

THE

House of Assembly Debates

(OFFICIAL REPORT)

FIRST SESSION 1991 - 96

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, July 13, 1993.

Pursuant to the adjournment, the House of Assembly met at 12.20 p.m. o'clock.

PRESENT

His Honour L. A. WEEKES, G.C.M., J.P., (Speaker)

His Honour T. C. ESTWICK, B.Sc., LL.B., (Deputy Speaker)

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD, B.A., M.A., (Econ.), J.P., (Prime Minister, Minister of Finance and Economic Affairs and Minister for the Civil Service)

Mr. H. deB. FORDE, Q.C., M.A., LL.B., (Leader of the Opposition)

Hon. B. M. TAITT, B.A. (Hons.), M.P.A., LL.B.(Hons.), (Minister of Health)

Hon. P. M. GREAVES, Q.C., B.A., (Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Public Works, Communications and Transportation and Leader of the House)

Hon. M. A. KING, Q.C., LL.B., (Attorney General and Minister of Foreign Affairs)

Hon. W. O. FRANKLIN, A.I.C., M.I.A.S., J.P., (Minister of Trade, Industry and Commerce)

Hon. N. K. SIMMONS, (Minister of Justice and Public Safety)

Mr. H. A. BLACKMAN, B.Sc. (Econ.)

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR, M.Sc. (Econ.)

Mr. L. L. BRATHWAITE, J.P., (Chairman of Committees)

Hon. W. W. HALL, G.C.M., H.B.M., J.P., (Minister of Tourism and Sports)

Mr. C. LeR. TROTMAN, M.A.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS, B.A., Cert. Ed.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON, LL.B. (Hons.), (Minister of State, Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs)

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN, Q.C., LL.B.

Mr. L. R. TOLL, Q.C., M.A.

Miss B. A. MILLER

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW

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

Mr. J. O. TUDOR

Hon. D. W. BOWEN, (Minister of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries)

Mr. G. W. PAYNE

Prayers were led by Rev. Mark Harewood. Mr.

SPEAKER: The House is in session.

MINUTES

Mr. SPEAKER: The Minutes of Tuesday, June 22, 1993 and Wednesday, June 30, 1993.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, first of all I move that the Minutes of the meeting of this Honourable Chamber held on June 22, 1993 be taken as read and confirmed.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I beg to second that.

Mr. SPEAKER: If there are no observations, then let those Minutes stand confirmed.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: I also move, Sir, that the Minutes of the Special Meeting of the House held on June 30, 1993 be taken as read and confirmed.

Hon. M. A. KING: I beg to second that.

Mr. SPEAKER: If there are no observations let these Minutes stand confirmed.

ANNOUNCEMENTS BY HIS HONOUR
THE SPEAKER

Mr. SPEAKER: I am to announce that I am in receipt of the Special Report of the Ombudsman for Barbados.

FIRST READINGS OF BILLS

On the motion of Hon. P. M. GREAVES seconded by Hon. B. M. TAITT the following Bills were read a first time:

L The Final Appropriation (1992-93) Bill, 1993; 2.

The Sugar Import Levy Bill 1993. SUSPENSION

OF STANDING ORDERS

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that Standing Orders Nos. 6, 16, 18, 20, 42(5), 43 and 44 be suspended for the remainder of the day's sitting.

Hon. E. E. GREAVES: I beg to second that.

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

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

Mr. SPEAKER: Government Business is the order of the day. Order No. 8.

ORDER NO. 8: FINAL APPROPRIATION (1992-93)
BILL, 1993

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, the Bill that is before us is the Final Appropriation Bill in respect of the financial year which ended March 31, 1993. As Honourable Members well know, Sir, during the course of the last financial year supplementary provision in the total amount of \$81 938 510 was passed by this House. Requirements are that any amounts not in the Appropriation Bill should, as soon as practicable after the end of the financial year, be introduced in the form of a Final Appropriation Bill. Sir, these matters have all been discussed and debated before when they came by way of supplementary provision. The House has already considered, debated and concluded in these matters. Therefore, Sir in accordance with requirement, I am presenting this Final Appropriation Bill as indicated.

