the sugar cane blade in Barbados, you have to look carefully at what can be done for the best economic development of the country, whether the strategy for economic development should be based on agriculture or on industrialisation. This is what we have to look at seriously in all aspects, for while we are in here making fun at one another, there are thousands of people outside wanting jobs and many are concerned about the threat they face in their day to day occupation. So it becomes a matter of what strategy suits the particular circumstances of Barbados, whether it is one based on sugar cane — and we know the limitation on sugar cane regardless of what we are saying to each other across the floor of this House; there are certain realities we must face in Barbados, the size of the country, the cost of production and many other factors which limit the development of sugar in this country and it is a question of strategy whether it is agriculture based on sugar cane or a strategy based on industrialisation that we have to examine carefully in all its aspects, and stop going around with this hanky panky, because regardless of what you say there is a limitation to what sugar cane development in this country can do for the economic development in Barbados as a whole.

Mr. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, in 1975, from somewhere in this very area, perhaps from this very seat, the present Minister of Agriculture used to thunder about the inefficiency of agriculture and how that particular sector of the economy of this country should be transformed.

1.35 p.m.

I am very glad to see that he has the report of what he said on that occasion because I, certainly, would not attempt to misquote him. He must refresh his mind of the things that he said then to find out what has happened to those brave words that he used to advocate and advance things on that occasion. He was speaking in 1975 about the fantastic sums called

"sugar levies" that were taken out of the sugar industry. As Minister now, we see him proposing before this House to continue to take out sums from the sugar industry. We wonder if he is going to tell us in his reply — because he has not said anything about it in his introduction — that he is going to reduce the amount of money taken from the sugar industry. He used to speak in terms of fantastic sums being taken from the sugar industry. I believe his leader at that time, and still leader now, used to say that money taken out of the sugar industry was money taken out of the pockets of the workers in this country.

We are somewhat puzzled to find that, in 1975 in a major address on sugar in this country, the present Minister of Agriculture was making comments about the sugar industry and about taking money from that industry in keeping with the comments of his leader, but, now he is the Minister responsible, we do not find the action in consonance with the views expressed at that time. At that time he was speaking about a National Sugar Marketing Board. He said that there should be a National Sugar Marketing Board in this country which would not only deal with the marketing of sugar, but should seek to control the whole sugar industry. So we want to set up in this country a Board, Statutory Corporation no doubt, to control the whole sugar industry, no doubt to take it out of the hands of the private employers and to put it under the control of this National Sugar Marketing Board.

This is why I am saying, Mr. Speaker, that on these occasions — no doubt it may be the first occasion that a major measure relating to sugar has come before this Parliament and, certainly, since 1956 this particular section wanted a National Sugar Marketing Board which would deal not only with the marketing of sugar, but to seek to control the whole sugar industry. That is what the present Minister said in 1975. We are wondering now why we have not heard anything from him today regarding the development of those proposals. Maybe, it would be interesting for him to develop these ideas. I know that the previous Government was working on the establishment of a Sugar Industry Authority and working in the area of the consolidation of a number of Boards — I believe the number must be about thirty — dealing with sugar itself, but we cannot get, in spite of all the talk about a policy for sugar, any word which really goes to the heart of the matter especially in keeping with the type of sentiments which were expressed from over here when the said hon. member for St. Joseph was the principal spokesman for the then Opposition.

We used to hear then that levies and taxation, pure and simple, were methods of taking money out of the workers' pockets. We used to hear that Government should be buying the sugar and selling the sugar, and, in spite of the time available to the Minister, we have not heard anything about these measures and these plans. The last place to look for any such development, of course, would have been in the Throne Speech. There is no reference to this at all, and this indicates that it is not a major priority with the Government. (*Asides*). I am referring to the question of Government buying and selling sugar.

Generally speaking, this country would like some type of lead from the Minister of Agriculture on these particular aspects. We do not like the type of lead which gave an indication that seedlings would be available from the Government Agricultural Station. I am not aware of anybody who can purchase any seedlings from any of the Government Agricultural Stations. This is one of the very early things stated in all urgency. It was said that it was intended to save twenty-one days or thirty days to the farmers, but we still do not see these things. I would like to hear something about the problems in relation to the things which were said in 1975.

Mr. Speaker, we heard recently a lot about the trivialisation of politics in this country, and I would think — (*Asides*.) This is nothing that I have to apologise for.

Mr. SPEAKER: Is the hon. member addressing the Chair?

Mr. SANDIFORD: I am addressing the Chair on the trivialisation of politics. I think, on reflection, the Minister of External Trade should reflect and probably retract some of the things he has said. On that occasion when we were hearing about the trivialisation of politics, perhaps, one of the most glaring attempts at the trivialisation of politics was coming when we heard an imputation, or a suggestion, that somehow or another the Barbados Labour Party, as my colleague the Leader of the Opposition, the member for St. Michael South Central, has said, was somehow responsible for this great production of sugar of 117,000 tons in 1977. I think this is cheap politics; it is the trivialisation of politics to suggest that a Political Party would be responsible if the production of sugar goes to 117,000 tons. I am not claiming it for the Democratic Labour Party, but I believe that the praise should go to the workers in the industry and to the owners who are responsible for the planting of the sugar crop. That is where I think it should go. Praise should also go for the providence of

the rain which came in the early months of the crop, even though during the harvesting it was not as heavy as one might have wished.
1.45 p.m.

But even then, if you want to take praise, we should go back to 1967. I am certain that the member for Christ Church South Central checked the statistics out, because he said he checked them out, he was speaking from statistics, but in 1967 if my memory serves me correctly sugar production rose to something like 200,000 tons in this country, and I believe that was only eclipsed back in 1957 when I believe it rose to 204,000 tons, but over there the Minister of Agriculture did not put any bag of fertiliser in any field of canes, or he did not go and weed any ground in order to help the crop to come to 117,000 tons, so I do not think we should go out of the way to make these types of claims. We are all glad that the sugar production has increased this year, and we should praise the producers of sugar and the workers in the industry for that.

I do not wish to speak much longer on this particular topic. I wish in conclusion to make the point that in 1975 we heard criticisms about sugar levies, we heard that levies were taking money out of people's pockets, that it was taxation pure and simple. We heard that there should be a national enquiry into the sugar industry, something as big and important as that, a national enquiry. I believe the member was calling for a national enquiry into the sugar industry in 1975 because the problems were that great, and now that he has the responsibility for sugar in this country we do not hear anything about any national enquiry into sugar, not a word about that, but of course we realise that he is very knowledgeable in these areas and he is going to solve the problems as far as sugar and agriculture generally is concerned.

All of these things were said back in 1975, but now that he has the responsibility and the power in his hands we are waiting for the action in respect of these matters, not for the reshuffle.

Mr. Speaker, I do not wish to speak on this matter any longer, and as I said, I hope there is nothing for me to apologise for.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, I am very glad that the hon. member who spoke last intervened, and I am very glad also that he raised the question of trivialisation of politics in this country. I want to raise the question of intellectual dishonesty in politics. That is the question I want to raise.

Mr. SPEAKER: As it relates to the sugar industry.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Yes, Sir, the sugar industry is part of the economy and I only want to deal in a short

way with what the hon. town gentleman who spoke, the Leader of the Opposition, had to say. He must understand that there is a distinction between planting and reaping. There is a long period of time between planting and reaping.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Leader of the Opposition must contain himself.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: And as to what I said in relation to the sugar industry, in relation to the performance of agriculture, sugar is part of agriculture, and I was rebutting the statement that is put Sunday after Sunday in the newspaper which I characterised earlier, under the by-name of one Sandiford, that since 1976 the economy of this country has not moved in any way, and I was rebutting that statement, and you rebut that statement by an analysis of each sector of the economy and show the position in relation to this year as opposed to last year, and that is how I was rebutting it, so do not talk about trivialisation. Why does the hon. member, if he is the author of the by-line, why does he not write the facts in the newspaper instead of making a generalisation that the economy is not improving. Why does he not publish the factual evidence? That is what I was rebutting, but the trouble is I was rebutting it so successfully that the hon. member now has to say that his arguments are trivial. That is the problem with the hon. member, because each sector that we dealt with we demonstrated and showed that the performance percentage wise and employment wise was greater, and that sticks the hon. member in his gall. That is what is bitter to him.

Sir, since we have been into power we have done a tremendous amount for the agricultural industry in this country. One of the first acts — and I am going to repeat it — one of the first acts of the Ministers of CARICOM meetings that I did after we had put it in our Manifesto, and after we had criticised it from the time the CARICOM Treaty duty on agricultural inputs, from the time of the CARICOM Treaty we always criticised the imposition of duty on fertilisers, pesticides, weedicides and other inputs, and we went before the CARICOM Trade Ministers and said that Barbados applied pursuant to the Treaty for a waiver because our Government said that that duty was irresponsible, nonsensical and counter productive, and that is of great importance.

In addition to that, as a matter of policy, the Central Bank has refinanced the terms and conditions under which the whole of the sugar industry is financed. In addition to that, we were faced — and I specifically made this point — we were faced with a situation where we had just come into power and people were threatening to burn down the whole of the sugar crop in this country, and this Government had the courage to pass measures in this House of Assembly and to take action on

a national scale to arrest such acts, and I say that those are responsible and contributory measures towards the realisation of the crop. I say that, and I have no apologies for the hon. member for saying it.

In addition to that, there were other areas of dissatisfaction in relation to the reaping of sugar cane between the small farmers and the sugar factories consequent upon the centralisation of factories, and I do not want to steal the thunder of the Hon. Minister of Agriculture, because as I say, it has now become the habit of the other side to abuse the Minister of Agriculture, but the Minister of Agriculture is perfectly fit, competent and capable of answering all of them over there put together, singly or individually, and happens in this particular case, he also has the facts on his side. The evidence is there to convince those people who are willing to be convinced. Because after the hon. member has been writing now and now understands what people say when they talk about people who have a reputation for scholarship, but the more they manifest and the more they act in areas where their scholarships can be analysed, the more they expose that they do not have any scholarship at all.

One of the first criteria is that if you are going to make a judgement or express an opinion you should set out the factual basis, and the hon. member has been making that statement and we have debunked it, and we will continue to debunk it at every opportunity. You cannot deny the fact, agriculture, industry, tourism, construction, the pillars of the economy of Barbados are moving forward at a pace you cannot understand. Put that in your pipe and smoke it.

Mr. WARD: Mr. Speaker, politics and being in Parliament never ceases to surprise me. I sat down here today and looked over the other side at the Opposition to see them in absolute joy and wallowing in trying to destroy the Minister of Agriculture on this side, when in fact they have such an awful history of agriculture in this country. I could not believe that people who have reduced the industry that used to put out about 190,000 tons of sugar a year, and now struggling to get 130,000 tons, those same people could get up here and boast and carry on about what good they did for agriculture.

Look at the former Minister of Agriculture, an excuse for a Minister in any capacity, and let me say this, Mr. Speaker, that we on this side are proud of the record of our Manifesto of Agriculture for the last 14 months. I drive around this country and I see land that has not been worked for the last ten, twelve, fifteen years; I do not know how the Minister has managed to get the people to start working it, I do not know, but today acres and half acres that have not been used are being used.

1.55 p.m.

The Minister has not left one stone unturned to increase agricultural production in Barbados. I will tell you before I sit down that in 30 or 40 years when our grandchildren read the history books of Barbados they will ask their parents how it is that Barbados used to produce 200,000 tons of sugar and now they can hardly produce 130,000? I hope that the parents will be able to say that that was during the Democratic Labour Party rule of the 1950s – I mean the 1960s.

Mr. BRADSHAW: Mr. Speaker, I feel that I have got a duty to speak on this particular measure before the House today. First of all, I represent a constituency which is agricultural, and there are a number of things which I would like to have clarified after listening to hon. members from the Opposition benches. In 1971, during the election campaign, the Democratic Labour Party accused the Barbados Labour Party and accused the then leader of the party of having the hoes stored at Mangrove Plantation so as to put people back into the fields. It was during that campaign that abuses were hurled at the Barbados Labour Party because that Party believed in agriculture, and they preached that agriculture was vital for the development of this country.

What did we see later? We heard the famous cane blade speech made in St. Philip and which thousands of workers were privileged to hear from the then Prime Minister.

Mr. SPEAKER: I take it that you mean the notorious cane blade speech.

Mr. BRADSHAW: Yes. The notorious cane blade speech. That speech was a deterrent to people who were genuinely interested in agriculture and deterred them from going into the agricultural sector and producing. What did we see after that? We saw the then Prime Minister going into Christ Church with his watch on his hand and a Collins backward cutting canes showing people watching on T.V. and trying to generate some interest in agriculture. From that show on television people were convinced that agriculture was just mock sport. That Government had already run down agriculture.

What must be made plain is that the Barbados Labour Party has an unswerving commitment to the agricultural sector of this country. We, time after time have said, even during the 1975 campaign that agriculture must not be run down. What must be borne in mind is that when we were campaigning 1975 we were not campaigning about the 40 per cent levy. We were complaining because extra money was brought into this country, and the then Government was seeking a second tax on the money which we thought that people should have had.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Mr. SPEAKER: The time is now 2 p.m. This sitting stands suspended until 2.45 p.m. today.

The sitting was suspended accordingly.
2 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SITTING

On the resumption:

Mr. SPEAKER: This sitting is now resumed. It is now Question Time. (Pause) I am informed there are no Questions on the Order Paper. It is now Private Members Business.

Mr. WEEKES: Mr. Speaker, there is no Private Members Business on the Order Paper.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, I think that technically notice was only given today although it appeared in the Minutes that notice was given then, so that it cannot be debated today. It will have to be debated next week.

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

Mr. SPEAKER: There being no Private Members Business, we now automatically revert to Government Business. When the luncheon break was taken, the hon. member for St. Michael South East was addressing the Chair. If he desires to, he may continue.

Mr. BRADSHAW: Mr. Speaker, I shall not be long; but I want to clear up a few points made by the hon. member for St. Michael South. He has stated that praise should go to the agricultural workers. I do not agree with that; but at the same time no one should deny the Barbados Labour Party full praise for encouraging agricultural workers and giving them that ray of hope so that they could produce 117,000 tons in 1977.

The hon. member for St. Lucy has expressed concern about the treatment of agricultural workers and their participation in the industry; but the hon. member must understand and realise that it was in his regime that plantations which were then producing sugar cane were allowed to be sold or change hands. Some of those plantations that come to mind include the Belle Plantation, Frere Pilgrim, Sandford in St. Philip and Ruby of course. What is even worse is that the people who worked on these plantations were not even compensated, and this is one of the things that concern me; because up to this very week, yesterday, an agricultural worker who was working at Frere Pilgrim before it was sold told me that she had not received compensation. There are lots of other workers, and that was the policy which was

common to the Democratic Labour Party. So the hon. member for St. Lucy should not be here claiming that agricultural workers should have better participation when he did not make any representation or see to it that these people were properly compensated after working on the plantation for a number of years.
2.55 p.m.

As I said, we have done everything in our power and we will continue to do everything in our power to see to it that agriculture remains alive and that all the injections are put into this particular industry so that we can have greater production in the years ahead. We realise that agriculture is very vital and important to the economy of this country, and we are going to do everything to see that this is being done so that people will be able to benefit in due course.

Hon. C. L. BOLDEN: Mr. Speaker, the members of the Opposition all spoke on this Resolution and I would have to adopt the words of the Hon. Deputy Prime Minister when he spoke about intellectual dishonesty. I must say that with the exception of the hon. member for St. Michael North Central everyone of them has been patently dishonest in their contribution today as they have always been as members of the Democratic Labour Party. In the first place the gentleman who writes under the "non de plume" of Sandiford, if he is the same person as the hon. member who sits in this Assembly, and whom I thought would have known a lot better, quotes from the speech made by the Opposition in this Chamber in 1975, but he forgot to tell the public in the Gallery that when we on the Opposition were criticising the Democratic Labour Party it arose out of what their leader, the hon. member for St. John called a friendly chat imposing heavy levies on the sugar industry of this country. It was a friendly television fireside chat that imposed a levy, but all of them have come in here today and are talking something completely different and forgetting the long speeches made by the then Prime Minister which opened the very remarks that they were quoting from in Hansard. The very first thing on that day was a motion moved by C. E. Talma to move the suspension of Standing Orders; G. G. Fergusson seconded and then there was C. E. Talma moving the Sugar Export Levy Bill, 1975, and one Barrow got up and talked from there onwards. They did not tell the public so, but it is like the political meetings they are keeping about the country trying to mislead everybody in the country by dishonesty, making statements that they full well know can be refuted. That is the system here and everyone of them has run out because they do not want to hear the truth this afternoon. As somebody said behind here, that is their new strategy, to make comments and run out of the Chamber, but my colleagues on this side have told me you have to treat them easily, be decent with them, but you cannot be decent with cowards. How can you be decent with cowards who want to hit you with a stone

and run behind a glass door and tell you to hit them. This is how you treat cowards; hit them when you get them.

Mr. Speaker, I will deal with the points raised by them one by one. The hon. member for St. Lucy above anybody else talked about rationalisation of the sugar industry. He sits in one place and his boss and leader sits in another place, but he should know that there is a tripartite committee representing the workers, the Government and the employers; they determine what level of subsidies is taken from the sugar receipts. Every year the same tripartite committee decides how that money should be spent, and it goes back to 1974 when I stood on that side and warned the Government then that when Barbados Sugar Factories came into being it was a new company which took over all the sugar factories in the country. They had an allocation of shares whereby the plantations that owned factories were supposed to receive one dollar a ton more for their canes than anybody else who sent canes to the factories. I got the news and came into this Chamber and urged the Government to take up the \$1 million in shares that had been set aside for Government to purchase for the small farmers of this country, and the same hon. member for St. John and the two hon. members who represent the Union on the Government side said I was talking nonsense. Now he comes today and asks us what we are doing about the rationalisation of the sugar industry.

There was a survey carried out between the late 60s and early 70s which stated that there should only be four sugar factories in Barbados. I looked at the Minutes of the Tripartite Committee last week in which Frank Walcott asked when was Government going to institute the policy of four sugar factories in Barbados. We in Government are fighting to keep the eight sugar factories open because we realise that if you shut four, you will have unemployment in the very sugar industry that the Union boss is telling you to shut down four, and his colleague the hon. member for St. Lucy who should know this comes in here with a different talk today, trying to tell the public that he knows what is going on in sugar. Not one of them on that side knows what is going on in sugar, but are trying to jump the bandwagon today when they do not understand what is going on in sugar. What is the problem with sugar factories and workers in this country? I held a meeting with Barbados Sugar Factories Limited and they said they could keep the factories open, but as long as you allow the subdivision of good agricultural land whereby the factories will be starved of sugar cane, it was uneconomical for them to keep them open. During the period of time they allowed 12,000 acres of good agricultural land to be subdivided and the Belle Factory has been closed as the Attorney General has told you; Searles Factory has been closed because all the land in Christ Church and St. Philip has gone; Guinea Factory has

been closed because they let out the Mount and all those areas in St. George that are good agricultural land. But thank God under the careful watch of the Barbados Labour Party we have recovered some 50% to 60% of the land that they had allowed their cronies and friends to subdivide to put into houseplots. Now they talk about rationalisation of the sugar factories.

Mr. Speaker, when we begin to look at the sugar factories, there has been no sugar factory built in Barbados since the Barbados Labour Party went out of power. The Leader of the Opposition who is now only a deputy as far as I am concerned, gets up to talk about our having talked about how much sugar Barbados produced. If he only knew, sugar factories are kept operating dependent on their grining capacity per hour and the arrival of canes in the yard. Now what is the situation? There has been no new input in the industry during the fifteen years that the Democratic Labour Party has been in power. When you start to look at the sugar industry you have to ask how soon will it become necessary for a complete renewal of a sugar factory in Barbados. The hon. member for St. Lucy has the interest of the workers at heart, but he does not even know that; so he runs out.

The Democratic Labour Party entered into an agreement with the Canadians to run a new experimental plant at Uplands. We told them then that the agreement was not tight enough to guarantee the development of a new process of sugar. We are now reviewing the agreement because we see so many loopholes in it. Already Barbados Sugar Factories Limited are willing to switch operations, but the Government in the interest of the people have got to look at what is best for Barbadians, not one person, not two persons, but for the whole of Barbados. We have to look at the total development of the country whether it be in sugar, in by-products of sugar or any other form of agriculture.

As I said, the only person who spoke sense today as far as I am concerned is the hon. member for St. Michael North Central because he made some good statements. We have to look in general at what is going to happen in the sugar industry. The Americans have developed what is called high fructose corn sweetener. It is a syrup made from corn, and it has already taken hold of certain areas of the United States. The Arabs are now putting down large sugar factories because they said the western world will hold them to ransom for sugar.

3.05 p.m.