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

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: I beg to second that, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: Mr. Speaker, this Bill, as I understand it, deals with sums of money spent during the

last financial year. I would like to ask one or two questions from the Minister who introduced this Bill, or the Minister holding the appropriate portfolio.

A sum of \$2.7 million appears in this Bill as a subsidy for the Transport Board. Since the Government announced on two occasions that it was to privatise the Transport Board, and hence reduce the subsidy, I would like to know from the Government when, in fact, does it intend to privatise the Transport Board and hence reduce the subsidy to that Corporation. A date of March 31 was announced for the privatisation of that Board. A second date, June 30, was announced during the time when we were dealing with the amounts to be voted for the Transport Board. I want the Government to understand that some workers have complained they have problems at the Transport Board. 12.30 p.m.

They have raised the concern that the Operators - not now the bus drivers, they are now called Operators - and they are complaining that they are called upon to carry out duties which will normally be conducting duties. They are paid for it but there is a question as to how their pay is calculated when it comes to vacation. This is relevant. It is my duty to draw areas of concern to the Government's attention.

I would like the Government to state, on this occasion, what is its intention because it is unclear. The public is unclear. There is uneasiness as to whether the Government would, in fact, carry out its privatisation programme and the time. Government has commissioned a study and I would want to know when and if the study is ready and what is the decision of Government. How soon, what is the projected date now or if there is going to be a date and if there is going to be any further reduction in the services offered by the Transport Board because it is a Corporation that depends on subsidy. I am aware that just \$10 was allocated or put in the current year's Estimates.

I want to know if there is going to be a further subsidy to the Transport Board. There are questions which need to be asked. They are not simple. I do not want the Government to take this lightly at all because it has implications for even the economy or the revival of the economy. This transport business is serious.

The Minister announced that it was Government's intention to withdraw certain services from certain areas, certain routes. I would want to know if that is the position now since the 30th June has passed. I also want to know what provision the Government has made for severance of those workers. I do not want to see a repeated situation, as has happened in that past. I want to see adequate provision made for those persons. That is why I want the Government to answer these questions.

There are people who feel that they would not be able to benefit from the public transport because the Minister has announced that only 75 buses will be required. As I said I want to know this. I am asking these questions because I am aware that there has been a new Board, a Board re-appointed for 3 years and I want to know if the Minister would be kind enough, I want the Minister to be kind enough to state clearly in this House today whether we will be dealing with a further subsidy to the Transport Board. Because I was made to understand, Mr. Speaker, when the last resolution dealing with subsidy to the Transport Board was dealt with, that that was going to be the final subsidy.

I want the Minister and the Government to understand that ' am no fool. It is bound to come here for a subsidy. I want the Government to come up front and say that so that there will not be any debate. I do not want to be involved in any debate saying "I told you so". That is the problem that we are experiencing in Barbados today. I want to be quite clear on this. People have been asking me and there is a lot of speculation. Remove this speculation. I want the speculation to be removed. I want the Government to state if it is going to decide to continue at the level of operation with the number of buses it now has. Make a statement and let Barbadians know so that they could be relieved of that concern. I want that to be done. It is very, very important.

How can we think in terms of economic improvement when employers out there would like to know what mode of transportation, how regular transportation would be on certain routes? It affects the workers of Barbados. I raise this because transportation is very, very vital. I think I can agree that the Government would like to see work generated, employment generated. I am saying that, until you settle the whole question of transportation, there is going to be some reservation as far as employers are concerned. There are workers, not only at the Transport Board who are living in fear, because they do not know when and if they are going to be severed. All of these have consequences for us in Barbados. I would hope that the Government addresses this very vital area so that job creation will be based and if people are going to take jobs they will know whether they are going to have transportation to get home. It is important in the Deacon's Road area. People want to know if they are going to be served by a proper transport or minibuses or ZR vans. All of these things must be done because the Government in its transportation study will have recommendations dealing with the routes that are lucrative and the routes that are not an asset to the Government, those that are not making any money. All these are things that have got to be dealt with. We cannot just dismiss this matter.

These are new points that I am raising. They are not points that were raised before. Therefore this is a new dimension. This is a new debate as far as I am concerned.

I do not want to hear we are dealing with a subsidy and you have to move money into the Estimates for the Transport Board. It is going on and on. What is going to be the position? What is happening? I just want to know this.

As I said I hope the Minister in his reply will throw some light on that and remove the fear or the concerns and make a clear policy whether or not it is going to privatise and, if so, when and what will be the future of those persons, if they are going to have the 75 buses or if they are going to operate with fewer or more. That will mean that people who are working, the employees will be able to know, very early, what their position is.

I will say something. It is so serious that when workers are operating in an atmosphere of fear and ignorance a lot of things can happen. I am only asking the Government to address this area so that the workers at Transport Board can continue to work for at least 6 months, 1 year or so, so that we would have the workers working in a more comfortable atmosphere which would redound to the better working of a public transport system, Mr. Speaker.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: If I may respond, Sir, to this debate. We have taken very full note of the points raised by the Honourable Member and I recall and all of us will recall when the actual supplementary provisions were introduced into this House there was a full debate on these matters and the Minister responded appropriately.

To the extent that there are new issues being raised we have taken note of the points made by the Honourable Member and a statement will be made in due course on these matters. The Member can rest assured that we are not concealing anything here. We are doing everything possible to fulfil what we have said in the area of transportation. I hope this satisfies the Honourable Member. We have taken note, Sir. I think that was the only point that was made and I think the question should be put.

The question that the Bill be read a second time was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

On the motion of Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD, seconded by Hon. P. M. GREAVES, Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair and the House went into Committee on the Bill, Mr. L. L. BRATHWAITE in the Chair.

COMMITTEE Mr.

CHAIRMAN: The House is in Committee.

Clause 1 was called and passed.
12.40p.m.

Clauses 2, 3 and 4 -were called and passed. The Schedule was called.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: I beg to move that the Schedule be the Schedule to the Bill.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I beg to second that.

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

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: I beg to move that the Preamble be the Preamble to the Bill.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I beg to second that.

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

On the motion of the Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD, seconded by the Hon. B. M. TAITT. Mr. CHAIRMAN reported to Mr. SPEAKER, the passing of one Bill in Committee and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

On the separate motions of the Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD seconded by the Hon. B. M. TAITT, (he Bill was read a third time and passed and cited the Final Appropriation (1992-93) Bill, 1993.

ORDER NO. 5 - THE SUGAR IMPORT LEVY BILL, 1993

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker, this is a Bill to give effect to the announcement by the Prime Minister and Minister of Economic Affairs given on March 15, 1993 in respect of the introduction of a levy on every tonne of sugar imported by the Barbados Marketing Corporation effective April 1, 1993.

The tax will be paid at the point of entry of the sugar and will be administered by the Comptroller of Customs. The tax will be levied on raw cane sugar which includes regular sugar and straw sugar. Refined sugar will not be the subject of this tax and the tax should not affect the shelf price of sugar to Barbadian consumers.

There is presently in place a cess which the importer of sugar pays over to the Barbados National Bank and which the Ministry of Finance then uses to redeem various series of sugar bonds and therefore this is a cleaner and tighter arrangement for extracting the levy at the point of entry and putting it in hands of the Comptroller of Customs as with other border taxes.

This draft Bill makes provision for the levy to be secured by bond or deposit with the permission of the

Comptroller, pending final entry of the product. Provision is also made for its calculation when the product is imported in unlabelled containers.

Under this Bill, an importer is required to keep records and books of account pertaining to the importation of the product to the satisfaction of the Comptroller and the Comptroller has, within 7 years of the importation of the product, to reassess the levy paid if in his opinion such action is necessary.

All moneys paid over by the importer to the Comptroller shall be paid into the Consolidated Fund and the Comptroller is required to prepare a report within 6 months of the end of the Financial Year of all transactions relating to moneys received from the tax.

The Report is to be laid in the Honourable House and the Honourable Senate and published in the *Official Gazette*. The Draft Bill also makes provision for penalties to be applied for contravening its provisions.