Therefore we have to look at the total development, and again, Mr. Speaker, people do not realize that the Government of Barbados has no input or hold on the sugar industry. They talk about the Sugar Marketing Board. We are holding discussions now with the owners of the industry to see how best we can manage the industry

for the good of the economy. They expect that overnight from the time the Barbados Labour Party came into power you wave a wand and say "abracadabra" and everything is done, when they had fifteen years and did nothing. They destroyed the sugar industry. And, Mr. Speaker, you will remember a statement made by Patsy Springer, the then member for St. Michael South, when he expounded the views of the Democratic Labour Party on sugar, which were: "The rich man sends his first son to be a doctor, the second to be a lawyer, the third a commission agent, and the idiot he puts in agriculture. So they have nothing to do with agriculture." That is what Patsy Springer said, and now all of them who sat down and agreed with him on a statement and voted with him are now the supporters of the sugar industry, when their philosophy has been based on the destruction of the sugar industry in this country.

Mr. Speaker, as regards the Provident Fund. We raised the issue of the people not being able to draw their contributions under the Fund because plantation managers change from time to time. Under their regime you had to get the manager of the factory to sign a form to say how long you worked there. Cabinet took the decision long ago and told the National Insurance Fund that so long as you can get somebody, even a driver, to verify that you worked at a plantation, they should act upon that. What more can we do? I agree with the member for St. Michael North Central. He said it did not arise under our administration. He was honest, but the others want to make political headlines with things that are not facts. But we are looking at it, for I represent an agricultural area. In fact, 70% of the people of St. Joseph work in sugar, and it would be in my interest to make sure that they can get their provident Fund when the time comes. The fund under their administration was merged with the National Insurance Fund. So, Mr. Speaker, this is also a non-point, because the Fund has been merged into the National Insurance Fund. So I do not really understand what they are talking today.

We look now at the burning of sugar canes. Mr. Speaker, they advocated burning. In Opposition we said time and time again that we were against burning. Evidence showed that whenever you burn, the field produces five tons per acre less year after year. Under the Democratic Labour Party I think they produced some 96.8 thousand tons of sugar. Burning had affected the industry. In St. Philip fields were averaging twelve tons per acre. We carried out a campaign against burning. When the fires started last year we set up all kinds of check systems day and night. And I can say now, Mr. Speaker, I am convinced that it was a deliberate act of some one to embarrass this Government by trying to burn down the sugar cane; because from the checks we set up it was reported that one Saturday night the fire watch saw a car turn up at the top of Church Village; the car stopped with its lights on; a field of canes went up in fire; the car

moved off and went across by Sandford and another field of canes went up; two fields of cane in close proximity; the Fire Brigade can't attend to both at the same time. But it is our policy to stop the burning of canes.

As regards employment in the industry: if you have a political leader like the member for St. John every time he gets up on a platform he opens his mouth and says that people who work in the fields are beasts of burden. But yet he does not provide alternative employment for those very people. And what is his philosophy? People who work in the fields are beasts of burden and he would like to be able to drive about Barbados and not see a blade of cane. He wanted to take the women out of the field but had no other employment for them. This is one-sided planning. The member for St. Lucy was part and parcel of that planning. If they look at the very debate, when they realize that we would have attacked him, he said he had no discussions with the trade union; that they made their own arrangements themselves. But you are going to tell people not to work in the field and then you have no other employment for them.

Somebody over there is shouting about if the Rastafarians are going to work the land. When did the Rastafarians come about, Mr. Speaker? Is there any Rastafarian that is fourteen months old? The Barbados Labour Party came to power on the 2nd September; is there any Rastafarian that is fourteen or fifteen months old? No, they are eighteen years old, went to school, finished school and are now out on the streets during the regime of the Barbados Labour Party; people who never had an opportunity to work, because they were never provided with the basis for employment; the former Government only provided words.

Mr. Speaker, somebody talked about plans for small farmers. You will remember that in 1975 small farmers had their canes on motor lorries for five days, running from factory to factory and could not get them delivered. And if the member for St. Lucy is honest he will tell you that the price for hauling canes from St. Lucy to Porters went as high as \$18 a ton, and we moved a Resolution on the adjournment of the House to enquire of the Minister of Agriculture what he was doing to stop a situation like that. That is why we said there had to be an investigation in the Sugar industry. And I sat down in the Ministry with Sugar Factories Limited and worked out a system whereby no small farmer can tell you that his canes stood on a motor lorry for a whole day before they were delivered to the factory. So what are they talking about? They want political headlines, and as the Leader of the Opposition has said he likes to talk before lunch time because it will get in the Press next day. That is intellectual dishonesty; they talk anything they feel like just to get in the Press; that shows how dishonest they are.

Hon. F. G. SMITH: Mr. Speaker, I object. The member can't make such remarks about intellectual dishonesty. It infringes every rule. I think you should make him withdraw the remark.

Hon. C. L. BOLDEN: Mr. Speaker, somebody spoke about worker participation ... I am not going to withdraw even if I have to go out.

Hon. F. G. SMITH: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order

Mr. SPEAKER: Please continue, the hon. member for St. Joseph.

Hon. C. L. BOLDEN: As I said before, the Government in 1974 had ample opportunity to get involved in the sugar industry.
3.15 p.m.

The Government is one of the biggest landowners in Barbados. ADC has a number of estates that grow sugar cane, and I am saying that if ADC, under the then Government, had participated in the equity holding of the Barbados Sugar Factories Limited, if the Government had then taken up the \$1 million to represent the small farmers, the Government would have had a substantial holding in the sugar industry today. They are now asking us to correct the wrongs they have done, and, while we are trying to correct them, they are walking about telling the people that we are doing nothing. They wanted us to do something when they had already punched holes in the wicket. We have to repair the wicket before we can start to make runs.

Mr. Speaker, we came in with the policy of the plantation tenancies. We recognised that the workers in the sugar industry have given their lives to the sugar industry. We have already set up a Committee that is now discussing the transfer of the plantation tenancies to the tenants, and that Committee is working week after week to find an equitable basis on which the land can be transferred. We have set out in our Manifesto what we will do, and we are going to do it. We cannot do everything overnight. We might be brilliant, but we are not magicians. We have not yet learnt the art of the magician. I do not believe there is anything more for me to answer. I have answered the points that have been raised in here, and I move that this Resolution do now pass.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: I beg to second that.

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

Hon. H. B. ST. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, Item No. 2 is the next Order of the Day.

Mr. SPEAKER: Item No. 2 is the instant Order of the Day.

RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE LEASE TO SEAWELL AIR SERVICES LTD. OF LANDS AT GRANTLEY ADAMS INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT IN THE PARISH OF CHRIST CHURCH

Hon. H. B. ST. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, the Object of this Resolution is to seek Parliamentary approval for a lease to Seawell Air Services Ltd. by the Minister of Lands of a parcel of land containing 69,680 square feet of land at Grantley Adams International Airport upon the terms and conditions contained in the Schedule. Previously to this Session, Sir, the previous House had approved the lease to the same parties of a parcel of land then said to contain 89,000 square feet. Unfortunately, when the land was surveyed it was found that it was only 69,000 square feet, and we have been legally advised that it is necessary to come back for Parliamentary approval for the amendment of the lease.

In other respects the lease and the terms and conditions are the same with the exception that on renewal, in the event of a disagreement between Seawell Air Services Limited and the Minister responsible for Lands, the rent will be determined by the Minister of Civil Aviation after consultation with the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Lands. This is to ensure that no lengthy process or arbitration or court proceedings will take place upon the renewal.

It is urgent that this Resolution do pass because where Seawell Air Services Limited is now, it occupies an area of land which is needed for the new terminal building for a parking apron. As long ago as 1973 it was known to Seawell Air Services Limited that it would have to move to another area of Government land.

Accordingly, I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass. I have a copy of the plan in case the other side would like to see the plan.

Hon. L. R. TULL: I beg to second that.

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

Hon. H. B. ST. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that Your Honour do now leave the Chair and the House go into Committee to consider this Resolution.

Hon. L. R. TULL: I beg to second that.

The question was put and resolved in the affirmative without division, and Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair and

the House went into Committee of Supply, Mr. ODLE in the Chair.

RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE GRANT OF THE
SUM OF \$12,718 OUT OF THE HARBOUR
FUND TO SUPPLEMENT THE ANNEXED
ESTIMATES, 1977-78

HEAD 2 - PORT DEPARTMENT

Hon. H. B. ST. JOHN: Mr. Chairman, in moving the passing of this Resolution on behalf of the Minister responsible for Sports, I have to state that it is for the sum of \$12,718. The Resolution seeks this Supplementary provision under Annexed Estimates - Head 2 - Port Department, Item 3 - Other Personal Allowances. Negotiations were going on between the Barbados Workers' Union and the Port Department at the time the Estimates were being discussed. An Agreement has now been reached which has resulted in an adjustment of the allowance for Night Differential and Heavy Equipment Operators. The wages have been increased by 10 cents and hour and 96 cents a day respectively, effective April, 1976. The amount of \$12,718 is required to meet the expenditure on the increase in wages.

Accordingly, I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

Hon. C. L. BOLDEN: I beg to second that.

Hon. F. G. SMITH: I just want to say, Mr. Chairman, that, before one can accuse another of intellectual dishonesty, one must have an intellect. He is in no danger of my ever accusing him of intellectual dishonesty because he has no intellect. I just want to say, Mr. Chairman, that we approve this Resolution. It carries out the allowances that have been granted, and without more ado, the Opposition supports it.

Hon. C. L. BOLDEN: Mr. Chairman, when I seconded the motion I reserved my right to speak. Before I speak on this matter, I want to say that I have never yet claimed to be an intellectual, nor have I claimed to be a boy in the gutter. I do not want to take myself into the gutter with that hon. member. It just shows you how dishonest some people can be. Earlier this year they came in here and argued that things coming through the Port had been increased in cost because the Consumption Tax had been increased by an Order. They did not remember that this was the very reason for the increase. Now that this Agreement has been concluded, you will have to find money to pay the people who are working at the Port.

*The question that the Resolution do now pass was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.
3.25 p.m.*

On the motion of Hon. H. B. St. JOHN, seconded by Hon. C. L. BOLDEN, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported the passing of one Resolution in Committee, and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

On the separate motions of Hon. H. B. St. JOHN, seconded by Hon. C. L. BOLDEN, the Resolutions were read a first and second time and agreed to.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: The next Item is the Bill to amend the Unclaimed and Undistributed Moneys Act, Cap. 93, standing in the name of the Prime Minister.

Mr. SPEAKER: Item No. 4 is the instant Order of the Day.

THE UNCLAIMED AND UNDISTRIBUTED
MONEYS (AMENDMENT) ACT, 1977

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, this stands in the name of the Prime Minister, and with the leave of the House I will take charge of it.

This is a short amendment, and it seeks to empower the Minister responsible for finance to delegate the functions conferred under the Unclaimed and Undistributed Moneys Act, Cap. 93, to any other person. Under the Act the powers have to be exercised by the Minister alone and there is no power of delegation, and we really think it is a waste of good productive time for a Minister to sign every time a warrant is needed to a maximum of \$1,000. We think it could properly be delegated to the people who carry out the financial rules.

There are a number of these Acts we have come across that have to be amended, and consistent with our programme of bringing in meaningful legislation, and legislation that will remove the constraints on productivity. I have no doubt this Bill will receive the full support of the other side.

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

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: In rising to second that, I want to say something briefly on what I adverted to in a more public place than this recently, and which I understand has been picked up, copied and carefully supplied by the hon. member for St. Michael South relating to trivialisation.

We really cannot avoid dealing with ministerial responsibility in terms of deciding whether some widow shall get \$104.17 in unclaimed wages of somebody who

dies suddenly. This apparently was a function of the former Minister of Finance. He dealt with unclaimed monies, he dealt with duty free motor cars, and none of these things could be done unless he affixed his signature to them. If you have to spend your time operating with such trivialities you cannot look at the larger issues of Government. If you feel that because Leo Leacock is your friend that you personally have to sign every little document, as I have heard in here, you cannot deal with the major issues of reducing the cost of living. If you are a Minister of Education and every expenditure of \$11.14 has to come under your purview, or if you are another Minister of Education and you spend your time reading carefully the reports of the School Meals Selection Committee, you cannot be properly concerned with making sure that 14 year old children can be all receiving education and not get put out of school at a time when they may be properly trained and equipped for life in this country, and therefore we are trying to divest ourselves of these petty trivialities.

The Attorney General has to sign marriage licences. I had to sign one when I was Acting Attorney General, and unless you divest yourself of these petty duties and leave them for public officers who are perfectly capable of discharging you cannot get the business of Government done in this country, and I want all the files on duty free applications out of my office, and I want all those unclaimed monies and so on out of my office, and we are asking the House of Assembly to spend five minutes on saving ministerial time and providing a little bit for the smoother running of things.

3.35 p.m.

Mr. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, it is not often that I rise to agree with the Prime Minister, but I have to say this afternoon that I am very pleased to agree in part with the Prime Minister that certain trivialities ought to be removed from the personal attention of Ministers. That is why when I myself was a Minister I did not, as I am told, sign licences. Indeed I was very surprised to hear someone of the calibre of the Prime Minister say in Independence Square that he had in his possession a licence for a motor car with the name "B. M. Taitt". I do not know if that licence originated in any other country than Barbados. I would be very glad to see that licence because I have never signed a licence for a motor car.

I agree with him and I hope that he will in fact continue to have removed trivia from his Ministry; and I hope that this will remove what I have heard that those who apply for one-armed bandits must see the Prime Minister personally; because once he has enunciated the policy there will be no need for him to see these persons personally. I hope further that when cases are brought in court — not that I believe that the Prime

Minister will interfere with cases brought in court — but when there are cases connected with Customs I hope that the Minister will consider it adequate once he has enunciated his policy not to have to deal with them personally any more.

I heard a tape recording of the statement that he made in the Square and he said that he was overburdened and that he has too much work to do. I hope that in keeping with removing some of the burdens that he will not insist that appointments to such places as school meals and other places should not be removed from his office.

I know that the Prime Minister has indicated in another place that there are some persons whose veracity is in question. I know that he has attributed a certain genius to certain persons who can tell as many as 64 or 66 lies in a small half hour. I am sure, Mr. Speaker, that you will agree that anyone who can do that has a great capacity of speech to say nothing of ability; but I cannot agree more that some of these things ought to be removed from the personal ambit of the Prime Minister, and I hope that he will in fact be able to allow his Ministers and other persons to carry on with their work, as for example, on the question of price control. I do not believe that the Prime Minister should deal with these trivia, these small matters when he has a Minister who has to look after these matters. I rise to say that these small matters should be removed from him.

I hope that he will take the opportunity also to look at the broader issues. He talks about the claims of a few people for such small sums as \$104.00; but where it is a case of an old woman who may have reached the age of 65, the sum of \$104.00 might suddenly become very important to her because of the inability of some poor people who reach the age of 65 to get a pension because either they or their family have an income of more than \$15.00 a week; and they may have a difficult time. So, Mr. Speaker, \$104 might turn out to be a large sum. (*Aside*) I am hearing that the \$15.00 limit was a Democratic Labour Party measure.

You and I know, Sir, that there is a white line in the road when you are turning a corner; and the law says that you must stay within that white line on one side or the other; and the law says that you must stay within the studs; but there is such a thing as discretion in the application of the law, and from time to time such discretionary application must apply to a people, especially those in a developing society; that is why the Democratic Labour Party when it had the responsibility for administering old age pensions did not apply that rule strictly. They did not cause that rule to be applied in such Draconian terms that people who were receiving

more than \$15 from some other place could not get that pension.

I hope that the Prime Minister will carry his concept of removing trivialities from his Ministry all the way back to take account of the poor and suffering people of this country. I hope that some of them will be able, because of this amendment, that we are now passing to get some money in time to buy some of the necessities they need for Christmas; because as we get nearer to Christmas, the situation especially for the older folk is beginning to look very grim. I have no difficulty at all in agreeing to this Resolution.

Hon. F. G. SMITH: Mr. Speaker, in supporting this Resolution, I would like to draw to the attention of the Prime Minister another matter to which I think he should give serious consideration, and that that is the question of ministerial discretion. I am quite aware of what the law is, but I wrote the Prime Minister on another matter where a member of the staff of the Ministry of Communications and Works has sustained an injury and is in the St. Michael District Hospital. He is totally incapable of managing his own affairs; and he has a small gratuity of \$1,800 and an annual pension of about \$440. His sister is in a position to take to him certain toiletries etc. For him to get this pension which has been computed, he has to go to the Supreme Court under the Mental Health Act, Sections 34, 35 and 36 with about 19 documents. He has to take out a summons. I believe that the Deputy Prime Minister will know about one that he did. I must say that I got his precedent because this is the first one that I am doing; and it is a good precedent, and I am using it lock, stock and barrel. You have to file a summons. You have to have a medical affidavit. You have to have an affidavit of sickness, an affidavit of service etc. If you are to charge for an estate like that of \$1,800 there is no doubt that the work involved would gobble up the \$1,800.

3.45 p.m.

I am doing this as a matter of interest, because I want to see that he has a good funeral and that in some way, if possible, the State can get some compensation for keeping him at the District Hospital if there is any provision. So I would like the Prime Minister to look at this possibility. In cases of large estates it is all right, but here is a poor labourer at M.C.W. who is incapable of looking after his affairs and yet all the advice from the Attorney General's office and from the Ministry of Finance is that he has got to go to the Supreme Court with the necessary documents to get the Court to appoint a Committee for him. Even if it gives the Ministry or the Accountant General or whoever pays out the money some indemnity or indemnification if the estate is paid to some accredited

relative who will have to give security, in the absence of legal aid and in the absence of a cutting down of the expenses, I would like to see some steps taken to exempt or to make it possible for payment to be made in cases where there is unlikely to be any dispute about the payment, to whom and who should look after his estate, and where the estates are under small amounts, not even \$25,000, the Prime Minister should look at the possibility either of giving himself or the Ministry of Finance the right to say all right we will pay to the brother, sister or whoever it is with proper guarantees that nobody can come against the Government and claim the money which has been properly paid out. This man has no land, no property, no house; the only thing he is entitled to in the Accountant General's office is a gratuity of \$1,800 and an annual pension of \$444, but to get somebody to look after this you have to go through the big machinery of a Supreme Court summons and six or seven affidavits sworn by doctors, by somebody who knew the person, by the person who served him etc. I would therefore like to ask the Prime Minister to take this opportunity to make it easier in cases such as the one that I have mentioned. I am not blaming the Government because the law is there and it is quite clear. I am not saying the Prime Minister has any discretion or has in this case refused.....

Mr. SPEAKER: I think I must tell the Hon. Leader of the Opposition that this is neither the time nor the place to plead a court case.

Hon. F. G. SMITH: I am dealing with unclaimed amounts where the amount is such that the Prime Minister is saying he wants to delegate these powers, and I am just saying that not only in this particular Act should those powers be delegated, but Acts in similar cases where small people have got to use the expensive machinery of the Courts. The Prime Minister should look at the over-all possibility just as he has made in this particular Bill to shed this particular responsibility of easing and taking away from himself this responsibility.....

Mr. SPEAKER: What I would like to say to the hon. member is that the unfortunate situation is that the hon. member is himself involved in the particular matter that he is now trying to argue before this House, and this is neither the time nor the place.

Hon. F. G. SMITH: I appreciate that. I can declare my interest, but it enables me to draw to his attention a case where hardship can arise. I am not asking for any fee from any Government. I am just drawing this to his attention and I think the Prime Minister will appreciate what I am saying because I actually wrote the Ministry of Finance and received a letter from the Prime Minister's Office as Minister of Finance telling me

that he has delegated this function to somebody else, and therefore I am not asking for any money. I am saying that my position apart from my interest which I can declare enables me to draw this matter to the attention of the Government since in the future there may be similar cases involved. I am not criticising the Government, but this particular case shows up the need for discretion on the part of the Ministry of Finance to look at each case on its merits, but with discretion in the Ministry to make allowances wherever possible. That is all I am trying to do.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Speaker, if I may help the hon. member, having just confessed that he was dealing with a branch of the law that is new to him, all I would like to express, if you would give the latitude, is the hope that having had the benefit of the work of the Hon. Leader of the House, the Deputy Prime Minister and acknowledging his copyright, he will not charge the poor clients. That is all I will express to him, having regard to the smallness of the estate.

Sir, this also provides an opportunity in dealing with the whole question of unclaimed money to point out to the hon. member that there are some Acts on the Statute Book which allows a discretion to be exercised in relation to certain funds accruing to deceased persons who have been working for Government and whose estates may be getting funds by way of gratuity. One of these I think is under the Finance and Audit Act where there is a particular provision where the Minister may allow payment out to take place. Certainly there is also a provision under the Savings Bank Act and some slight attempt was made in the Succession Act to deal with the whole question of small estates. I think the hon. member is perhaps dealing in the particular case with the case of a person who is not able to look after his affairs and this will call for an amendment to the Mental Health Act.

Now for the benefit of the hon. member for St. Michael South West, had he not been so busy attending to licences, he would have drawn to the attention of the hon. member when he was Attorney General the necessity to carry out that sort of amendment so that the poor person would not have suffered at Christmas. You see, this is the sort of thing one would have expected him to pay attention to; but he had not had time to deal with these things. I may assure the hon. member however that the brilliant and hard-working and very feminine member for the City of Bridgetown has already looked at the Mental Health Act and will shortly be giving my Ministry final instructions to reform the draft that came into this Parliament which was not satisfactory, so that a final Act can come down stopping up all of the loopholes. This is only showing you the devotion, the hardwork of the Barbados Labour Party despite the purveyors of rumours, the prophets of

doom, the preaching of what is the end of the world which you hear from the hon. member for St. Michael South West everytime he gets in here saying how hard it is for people. Since we have come into power you have got more people getting pensions than were getting under you and yet you hear how hard it is for people. Did you know it was hard in December last year when your pension was at the level that it was? These are the things we have to point out daily to them. All of a sudden it has become so hard. Had the hon. member taken time, he would have realised that it was not the Unclaimed Moneys Act only, if I may stick within the Rules for your purpose, Mr. Speaker, that needed amendment. One had also to look at putting amendments to similar Bills like the Miscellaneous Control of Prices Act to prevent the exercise of ministerial discretion where only friends would benefit. We are talking about when cases go before Court. There is a brand of cases that never get before Court as the hon. member will well recall, where you do not even have the right of appeal, where he would know and where you are in a position to prefer one of your friends over the others. You never heard any such thing. Now the hon. member is in Opposition I hope he will study these cases and do not ever allow the opportunity to occur again when one person gets about 90% of the cement licences, because ministerial discretion must be properly exercised and justice must not only be seen to be done but must be done, and the hon. member would not want to be found wanting in that respect; so I would wish to remind him very carefully that there is also a justice which Ministries like those he presided over....

Mr. TAITT: If the hon. member would give way on a point of elucidation, of what I was trying to convey to the hon. member, recently there was in this House an amendment to the Miscellaneous Controls Act and it sought to give the Minister more power; it took the power from the Chairman of the Prices Commission and gave it to the Minister. I am not sure that the hon. member understood what I was speaking about.
3.55 p.m.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: I understand quite clearly and I am warning the hon. member to bring forward proper amendments if he wants to be constructive, to prevent the sort of abuses that he would have recognised and could have corrected during the last 15 years of DLP rule, such as executive discretion at their level which would allow you to prefer one importer over another. That sort of thing. I would consider that to be constructive, not based on rumour but on instances that he would have known from the files. That is the sort of thing I would have wanted to hear him on.

Hon. C. L. BOLDEN: Mr. Speaker, I just want to correct the hon. member on one point. The

Miscellaneous Controls Act has not been amended in this House, at least not since I have been in here. What I know has happened is that we amended a section of the Prices Commission Act.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: Mr. Speaker, I am glad of the opportunity given me by the hon. member of St. Michael West to deal with one or two other matters that I was unable to deal with before.

Hon. F. G. SMITH: Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister has already spoken, how does he reply now? What is his right? It is the introducer of the Resolution who is entitled to reply. I do not know if he has special privileges in here, but it would be for the Deputy Prime Minister to reply since he introduced the Resolution.

Mr. SPEAKER: I am sure that the Hon. Leader of the Opposition is very familiar with Mays Parliamentary Procedure.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: Mr. Speaker, even Homer nodded, and therefore we must forgive the Leader of the Opposition.

Hon. F. G. SMITH: So I am coupled with Homer; thank you very much.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: Homer is an old timer with little or no future in modern society.

Now, Sir, I am obliged to the hon. member for St. Michael South West, but just to dispose of the Leader of the Opposition I would like to say that I appreciate the humanity with which his intervention was formed, and I assure him that the Attorney General and I will look at it. However, I would like to endorse what the Attorney General said, that matters affecting mental health present difficulties that matters affecting persons possessing their normal faculties do not. But nevertheless we will look at it.

In the matter of estates, it is already open to the court to grant probate of a small estate to anybody, whether in good mental health or not. There are various other matters where the Attorney General says the limits have been raised, and we will look at that. As far as the hon. member for St. Michael South West is concerned: I unfortunately on Friday night did not have the opportunity of dealing with lie number C-23, which is the lie in the third speech of a certain political meeting dealing with the proprietors of one armed bandits who had to come to see me personally. I would agree, Sir, that it would be monstrously trivial for a Minister to engage in if it were true, and I would just like to take a brief opportunity because it has been

given some circulation and it is a dangerous, evil, wicked, malicious, poisonous rumour.

If anybody reads the Act relating to gaming machines, they would observe that there is a Committee which sits on import licences, premises licences and machine licences; and you can make application to that committee. You may then appeal from that committee to the Minister of Finance if you are dissatisfied with the determination of the committee. I would like to go on record as saying that with one exception — and I will tell the House of that exception — no person who has applied for a gaming machine licence has ever been into my office or has ever approached me personally about the licence. Let us get that absolutely clear. The one exception relates to a gentleman who carries on business in Spry Street. He applied for a licence for 40 or 50 machines; he was granted a lesser number, he appealed and he received a letter from the Ministry of Finance saying his appeal would be heard on a particular date; and that if he wanted, he could attend at my office on that date with his lawyer and witnesses. He attended at my office with his lawyer and witnesses. I was attended by officials of the Ministry of Finance. I took down the evidence, I heard his lawyer's submissions and I refused his appeal. And as far as I know, certainly in my time, none of the persons who have applied for gaming machines licences have ever been in the Prime Minister's office in my time. That is all I can say since September 2, 1976. And I would just like to issue a warning. I am the Appeal Court, so to speak, in this matter and I am not going to hear from anybody anything about an application for gaming machine licences, because they may apply and if they appeal it will have to come before me. And I would like to say something else. There is a whole range of responsibility given to Ministers involving dealing with people who stand to gain or lose from their decisions. There are Town Planning decisions, import licence decisions, there are perhaps decisions even in the Ministry of Education. But I have never known any member of my party so insulting to the hon. member for St. Michael South West as to get up and say that people who apply for import licences go into his office personally. He cannot get up and deny that. The Ministers responsible for Town Planning in the previous regime cannot truthfully deny that they have seen people applying for Town Planning permission in their office. If the hon. member has something to say he can get up and say it; and I would prefer him to get up and say it outside. Which leads me to another point: I have heard that the Hon. Leader of the Opposition has advised the hon. member for St. Michael South not to apologise for a certain thing. I am reminded in this instance of the two men who went to rob a Chinese shop in Trinidad. The first fellow made a little hole and put in his hand, not knowing that the Chinaman was

waiting inside with a chopper. And the Chinaman chopped off his hand. The second man asked "What's wrong"? And the first man replied "I can't reach the latch, you come and see if you can get it undone." The advice which the Leader of the Opposition is giving the member for St. Michael South savours exactly of that experience with the Chinaman. And let me tell the hon. member for St. Michael South that he had better appeal to the Chinaman and not to his partner in crime.

On the matter of price controls, this is something that must concern us too, and I must regret that the cooperation of three Ministers of Government in the matters of import licensing and price control — that is the Minister for Consumer Affairs, the Minister for External Trade and the Minister of Finance and Planning should be brought into a debate about the trivialisation of Government.

4.05 p.m.

I regard inflation as a major problem, and I believe it is no reflection on this Government if three members of the Government come together to give assistance to all the Departments concerned with price control, import review and import licensing and so on. I believe that the hon. member for St. Michael South West's reputation might stand higher if he had taken some advice and assistance from people who know better than he. It is not that anybody is thought to need the assistance or to need the advice, but you are dealing with difficult matters.

There is no interference with price control day-to-day matters as is well known, but there is an Import Licence Review Committee and that Committee is also charged with giving the appropriate advice in the appropriate quarters on the level of imports into this country and how far price control is desirable when you are dealing with questions of imports substitution and so on. There has to be an input into that Committee from the three Ministers concerned: mine because it deals with the overall purview of the economy, the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, and the Ministry of External Trade. On that Committee are also represented the Central Bank and the Ministry of Finance as a whole, and I believe that that Committee has nothing to be ashamed of in its work and the way it has been able to rationalise and examine the import situation *vis-a-vis* the economic position of the country at the present time.

If the hon. member would prefer us to let inflation get out of hand and go to 40%; if he would prefer us to get in the condition of Jamaica, which went so far that the guillotine had to be applied when at an earlier stage you might have been able to hold up your hand and stop the onrush and the collapse of the foreign reserves of the Government; if he would prefer us to do

that, then all I can say is thank God that the people recognised ill for ill and good for good on September, 2, 1976, in that particular context.

Price control has been a difficult subject. The hon. member said that inflation in this country had reached 10.2% on August 31, 1976. I would not call that two lies. Maybe, those who analysed it called it two lies. He merely got it wrong. It reached 10.3% on September 30, 1977, but, faced with that situation, all concerned said that we had to fight against this, and fighting is what he never did when he was in charge of prices. We went out and we looked around. Why are sweet potatoes costing 75 cents a pound? Why are onions costing such and such? How dare the Supermarkets to raise the hams to \$6.50 and so on? We reduced prices during the month of October by over 3%, food prices falling by the greatest amount they ever fell in one month! Of course, that is according to the preliminary figures supplied to me last month. Whether they prove to be accurate or otherwise will turn out in due course. I have no reason to disbelieve their accuracy. Now, 5%, Sir, was the projected fall in food prices during the month of October, 1977. That is the measure of how we are fighting at price control, and a rise of 40% in 1974 is the measure of what the hon. member for St. Michael South West.....

Mr. TAITT: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker. Surely the Prime Minister must be inadvertently misleading this House. If he said that the hon. member in 1974 achieved inflation of 40%, he owes it to the House to go on and to point out that 1973 to 1974 was the period of the oil crisis. He never does that.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: He says that it is a point of order, but I would have heard it on a point of elucidation, or information, or just plain interruption. The hon. member, however, should be aware that Barbados, of all the countries in the world, I believe, had the fifth worst record for inflation during that year. He can look at any United Nations publication and he will see that, where the prices of our imports were rising less than 20%, the domestic prices were rising at double the rate. If he is not familiar, I will send him a copy of last month's U.N. Bulletin, if he wants to get information. It has been analysed by my Parliamentary Secretary, but I do not believe it was ever published. To tell the truth, Sir, we have drawn a curtain over the past in so many cases that we are even prepared to draw a curtain over the hon. member for St. Michael South West. Even his misdeeds we will allow with the effluxion of time to erase from our unhappy memories in respect to price control matters.

Mr. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. I object to the Prime Minister talking about my misdeeds. Is he speaking about me in my ministerial capacity? I

consider that to be a slur, or an insulting statement on my performance. I ask him to withdraw it.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: Mr. Speaker, I will withdraw any reference to ministerial misdeeds. I really did not realise that the hon. member, perhaps, might not object so strenuously if I said personal misdeeds because he is only objecting when I say.....

Mr. TAITT: Again, Mr. Speaker, in the matter of personal misdeeds, the Prime Minister is not in a position to speak about me, and I insist, Sir, that he withdraws the remarks.

Mr. SPEAKER: You are now bringing him into the realm of opinion.

Mr. TAITT: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker. The Prime Minister spoke about my personal misdeeds, and I ask that it be withdrawn.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: I am not Tom Clarke. I accused him of nothing, Sir. I did not say when he went down on his hands and knees what he did and so on. I accused him of nothing whatsoever. I do not know what he is worried about.

Mr. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. Is the hon. member going to withdraw the remarks? I did not hear your ruling, Mr. Speaker. He spoke about my personal misdeeds after having spoken of my Ministerial misdeeds.

Mr. SPEAKER: I told you that you were now bringing him into the realm of opinion. You went on to clarify the position by saying what the Prime Minister could say and what he could not prove about you.

Mr. TAITT: With due respect, Mr. Speaker, I did not attempt to clarify any situation. There was a preamble to my asking that he withdraw the remark about my personal misdeeds.

Mr. SPEAKER: The notes will show that you went on to say what he could prove and what he could not prove about you.

Mr. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, with due respect, I.....

Mr. SPEAKER: Take your seat.

Mr. TAITT: Certainly.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: I do not know what he wants me to withdraw. What does he want me to withdraw? (*Asides.*) I am prepared to withdraw any possible thing that has been said in here about the hon. member. Is it something about Sam Gibbs and the

meat licences? Do you want me to withdraw something about Leo Leacock and the cement licences? What does he want me to withdraw? I withdraw them all. As I have said, I cannot regard price control as a trivial matter and, therefore, I have no apologies whatsoever for any steps that the Government may have taken to control prices in this Island. I believe that the movement of the retail price index during last month, and I very much hope this month, will reflect that the Government has done what no previous Government had the understanding, the force, the initiative or the drive to do. It is, in the face of heavy wage pressure on the cost of living you have to fight against it and resist it. What causes domestic inflation is the capacity that people have to pay more for things which are in temporary or short-term supply. It is against that kind of pressure that the present Government has been operating its price control.

Mr. Speaker, I urge that the House gives this Bill its second reading.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: I beg to second that.

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

On the motion of Hon. H. B. St. JOHN, seconded by Hon. C. L. BOLDEN, Mr. Speaker left the Chair and the House went into Committee on the Bill, Mr. ODLE in the Chair.

Clause 1 was called.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that clause 1 stand part.

Hon. C. L. BOLDEN: I beg to second that.

Mr. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, just one small point on clause 1. In his reply the Rt. Hon. Prime Minister indicated that Barbados in 1974 had

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: On a point of order, Sir, the hon. member is being irrelevant.

Mr. TAITT: How can I be irrelevant when he has not even heard what I want to say?

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: What has 1974 got to do with the short title of an Act, Sir? The short title of the Act is that this Act may be cited as the Unclaimed and Undistributed Moneys (Amendment) Act, 1977.

Mr. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, the Prime Minister wound up the debate, and he wound up the debate on this Act. It is a small question which I wish to ask the

Prime Minister about the title of the Act. The Attorney General cannot essay to speak for me in advance. May I continue, Sir?

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: If I did speak for him in advance, Sir, he would be sounding sensible.

Mr. TAITT: May I continue, Mr. Chairman? I am wondering if the Prime Minister has access to the Central Bank of Barbados Report, December 31, 1974, which they say is their bible.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: On a point of order, Sir. I move that clause 1 stand part.

Hon. C. L. BOLDEN: I beg to second that.

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

Clause 2 was called and passed.

On the motion of Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS, seconded by Hon. H. deB. FORDE, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported the passing of one Bill in Committee, and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

On the separate motions of Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS, seconded by Hon. H. deB. FORDE, the Bill was read a third time and passed.

STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: I beg to move that we revert to the question of ministerial statements. There is a statement to be made which was not available at the particular period of time.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: I beg to second that.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, a Resolution was passed by this House on 17th May, 1976 during the last Session.

Hon. F. G. SMITH: On a point of order. I have no objection, but we do not do it so. I am Leader of the Opposition and nobody asked me if I have any objection. I am not having any, but it must be properly put, because the time for ministerial statements is passed, and therefore he must apply to you, you must draw it to the attention of the House, and if the House does not object he can go right ahead. (*Aside*). I was not here, therefore I must object. There is no heading under which you can make a ministerial statement at this point unless the House gives permission for you to do it, and therefore it should be done the proper way.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: I specifically asked His Honour.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Leader of the Opposition knows too much and knows too much about nothing. A ministerial statement can be made at any time provided it does not interrupt the business of the House.

Hon. F. G. SMITH: Mr. Speaker, now, now. You are Speaker of this House and you will not insult me in here. You are the Speaker of this House, you are supposed to protect the minorities in this House, you must not make those insulting remarks.

Mr. SPEAKER: Nobody can insult the Leader of the Opposition.

Hon. F. G. SMITH: You may think so, but I can insult you too.

Mr. SPEAKER: Just take your seat.

Hon. F. G. SMITH: No, no, I am not standing for that in this House. You are the Speaker of this House, you are supposed to uphold the rights, and you should be the last one to insult members, when the Rules say you must not make offensive or nasty remarks, and you must not do it to me.

Mr. SPEAKER: Will the Leader of the Opposition please take his seat?

Hon. F. G. SMITH: I am going to take my seat if you withdraw, or I will tell you something about yourself today.

Mr. SPEAKER: Will the Leader of the Opposition please take his seat?

Hon. F. G. SMITH: I am not taking that from you or anybody like you. I am very annoyed.

Mr. SPEAKER: Will the Leader of the Opposition please take his seat?

Hon. F. G. SMITH: Mr. Speaker, are you apologising to me for your insulting remarks? I just want to know, otherwise I will tell you something about yourself and walk out.

Mr. SPEAKER: Will the Leader of the Opposition please take his seat?

Hon. F. G. SMITH: But you must be the Speaker and must carry yourself with dignity. You must not insult people like that, who the hell you think you are?

Mr. SPEAKER: I must draw to the attention of the House that the Hon. Leader of the Opposition is obstructing the business of this House.

Hon. F. G. SMITH: You will have to throw me out. You know it is an insult.
4.25 p.m.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: A Resolution was passed by the House.....

(Hon. F. G. SMITH) Insulting me?)

Mr. SPEAKER: All right. The hon. member for St. Lucy — you can ask him now what happened to him. The hon. member for St. Lucy — if I take the appropriate action against the hon. member for St. Lucy this afternoon, he will again say that he did nothing and he will again tell the public that the Chair has something against him. I want to warn the hon. member for St. Lucy. I am not deaf. I am not going to be the hypocrite that some others who have sat in this Chair have proven themselves to be. I am not going to be that type of hypocrite. I have heard what the hon. member for St. Lucy has had to say, and understand it. I am giving you a chance today. Not half a chance on another occasion if you do such a thing. I warn you. You can say you did nothing; but I am just letting the public understand. (*Asides*). The hon. Minister can continue.

Hon. H. B. ST. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, a Resolution was passed in the House on the 17th May, 1976, during the last parliamentary session, urging the Government to consider such steps as may be appropriate to convert and develop Archer's Bay, St. Lucy, into a National Park.

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS RESUMED

Hon. H. B. ST. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that we now revert to Government Business.

Hon. C. L. BOLDEN: I beg to second that.

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

Item No. 5 was called.

Mr. SPEAKER: Item No. 5 is the instant Order of the Day.

BILL TO PROVIDE FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF AGREEMENT RE CARIBBEAN FOOD PLAN

Hon. C. L. BOLDEN: Mr. Speaker, some time between 1974–75 the Heads of Government of the

Caribbean Community decided that there should be some institution which would look after consolidating the food production in the region. In October, 1976, the Council of Ministers accepted the Agreement which was drawn up to bring into force what is now known as the Caribbean Food Corporation. Barbados on the 24th November, 1976, signed the instrument accepting, which was delivered to the Caribbean Secretariat in November.

Under Article 37 of the Agreement, Mr. Speaker, each country must pass legislation in order to discharge its obligations under that Agreement and the legislation should deal with the status, the immunities, the exemptions and the privileges of the Corporation and its members while operating in individual territories.

Barbados appointed as its directors to the Caribbean Food Corporation Mr. Neville Osbourne of the Sugar Producers' Association with alternate director Mr. Russell Kellman, Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Agriculture. Under the Agreement Barbados' contribution to the Corporation is \$500,000 (T.T.). Mr. Speaker, the Bill before the House is now to pass the necessary legislation in accordance with Article 37 of the Agreement; but it is necessary at this point that I make certain things clear in respect of the Caribbean Food Corporation.

Certain territories have been designated to produce certain commodities for the whole Caribbean region. Barbados' contribution will be the production of Black Belly Sheep and high quality calves for the various regions in the Caribbean. The Caribbean Food Corporation has its headquarters in Trinidad. Premises have been allocated by the Government of Trinidad and Tobago; and the Chairman of the Corporation is a Mr. Fuller who is looking after the business of the Corporation.

There have been statements in the "Trinidad Guardian", I think it is, and in the "Bomb" newspaper of a statement which has been attributed to the Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago. I understand that that statement has been denied; and quite recently — I think as recently as yesterday — there has been another denial coming out of the office of the Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago that the newspapers had incorrectly reported the statement made by Dr. Williams; but for the benefit of people in Barbados who may be worried as to what part Barbados is playing in the Corporation it is therefore necessary that I make some disclosure as to our position in the Corporation.

Mr. Speaker, when the first meeting of the Corporation was called in Trinidad it was on the 6th of May, 1977, and a decision was taken by the directors of the Corporation that the countries that had signed

the acceptance to the Agreement should pay their monies to the Corporation not later than the 21st of May, 1977; but it was recognised that because of the inflationary position in the Caribbean that many countries would not be able to meet their commitment by that time. A decision was taken at that meeting that countries should opt for one or another position, in that they could pay their contributions at one instalment into the Central Bank of their respective countries in the name of the Caribbean Food Corporation or they could pay in two instalments and the Corporation would draw down such sums as were necessary if and when they had to use the money. Barbados opted for the second position in that we decided to pay our contribution in two instalments.