This Bill, Sir, applies essentially to the importation of sugar and would apply to the Barbados Marketing Corporation since the decision had been taken by the Cabinet that the Barbados Marketing Corporation, until further notice, would be the sole importer of sugar in Barbados, but the Bill is sufficiently wide as to make it applicable to any importer should Barbados find itself in the position that it has to import sugar in the future.

In that regard, Sir, it is well known that the Government is carrying out a restructuring programme in the sugar industry which should ensure that the levels of sugar production in Barbados would increase sufficiently so as to avoid the importation of sugar for domestic purposes.

The House would be very pleased to know that the owners of the heavily indebted plantations have finally, after very lengthy negotiations, signed the leases with some reservations which are to be solved over time, which would give permission and rights to the management company which the Government will appoint very shortly to manage those heavily indebted plantations. The configuration is such that the Government had established two companies, the Barbados Agricultural Credit Trust and the Barbados Agricultural Management Company which will be the companies that will be party to the lease.

The Barbados Management Company will very shortly be appointing the long-term managers of the sugar industry based on the tender process which is now being evaluated by a Committee appointed by the company in conjunction with the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Finance. That would take care of the operation of the estates and one would assume that action will take place very shortly through the Barbados National Bank and the Agricultural Credit Trust, as well as the Barbados

Sugar Industries Limited, which only yesterday assured the Government that it will be cooperating with it fully in finding a solution to the issue of getting control of the assets of the BSIL for the purpose of grinding for the 1994 crop,

At present there is a Receiver in place and the Government has no control over the action of the Receiver and also has no control over the assets of the Barbados Sugar Industries Limited. Therefore, it would be inimical to the arrangements which are proposed consequent on the award of the tender for the Government not to be able to have some form of control over the three factories which are presently in operation in Barbados and also control over whatever assets are necessary to have the sugar crop in 1994 concluded. 12.50 p.m.

I want to reiterate, Mr. Speaker, that the financial reform of the sugar industry has been a very difficult exercise. There are those characteristically, Mr. Speaker, who feel that the reform of an industry that is 300 years old is something that one can do by sitting in a room under an oil lamp and toiling tirelessly in moving the players around as if solutions can be found in the mind of that one individual. It has taken an herculean effort which has involved a lot of technical expertise both within and outside of the Government of Barbados and a lot of legal and financial work to determine how best the industry could be restructured. All of that has been done, Mr. Speaker, against a background of cooperation. Even though the Government had from time to time to put its position very forcefully to get matters to move on swiftly and to get those charged with the responsibility of concluding those matters to conclude them swiftly, at the same time it must be made very clear that cooperation at all levels is vital in the restructuring process. If you do not have that cooperation, the smooth operation of the sugar industry will come to a halt. Therefore, those who feel that they have the solutions to the sugar industry's problem and who certainly had a more leisurely framework for the implementation of those solutions should have put those solutions to the public of Barbados and should have introduced them.

The entire restructuring of the sugar industry has fallen to this Government and it has required very active and close collaboration between the Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Finance, trade union movement, Barbados Sugar Industries Limited and the persons who are giving the technical advise. There are no easy solutions. People will make errors in the way in which they seek to resolve the issues and there are going to be delays. I want to make it very clear that the issue of the debt of the sugar industry, has not yet been solved even though the leases have been signed. The owners are disputing the interest that has been charged by the Barbados National Bank. We still have to find a formula over the next 6 months to work out

the precise debt of the heavily indebted plantations and perhaps some others because it will affect them even though they are not necessarily heavily indebted but who have loans from the Barbados National Bank. That has to be done again, hopefully, through some process of cooperation. We do not want that to delay what we are doing. Therefore, some solution for the transfer of Barbados National Bank's contaminated portfolio has to take place and it may be necessary for the act upon the issue of Government bonds to purchase that contaminated portfolio and then assign securities at a later date or some other arrangement which would protect the viability of the Barbados National Bank and also afford us the opportunity to solve the issue of the precise indebtedness of the industry.

I want to say, Mr. Speaker, that if there have been problems in the process that these were not problems that were not anticipated. If you are restructuring one of your major industries, it cannot be done by fiat. It should not be done by any heavy-handed techniques by Government which seek to impose upon the principal actors in the sector conditions which are unacceptable and which essentially would disrupt the process of sugar production in Barbados. If we have determined that we wish a sugar industry, then we have to move as quickly as possible, but also carefully, to ensure that those who have the expertise are still interested in continuing to function within the sugar sector.

I can only speak on behalf of the financial restructuring. The agronomic aspect does not concern me. Regrettably, I am not one of those people who can speak beyond my brief. So I cannot speak about the cutting of sugar workers wages or any other things that do not fall within my portfolio. Those who wish to speak beyond their brief can do so. I hope that when the Government has to speak beyond its brief and indicate what it feels about the way in which the arrangements were concluded in respect of the receivership of the Barbados Sugar Industries Limited, that those persons whose toes are mashed at that point would not be unduly upset. But I know what my remit is and I think that the Government of Barbados knows what its remit is in restructuring. If the people who had their jobs to do would do those jobs instead of trying to do my job or trying to do the job of the Minister of Agriculture or the job of the General Secretary of the Barbados Workers' Union, we would not have problems of reform in this country. But that is another matter which regrettably I am not able to speak on any further, Mr. Speaker. I hope those who have that responsibility for assisting the Government in carrying out the restructuring of the sector will do so in good faith and will assist that restructuring, because we all acknowledge that it is vital to the development of our country.

I am convinced, Mr. Speaker, that the process which has been initiated for the restructuring of the sugar

industry in Barbados, particularly the financial arrangements, will redound to the benefit of all Barbadians. The opportunity will arise for citizens of Barbados to own shares in those companies including the Agricultural Management Company in due course. One will assume that other assets in the sugar sector will be available to other citizens of Barbados to participate in and that the management techniques which are used by the new managers of the industry would provide opportunities for sub-contracting for various services and bring Barbadians more into the main stream of sugar production by mechanisms, which have so far been alien to us, but will be desirable in the context of developing the sugar sector.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, with those few words, I beg that this Bill in respect of the Sugar Import Levy be read a second time.

Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: I must say, Mr. Speaker, that the defensive and apologetic tone of the Honourable Member who introduced this Bill has done nothing to improve the very depressed state of the sugar industry. The sugar industry is financially depressed, physically depressed and psychologically depressed and recent events have done nothing to improve the situation. The forecast which I disputed in this House, that we would have reached fifty thousand tonnes, was not realised and the controversies surrounding the receiver, too, have not done anything to improve the state of the industry. 1.00 p.m.

I concede, Mr. Speaker, that the whole process of reforming and restructuring the sugar industry cannot be done overnight. It will take time. I concede further that it needs the support and the co-operation of all the sectors that are involved, including - and this has been left out by the Government - the need for the education of the public, because the public on the whole has an anti-sugar industry attitude, cultivated over the years in part by the Democratic Labour Party, and they have a responsibility to educate the public about some of the steps that are necessary if we are to save this vital industry for Barbados to the point where we can cease importing sugar and make a serious and enhanced contribution to our foreign exchange earnings.

But notwithstanding the problems, the difficulties and the delays that will be experienced in getting reform right, we are dealing with an industry where attitudes are set and have been set for over 300 years; and I think that the Minister and the Government are really losing track of certain priorities even in the process of restructuring.

It seems to me, Mr. Speaker, that the first priority, even in the midst of the restructuring, is to get production up. While time is needed to identify precisely the nature of the debt and perhaps to determine how you are going to deal with the debt, in the midst of all of that we need to

get our production up. All that we are having are statements giving some false dawns. I heard the anchor man on the CBC 7 o'clock news programme a few weeks ago saying that only 48 000 tonnes had been achieved but sources close to the industry say that by next year we will have an improvement of 5 000 tonnes. I was neither standing nor sitting. It was not easy for me to fall, otherwise I would have done so, Mr. Speaker. You cannot get a turn around in production under 3 years and we need to make the start now so as to ensure that the time will come when we will not have to be importing sugar and when we will be able to make an increased contribution to the export of sugar and the earning of foreign exchange.

That is the first thing, Mr. Speaker. We need to get our production up. The production cannot be increased unless we put additional acreage under cultivation. The reports from the industry are to the effect that the Barbados National Bank, which is the banker to the industry over the last 10 years or more, has not been extending any loans, any credit to the plantations.