The record will show, Mr. Speaker, that on the 16th of May Barbados paid into the Central Bank of Barbados \$250,000. There is a copy of the letter from the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Agriculture; and the Central Bank on the same day wrote a letter to the Caribbean Food Corporation indicating that it had received the first portion of Barbados' call in the bank; and it set out certain positions.
4.35 p.m.

On 23rd May a letter came back from the Chairman and the Acting Secretary *pro tem* of the Caribbean Food Corporation giving the Central Bank of Barbados the authority to deal with that \$250,000 from the point of view of investment until that sum was required by the Corporation. Also on 31st August Barbados made its second payment into the Central Bank of Barbados and on the same day notified the Chairman of the Caribbean Food Corporation that the payment had been made. The Caribbean Food Corporation acknowledged receipt of the letters subsequent to the letter from the Central Bank which was signed by Mr. Phillips.

Now, Mr. Speaker, we have done in Barbados everything that we have been required to do under the Caribbean Food Corporation plan. Our directors have attended the meetings in Trinidad and we have been very active in the operation of the Corporation. The Attorney General has received information from Trinidad that the report which appeared in the newspapers in Trinidad were not the statements that had been made by the Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago. If the Attorney General so desires, he can make his statements as far as that is concerned. But it shows, Mr. Speaker, that despite the fact that Trinidad is now a very rich country with its petro dollars, the Caribbean press seems not to be able to report accurately what is said by many people, not only Government Ministers, but several other people. One begins to wonder whether or not the press reports what it considers matters which would create some sort of atmosphere in the community, and I only believe that

they do it for the simple reason of selling a lot of newspapers. I would not like to attribute any malpractices to journalists, but what I would like to say is that in a matter like the Caribbean Food Corporation which affects the entire region, because when you look at what the region is importing in terms of food, when you look at the acreage of land in the region that could be put to profitable production, I would think that rather than a newspaper seeking to report in such a way that would break up the community, they would lean over backwards and check every report that is given to the editor to make sure that it is correct.

I was in Jamaica last week and there is a big enquiry going on over the differences of opinion between the Reporter in a newspaper in Jamaica and the Editorial Board as to what stand the newspaper should take. It is something we all have got to ask, what is happening in the region. Are we trying to pull ourselves together for the benefit of the region or are we going to destroy ourselves by irresponsible reporting?

Mr. Speaker, I have nothing more to say on the matter. The Bill has been circulated and if there are any points any hon. member of the Opposition would like to raise, I would gladly answer them.

I beg to move that this Bill be now read a second time.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Speaker, in moving to second this Bill I wish to say that perhaps the concept of the Caribbean Food Corporation is one of the most important regional concepts that has come on the scene for a long time and that the full implementation of this project would have a very tremendous effect on the daily lives of all of our citizens be they farmer or indeed consumers. I think it is an acknowledged fact today that the father of the idea was the Rt. Hon. Dr. Eric Williams, Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago, and indeed he has given his considerable prestige to the concept, and I believe that he has also given the full support of his Government to pushing the idea of a Food Corporation for the region. I do not think that people recognise that the Caribbean is an importer to the tune of over \$1 Billion annually in foodstuffs of one sort or another from outside the region. When we import so massively, not only are we importing for our benefit and our livelihood, but we also to some extent are importing to our detriment and to our inconvenience, because we are importing the high inflationary costs of the industrialised world, we are also importing to the detriment of our balance of payments position, and we are also importing in circumstances where we are failing to use our very vital natural resources and indeed some of the limited natural resources which we have in this region. I think we tend to forget that there are several thousands of farmers of one nature or another in the whole Caribbean region and in

the Caribbean region I include of course Belize and Guiana, and that if one takes the land mass of the Caribbean countries together as a natural resource of land, there is a vast opportunity for us to become very self-sufficient in food in this part of the world, and not only can we become self-sufficient if we are assiduous about our business, but I think we are in the position where we can become exporters to other parts of the world including both the developed and underdeveloped world, particularly the Third World which are in need of foodstuffs.

For those of us who follow the proceedings of international organisations such as the Food and Agricultural Organisation, it saddens to learn that there is going to be a shortage of food in some regions of the world although in others there may be an over-production of grain at any one time, and that mankind seems not to be able to use effectively the resources which are made available to us by nature and by deity, and it is in this respect I think that we would have recognised in the Barbados Labour Party the necessity to give full support to the concept of the Caribbean Food Corporation.

I should like to take this opportunity to commend the Minister of Agriculture and the Minister of External Trade and Caribbean Affairs for the effort they have been making with their Caricom partners to get this organisation moving ahead. Let me say that a few days ago my counterpart in Trinidad and Tobago, the Hon. John Donaldson, Minister of Foreign Affairs, took the opportunity of telephoning me to clarify the statement which was attributed to his Prime Minister.

4.45 p.m.

He read verbatim from a script and even offered to send me the particulars. I was more than satisfied that the Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago was not giving as his opinion the view that Barbados had not paid its share as called for under the agreement. What he said was that he had received a letter from a Mr. Fuller who said that on a particular day Trinidad was the only territory that had paid up; but which went on to say that on other dates other countries had paid, including Barbados. This is a completely different situation. And it is unfortunate that people are not reported correctly in instances such as these, because this could have been another instance where it could have been made to appear that Barbados and Trinidad have very bad relations between them or that we are slogging away at each other. Let me assure the hon. member for St. Michael South West who likes to get himself into the record by remonstrating while he sits in his seat; let me assure him that the bad days of Barrow versus Williams are long since past. This Government does not conduct its Caricom or international relations on the basis of personalities but on the basis of principle. And if we take a decision on the basis of principle we explain it to our Caricom partners without becoming offensive and

without having any problems about our personal relations. And I say without fear of contradiction today that the relationship between Barbados and Trinidad and Tobago has never been on a better and warmer ground than at the present time, and I believe that any Minister in Trinidad and Tobago would confirm this. We are in frequent consultation with that great Republic on many matters. We have made requests of them and they have been granted. They have consulted us and made requests of us which have been granted. Where we have disagreed on points of view we have been able to explain the situation without being offensive. And I think that it is acknowledged today that the commitment of Barbados to regionalism at all levels can not be challenged.

Mr. Speaker, you would not be surprised by this statement. You yourself know that you preside in this Chair seeing as composing the Government those who fought valiantly in the Barbados Labour Party, and in the Under Forties for the regional movement and regional commitment. We were convinced then, as we are now, that the true destiny of the Caribbean people must lead to close association at all levels, and we are dedicated to achieving this and to laying the foundation for close political integration in the Caribbean. A lot of people scoffed at us then, but events have proved that we were right in 1964, and that is why now the opportunity is given to those of us in the Government both in the front bench and on the back bench, we are devoted to this concept and we will go all out to ensure that regionalism triumphs in this area. The Minister of Caribbean Affairs daily goes out of his way, whenever there is a problem to, try to settle it without rancour. When we came into power, we had one or two incidents with the Republic of Guyana which were over-dramatised by some people. Indeed on an occasion when we would have looked for the support of the Democratic Labour Party and its erstwhile leader of the Government who now sits as a member here, he was throwing oil on troubled waters; he was not interested in cementing good relations; he was interested in short-term political matters. But again I say that the consultation today between Barbados and Guyana is constant, and that there is no friction existing between our countries. We have consulted at all levels from time to time in the interest of the wider Caribbean, and the same applies to the other Caribbean countries; not only on the international, but at the regional level and at the bi-lateral level there are several things that are going for us. Obviously, Mr. Speaker, any regional movement will have its high points and its low points. I consider that the Caribbean Food Corporation, if and when it becomes an effective organism, would be a high point of the Caribbean Integration Movement.

But despite the difficulties confronting the Caribbean today, looking at the position as a historian and someone interested in international politics and in the concept of regionalism, Caricom has succeeded at a much

faster pace and with a greater amount of success than similar movements in other parts of the world. I believe the hon. member for St. Michael South studied the East African Corporation as part of his thesis. Only the other day we were looking at the problems confronting that organisation. The problem is that we West Indians are often apt to over-dramatise our difficulties and to undermine by rumours, malicious gossip and by bad talk the successes that we have achieved. There is too much of that. You can get it almost as part of the psyche of the West Indian today. And in doing so we destroy our own security and our own strength and vision. But if you pick up the learned international journals, be it of the World Bank, United Nations, PAHO, UNESCO, you will perceive from day to day constant reference to the success of Caricom and the example which it holds for other regional movements. And that is why the Barbados Labour Party, as well as the Government of this country are firmly committed to regionalism. And each one of us will do all in our power, even to the extent of taking insults regardless of whether they be deliberate or accidental, from anybody in the Caricom region, to make sure that it succeeds, and to work in a dedicated way for the achievement of the true West Indian personality.

Mr. Speaker, you know why it is important? As a little boy I followed very closely the careers of some of our great people. Marryshow comes to mind; Cipriani, Hugh Wooding, and Barbados' leading and outstanding statesman, the late Sir Grantley Adams. He took a lot of insults because he was dedicated to the concept of the West Indian personality and the West Indian man. He took insults regionally, he took them here in Barbados from his own people; he took them from the hon. member for St. John, from the former hon. member for St. Andrew, all in the cause of regionalism. But he was a dedicated man, and history has shown that his vision and concept were right for this country then as it is right for it now. And if there is one thing I would ask Barbadians to do it is to stop being so parochial that we cannot see that we become bigger and better and greater in a wider association which gives us the strength economically and politically and in terms of human resources to be able to talk to, grapple with and stand up as equals with other people in all parts of the world. That is why we are not allowing any newspaper to create difficulties between ourselves and any other country in this area.

Despite present short term problems confronting the Corporation, it will succeed. Only recently Guyana passed legislation dealing with the subject. Belize has also just done so.

4.55 p.m.

If hon. members wish a copy of the text of the speech made by the Minister of Foreign Affairs in Trinidad, which agrees with everything I said, then they must read yesterday's *Advocate*, last week's *Guardian*, or

I will get hold of a copy and send it to anyone who would like to read it. Let me say, without contradiction, that there is no dispute between Trinidad and Tobago and ourselves about the Caribbean Food Corporation, and that Barbados does not intend, as indeed I am assured by the Minister of Foreign Affairs in Trinidad and Tobago, that Trinidad and Tobago does not intend to allow statements misreported to sour the good relations which we have tried to cultivate and to build up. We have not got the legacy that has been left in some regard by the last Prime Minister in his particular feeling about Dr. Williams.

I recall one famous conference at which the hon. member for St. John was presiding, and on that day he was in a caustic mood and lectured all of his Caribbean partners. At the end of it the Right Hon. Dr. Williams said: "Now, shut up your b..... mouth. I have heard enough from you. We make decisions, or you get out of here and the conference is finished." We will never get to that stage, because we do not go to lecture. We go to discuss, we go to give our different points of view, we go to hear their points of view, we go to compromise where we can, and then we part as friends. It is possible in international affairs to disagree without being offensive. It is possible to compromise without losing self-respect, and it is possible to be firm without appearing as a coward. I think this is how we go about the business of the Caribbean Food Corporation, or our Caricom relationship and, indeed, of our wider relationships.

It gives me pleasure therefore, Mr. Speaker, to second the Second Reading of this Bill convinced that the Caribbean Food Corporation will become a reality, satisfied that it is a correct project for this region, and dedicated to making sure that it becomes of some tremendous benefit to the relief of the poor West Indian consumer and the West Indian farmer.

Mr. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, clearly we on this side are unlikely to vote against this particular Bill for the simple reason, as the information submitted by the Hon. Minister when he was introducing the Bill would suggest, that this Bill arises out of the action taken by the Democratic Labour Party back in 1974-75. Mr. Speaker, I can sympathise with those hon. members sitting on the front bench, who might not be familiar with the unwritten record of this particular concept, because the concept was talked about among leaders of the Caribbean for a long time before it was formulated and, as a result, those of us who participated in some of the informal discussions — there was nothing formal about the discussions and, therefore, the concept was, in fact, born in 1974. It came to embryo stage in 1975, and it is very significant if this was a measure in which the Barbados Labour Party Government could envisage some kind of political plus, they would have been quick to point out that the authorship of this Bill really rests with the previous Government.

Of course, all of their speakers so far have indicated, that the Caribbean Food Corporation, commonly called the Caribbean Food Plan is likely to redound to the eventual benefit of the Caribbean region, and so the whole question of its authorship unless outlined by this side is left abegging. I have to agree with the Attorney-General that it is one of the most important concepts, perhaps the most important concept, that has come on the scene of the Caribbean for the first time. It is precisely because we believe it to be a most important matter that we conceive with our brothers in the Caribbean the Regional Food Plan, and it is for those reasons that we have faith that the Caribbean Food Plan, given the goodwill of the rest of the Caribbean can succeed.

Mr. Speaker, let me say that contrary to the Attorney-General, contrary to the Minister, and contrary to the attitude which they seek to suggest, I believe the Caribbean Food Corporation has been moving much too slowly. I believe that if the Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago had not made a statement which was reported, we would, probably, not see this Bill as fast as we have seen it. Mr. Speaker, I read in the newspapers a statement made by the Prime Minister — the alleged statement made by the Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago — arising out of the clarification. I see no reason based on what the verbatim statement says. I see no reason for the Minister, for the Attorney-General or anybody else, joining the Prime Minister in condemnation of the Press. The Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago, according to the verbatim statement, was speaking about the relationship between Trinidad and the rest of the Caribbean, and he was conveying the impression — that is what I read, Sir — that Guyana and other Caribbean countries had not fulfilled their obligations. He seems to me, Mr. Speaker, to be expressing some kind of disgust that the Caribbean Food plan was, in fact, lagging behind and that feet were being dragged. That was the gravamen of the statement which the Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago made.

It is desirable that the Minister of Barbados should seek to communicate to the people of Barbados that the relations between Barbados and the other Caribbean countries are excellent. I think that is a desirable thing. I do not think it is true. I do not believe it, but I think it is desirable for them to seek to have the people of Barbados believe it. If, in fact, we had the good relations that we should have, we in the region would have been farther along the road towards the goals which the Attorney-General, who seems constantly to be begging the case for the Government so beautifully. His goals are the goals of any person who has the interest of the region at heart. The goals in the preamble of the United Nations are the goals, the lofty goals, of any person who is interested in humans anywhere in the world, but the actions taken by people in authority towards the

achievement of those goals can give you a greater incite into their real beliefs, if you would pay attention to those matters.

5.05 p.m.

The Attorney General said words to the effect that the days of Barrow versus Williams are over. I dare suppose then, Sir, we can expect at any moment an announcement from the Barbados Government that BWIA will become the regional airline. I dare suppose we can expect any moment an announcement from the Barbados Government that they will ensure that Trinidad & Tobago does not at any time in the future send back to this country a plane load of yams or a plane load of any produce or any other item which we send to them. I hope, too, that we can look forward to the Ministers of our Government going to conferences and coming back from those conferences with reports of comradeship, with reports of good relations between our Ministers of the Barbados Government and the Ministers of the Caribbean. I do not expect to hear the Deputy Premier of St. Vincent any longer castigating the Government of Barbados in the manner which a few weeks ago he did. I do not know why they come in this House and try to give the impression week after week that they have excellent relations with the people in the Caribbean. As much as the Attorney General said that the days of Barrow versus Williams are over, I cannot recall at any time Barrow backing his jacket to beat any Minister anywhere in the Caribbean. I wonder if the Minister for Caribbean Affairs will get up and explain the information which came out that he backed his jacket in Trinidad & Tobago. I hope that he will confirm that it is not so.

Mr. Speaker, while I am on this point of their statements, every time we have to discuss an economic matter in this House the Prime Minister — I am very sorry he is not here, I would have preferred him to be here — every time the Prime Minister gets up in this House he makes innuendoes, he talks about cement and he mentions Sam Gibbs. I issue a warning to the Prime Minister that if he continues to provoke me, indeed before this Session of Parliament is finished, I am going to tell the people of Barbados about Sam Gibbs and the Prime Minister. Yes, I issue a warning, and those on that side can tell him that I will tell the people not in this House of Assembly, I will tell them out there on the hustings about the Prime Minister and Sam Gibbs. I would like the Prime Minister to go outside on the platform.....

Mr. SPEAKER: Please get on with the debate.

Mr. TAITT: I am trying, Sir. I would like the Prime Minister to come outside, leave the privilege.....

Mr. SPEAKER: Please get on with the Caribbean Food Plan.

Mr. TAITT: outside of privilege and say some of the things on economic matters and matters relating to me which he says in here.

The Caribbean Food Plan, Mr. Speaker, is not likely to succeed when you can have a situation like the Prime Minister of Guyana passing through Barbados and the only person — on the 31st October, to be exact — passing through Barbados on his way back home and the highest level of person who went to the airport to meet him is, I think, a Foreign Service Officer. Mr. Speaker, they would not understand what is wrong with that. It is common protocol, and I believe the Attorney General himself would confirm this in his more sober moments, he would confirm that on the question of a Head of Government passing through the territory of another Government, that it is customary for a person a little higher than a Junior Foreign Service Officer to go and meet that person. There are matters of substance, Mr. Speaker, which only Prime Ministers can discuss, or which only Ministers can discuss, and I put it to you, Mr. Speaker, that the Prime Minister of Guyana is bound to feel some kind of sleight that the highest official that went to the airport to meet him was some clerical officer or some foreign service officer in the Ministry of External Affairs. You see, Sir, some people cannot understand these matters because they do not wish to, and they can shout and holler, but it is precisely that attitude which leads us continually to have bad relations between Barbados and other Caribbean countries.

They talk about good relations. The Attorney General says we must stop being so parochial and recognise the benefits of regionalisation. I hope that the front bench Ministers who deal with the Caribbean have stopped being parochial. I hope that they begin to recognise what regionalisation means to the Caribbean Community, because Mr. Speaker you must remember that within days of coming to office they were making insulting statements about other Caribbean Governments. Within days of coming to office we had them accusing the Government of Jamaica of dishonesty. You cannot engender the kind of warm relationship which the Attorney General sought to give the impression in this House that exists, you cannot engender that kind of relationship with the kind of hard nose attitude which some of the Ministers of the present Barbados Government obviously consider to be the right attitudes.

Mr. Speaker, the Caribbean Food Plan is much more than the signing of a document, it is much more than the passing of a piece of legislation. The Caribbean Food Plan — and I am not going to educate the Minister of Agriculture, I am not going to do it. The

Minister of Agriculture got in here some time ago and said that I went to night school, and therefore anyone who went to night school would not be able to educate him, Sir — the Minister of Agriculture in these matters is totally innocent. It is not his fault, Sir, and therefore that is why I do not get into any contention with him in these matters; I do not intend to.

The Minister of External Trade, who deals in Caribbean matters, claims to have a firmer grasp of these matters than the Minister of Agriculture, but I must confess that I have not heard any statements from him over the last year that suggest he has become fully *au fait* with the matters of state of the Caribbean, but I am waiting because it takes a little time to grasp these matters, and in due course he is going to be able to deal with them. I feel certain. He must understand though that getting up and jumping up and shouting and announcing that we have made progress does not mean that we have made progress. We have to make progress first of all in cementing the relationships between the Caribbean peoples. I put it to you that the cementation of relationships in this country.....(Asides). Yes, I want to talk about cement but we cannot do it in this particular debate. I am sure Mr. Speaker would not wish me to talk about who imports cement in Barbados now. I am sure Mr. Speaker would not wish me to deal with that at all. A single person in this country. Why do they not come out on the hustings?

Mr. SPEAKER: Let us talk about food now, let us talk about the Food Plan.

Mr. TAITT: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I have to stay with the food because there are times when I wish that it were possible — you know, Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Minister of Health ought to explain to some of her colleagues that it is not possible to have retroactive birth control. You know, Mr. Speaker, if there were retroactive birth control there are certain hon. members who we might not see now, Sir?

Mr. SPEAKER: Food, please, let us deal with the food.

Mr. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, as I was saying, this Bill is much more than merely the passage of a Bill, this Bill is of importance not necessarily to those of us who are here now, it is of importance indeed to the whole Caribbean regionalisation plan. Let us not bother to insist that it is conceived by the person who is most maligned on this side of the House, let us not spend any time saying that the former Prime Minister is accorded outside of the circles of the Barbados Labour Party highest honours for having conceived the Caribbean Free Trade Area and having seen it through by his insistence to the Caribbean Community.

5.15 p.m.

Let us not bother to insist that when it was conceived who was most maligned on this side of the House. Let us not spend any time saying that the former Prime Minister is accorded outside of the circles of the Barbados Labour Party highest honours for having conceived the Caribbean Free Trade Area and having seen it through by his insistence to the Caribbean Community and looking forward.....

Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair and Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER took the Chair.

Mr. TAITT: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I welcome you to the Chair. It seems that whenever I am in full flight you are the person who comes to preside over the proceedings. The Caribbean Community which is being widened or which ought to be widened in due course and which certainly must see a deepening over the next few years if we are to be successful, is of much more importance than mere political statements between one side and the other. In fact, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I believe that we would have no contention at all if the Barbados Labour Party people had not — quite inadvertently — I believe — I do not wish to think that they were deliberately silly — if they had not set out as part of their plan to attack the Caribbean Community, if they had seen the Caribbean Community as a concept outside the pale of ordinary political back and forth, if they had seen it — *(Asides)* Mr. Deputy Speaker please protect me from the back benchers on the other side.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: You must never assume that the Chair is not doing its duty.