Aside.

Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: I am glad to hear that it is not true, but that is what I am hearing. It means, Mr. Speaker, that a lot of labourers have been laid off, that a lot of land is not being prepared and that the factories themselves are not being readied for next crop. My information is that a large amount of maintenance and repair work needs to be done in the factories, that orders have not been placed for vital machinery and that there is concern about whether or not the next crop will be able to start as early as we would like the crop to start.

I would need to be assured, and I think the whole country would need to be assured, that in the midst of this restructuring and re-organisation exercise, attention is being paid to priorities and that attempts are being made by the Government to increase production so as to ensure that we will no longer be talking about a production of 48 000 and 50 000, but that we will soon get back to higher levels and that we will be able to make an enhanced contribution to our foreign exchange earnings.

• I want to make one or two additional points, Mr. Speaker, to do with the contract which rumour has it - I am not too sure whether it is yet official - has been awarded to Booker Tate with respect to the management of the estates. My understanding is that Booker Tate is interested - and I think this was written in the report - in sugar cultivation only. In Barbados it is not possible to be engaged in successful sugar cultivation unless you are also involved in non-sugar. There is a close, symbiotic, unavoidable relationship between the two and I would like to know from the Honourable Minister and from the Government what is going to happen to the significant non-sugar production in Barbados without which there can

be no successful sugar and vice versa. You cannot have new managers who are declaring up front that they are only interested in sugar, because vital to sugar is non-sugar. I think that particular statement needs to be addressed and the Minister needs to state whether or not Booker Tate, assuming that they are the new managers or the managers for the future, will be concerning themselves with non-sugar production. It has implications not only for the sugar industry itself, but for nutritional standards, food supply and food security in Barbados, and it is very important, particularly at this time when people cannot buy the imported foodstuff and have more and more to be relying on the local vegetables and ground provisions produced.

Mr. Speaker, I want to return to a point which I only made in passing but which I think is very important. The whole restructuring exercise is proceeding as though the whole of Barbados is not tied up with the sugar industry. Every man has a perception of the industry, a view about it, sometimes even passionate. It has been a vital part of the history of the country for 300 years. It follows, Mr. Speaker, that this restructuring exercise cannot go on between the Government and the Bank, the sugar factories and the sugar plantations. They are key players, but there must be a certain public support for what has to be done and what the Government is attempting. I am concerned that that public education aspect of the whole exercise has been ignored.

I hear every day on the radio programmes directed to the avoidance and the prevention, if we can, of AIDS and a lot of other things. They are important programmes for public education, but equally important at this time are programmes of public education concerning the sugar industry, its importance to us, to the economy of Barbados, the necessity to reorganise it, the implications, and I think that the Government has a responsibility to start that exercise, because without that there are serious limits to how far you can get, especially where public time and public resources have to be involved.

I heard mention of the contaminated portfolio at the Barbados National Bank relating to the sugar industry. When we, 10 years ago or more, brought the sugar price support to this House the rationale was that without that you really have exposed too rapidly the Barbados National Bank, because it was not a gift. The repayment went directly to the Barbados National Bank. There was a formula that ensured that, and the Opposition at the time, now the Government, completely ignored that and pooh-poohed the whole idea without recognising that it was a well thought out and well conceived scheme designed among other things to prop the industry at a difficult time in terms of international prices and, at the same time, to ensure the viability and the survival of the plant. All of a sudden, we are now hearing that there is concern about this

contaminated portfolio as though it was not something that was anticipated and addressed by us on this side when we were in Government and as though it was a matter that could have been lightly ignored. 1.10 p.m.

I am concerned, Mr. Speaker, that the Government is not doing enough, is not providing enough leadership with respect to the sugar industry. I am concerned that not enough is being done to lift the morale in the industry. I am concerned that we are hearing too many excuses about the non-avoidance of delay and the long period it will take and the number of mistakes that have got to be made. The mistakes can be minimised. I interpret the speech of the last Honourable Member as nothing more than a recital of excuses for the fact that the Government is not taking the lead in a sufficiently vigorous way to ensure that the strength of the industry is revived, and that morale is restored, and that we target on the essential of getting production up both in the short term and in the long term.