Mr. TAITT: Very well, Mr. Deputy Speaker. The next time you hear anyone, any bandits, I am sure that you will deal with them, Sir. As I was saying, if in fact they had not started off on a course of attacking the Caribbean Community and making statements only to discover when they got into Government that they cannot fulfill some of the commitments they made in relation to the Caribbean, then we would find that life in Barbados would be a little easier because of the good relationships that would now exist between the contries that make up the Caribbean Community.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we are going to be producing black belly sheep and we are going to be producing high quality calves. I have not heard the Minister say, although I have no doubt that he intends to say — I have not heard him say what steps he intends to take to fulfill Barbados' requirements under the Caribbean Food Plan. We heard earlier today about Agriculture. Mr. Deputy Speaker, in order for the Food Plan to be successful, we in Barbados are going to have to be self sufficient in certain commodities. One of those commodities that is a natural for Barbados is the commodity pork. I think that it is a disgrace, Mr.

Deputy Speaker. I think it is a burning shame and a disgrace that after one year that Government over there has not been able to straighten out the Pig Industry in this country. *(Asides.)*

Mr. Deputy Speaker, anyone in this country who is remotely familiar with the Barbados Agricultural Society and its members can check with any one of those members and find out the real truth about what is happening with Agriculture in this society. There are about 200 pig growers in this country who are having difficulty getting rid of their pigs. Mr. Deputy Speaker, no one can expect any Minister to be perfect. No one can expect a Minister who is doing a job not to make an error. When they have made errors, however, they ought to have the courage to admit that they have made errors, and not behave as if they are dealing with some personal python and not behave as if the people involved ...

Hon. C. L. BOLDEN: Mr. Deputy Speaker, on a point of order. The hon. member has now moved from the Caribbean Food Plan to the Pig Industry. As far as I know the Pig Industry does not come under the Caribbean Food Plan. If the hon. member understood the Caribbean Food Plan he would have gone into different avenues. All I want to say at this stage is that I warn him if he keeps on on the Pig Industry, BARPAC and he will come out this evening. I warn him. So go ahead as of now.

Mr. TAITT: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would not even wait for you to rule that that was no point of order. I wish him, I urge him to bring out BARPAC and me this evening. I beg him. Put it on the table. I challenge him because at last somebody would hear something about BARPAC. That he could say that pigs in Barbados have nothing to do with the Caribbean Food Plan is a clear indication that he is among the most incompetent persons that have ever had the honour to hold ministerial position in this country.

Hon. C. L. BOLDEN: On a point of order, Sir. The hon. member does not understand incompetence, or he would understand that one of the things specifically left out of the Caribbean Food Plan was the Pig Industry. You see, stupidity runs far and if he understand what he was talking about, he would have looked at the Agreement and he would have seen that one of the things specifically excluded from the Caribbean Food Plan, excluded under the A.N.P. is the Hog Industry.

Mr. TAITT: Mr. Deputy Speaker, it hurts me. It really hurts me deeply to have to talk in these terms about the Minister of Agriculture. Article 2 of the Agreement that is attached to the Bill we are discussing — Agreement establishing the Caribbean Food Corporation — after the Preamble, Article 2, Interpretation and Application says: "In this Agreement

unless the context otherwise requires, agricultural production includes the production of fish and meat." My God, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I go further. Unless he is not saying that pork is not meat. I go further.

If he was familiar with the subject he would have known that the reason that pork does not specifically appear in the Agreement as a product to be produced was because countries like Barbados were able to report that they were self sufficient in pork. Guyana is self sufficient in pork. Barbados is self sufficient in pork. Trinidad and Tobago was on the way to becoming self sufficient in pork. Jamaica was on the way to becoming self sufficient in pork. The Caribbean Food Plan includes all the food to be produced in the Caribbean; and the Caribbean Corporation was established in order to co-ordinate the production of all — all — not the ones that appear in here. The depth of his ignorance of what he is doing causes me nothing but share pain, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

How can he come into this House, a man who has the responsibility for food in this country, and suggest that the production of pork in this country is not something that ought to be of concern in the creation of a Caribbean Food Plan? The Journalists who are sitting in here, Mr. Deputy Speaker, you yourself, the Attorney General who is now coming through the door — everybody except the Minister of Agriculture apparently would understand the role of pig production in food. Now, Sir, I begin to understand why the Minister is treating the pig farmers with such contempt. Now I begin to understand why when they go to him for meetings he chases them out of his office. Now I begin to understand why the Minister of Agriculture

Hon. C. L. BOLDEN: Mr. Deputy Speaker, on a point of order. I am objecting to the hon. member saying that when the pig farmers call for a meeting they are chased out of my office. I am objecting to that; but if he wants to continue in that vein, so let him continue. I do not want anybody to touch him. Leave him to me. I will deal with him when he is done.

Mr. TAITT: Was that a point of order, Sir?

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Do you wish to continue your speech?

Mr. TAITT: Oh, yes Sir. Most certainly. Now, Sir, as I was saying, — I thought it was good of him to interrupt at that point. If I was on that side I would do the same. Now I begin to understand why it is that in a short year this paragon of agricultural virtue has managed to bring to its knees all attempts at agricultural production on this country. He is the most feared Agricultural Minister that the farmers of this country have ever had to contend with.
5.25 p.m.

I repeat, Sir, that I now understand why it is that pork farmers and other farmers who go to his office get chased out. I now understand why it is that the Government either collectively or the Minister at his own hand is dealing with Barpac in such a manner. As I said, I beg him to bring out Barpac so that we can see it. I have a lot more to tell them about agriculture in this country.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Is the hon. member about to declare a personal interest of his shareholding in Barpac?

Mr. TAITT: I am not so about to do. I never had any interest in Barpac and unlike the Hon. Ministers on that side I do not participate in any of the businesses in this country with which I have to do business whether it is by way of setting up a Corporation or in a personal way. They can bring records from now until tomorrow, or until Doomsday and they will never be able to find that when I was a Minister I had anything....

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Is the hon. member saying that he has got such good legal advice that he is able to hide behind dummy trustees?

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: May I just interrupt to suggest that when a point of order is being made I would be grateful if you would take your seat?

Mr. TAITT: Yes, Sir, until I hear the hon. member say "on a point of order" I would not know what he is standing for. I think even you will agree on that.

I have never been a person with an interest in a business with which I was doing business when I was in the Ministry, and I challenge them. They can talk until they turn blue; let him bring the records, let them put it in the Advocate and the Nation, and speaking about the Nation which carried the Food Plan (*Asides*). The Minister attacked the press. If you want to go home, go home; I have come here to represent the people of St. Michael South West and they are sick and tired of the lies which are being told by the Ministers of this Government.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The hon. member will withdraw those remarks.

Mr. TAITT: I will withdraw those remarks. My people in St. Michael South West are sick to their gills with the wicked and deceitful lies of the Barbados Labour Party.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: On a point of order, this Government is composed out of the Barbados Labour Party. If the hon. member believes that it is correct for

us to come in here and say that my constituents in Christ Church West were sick and tired of the thieving of the Democratic Labour Party and their corruption when they formed the Government of this country, then of course he would be on good grounds if he thinks that is right, but in my submission, in a category where you are categorising a group of persons where there is sufficient identity as in this case, innuendo is sufficiently close for a class that it is contrary to the Standing Orders.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: May I suggest that you come back to the subject with which we are dealing.

Mr. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, it is in this context of the Caribbean Food Plan, it is in the whole problem of food that the people of Barbados are reeling and especially the ones in St. Michael South West. I do not know why the Attorney General would feel that a man of your calibre would need to be instructed on such puerile matters as to his opinions in this particular law.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member, if he said the word "puerile" will withdraw it.

Mr. TAITT: I would withdraw "puerile". There used to be an hon. member in this House from the parish of St. Joseph where the Hon. Minister now represents and he used to say that if you had a piece of wallaba wood in the back of your car....

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: With respect, this has nothing to do with the subject or the core of the debate. Can you please come back to the Caribbean Food Plan?

Mr. TAITT: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am talking about wallaba wood with which you cook food...

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: If you could connect wallaba wood directly with the Caribbean Food Plan that is okay, but in my submission it is completely irrelevant.

Mr. TAITT: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have no desire in here to antagonise you, and I will not any longer be put off by these attempts from the other side. But just in passing I would have hoped that the Minister would understand. But seriously, Sir, I am gravely disappointed and I believe that hon. members on that side, some of them, must be disappointed too that the Minister responsible for Food could get up and say that pigs in Barbados have nothing to do with the Caribbean Food Plan. Mr. Deputy Speaker, not only pigs, but eggs, poultry, all of these things are part of the total production of the food required by all the people in this country.

It is well known that when the Caribbean Food Plan was conceived what we did was to take a look at what was our present production, look at what our potential production would be and we know that in the event as we had in 1972 I believe it was of an epidemic like swine fever which destroyed more or less all of the pigs in this country, in those circumstances pigs and pork would be imported from some other Caribbean country, and so I am very glad the Prime Minister is back. I am sure that if the Prime Minister had been in here and had heard the Minister of Agriculture say that pigs and pork had nothing to do with the Caribbean Food Plan, he would hasten after covering his head to get on with the business of giving the Minister some other occupation less trying, less difficult and perhaps hopefully one in which the Minister could finally show us what it is he can do. I do not know if he is going to put him in charge of tar roads because he spoke so much about tar roads that he cannot wish to put him now on tar roads.

But to get back to the food plan, I would have hoped that this plan would have come to fruition about six months ago. I would have hoped that having passed this particular piece of legislation that we do not now have to wait for all of the other territories to go through their pieces of legislation, because, Mr. Deputy Speaker, Guyana will not be able to get on with the growing of soya beans and sorghum; they have put in experimental crops, they have proved the experimental crops, but they have to have markets. Fortunately we of the Democratic Labour Party left the project of the flour mill and I hope that the flour mill will come to fruition in sufficient time that the food plan would in fact be coordinated. I do not know if the Minister of Agriculture envisages our major contribution to agriculture in the recent pronouncement of the return to tobacco. I know that he and the other Ministers tend to look a little back, and I am sure when we come to discuss the Throne Speech we are going to be able to deal in a little more detail with their particular predilection for looking backward, but I will end by hoping and wishing that the Ministers will be able to get the respective positions coordinated especially as they deal with the Caribbean countries and that we can have less of the contumacious statements which are daily being made in one Caribbean country or the other which can in no way speed up what the Attorney General says is so vitally necessary, and with which I agree.

5.35 p.m.

The eventual removal of large quantities of imports from the region, and more important than the removal of the imports is the actual production of our own food in the region. I believe that fifteen years from now, as one Senator says, when our children look around and discover that in truth and in fact we are

now producing our own grain, our own meat, ham, bacon, eggs, etc., they will be able to say to the Government in power then, the Democratic Labour Party, we thank you.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I welcome this opportunity to speak on this Bill because it gives me the occasion to explain a few matters which of late have excited the minds of a number of people not only in Barbados but in other areas of the Caribbean.

The Barbados Labour Party and its commitment to the cause of Caribbean unity and Caribbean integration is well known. We do not have to recite it; our record proves it and there is no need for any attempt here by hon. members or in the Press or otherwise to try to create the impression in Barbados that this Government does not enjoy good working relationships with the other territories. But I want to be absolutely clear as far as the Government of Barbados is concerned that when you enter into a treaty the rules of the treaty must be obeyed, and if you find that the treaty has defects it is your duty to point out the defects. And all of the statements that we have been making both in Opposition and in Government have been to pinpoint what in our opinion are defects in the existing treaty or breaches of the existing treaty; because we believe that only by constant examination of the treaty, which is only an instrument to give effect to the ideas and aspirations of the Caribbean people, can we really achieve these objectives.

Now I was profoundly disturbed when I read the reports in the newspaper with respect to Barbados' position. I do not mind what anybody says. In the context of the Caribbean, for anyone to suggest that another country is not living up to its financial obligations is a very serious matter. I therefore made a very careful check of the records, because when I was in Guyana at the Trade Council Ministers Meeting, a review was given as to the state of progress of the Caribbean Food Plan, and at that meeting I distinctly remember the Permanent Secretary who accompanied me on the delegation getting confirmation from the Minister of Finance and Minister of Agriculture in Barbados that Barbados had complied with its obligations. I was very glad that a correction was made in the newspapers; but it is not a full correction of what are the facts; and I am a plain speaking man and I believe that it is necessary for any official in Government who makes a statement, if that statement is incorrect, to give a truthful and absolutely correct statement. It was suggested that the Chairman of the Corporation represents a country that is the only one eligible to vote. Now there is a fair amount of nonsense in that statement, because I would like to know how a

person could be a Chairman unless elected; it seems to me that before you can be elected Chairman, people must elect you. Secondly, I would like to know whether it has been unheard of for a Corporation to have bank accounts in as many countries as it does business in. I believe that we have banks in Barbados whose headquarters are in Canada and they have bank accounts in Barbados. But when I check the facts — the hon. Minister of Agriculture read out some facts, but I want to go further because if full facts are not brought to light, garbled and twisted versions can be given and people may take up a position based on bad information.

Now it is a fact that the Board of Directors made a decision that in view of the state of the economies of the territories the subscriptions to the Caribbean Food Corporation could be paid up in two calls. Now there is nothing wrong with that, because Article 8 of the Agreement says: "A member country which has taken up shares from the first portion of initial share issue shall make payment to the Corporation for such proportion within three weeks after the time prescribed by the Board of Directors for such payments". So the Agreement says how you can pay. It goes on: "The remainder of the initial issue shall be paid for in such amounts and within such time as the Board of Directors may determine, provided that the amount required to be paid by a member country for the remainder of the initial shares shall bear the same proportion to that member's share as the first portion bears to the subscribed shares." These things are there. It is not unusual for a company or a corporation to say that the subscribers to the memorandum pay an initial subscription and the Board of Directors make a call. And that is precisely what has happened. And the Board of Directors, presumably the same Board which appointed Mr. Fulham as Chairman, if they were competent to appoint Mr. Fulham, they were competent to set out the terms and conditions. And the same Board of Directors said that the manner of payments in respect of the territories could be that they pay into the Central Bank of their respective territories to the order of the Corporation. Now tell me what is wrong with that, provided that the bank is a reliable institution; and I do not think anybody can say that the Barbados Central Bank is not. So it was utter ignorance to say that the only territory that had paid was Trinidad, and we must let the public understand that the facts are that it was within the competence of the Board of Directors to stipulate the manner of payment.

5.45 p.m.

But that is not all, Sir, because not only was the money paid in to the Barbados Central Bank, but the same Mr. Fulham was written to by Mr. Tinton, the

General Manager of the Barbados Central Bank, and informed that the Barbados Ministry of Agriculture had paid in the first instalment to the order of the Corporation. It is a great pity that in all the statements that we have had Mr. Fulham himself, who made a statement, did not tell the public in the Caribbean that he, Mr. Fulham, was informed of the fact that money was paid in to the Central Bank to the order of the Caribbean Corporation and that the Caribbean Corporation could draw it when they so require.

Mr. SANDIFORD: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I can understand that indignation and the feeling of the Hon. Minister on this point, but if the Government were really practising the open Government that they so much boast about, why would they not have told the people of this country that for this new Corporation they had actually made and paid in their contribution to the Caribbean Food Plan?

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Deputy Speaker, with the greatest respect, the hon. member obviously does not read the newspaper. A Government Information Service Release precisely set out that as well as the dates and time.

Mr. SANDIFORD: When? I am talking about the time when the money was actually paid in to the Central Bank.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Deputy Speaker, the money was voted in the Estimates — specifically this year's Estimates — for payment to the Caribbean Corporation. The matter was debated in here and the money was specifically voted in this year's Estimates. If you look in the Estimates you will see:

"Caribbean contribution to share capital \$500,000 E.C."

Let us go further, Sir, I would like to know how the hon. member would expect that the money could be paid out on a warrant of the Ministry of Finance without it being in the Estimates? Let us go further, because I feel that we should state the facts. An arrangement was made also between the Central Bank in Barbados and the Caribbean Food Corporation that they would receive interest on the deposits, and a letter on the 31st October was written by Mr. M. I. Phillips to Mr. Fulham saying:

"Please refer to our letter of 2nd September, 1977, notifying you of the purchase of \$150,000 Bds nominal in Barbados Government Treasury Bills for your Corporation.

I have to inform you that the abovementioned Treasury bills will be redeemed on the 26th

October, 1977, at maturity and the amount of \$150,000 credited to the Corporation's accounts held with ourselves.

On the same day \$150,000 nominal Barbados dollars and bills were purchased for your Corporation, such bills forming part of the Central Bank's holdings. The particulars of the investment are as follows....."

They are getting interest to the Corporation's order. I want to go further. On the 29th September a letter was sent to the same Mr. Fulham:

"Please refer to our letter of the 6th July, 1977, notifying you of the purchase of \$250,000 Bds nominal in Barbados Government Treasury bills for your Corporation."

Again he is notified that the Central Bank holds the Corporation's money and interest was being paid on it. On the 6th July a letter goes ahead and shows:

"Please refer to our letter of the 23rd May, 1977, notifying you of the purchase of \$250,000 Bds in Barbados Government Treasury bills for your Corporation."

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to go further, because I am going to show now that this is what should be told and it is necessary to do so. On June 10 this year on the letter head of the Caribbean Food Corporation itself the Central Bank was written to. This is what the letter said:

"M. I. Phillips,
Acting Manager,
Banking and Currency Department,
Central Bank of Barbados,
P.O. Box 10 16,
Bridgetown,
Barbados.

Dear Sir," —

I want the hon. members on the other side to hear this, because it goes to show that, unless you bring out all the facts, people will get the impression that when you pay money in to the Central Bank in Barbados that it does not belong to the Corporation in Trinidad and that nothing is happening. The letter says:

"Dear Sir,

This is your authority to endorse all Barbados Government Treasury bills on behalf of the Caribbean Corporation at maturity or which will have to be

discounted before maturity when funds are required to be drawn down by the Corporation."

Mr. Deputy Speaker, It was signed

"Truly yours,

G. J. Fulham,
Chairman.

R. C. Phillips,
Secretary."

Now, the Chairman himself is writing to the Central Bank saying, "You have our money, and I am telling you what to do with it." It is the something as if you drew a cheque upon a bank account. In the light of these facts it is a no-point to make to say that we have not paid up the money. I hope now that the facts are made clear that those who misled others, if they have been misled, will have the facts or the basic position, made clear, and all of us can now get down to what I regard as the most important point of all. This is the point that I think we must not lose sight of. It is a point that very often in Caribbean relations occurs. You have your technicians devising and creating plans, but the implementation procedures and the implementation machinery are not being sufficiently well oiled, well staffed, and well directed to carry out the plans of your technicians.

Now, I believe that the public of the Caribbean have been bamboozled by the public relations job that has been done in respect of the conception of the Caribbean Food Plan. A tremendous amount of public relations effort has been put into this with all the skills inducing the public to believe that this thing is actually in existence, actually functioning, and getting practical results, when, in truth and in fact, it was merely a conception of technocrats and some procedures to implement at sub-sector level. I have made that criticism of it from the beginning.

5.55 p.m.

I have made that criticism of it from the beginning, because at each of the Council of Ministers' meetings I have been saying do not sell the people short, do not build up their expectations that this is a practical reality when in truth and in fact you know that all you have done is to identify the areas of co-operation and you have not yet indulged in setting into motion the machinery for implementation. This is what I have been saying, and I may say this, that the Minister of Agriculture has made very practical suggestions and has attempted to demonstrate at the Ministry of Agriculture meetings that you do not have to wait on the Caribbean Food Corporation alone, because that is only one of the

implements, but that in existence in all the territories there are pre-existing marketing agencies which if they got up off their haunches and started proper export promotion drives, proper market research, that a large part of the imports from the Third Countries could be satisfied within the territories.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, let us look at reality. We import from Third Countries nearly one billion dollars in food. There are some of those things that we cannot produce. Either we can try and induce our population by food promotion schemes and by suggesting to them that they must indulge in import substitution, or we have to decide that we are going to have a policy of regional import substitution. But one point that has always amazed me about the CARICOM Treaty is that whereas in respect of industrial goods you have very elaborate rules of origin and terms and conditions of trading in respect of agriculture — and this is where the confusion is coming — in respect of agro-industrial products, a number of restrictions and other complaints.