Now, getting back to the specific Bill before us, I, on first reading its provisions, was of the view that the Government would have been accommodating importers of sugar other than the BMC. As I understand it, the BMC is an institution on its deathbed. Others are putting it otherwise by saying that its days are numbered. The Honourable Minister is shaking his head to the contrary. Perhaps, he knows more than we know. In any event, Mr. Speaker, I do not know: we are in an era when we are reducing the role of Government and giving the private sector an enhanced role, whether the BMC needs to survive for the only purpose of importing sugar. Perhaps the Minister needs in his concluding remarks to tell us what is the major rationale for the BMC remaining the only importer of sugar for the future and certainly for the present.

I do not know that there is any particular justification for it and, in the light of all the suspicion that enveloped its operations of importation over the last 2 years, I thought the Minister and the Government might have taken the opportunity to run away from the BMC's importing sugar for the present and the future and allow that to be performed by the private sector.

That really raises an additional point and I think the Government may wish to indicate what is happening. It has to do with the future of the BADC and the BMC because it has been known that it has been recommended to the Government that these institutions should be amalgamated; that there is no continuing justification to have 2 institutions, the BMC and the BADC. It does remove insecurity both at the level of the staff and at the level of the public which has to work with these institutions if a clear indication of the time frame for this reorganisation can be given.

I think that part of the problem in the country at present is that there is too much uncertainty about too many things that should be made clear and definite to the public. This is another area of uncertainty and I feel that the Government and the Minister owes it to the country to indicate specifically what are its plans with respect to the future of BADC and BMG.

Mr. C. LeR. TROTMAN: Mr. Speaker, the problem of the Sugar Import Bill that we are faced with today is a direct result, in my view, of faulty land use which there has been over time in this country. Whereas one appreciates the efforts being made today to address the matter of sugar, that we have to import to meet our domestic needs, I think that as a people who have been producing this commodity for several years, we need to recognise that that represents a difficulty for us, which is not easy to address because of the embarrassment there is for us coming out of it.

The problem of land use has many sources, as reports will have it. On the one hand, we have been putting to the Government the need for a land use policy that is clearly articulated. The Barbados Workers' Union, for example, has been invited to make a statement in that regard and we have in fact, since February, written outlining our position on this. It might be useful for the relevant Minister to tell us where we are at this point in terms of our discussions regarding that particular policy; because I imagine that many other institutions have similarly submitted their proposals and their suggestions for a revised land use policy, and it would seem to be very urgent and important for us to be able to have that policy in place in order that we may better be able to address some of those concerns raised by the Honourable Member for St. Joseph.

I was, for example, very alarmed when I read a document last year indicating that one of the external agencies was of the view that Barbados, in treating its land resource, should move towards a position where it allowed complete flexibility in the ownership and control of land. The document gives the impression that the international agency was quite prepared and, in fact, was advocating an approach where lands could be sold freely, and that is to say, agricultural lands could be sold freely and be subject to any use by the parties concerned.

To people like ourselves, who are Barbadians and who love this country, we must have a concern about people from outside of this area who begin to treat Barbados as though we have unlimited square miles or hectares of land and, particularly, unlimited numbers or square miles of agricultural land. We have to realise we are a small country and resources such as our sugar lands must be resources kept in trust for all the people of Barbados, rather than being allowed to be used at the whims and fancies of any small number of our people. 1.20p.m.

We therefore have deplored the practice which we have seen and heard reported of persons who would leave good sugar lands abandoned for some time, or in fact, even move so far as to scrape the top soils thereby calling on the Governments of the day to recognise that the lands were no longer able to produce sugar and speculate in our very scarce resource. The Government must, therefore, be able to avoid that by moving in the direction of having a clearly articulated policy set down and set down so firmly that there is very little possibility for exploitation of that system.