At the meeting of the Ministers of Agriculture raised by Barbados, it was suggested that a meeting of the Chairman and general Managers and Ministers of all the territories' marketing boards should have a special meeting to identify the areas of what is produced in each territory, the areas of demand and analyse the constraints against the movement of goods and the bottle necks and see if we could not make a practical start towards bringing realisation of this matter. That came to the Trade Council Ministers meeting, and what is more, at the Trade Council Ministers meeting we endorsed that, we from Barbados moved that the CARICOM Secretariat should be re-organised and that at the head of a Division comparable to the Chairman of the Health Desk, we should have a technocrat who would be specifically charged with the sole responsibility of improving and giving advice on the marketing systems of agricultural produce. That is in the record of the Minutes. We moved that.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am going to deal now with the defects. Another glaring defect that we have pointed out, because I am interested in implementation, I am not interested in talk, and I have pointed out to them that one of the glaring defects of the CARICOM Agreement is that they have elevated the Secretaries General into gods. They are not gods, they are Caribbean servants to execute the policies that have been agreed by the political bosses of the respective countries, and I have said that in an analysis of the structure of CARICOM, that what is necessary is that in between meetings of the Caribbean Trade Council Ministers that some Minister should be designated specifically to be a Chairman in the interregnum period to see that what has been decided at the last meeting, practical steps are taken to implement it.

You cannot expect the Secretary General or any Caribbean civil servant to deal with the thorny political problems that arise between Ministers and when he is dealing with the question of their countries' interests. I have said that, and my views on this are absolutely correct, because I know in the working of the Lomé Convention, as well as the East African Community, as well as the E.E.C..... (*Asides*).

I am telling you. You do not understand tribalism in that part of the world. If you had understood tribalism you would know that economic interest alone does not dominate. Luckily for us we do not have that kind of tribalism, we may have insular nationalism, but it is not as strong as tribalism over there. In the structure of the East African Community, in the structure of the other integrated Treaties of the Lomé Convention, you would find that there is an executive authority and a political body to see to it that when decisions are made they are implemented, and that is the problem with this. Progress is being made, because that CARICOM Treaty will be reviewed. Under the stresses and strains of the balance of payment problems weaknesses are showing up, and under the stresses of the criticism of the consumers in the area, the CARICOM producers have got to react because no Minister of Government in any of the territories, politics being what it is, and the cost of living being an important political count, can afford to say that there is not a limited price for protection of your local farmers. You have to balance the interest of the consumer against the greed of some of the farmers. You have to do it, and I say that any Minister of Agriculture in these territories in relation to agricultural products should be happy to know that at least the farmers in his country have to face competition from farmers in the other territories, because competition is good for keeping down prices, and that is one of the reasons for the failure of the agricultural protocol, because each territory feels that its market is a closed market for their farmers alone. To me that is contrary to all principles of integration. You either will have the Caribbean Community or sections of the Caribbean Community as being a market which must be supplied by the farmers within that section of the Community, or you are going to say you are forgetting the Community and we are dealing only with this island and we are closing this market off to this island. Of course, there would be other limitations, because under animal public health you might not have free trade in certain livestock products because of disease and you do not want to do it, but even within the United States of America you have that, so that is another area, and this is a very outstanding area.

I heard the hon. member talk about pork products, and pork products illustrate this point. Pork products illustrate this point, because there is a conception in the Caribbean, leaving aside the question of animal public health, and the public health of your population, because

that is an exception in any area, but there is a conception in the Caribbean that each territory's market for pork products should be limited to the farmers in that particular geographical unit. That does not square with the Treaty, and the Government of Barbados as a matter of policy at the Import Licensing Review Committee said that no import restrictions apply to the movement of goods within Caribbean territories, with two exceptions. One was cigarettes because of a particular reason, and the other one was in relation to furniture, but this is where I am going to answer now another problem that has arisen, the problem of sweet potatoes.

Barbados granted a licence for sweet potatoes, but under the Agricultural Marketing Protocol St. Vincent is to supply Trinidad with sweet potatoes. (*Asides*). If you say it is a bilateral agreement, it is a bilateral agreement, but the basic position is this. We are the importing territory, we grant licences. We gave those hucksters licences, each and every one of them, but for reasons best known to themselves, in order to get the goods out of St. Vincent, they manifested them as eddoes, and they went into the hands of the Comptroller of Customs. One of the things I want to impress upon hon. members is this. Because another Minister in Government in the Caribbean says harsh things about me, it does not matter to me, because the hon. members over there have given me 15 years' experience in being able to tolerate harsh things about me. Fifteen years you have been abusing me and you have not stopped me.

6.05 p.m.

Fifteen years ago they were abusing me and they did not stop me. Whatever they say about me, my back is broad and my skin is hard. Therefore, all I will do is to give the facts. As far as the Barbados Government is concerned if the people who had licences came into my office I would ask where is the licence?

Mr. TAITT: Is the Minister now saying that people come into his office to see him on the matter of licences?

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: One afternoon at 4.30 potatoes were seized and they went to the Ministry of Agriculture. They were directed that I was Minister for Caribbean Affairs. The Minister of Agriculture had done what was his duty and they came to see me. I asked them whether they had a licence. I there and then phoned the Comptroller of Customs and I was told that they had a false declaration. I said that the Customs Law is administered by the Minister of Finance. The Comptroller of Customs is in charge of the Customs Law. I am very sorry. There is nothing I can do for you. That was the end of that. What is more, two days after I received a telephone call.

Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: I received a telephone call from Mr. Joshua and he asked me if I could do anything about it. I said that I could do nothing about it. I told him that the problem was not in Barbados but with his Marketing Board not giving export licences or not making arrangements for their counterparts in Barbados or with private importers in Barbados or their own exporters how to get the potatoes out of St. Vincent. It was as simple as that. I went to Haiti with the Caribbean Tourist Research Centre. He sent a telex, and the Acting Permanent Secretary wrote him in precisely those terms. So, we do not have anything to be ashamed of for having opened the market in Barbados because this may cause a noise to some farmers; and I am prepared to battle with this.

I feel that one of the means of checking that there is no exploitation of the consumers in Barbados is to make farmers understand that they must be exposed to the blast of competition from among the Caribbean Community. Manufacturers have to face competition. Why should farmers be different? So that I look forward, Sir, to practical steps being taken to implement the conception of the Caribbean Food Plan. We have other machinery. On the question of fisheries, hon. members are aware of what is happening, that all of a sudden, outside of the Latin American coasts every country has now declared a 200 mile limit. Therefore, bilateral decisions have got to be entered into among the Caribbean Community and among neighbouring countries. We have something with Brazil. We will have to have something with Surinam. We will have to have something with Cayenne; because the fish out there do not respect anybody's 200 mile limit. When they are swimming they move up and down and the boats behind them move up and down where they are. It is a delicate matter, and therefore a lot of constraints and problems have to be overcome; but we feel that there are enough agricultural resources in the Caribbean so that we can make a significant dent in satisfying our demands.

We in Barbados have done an analysis of all of our food imports, item by item. We are taking steps to ensure that where there is regional production the regional producers get their due; but at the same time we have to be careful and see that the consumers are not exploited, and that the level of production is not that great. So, far from saying that we in Barbados are not doing anything towards bringing to fruition discussions on the agreement, the original discussions began as long ago, as I understand, at a Heads of Government Meeting 1975. In 1976 the agreement was reached. A year is not a long time. Anybody who has anything to do with a project would know that between conception between entering into an agreement and between implementation there is a lag. So, I do not see why anybody should get hot in the collar, because there are other agencies.

The last point I want to mention is that for some years the Barbados Government has been seriously

concerned about the pattern of trade in fruit and vegetables at the Wharf in Bridgetown. All of us have felt that the consumers in Barbados are being called upon to pay for fruit and vegetables imported from other territories at unreasonable prices, not because the producers in the other territories get unreasonable prices, but it is because of the system of middle men.

We have given notice that with the opening of the new harbour, when the boats go down there, when the inter-island traffic goes down there, there will be a change in terms and conditions. There will not be any boat side sales. You will have to have proper consignees and proper declarations. We have given them notice. A small vessel capacity survey has been undertaken by ECLA and we can only ask them and beseech them and point out to people that it is time that some sort of rational plan be developed in the interest of raising production, and in the interest of satisfying consumers in the region.

That is why I feel the time must come when there should be a man in charge of inter-island, inter-Caribbean marketing; and what is more, I still believe that there is a big future for some of these Caribbean products to be exported to other countries in the world; and I look forward to the day when they will be exported by a Caribbean freight carrier which is owned by the Government of the Caribbean.

6.15 p.m.

I have always publicly announced that we feel that air freight is so important as a means of transport of perishable produce that whatever the historical arguments we have had in relation to the transfer of passengers, we should not allow that to interfere with the transport of goods because modern transportation systems for the transport of fruit and vegetables and perishables dictate that you use air freight; and we have pronounced that, and we have absolutely nothing to be ashamed of, and my conception for the benefit of everybody of Caribbean relations is not such that if I see untruths being told, if I see facts being distorted, I do not care who gets offended, I am going to tell the public the facts. If you do not like the facts I am very sorry. All my political life I have talked facts. Sometimes they like it and they vote for me; sometimes they do not like it and they do not vote for me, but it still is not going to prevent me from talking it and telling it as it is; and as I see it a lot more effort and energy from the political level and from the administrative level has got to be put in to make this conception a reality, and that is why the Caribbean people get frustrated because they are led up the garden path and action does not follow the words and the talk.

Mr. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, any discussion on this Food Plan must of necessity initiate a discussion on Caricom and what it means for the people of the Caribbean. Having listened to the Hon. Deputy Prime Minister who has just concluded his speech, he touched on a number of points which I myself had noted to touch on, particularly from the point of view of the workings of Caricom both at the political level and at the administrative level. But before I do so, Mr. Speaker, it is noteworthy that the speech of the Deputy Prime Minister followed that of the Hon. Attorney General, and in listening to the Attorney General you would remember that he stated that in the documents prepared by the FAO and the UN and other international agencies Caricom has been held out as probably one of the most successful regional economic integration units in the world; but yet at the same time one hears the Deputy Prime Minister referring to the very serious shortcomings of Caricom, and there is no doubt that there are some very serious shortcomings which have got to be ironed out if Caricom is to succeed.

Certainly the question of the food plan is a good idea, but like the Deputy Prime Minister I entirely agree that so far it is merely a paper arrangement and that nothing practical has been done really to implement this particular concept. I overheard some people from the Caribbean talking recently and there was one gentleman from Dominica in particular who is in the area of farming and who was particularly concerned or maybe enthused about the idea of a Caribbean Food Plan, but who asked the question, what is there in this for me as a producer. There was some difficulty with the people who were there, and some were from Caricom, who one thought would be able to explain the food plan, but they were unable to do so.

The point I am making is that we often conceive some brilliant plans, but then the question of getting beyond the point of conception seems to be fraught with a number of difficulties, and I think it is one of the very serious problems confronting us in the Caribbean at all sorts of levels, and Caricom of course is no particular exception. I would therefore think, Mr. Speaker, that we have got to have some plan of action in order to implement and to put into force the number of plans which we have written down and which have been conceived.

Speaking more specifically of the Caribbean Food Plan, I am yet to find out and I hope the Minister of Agriculture in his reply will be able to give some

indication of this, how will the Caribbean Food Plan affect our national agricultural plans, because you have on the one hand a superstructure of Caricom; we have the concept of the food plan which presumably embraces all of the units in the Caribbean, but at the same time at the national level we have our plans for agriculture, and what I am concerned about is whether our plans for agriculture as well as the plans for agriculture in other territories would in some way or another be clashing with the plans which are conceived in this particular Caribbean Food Plan, and I think this is one aspect in which I would suggest there must be some clarification if it is not to lead to confusion and if it is not to further lead to the kind of misunderstanding which can so easily develop, because no matter what happens, when the crush comes each Island is going to be looking out for its farmers and for its consumers, because in the final analysis they are the people to whom the politicians are responsible and answerable and to whom the politicians will have to return for a vote, so that it is going to be a question of being able on the one hand to balance the national and the internal desires with the greater desires and greater plans which are in existence in the Caricom region.

It seems to me, Mr. Speaker, that the leaders in the Caribbean have got to be honest if only for once because more and more one gets the feeling that there is a move afoot that whereas it is recognised that we cannot exist as successfully independently or individually as we can if we come together in a grouping of this nature, yet more and more there is this pulling and tugging and tremendous amount of bickering at all levels, at the Heads of Government level; at the ministerial level, and we have got to be able to iron out this kind of bickering if we are going to be able to satisfy our constituency of the Caribbean. This is of extreme importance because I think the future and the success of Caricom depends to a large extent on the success at that particular level.

Now the Deputy Prime Minister referred to a point which I would want to certainly support him on, and it is the feeling among some of the technocrats in Caricom that they cannot be questioned and of their superiority in being able to conceive plans and implement them, and the whole question of people challenging some of the statements they may make and the positions they take up. I am suggesting that this is probably one of the other drawbacks of Caricom in that the technocrats and bureaucrats in the Caricom Secretariat seem to think that they are beyond question or in some instances beyond accountability, and we have

got therefore to bring some kind of measure of responsibility on their part to bear on this whole concept of Caricom and the food plan if we are going to succeed in all our exercises. It is at these two levels that we have got to look at and iron out whatever difficulties there are existing in those particular areas.

I do not know, for example, what is the big problem surrounding the calling of a Caricom Summit Meeting, but in almost every territory you are hearing leaders making the point that there is need for a Heads of Government Conference, but one does not seem to be able to get beyond calling for a Heads of Government Conference, and I would hope and certainly appeal to the Heads of Government in the Caribbean that whatsoever differences exist among them should be sunk in the interest of Caribbean unity to ensure that they meet and iron out whatever difficulties there are so that on whatever troubled waters there are, oil can be poured and things would run more smoothly than they are running at present, because I am sure there is no person in the Caribbean who could say that things are running smoothly in that particular area.

6.25 p.m.

On the question of the Food Plan, I want to refer to and expand a little on the points I made earlier about information. I think it was the Deputy Prime Minister who said that perhaps the best thing that has happened to the Food Plan was the kind of public relations that went into the promotion of the Plan. In a way that is true, but at another level there is a tremendous lack of information regarding the Food Plan, and I think we have got to recognize that for anything in the Caribbean from the point of view of Caribbean unity, whether it is at the economic level or the political level, if it is to succeed a lot of work has to be done in informing people and getting information to the man in the street so that everybody can understand very clearly what is being done; can understand the nature and extent of their involvement. So what I am saying is that we have to go beyond the high level kind of public relations gimmickry that has been used very often in this kind of situation, and we have to get some basic information across to people in the Caribbean because, after all, they are the people who are going to make CARICOM or any regional grouping succeed or fail.

Now, Mr. Speaker, looking at the Agreement establishing the Caribbean Food Corporation, there is a section on page 1 of the Schedule which talks about the determination on the part of the Corporation to remedy the food situation in the Caribbean by using

advanced technology to implement a viable and efficient import replacement scheme. Now, I recognize that the term advanced technology has not only to do with machinery but with the application of science and technology to agriculture. But what I want to warn about is that in the use of advanced technology we have to take into consideration a number of things, for instance whether it is going to lead to over-mechanization, — and I made this point earlier on today; for on the whole question of agriculture we have got to be very careful, bearing in mind a number of factors, e.g., the high unemployment situation which exists in the Caribbean, the high import bill in the Caribbean region so that whereas on one hand you might be saving in one area you will find that your foreign exchange will be going out in another area. So that while I recognise that we are living in a modern society and that we have to have technology because we are living in a technological age, it is a question of applying the appropriate technology, bearing in mind the kind of factors and the kind of difficulties which exist in the context of the Caribbean. I would therefore hope that every effort would be made to ensure that there is a balance between what obtains in the Caribbean and what we are trying to achieve, because in the final analysis we have to aim at the general good and welfare of everybody in the Caribbean.

Now Mr. Speaker, the Caribbean Food Plan is obviously a big venture — big in terms of money involved and in terms of the amount of trade which is going to be done among the various territories of the Caribbean. We therefore have to try to improve the level of efficiency at the administrative level; we have got to be able to iron out all the difficulties, whether they have to do with trade or a lot of other things. The Deputy Prime Minister, for example, made reference to shipping. This is going to play a very important part in the Food Plan, whether it is shipping by sea or air. We have got to look at all of these things and obviously the planning which is necessary for the successful and efficient implementation of this particular exercise is something which we have to pay very close attention to. So whereas I commend this particular Corporation and the Food Plan, I would hope we can now come down from the sky and get down to the ground because this is where it is going to matter, and I hope that it will succeed because it holds a lot for our future. It is a challenge for the people in the Caribbean and I therefore hope that we will be able to live up to this challenge, otherwise history will record that we failed not only as far as Barbados is concerned, but the entire Caribbean region.

Mr. JOHNSON: Mr. Speaker, one of the greatest deterrents to genuine integration in this region has been the economic, political and social insularity of various governments in the region. Indeed, the anthropology of this region is such that one would be almost forced to conclude that there is hardly any hope for any successful effort for integration in this region. Indeed, Sir, if you examine the efforts so far — Federation, Carifta, Caricom, Caribbean Food Corporation — none of these efforts have lived up to the expectations of the drafters and promoters of the agreements which have ploughed large sums of money into the effort to make a genuine go of bringing the Caribbean closer together either as a political unit or a group capable of working together to achieve certain common objectives. I would hope that this new attempt is not going to prove another device to provide comfortable niches in which retired permanent secretaries can lodge. I would hope instead that this will turn out to be one genuine effort and attempt to bring the Caribbean Region to the realization that we are all sailing in the same boat and share a common fate and a common destiny.

Within recent weeks we have heard various heads of Government fulminating about the weaknesses of their own economic situation and they have taken certain drastic measures to demonstrate that there is almost no hope for a genuine coming together of this region. A few weeks ago you heard an official of the St. Vincent Government making a lot of noise about Barbados arresting boats coming from his country, whereas anybody who is genuinely interested in looking at the situation would see that it was not malice on the part of Barbados, but clearly an attempt to carry out the responsibilities of the civil authorities here. The Barbados Marketing Corporation, the Jamaica Marketing Corporation, the Marketing Corporations of Guyana and St. Vincent, are all marketing Boards and if those Boards and the Minister responsible for Caricom would make a serious and concerted effort we would be able to achieve some of the goals that have been eluding us for a long time. And I submit, Sir, that the whole thrust and future of the Caribbean Food Council will lie not in an effort to feed the Caribbean region as its primary objective but will lie in the effort of their various Caribbean governments to recognise that agriculture is the single, most important economic growth industry available to us in this region at the present time.

6.35 p.m.

We talk about a lot of industrialisation in terms of all kinds of new businesses, but we have not yet sat

down and measured the full potential of agriculture as a means of generating the necessary capital with which to buy the things we have to import, or as a means of feeding our own people. I would submit, as an example, an agreement just concluded between the Barbados Marketing Corporation and some principals in Miami for the export of two important crops. We are talking now about okras, in the first instance, and yams, in the second instance. The stringent grading of the United States will inevitably leave a large quantity of both of these commodities available for either shipment within the region, or consumption at home base.

We had a meeting yesterday at the Barbados Marketing Corporation with the various farmers, and they were wondering what is going to happen to the second-grade okras that will not be able to face the Miami market. This Caribbean Food Council business that we are talking about, Sir, should give us a good opportunity, if these various countries were interested in working together, of sending these surplus commodities, either canning them, or sending them down blast frozen, or however we would choose to send them, but it would give us an excellent opportunity of providing food for this region at prices that the people within the region could afford.

I say, Sir, that it is nothing short of disgraceful that the people of Barbados have had to pay as high as \$1 a pound for sweet potatoes, because we ourselves have not been able to grow enough sweet potatoes, or because our sister countries that had excesses of this particular commodity charged us whatever the market could bear. Economic integration, agricultural integration, or whatever you want to call these things, require a concerted will of working together. I, Sir, do not see on this horizon the necessary attitudes that should go before the formation of all of these bodies about which we are talking.

I am wondering, Mr. Speaker, when we have sat down and put — I think the authorised share capital is somewhere in the region of \$10 million, if I remember what this Schedule says. When we have put all of this money into this Corporation — of course, Barbados puts only a portion of it — I am wondering if the goals that have eluded us through Caricom are going to be achieved this time around, or whether or not this is going to be another exercise in futility, or whether it is going to be another avenue that will provide opportunity for our partners to ridicule us and to castigate us because we have failed to perform according to some dream that they may have had in their mind.

I heard the member for St. Michael South West, a few minutes ago when he was talking about this Corporation, mentioning something about yams which had to be flown back from Trinidad to Barbados. Well, I do not think that I need to spend a long time talking about that. It is either the ignorance or the inadvertence of the member for St. Michael South West. I do not like to think that this man is by nature malicious or anything of that sort. I would just like to think that he is like a young puppy, Sir. It always falls over its own feet until it learns co-ordination, and he has great difficulty at intellectual co-ordination. He has been frequently heard to say things which are neither true nor sincere. He said that we had to fly back yams from Trinidad because they were rejected. That was meant as a slap to the Barbados Marketing Corporation. I should like to state, for the benefit of the House, that we have never flown yams to Trinidad or from Trinidad to Barbados.

Sir, we sent yams to Trinidad under what I would consider to be a most ingenious, bold, and artful initiative on the part of the Barbados Marketing Corporation. For the last 15 years the Democratic Labour Party has sat here and not only has it failed to perform in this area of feeding the Barbados population, but it has deliberately, with malice aforethought, set about to destroy the avenue through which we must feed ourselves, because it has deliberately put out of cultivation land which was fit to produce food. If the then Government were not shortsighted; if they were not light blighted sepulchres intellectually, they would have known that that was a retrograde step, but they do not know these things.

We decided that the way to save this country from having to depend upon imports constantly was to start looking for markets that were not then available when we came to power in September. We sold yams to a private entrepreneur in Trinidad. We had to do a lot of co-ordination between ourselves and the Marketing Board in Trinidad to get the licence for this man to import our yams. Now, everybody knows that the yams were exported at the end of the yam crop, and they did not perform well in Trinidad. We had complaints about their quality and we have a friendly agreement. The contract still stands, and we will be exporting further to Trinidad when we get a fresh crop. No yams have been returned to Barbados either by boat, schooner, bath tub, or any other device. That is simply not true, and I think the member for St. Michael South West knows that only too well, but he cannot do any better.

Mr. Speaker, he also sought to cast aspersions at the Marketing Corporation because of the incident that, I think, has been adequately explained by the Minister responsible for Caribbean Affairs. I am talking about the potato incident in St. Vincent. We in Barbados cannot help it if there is a short circuit in communications between the Marketing Board in St. Vincent and the Ministry of Agriculture. It was the Marketing Board in St. Vincent that said they were not going to give any export licences to itinerant traders to bring potatoes to Barbados. We asked them for licences. We asked them to give the people permission to bring the potatoes because we were then suffering a shortage. They explained to us that they were not able to supply the contract which they had with Trinidad, so we could not get any.

Enterprising people in St. Vincent decided to work another avenue. They had tannia eddoes available, so they hid some potatoes underneath and they manifested everything as tannia eddoes. If the Comptroller of Customs, in the exercise of this responsibility, discovers that goods coming into Barbados are falsely manifested, is it not his responsibility to take steps according to the laws of Barbados.

Sir, the one-armed bandits came in the same way — falsely manifested as personal effects — and they sat down and watched it happen time and time again and did nothing about it. The Barbados Labour Party is not going to do that. We have a responsibility, and we are going to discharge it according to the laws of Barbados. Now, the Minister responsible for Agriculture in St. Vincent must, certainly, have known that it was not in keeping with his policy to export sweet potatoes to Barbados. It was not any part of genuine for him to get down there and say that Barbados was not exercising or manifesting a genuine attitude towards Caricom integration. We asked them for the product. They said they could not supply it to us, and that is what I am so afraid of with this new treaty, or new agreement. I am wondering, after we have signed the agreement, whether or not the attitudes that have eluded us so far will continue to elude us, or whether a new spirit of integration, or a new spirit of working together and co-operation, will be manifested.

6.45 p.m.

It is no secret that last year we had our difficulties with the export of onions with the Government of Trinidad which had signed an agreement to accept under the Agricultural Marketing Protocol a quantity of onions from Barbados, and which they

refused to touch. While onions were selling in Trinidad at \$3.00 per pound the Trinidad Government refused to import onions for which it had agreed with Barbados under the AMP Agreement. Is this Agreement going to be treated with any greater respect than all those other Agreements we have signed before, Sir? That is the question I am asking, and I am saying that it is not enough for us just to sit down and say we have to feed ourselves, that is very obvious. I think what we have to do in this country, and in all of these countries in the region, is to come together with a spirit of co-operation.

The Barbados Marketing Corporation's General Manager, Frank Richards, wrote and requested a meeting of the various Heads of the Marketing Boards. That meeting has not come about yet. It is residing in somebody's 'In' box at the Caribbean Community Secretariat, it has not happened yet, so the Barbados Government has gone ahead and it is looking for markets for its various products outside. You will remember, Sir, a very successful tour concluded by the Minister responsible for External Trade which has opened avenues in Germany and on the European market in general for produce grown in Barbados.

In the United States, one of the largest commodities imported into that country is okra. Country after country, Mexico, Guatemala, Columbia, and all kinds of countries have been cashing in on this very lucrative business. The imports of this product into the United States — I saw the statistics yesterday — have fallen frightfully because of the various countries not being able to fill their quotas, and we are now trying to get our feet wet on these markets, something which eluded the Democratic Labour Party, because they never even received that there was a possibility to market produce grown in Barbados. St. Lucia, St. Vincent, Dominica, Grenada, all have export markets in agricultural products. Barbados had sugar and that was it, period, and they were killing sugar. We now are showing that we have a greater grasp of what can be accomplished in this area. Do not fool yourself, when we have secured the markets for food overseas there is bound to be a large surplus of produce that cannot be exported. That is going to have the effect of forcing down prices for the consumer in Barbados, while at the same time providing work opportunities for a number of persons who are now not employed. This, Sir, is the whole thrust.

I see Barbados standing to gain significantly if this Agreement is a genuine document, because Trinidad — you know the situation well, Sir, they have discovered

oil and with that discovery agriculture is bound to suffer, because people are not going to go and plant potatoes when they can go and drill oil or work in the oil fields. As a matter of fact, they are now calling to us for a number of things we cannot supply. Okras, yams, carrots, we can just listen to them and nod our heads, but we are not now in a position to earn a single dollar of foreign currency by supplying any of these markets that are open to us. Venezuela, they are importing almost all of their food out of South America, and Barbados is here with land lying fallow, unable because of the dereliction of the Democratic Labour Party when they were in power. We have to come now and spend a valuable year or two getting the land ready, finding the seed, getting it planted in order to export it to these markets that are going a-begging. I would hope that this Agreement we are signing here is a genuine recognition finally that Barbados, Guyana, Trinidad & Tobago, all these countries must find a way to feed themselves.

Speaking of imports, Sir, the United States now is buried under bushels of corn. They have more corn in their warehouses than they can possibly dispose of. The Barbados Government stands to benefit from this situation. All of the countries in the region that have chicken industries should be in a position now to buy collectively on the foreign market so that they can get rock bottom prices for corn, but they do not do that, there is no co-operation, each man must buy independently. Barbados must go and buy a couple of bushels for Roberts Manufacturing, when all the large chicken producers place their orders independently, even in Barbados, Sir, each farmer places his own order, and I am saying that if we were to rationalise our buying programme so that we can make benefits from bulk purchases the cost of living in Barbados would be forced down, but we are not in a position, because of the short-sightedness of a Government that preceded us for fifteen years, and were it not for the mercies of Almighty God Barbados would still be buried in the ground now, but we are seeking to resurrect it, Sir, and I believe that we are doing a good job of it, and I hope that this Treaty, this Agreement is going to be one more chapter towards the recovery that Barbados is going to bring about not only in its own country but in this entire region.

Finally, I would suggest that all of us in this Chamber not only vote for this Bill but pray for it, as the Minister of Labour has just suggested to me, and work diligently by influence, personal and otherwise, to make certain that the expressions manifested in the Bill,

the spirit of the Bill, for this time is upheld, because we have signed Treaties before but the spirit has always been missing, and I hope now that we have finally captured the spirit of true integration and we can go on to feed ourselves and others.

Mr. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, we on this side have noted the technique of the Government benches. Whenever the speeches are a little weak the congratulations tend to be loudest. That is a technique which I am not necessarily saying was applied in this particular case, I hope my friend the member for St. Michael West does not believe so.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: On a point of explanation. I was wondering whether the hon. member was harping back to the speeches made earlier by the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, I think there are a few points which must be made in this debate. First of all, I think it is perhaps time that the record as far as agriculture and agricultural production in this country is concerned should be set straight. There seems to be some orthodoxy propagated by the members of the Government, not least of all by the Minister of Agriculture, that the previous Government, the Democratic Labour Party Government, did nothing for agriculture and that all we had was falling production, land being taken out of agriculture and agriculture in this country really going down and down.
6.55 p.m.

That seems to be the orthodoxy preached by them and one which they would have the people of this country to believe is gospel. I have in my hand, a document — the Central Bank of Barbados Report and Financial Statement of Accounts for the year ended 31st December, 1976. This is a document of this Hon. Chamber, and it indicates at page 4; "Agricultural products other than sugar recorded substantial increases mainly as a result of favourable weather conditions. However non-sugar agriculture continued to be plagued with marketing difficulties, poor storage facilities, pests, diseases and still play only a minor role in the island's economic activities."

I have quoted that because I did not want any criticism to be made that I only quoted part of the statement. Now I go on a little further and I quote again: "Agricultural production was approximately 8 per cent higher than in 1975." Now, they are trying to give the impression that what we had were decreasing statistics as far as production in the various sectors is concerned. I go back to the previous year which is 1975, and I quote again. It reads: "Although firm data on vegetable and other food crops are not available, preliminary estimates

indicate a 14 per cent increase in production largely because of a good yield in yams and sweet potatoes."

It refers to the volume of vegetables and food crops handled by the Barbados Marketing Corporation. There was a glut of poultry on the market for most of the year and the output rose by 17.5 per cent. Therefore it is in those sectors that we are indicating.....

Mr. JOHNSON: On a point of order. I know the hon. member for St. Michael South is a competent man and like his counterpart, the hon. member for St. Michael South West, he knows a little bit about trend analysis so he should not seek to mislead the House by taking one point in a graph and talking about it. He knows what I mean.

Mr. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, I am wondering if I can continue at this stage, it being now 7 o'clock.

Hon. C. L. BOLDEN: Mr. Speaker, I understand that the hon. member will be no longer than five to ten minutes. This is the last item on the Order Paper. I will be no longer than 10 minutes. If we break now, under the Standing Orders we will have to take a break until 8.45. I would like to move if the hon. member has no objection that we continue at this stage which would take us no later than 8.20.

Mr. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, I have no objection to continuing. I was merely trying to remind the House of the fact that the Standing Orders were not suspended. There is a proviso here because earlier in the session I heard the member for St. Joseph indicating that he would be severely critical of the member for St. Michael West, and I am not certain if he would only go on for 10 minutes.

Hon. C. L. BOLDEN: Mr. Speaker, I speak very fast and I believe that I can do my duty in 10 to 15 minutes.

Mr. SPEAKER: Hon. members are familiar with the circumstances and there being no objection we will continue and complete this matter, giving each member an opportunity to exercise his right.

Mr. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, on a point of procedure. Can we have someone move the suspension of the Standing Orders at this stage?

Mr. SPEAKER: If it is the general feeling of the House and there is no objection, then that will not be necessary.

Mr. SANDIFORD: I was making the point that what the Government is trying to do is to convey to the people of this country that agricultural production in Barbados was going on the decline, but that the statistics

proved otherwise. The poultry industry was virtually a creation, as the member for St. Joseph knows, and as you yourself know – the modern poultry industry dates from the days of the Democratic Labour Party. The production of poultry on a large scale is a creation in the days of the DLP. I think that their effort to try to tell the people of this country that the Democratic Labour Party did nothing for agriculture is one of the greatest travesties of history in this country as far as the economy of this country is concerned.

There are others, but I am dealing with the economy at this time. I see that the member for Christ Church South Central is smiling at the truth of those remarks. I wanted to dismiss those arguments and get them out of the way once and for all that the Democratic Labour Party was not interested in agriculture. The statistics just do not prove that.
7.05 p.m.

Now having said that and having cleared away a few of the cobwebs which prevent the members of the Government from taking a true appraisal of the agricultural situation in the country, I think we should be in a better position to appreciate the stand of the Democratic Labour Party when in Government in readily supporting the initiative taken by the Government of Trinidad and Tobago in trying to get a Caribbean Food Corporation established, because it gained ready support from the Government of Barbados realising the problems of agriculture in the region, the need to cut down the high import bill for food, the need to provide the farmers of the region with a decent living from agriculture and to provide the consumers of the region with the products that they needed at reasonable prices. These are the main objectives and the motivations which led the Democratic Labour Party from their inception to be a party to this particular agreement. But I would have thought that in speaking of this particular matter the members on the front bench certainly if not those on the back bench would have been gracious enough to say that the Democratic Labour Party Government took a good decision as far as agriculture in this country and in the region was concerned, that it participated and assisted in the development of the concept and elaboration of the Caribbean Food Plan. I think it is the least that could have been done, instead of trying to prove that the Democratic Labour Party did nothing for agriculture in this country. The very plan that they have now brought before this Chamber is a plan which the previous Government was committed to and did a lot of work in bringing on along the way.

Mr. SPEAKER: Did the spade work.

Mr. SANDIFORD: Thank you for your word, Mr. Speaker. I do not wish to spend very much time on this matter. I believe the Minister of Agriculture is eager to set

the records straight and to agree with the points that have been so cogently, forcefully, and effectively made from over this side by the Opposition.

A point I wish to make is that we now have yet another Caribbean institution being established, the Caribbean Food Corporation, and there is a school of thought that the more of these regional institutions that can be established, the better it may be for the whole concept of Caribbean integration. I certainly hope and the Opposition hopes that the Caribbean Food Corporation can be made a distinct reality and a positive contribution as far as Caribbean development is concerned. I fear, however, that there are going to be other measures needed in order to weld this region into an integrated region. I think that there will be problems in this integration movement, and I must pay a tribute to the member for Christ Church South Central for the very frank way in which he looked at the problems of the Caribbean and the Caribbean integration process, and I think that augurs well, at least when he is speaking and when he does not get too much worked up, that if you start from that basis that maybe as far as Barbados is concerned, there should be no misunderstanding about where Barbados stands on these matters.

There are just a few points which I would like to get some clarification on. I am looking at Article 32 of the Agreement and I am wondering if Clauses such as this one would create any problems among member countries. I am thinking particularly of Section (b). The whole Article reads:

“To the extent necessary to carry out their purposes and functions effectively and subject to the provisions of this Agreement, the Corporation, its wholly-owned subsidiaries and joint enterprises with Governments of Member Countries –

- (a) may hold assets of any kind and operate accounts in any currency, and
- (b) shall be free to transfer their assets from one Member Country to another or within any Member Country and to convert any currency held by them into any other currency of the Region.”

Now we have had problems of which the Minister of Caribbean Affairs and External Trade is very much aware, of restrictions being imposed on the movement of goods within the region, and I am just wondering what problems might necessarily be created as far as the Caribbean Food Corporation is concerned if the financial or other situations in a country or more than one country of the region dictate that there should be some stringent financial control. I am very glad to see the Minister

waving it away as though this is not a problem. Sometimes we tend to dismiss these things, but when they come up then everyone is faced with the problems.

Mr. Speaker, as I said, I do not wish to hold up this debate. Maybe in another context I may have to point out the record of the previous Government in agricultural production to dispel those rumours and the impressions that are being conveyed, but for the moment....

Mr. SPEAKER: You will try to set it in perspective.

Mr. SANDIFORD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, that is very good. I will try to set it in perspective, but sometimes when I set it in perspective they get very annoyed and they cannot take their licks. I have heard that phrase. That is the problem.

Hon. C. L. BOLDEN: Mr. Speaker, one of the things that have come forward this evening is clearly that we need to do a little more publicly of the Caribbean Food Corporation not only in Barbados but in the entire region, and it has now come to bear upon me that I may have to go against the accepted practice of not making certain confidential project documents public. I think we should now have to look at a method of getting the project documents out to the public at a very early stage so that everybody in the region can fully understand what is happening in the Caribbean Food Corporation.
7.15 p.m.

Now lots of things have been said but I must truthfully say that the only member who has spoken in this Chamber this afternoon who has displayed total ignorance of CARICOM and the Caribbean Food Council is the hon. member for St. Michael South West. He said that there are reports not on record — unwritten reports....

Mr. TAITT: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker. The hon. member is misleading the House. I never said what he is saying.

Mr. SPEAKER: Is it a point of elucidation you are on?

Mr. TAITT: Yes, Mr. Speaker. I said there is an unwritten record; I did not say there are records.

Hon. C. L. BOLDEN: The member said unwritten records. Well, if he knows of unwritten records he should tell us something, because otherwise there can be no check other than from the knowledge of the member. That is similar to common law; common law is unwritten law; you can only testify to it by persons who know it and are familiar with it.

Let me explain what the Caribbean Food Corporation is, and it would probably satisfy the last

enquiry made by the hon. member and his colleague who has just left. The Caribbean Food Corporation is like an international company. The head office is in Trinidad. Now the Corporation will go into individual territories and will operate either on its own or in conjunction with the Government or private enterprise, in order to produce a commodity which can be satisfactorily and economically produced in that particular territory; because it is set up in a particular way, that is, every country that is involved in Caricom participates in the equity. It means that irrespective of the Corporation setting up an enterprise in your country, you are still benefitting from the profits made by the Corporation in producing commodities for the region. You are saving foreign exchange and at the same time generating income for the shareholders, the various Governments comprising CARICOM. Now in the Corporation there have been pre-feasibility studies carried out on a number of enterprises. There have been pre-feasibility studies on Fisheries in which there is supposed to be a fishing venture between Barbados, Trinidad, Guyana and Jamaica. There is to be another fishing venture between Jamaica and the Leeward Islands. There is a corn-soybean project between Trinidad and Guyana, a corn-soybean project between Guyana and Belize. There is a beef cattle project between Belize, Trinidad and Guyana. So the region is completely bound up in separate agreements through the Caribbean Food Corporation.

Somebody asked about Barbados' contribution. Our contribution has been identified in a pre-feasibility study along the lines that since Barbados has the black belly sheep as indigenous to this country, we should produce the required number of black belly sheep for every other country of the region. But then the various territories will look at the black belly sheep; they will set up what they call multiplication units in their country; they will develop cross-bred sheep for mutton production, for when you take into consideration the importation of mutton into the region, it has been felt that every country can produce sufficient mutton to satisfy its requirements without importing from outside the region. We are also, because of our heavy imports of foreign cattle, to supply high bred calves to places like Jamaica, Guyana and Belize. So when you ask what will the farmer get, the farmer in Barbados is getting the dairy farms. We have to set up holding units for the calves and then export them to the other territories of the region.

Going back to sheep: when I announced earlier this year that we were going into a sheep multiplication project, the Barbados Agricultural Society said that we did not consult with them and that we were cutting them out. But if one looks at the total requirements of the region, the Government is producing first quality black belly sheep. We are only setting up a project which will supply first quality lambs to the farmers in Barbados, and we have got a ram castration scheme whereby we intend

to castrate all off-site rams in order to move ourselves back towards producing high quality black belly sheep and exotic sheep, so that the farmer in turn can come to the station and buy the good quality sheep and raise them for export. But because of the bad reporting — and the member himself talked about bad relationships between the Minister and the Barbados Agricultural Society — I would say now that the very members of the Barbados Agricultural Society which he seeks to represent will come into your office, have a meeting and go outside and tell the Press something quite different.

Now the other side talked earlier about the relationships between Barbados and other Caribbean territories. The Minister of External Affairs has said that at no time whatsoever has the relationship been better than it is today.

Now Mr. Speaker, let me go a little further into Caricom. Under CARICOM there is something called the Agricultural Marketing Protocol in which several groups are listed. Every year the Trade Ministers meet with technical officers of the various territories to declare their likely agricultural surpluses and deficits. This is a case where confusion has come between Barbados and St. Vincent. Under this year's protocol arrangement St. Vincent is supposed to supply 350,000 pounds of sweet potatoes to Trinidad between July and January; 390,000 pounds for the months of February, March and April; and 300,000 pounds for May and June. Under the protocol if another country takes produce from a country to which it is not allocated, we are in breach of CARICOM rules; and Barbados is the only country that has adhered to the CARICOM rules from beginning to the end. And I have instructed my Ministry that in view of the fact that we were going through a drought period that if we had an offer for sweet potatoes we would first investigate Guyana and St. Vincent before issuing a licence. When the sweet potatoes came here they came to me on a day at Cabinet and I said: "Go down to the Ministry to the section responsible for licencing, because they have instructions not to restrict the issuance of licences when it came to food supplies which would bring down the cost of living in Barbados." When I returned to my office they came to me at 4 o'clock in the evening, and I said that as far as my Ministry was concerned we had done our duty in issuing the licence; they should go to the Minister responsibility for Caribbean Affairs. And I phoned the Deputy Prime Minister and told him I was coming to see him and he waited.

Now, my good friend Mr. Ebenezer Joshua, the Minister responsible for Trade and Agriculture in St. Vincent phoned me on the matter and I reminded him that when I first took up office I went to St. Lucia on a Council meeting and I had met the Minister for Agriculture of St. Lucia who had asked me whether I

could help him get rid of some of the oranges and grapefruit that were just dropping to the ground.
7.25 p.m.

After I looked around, I came back and at the next Ministers of Agriculture meeting I said that it is time that each Minister in the various countries be honest to himself first and to the people he represents. I suggested that there should be a meeting of the Ministers responsible for Licensing, Chairmen and Managers of the Marketing Boards in the region because there were a number of commodities that could be traded outside of the AMP Regulations. As far as I am concerned, the technocrats in the Caribbean had sought to impose certain standards, measurements, weights, etc., before we had reached the stage of perfection. I felt that if we could get the Ministers together, the Chairmen and the Managers, we could start trading commodities outside of the AMP Regulations which have standards, etc., laid down. It was accepted by the meeting. The Council of Ministers, as the Deputy Prime Minister has said, accepted the recommendation, and we are waiting for that meeting to be called. When my friend Mr. Joshua called me, I said, Mr. Joshua, if you would insist that the Caricom Secretariat call the meeting I had suggested, we would rid ourselves of these problems.

Mr. Speaker, I have had discussions with the representative of Trinidad, Mrs. Verna Crichlow, and I said that Trinidad at certain times has cabbage selling at 6 cents a pound. I have driven along the Churchill-Roosevelt Highway in Trinidad, and I saw cabbage selling at 6 cents a pound, whereas cabbage in Barbados reached as high as \$2.00 a pound. I have asked her to ask the Manager of the Marketing Corporation to discuss the matter, either with me or my Chairman, so that we can have a bilateral agreement. I have heard nothing about the matter to this day.

You will find Guyana with its mangoes and pine apples, and we are importing Pine Apple Juice from as far as Australia when Guyana has pine apples rotting in the hinterland and we cannot get them in Barbados. St. Lucia, Dominica, Grenada, have citrus falling under the trees that cannot be sold while we are buying grape fruits in Barbados at \$1 each! This is the reason why I put forward that statement. Since then we have had a delegation from Guyana in Barbados and it was agreed to trade plantain, cheese and cheese food in return for the trading of carrots and beets.

Now, the hon. member talked about the Jamaica delegation. I said, and I will not back out of it, that Barbados was honouring the treaty of Caricom, but I was opposed to things coming in from Jamaica which did not meet the Caricom standards. I refer to things like peanut butter, raspberry jams, and blackberry jams. The Trade Delegation met me, and I will make a document of this

House the letter written by Mr. Chin and what he said about my statement and what he thought about what I said to him in my office. I will bring it and make it a document of the House at some appropriate time. I said that if you based your economy, whether it is Trinidad, Barbados, Guyana or Jamaica, on imports from the United States, and when you talk a philosophy or take action that does not satisfy the political pundits in those countries, when they have cut off supplies it will cause disruption in the entire region notwithstanding the disruption in the employment of your own people. They have agreed with that.

Mr. Speaker, somebody said that the Bill was slow in coming and that people were dragging their feet. I regret that we have not done enough publicity on the Caribbean Food Corporation. The Bill is not slow in coming because the Corporation has not yet come into Barbados. We have said that, although we will fulfil our obligations under the Caribbean Food Plan, Barbados will manage its own sheep production and, therefore, Barbados does not need the Caribbean Food Corporation or private enterprise to come in and join with us in order to get that aspect of the matter going. We are not dragging our feet. The region is short of technicians. We cannot even get the Food Plan going as fast as I would like to see it going, or the Minister responsible for Caribbean Affairs would like it, or Dr. Williams in Trinidad would like it.

At the last meeting of Ministers of Agriculture it was disclosed that they have now secured four places in veterinary medicine in Nairobi, Kenya; two places in pasture technology, and one place in agronomy. Mr. Speaker, what people have to understand is that, in order to rain people in agriculture, Ministers are ripping the hair out of their heads daily trying to get people into institutions abroad to be taught the technology and return to Barbados. The region will need something like 158 vets within the next 10 years in order to get the Food Plan going, and we have only been able to place four. I have had my say with the last Secretary-General of the Caricom Secretariat. The vets in the region have still not declared whether they will accept the four persons trained in Nairobi when they return to the region. I said that we must make sure that if we train a man, when he gets back to the country he is accepted as a full veterinary officer and can work in such a field. These are the problems we have to face. We, as politicians, have to fight the technocrats.

There is another point I want to raise. Mr. Speaker, the hon. member talked about the pig industry. In the first place, throughout all the documents of the Caribbean Food Corporation pork has been excluded for one reason. Every country in the region that has a pig is now over-producing pork. They say that the Plan is to supply the region with import substitution, that is, a commodity

imported. The only items you will import into the region in the Caribbean, Mr. Speaker, are corned pork, pig tails, and snout, and every country is trying to set up something to can or to corn the various portions of pork.

The hon. member should know this. He also talked about the pig farmers in Barbados. He and the last Government set the problems with pigs in Barbados. When we came into office, Mr. Speaker, I went to Mauritius, and on my return I found every newspaper waiting on the Minister of Agriculture to settle the pig problem. I did not know anything about it. This is what happened. A Mrs. DaSousa had set up a place called "Barbados Cannery and Packers". He came into Barbados, went to the pig farmers himself, and told them, according to the Ministry's documents he submitted to get pioneer status, that he needed over two million pounds of pork a year to run a pork factory in this country. When he stopped producing there were problems in the Plant. I would not say what the problems are.

There was a meeting with the Deputy Prime Minister while I was out of the country, and we tried everything to get that Plant working. One of the basic things is that there was to have been a rip off on the people of Barbados. Do you know what the document said? It said that the Barbados Marketing Corporation was to be removed next door to BARPAC. That they should not build an abattoir, and that the Barbados Marketing Corporation shall seek to use the facilities of BARPAC because the Government would eventually own BARPAC. 7.35 p.m.

He had the gumption to send a letter telling me that they wanted the Government to buy 65 per cent in BARPAC. I looked it over and it is worth nothing. Only the building has value. I went to Cabinet and got Cabinet's approval to help the pig farmers in this country. Let me go on the platform and talk these things. Just recently we have agreed not to allow sausages, bacon, hams into Barbados in order to give BARPAC a chance. Luncheon meat has not been imported into the country for the last four months.

The Minister of Agriculture from Guyana was travelling through the region trying to sell surplus pork; and I do not know what the pig producers were doing in Barbados. They did not have the decency to tell me. One day the truth will be told. When they talk about Government not helping the pig industry, BARPAC brought in two technicians from Britain. The two came into my office and complained about the operations. In my file I have a letter from the Ministry of Health. Because you do not come out and get on a platform like the hon. member for St. Michael South West, the people will say that you are doing nothing.

I asked the Ministry of Health how they could help BARPAC out of their problems. If we wanted to destroy the pig industry we could have acted differently but we said that we would give them a chance to settle their own problems up there. That is why, as I have said, Caribbean Food Corporation has excluded pork.....

Mr. TAITT: On a point of order. He must not mislead the House. The Agreement that we are dealing with here says in Article 11 – Operating Principles:—

“1. In pursuance of its objectives the Corporation shall invest in enterprises which are financially viable, due regard being paid to the following important criteria:

- (a) the ability of the enterprise to increase agricultural production in order to achieve the greatest possible self-sufficiency within the Region: and
- (b) the ability of the enterprise to produce agricultural products that will raise the nutritional levels within the Region.”

Mr. SPEAKER: Are you on a point of elucidation? There is no rule that the hon. member has broken. You are trying to elucidate something.

Mr. TAITT: Very well, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: Is this on a point that you made previously.

Mr. TAITT: Not the entire point.

Mr. SPEAKER: Unless you had made the point previously, you cannot elucidate anything. Please resume your seat.

Hon. C. L. BOLDEN: The hon. member must understand something. From time immemorial – and that is another reason why pork has been excluded from the Caribbean Food Corporation. There are restrictions on the movement of beef between Caribbean countries because of Foot and Mouth Disease. We do not get pork from Guyana because our vets have told us about the question of Cholera. That is the reason why they have excluded pork. I do not understand how people can set themselves up as management consultants and cannot understand.....

Mr. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, the Minister is misleading the House about the food plan and about pork. Guyana is part of the mainland which has Foot and Mouth Disease. The only reason why pork was sold to Trinidad and Jamaica was the way in which the pork was slaughtered.

Hon. C. L. BOLDEN: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member does not understand. I said that there could be no movement of beef and pork from different territories of the region and the Caribbean Food Corporation has excluded pork specifically from its operations.

Antigua has one poultry farm, but still imports from Puerto Rico. As I have said, it now falls to me as the Minister who is responsible for the programme to set out certain principles pertaining to the Caribbean Food Corporation. These principles have grave implications for the region and our development prospects.

7.45 p.m.

Venezuela put a 140% duty on the importation of food into that country. Because of the petro dollars they have cut that down and have sent memos to Barbados asking what we can supply them in the line of anything in food. Further than that in the United Kingdom tropical foods have now become a hit. Only yesterday, Mr. Speaker, I had discussions with a man from the United Kingdom who wants to buy substantial quantities of food from Barbados to be taken into Britain. Now it means that while the Government is striving to make agriculture work that every man Jack in this country including backyard farmers must start to produce something. If you produce you can satisfy your home needs and the surpluses can be exported. The Barbados Marketing Corporation will shortly begin building at a site behind CBC and the plans are so designed to receive the grades, cold storage and shipping, and if everybody in Barbados wants to join in on the wealth, they have got the warning early.

When the hon. member spoke earlier when they were talking about sugar, I said that it is time the Government develop a policy which would serve small farmers, and the then Prime Minister, the hon. member for St. John looked back at the debate and said he does not believe in ten acre plots, he believes in 20 acre plots, but we are saying that every man Jack can contribute to the Food Corporation plan, because it basically has to produce what you need for yourself and any surpluses can then be exported. Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is still quarrelling over Article II.

Mr. Speaker: Which hon. member?

Hon. C. L. BOLDEN: The hon. member for St. Michael South West. (Mr. TAITT: You should resign.) If you did not resign when you issued Leo Leacock the licence for the cement at one price and then he sent back a bill for you at another price, and when your technical officers told you that you could not.....

Mr. SPEAKER: Do not let us talk about cement.

Mr. TAITT: Why don't you go outside and say that. He is dishonest. You are dishonest.

Mr. SPEAKER: There are two hon. members on their feet.

Hon. C. L. BOLDEN: Mr. Speaker, I am dealing with the food plan because the food plan deals with the importation in bulk in order to relieve the poor consumer, and when Leo Leacock had the licences for 600,000 bags of cement he quoted one price and then sent back for another price, and when the senior officer told the Minister he could not get it, the Minister wrote saying to pay the man his money.

Mr. TAITT: On a point of order, I charge the Minister with deliberately lying and misleading this House. I charge him with that.

Mr. SPEAKER rose.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member for St. Michael South West. I am on my feet to help you contain yourself like I would wish the Hon. Minister of Agriculture would contain himself as well. I stand to give you all a cooling off period.

Hon. C. L. BOLDEN: Mr. Speaker, the last hon. member who spoke on that side dealt with agriculture increasing under the Democratic Labour Party reign in 1976. I am no statistician but I know that if in 1975 you only produced 98,000 tons of sugar and in 1976 you produced 117,000 tons of sugar that there is bound to be an 8% increase in the agricultural output, but the records said non-sugar products suffered under pests etc. and did not increase. The 8% increase in sugar was due to the increase in production which was achieved because the Barbados Labour Party insisted from the beginning that we shall not burn sugar cane, and as I said earlier we set up several checks to monitor day and night and to stop people burning the sugar cane. That is the 8% we are talking about.

When he talked about the increase in onions, all the increase in onions was washed out by the \$400,000 for which the hon. member for St. Michael South West signed a document at CIBC which was never recorded in the BMC books, and when I walked into CIBC the manager called me and handed me two documents, and when the Prime Minister asked me whether I was sure I had two accounts, I had to tell him that these two documents were handed to me, and nowhere in the BMC accounts were they recorded, and he wrote a letter saying that he would repay the money at the end of June, but the money was never repaid. So all the increase in onions was wiped out by the debt that the BMC incurred under the signature of the hon. member for St. Michael South West who was then Minister

responsible for Trade under which the BMC fell and never paid back. But look at what has happened this year. I sat down with the BAS and worked out a marketing programme with them in conjunction with the BMC and nobody lost money. Money was made on the total onion crop. The taxpayers of Barbados did not have to pay \$400,000 for the inadequacies and the inefficiencies of the Minister and the BMC.

Mr. Speaker, when they begin to talk about agriculture, I believe in this. Let them make all the rumours they like. I am a practising lawyer; I am not setting up myself as any Management Consultant waiting for any job. No Leo Leacock could ever present a Bill to me with all the three cents a bag for communications charge allowing \$10,000 in his pocket; 2½ cents a bag for letter of credit, \$8,000 gone into his pocket — something like \$30,000 odd made on a shipment of cement. Let us get down to talking now. (*Asides*)

Mr. SPEAKER: Let us have some order on the Government benches.

Mr. TAITT: On a point of order, the Minister was speaking in reference to the hon. member for St. Michael South West.

Mr. SPEAKER: Let us have some order on the Government Benches, please.

Mr. TAITT: I understand the hon. member for St. Joseph, the Minister who is on his feet, to be saying that when I was a Minister I put money in my pocket. Do I understand him to be saying that? Mr. Speaker, if that is your understanding, I am asking the hon. member to withdraw that.

Mr. SPEAKER: If an hon. member rises and says that while I was a Minister I put money in my pocket, where would he expect me to put it!

Mr. TAITT: Once you understand it like that, Mr. Speaker.
7.55 p.m.

Hon. C. L. BOLDEN: Mr. Speaker, we continued in this period to make sure that everybody progressed at the same time and that the consumers had a fair break.

Getting back to the onions, in January when there was an embargo because the onions crop was coming in, Sam Gibbs phoned me about 4 o'clock in the morning telling me the last Minister used to give him licence to bring in onions at this time. He said that he wanted a licence and that it would be all right with me. I told him no. That is why Sam Gibbs can talk about a proper nigger. And you hear all this shouting outside in the street; they said the B.M.C. should not be importing onions, but the moment we removed the control onions shot up to \$1.00 a pound, and that is what Sam Gibbs wanted. But I tell people straight that I am beholden to

no man; so if you want to talk, let us talk facts. Because, Mr. Speaker, when one wants to criticise the Ministry of Agriculture and talk about reshuffle and transfer and so on, thank God when the reshuffle comes I shan't have to set up myself as a management consultant; I still have the wig and gown put down in the backyard. And you don't have to take it from me; you can ask any Minister around the Caribbean if I have not made a contribution to every international meeting I have attended. I have always said that I would give a few years of my life to the people of this country, and when I have done that, I don't care what anybody says.

Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this Bill be now read a second time.

The question that the Bill be read a second time was put and resolved in the affirmative without division, and Mr. ODLE took the Chair.

Clause 1 was called and passed.

Clause 2 was called.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: I want to make one point about our relationships under this agreement. During my absence from this Chamber the hon. member for St. Michael West in trying to reply to a point I made about the good relationships between ourselves and the other Caribbean countries tried to throw some cold water on this situation by saying that when the Prime Minister of Guyana passed through here recently he was received with less than the usual standard of protocol. I would like to say that there is no truth at all in the allegation. When the Prime Minister passed through here he was received on his way to Canada by the Rt. Hon. Prime Minister of Barbados, the Deputy Prime Minister and myself, and we had very useful discussions between the Prime Ministers and at ministerial level. Before Mr. Burnham came back through, it was indicated that H.M. the Queen would be visiting on that day, and because of various commitments it would not be possible for the Prime Minister to meet him. He said he could well understand that and that he did not want to be met by any Ministers. After the telex came through that he would reach Barbados at 4.30 p.m., my Permanent Secretary spoke with his Permanent Secretary and arranged that we would meet him at the airport. Because of security arrangements in Canada the flight was delayed, and the Prime Minister's arrival clashed with a dinner I had to attend at Government House at the command of the Queen. We explained this by telephone to the Guyanese and they said that all they wanted was to be pushed through Customs as speedily as possible. The plane eventually arrived and within ten minutes the Guyanese party was ready to leave for home. Just at that time I was on my way out of my

house when Mr. Hoyte called on the phone and said that they were very pleased that we had made their way out of Barbados so speedily. I would be willing to show a copy of the telex in my office from Guyana thanking us for the courtesies extended to our Guyana counterpart, the useful discussions we had and the warm relationship between the two countries.

And I would like to make this clear to the hon. member. He seems to be on the platform now, but if he wants the facts he should try to get them and not rely on rumours. In this case he has no valid point, and I hope that when he sees the cable he will see how mistaken he was.

Mr. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, I do not know why the Attorney General feels he has to fulminate on this matter. He got up and virtually affirmed the facts that I stated that the Prime Minister of Guyana was met at the airport by a person of lower rank. Only now has he given information which was not previously available to members on this side, so it was not unnatural for one to observe that a Prime Minister was met at the airport by a lower ranking officer. How would people in Barbados know that he had spoken to Mr. Hoyte? I do not understand why he had to get up as if someone was telling lies. The Attorney General outlined the same set of facts and then tries to suggest that somebody is not speaking the truth.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: On a point of order, Sir, if the hon. member is not in possession of all the facts, he is entitled to ask for information before rushing off his mouth.

Mr. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, the Attorney General must be aware that I can enquire on any public matter in this country, but I do not know if he wants me to come to his house to get information.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: On a point of order, Sir, I would like to assure the hon. member I do not want him to come to my house.

Mr. TAITT: I can assure the Hon. Attorney General that he is in no danger whatever of my going to his house. I have never done so before and I have no desire whatever to go there.
8.05 p.m.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Sir, I must object to that. If he wants me to be rough with him, I can be rougher than the hon. member for St. Joseph with him, because everything I will say about him I will document. He must remember that I have spent many years in practice practising for several clients, and I do not like to disclose their business. I will only warn him, so he has to watch his language.

Mr. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, he cannot warn me. I invite him to make documents available. (*Asides.*)

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Order, please!

Mr. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, he has finished his speech, I believe.

Mr. TAITT: Not yet.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The hon. member must stick to the subject we are discussing.

Mr. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, I think you will appreciate that this business of getting away from the subject matter — (*Asides.*) There are certain niceties about Parliament, but when members on either side try to destroy the reputation of any member in this House, then that member has a right to defend himself. I am sure you would agree with that. Mr. Chairman, there is no one in this.....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Let us stick to the matter before the House.

Mr. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, I am discussing the question of good relations. There is no one in this House, other than yourself, who has had any practical experience in dealing with the Ministry of Trade when I was the Minister in the commodity of cement — no one in this House.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I will not allow any discussion on the question of cement.

Mr. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, with all due respect, in his response the Minister ranged wide on this matter and he dealt with cement. (*Asides.*) I wish merely to say to you, Mr. Chairman, that in all my time as a Minister in this country I have never ever engaged in any kind of illegal activity at all in the Ministry. I go further and I, categorically, state that I have never taken a single cent from any member of the public. The only money I have ever taken is the money I have earned. I challenge any of them to go outside — (*Asides.*) My salary which I received as a Minister was all, and I challenge any of them to step outside this Chamber at any time and make a statement or an innuendo. I am surprised and disappointed that the Attorney-General, who ought to know better — and I will deal with the Minister in due course. I am going to say it outside, and I am going to talk on a platform about you. I am going to say what I know about you, outside and not in here.

Mr. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, I just wish to make one point on the question of the meeting of the Prime Minister of Guyana. I was in here when the hon.

member for St. Michael South West spoke. He did, in fact, allege that no Minister of Government met the Prime Minister, but it was some senior civil servant from the Ministry of External Affairs. But, in the course of his speech, he certainly conveyed the impression to me that the Government had been neglectful in its protocol arrangements, and that it being neglectful it could have the result of impairing good relations that should exist between Barbados and Guyana. I think that having heard the Attorney-General and Minister of External Affairs, it would seem that the conclusions which the hon. member for St. Michael South West sought to draw were ill-conceived.

Hon. C. L. BOLDEN: Mr. Chairman, I would like the hon. member for St. Michael South West to understand that when he is on that ground he is on a very bad ground, because Barbados suffered internationally in 1975 when there was a CPA Conference in St. Lucia, and we had passing through and overnighting in Barbados the Premier of Nova Scotia, the Prime Minister of Northern Ireland, and at least two other Premiers overnighted in Barbados. A Cocktail Party was hosted, and the then Prime Minister, the Member for St. John, refused to turn up, and Barbados' name had a black mark internationally. That is why this very year when we hosted a party for the CPA Conference in Barbados we had to go all out to restore the name of Barbados on the political map of this world.

I now move that Clause 2 stand part.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: I beg to second that.

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

Clauses 3 to 7 inclusive were called and passed.

The Schedule was called and passed.

Hon. C. L. BOLDEN: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that you do now report the passing of one Bill in Committee.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: I beg to second that.

The question was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. CHAIRMAN reported to Mr. SPEAKER who resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

Hon. C. L. BOLDEN: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this Bill be now read the third time.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: I beg to second that.

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

Hon. C. L. BOLDEN: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this Bill do now pass.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: I beg to second that.

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

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this House do now adjourn until Tuesday, 15th November, at 12 o'clock noon.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: I beg to second that.

The question was put and resolved in the affirmative without division, and Mr. SPEAKER adjourned the House accordingly.
8.18 p.m.