Among the suggestions which we have made before now in that regard and which I would wish to repeat here, Sir, is for that policy to be so tight that where land is to be moved away from agriculture, a commission that would be broad-based in its membership, would be the only authority responsible for allowing that movement away from the land use, and that movement should be only after there has been the possibility of open debate with the public being fully apprised of the circumstances leading to that request for a change. If we can move in that direction, we would be moving, Sir, somewhere in the direction which the Honourable Member for St. Joseph, in my view, has properly referred to, that is, the need for there to be general acceptance by the public of Barbados rather than limited acceptance by a few in Barbados of the importance and relevance of sugar and the need for us in agriculture generally to be able to realise that our future will lie in the way that we treat our lands and the culling and cultivation which we give to our agriculture as commodities.

I would think in that regard, Sir, that we have to be particularly careful to ensure that we do whatever is possible to make sure that the 1994 crop season begins in good time. I have in some discussions with officers of the organisation that has been set up by the Government, repeated the request of the workers to allow them to get back to work in good time. They should have been back to work no later than 4 weeks after the end of the crop season because there is quite a lot of work to be done to ready the factories for the succeeding harvesting season.

It is my view that by July 1 the workers at the factories should have been back on the job. I understood then that efforts would be made to have them resume work but I am alarmed, and very concerned that that has not yet come about. I am asking the relevant Minister, or Ministers, to advise us how soon it is possible, in their view, to have resumption of work and then to assist the industry to move with despatch to ensure that we do not have a problem in 1994 as we had in 1993.

Towards the end of 1992, Sir, we wrote to the Minister of Finance and Economic Affairs and suggested to him that it was necessary to put in place all of the outstanding matters to correct them in such a way that the

1993 crop season should have started by the first working week in January because we were able to see that the canes were ready for reaping. We were of the view that an early start to the crop would have been able to bring about the kinds of changes in the approaches to the 1994 crop which might have assisted us in the level of the harvest which we need to look forward to.

Contrary to my colleague who spoke of 50 000 tonnes as being a lot of tonnes, I think we should be able to achieve that without too much trouble but it has to be that we make the efforts, and make them soon, and that all the players do as much as is possible to ensure that the funding is available to provide for the preparation of the fields for the spraying that is required and for the labour that has to be done in between. I think it is being a penny wise and a pound foolish for the kinds of initiatives that have been taken in the industry where workers are not being given the opportunity to work in the industry and with people still believing that with workers not being given enough work there will be the possibility for the harvest to be as full as it ought to be.

In relation to the matter of the industry after the restructuring here, I have been very concerned to make the point, and I wish to make it publicly today, that we have a concern about the ownership and the control of those sugar lands. As we understand it, whoever becomes the people to manage those lands will manage for somewhere leading up to 12 years in the first instance. But the question of necessity will have to arise as to what will happen with those lands that are badly indebted sugar lands today, those lands which the managers might be able to re-establish to some situation of integrity or consistency. Are those lands going to be given the possibility of lapsing into a further state of difficulties after this period or is there going to be a regime that will allow for consultations which will eventually lead to our having an arrangement in this country that would protect those lands, not just for this 12-year period, but will allow us to look towards our agricultural base with some greater degree of assurance than we can do at this moment?

At the same time I would wish to say, Sir, that we are very interested in having the Government, when the new managers are set up, and when they move to restructuring labour, bear in mind those large numbers of people who have worked on beyond age 65, for whom there is no legal situation within the Severance Payments rules of this country, who will go out of employment, but whom the sugar industry depended on to a very great extent for its existence over the last 10 or 15 years.

We have made the point to the previous managers of the sugar industry and they had indicated some interest in these people by taking care of them at some level of a gratuity. It is my hope that the Government will provide for

similar commitment to some gratuity for these people who I believe will lose the opportunity for employment. I think, Mr. Speaker, you realise that many people in the industry are over 50 years old. In fact, many dozens of them are over 65 years old and we have those persons who still have to work to maintain themselves. We have to try in some form or another to look after them.

I hope that the Minister who introduced this measure was not serious when he made an observation regarding a matter of the cutting of wages. I do not know if he was referring to other institutions at other times and occasions of cutting of wages and was trying to remind us that there has been, in fact, such an incident that is still very present in our minds and on which we are still seeking a resolution. But I hope that there will be no question at all of the cutting of wages.

I am aware that there may be some commitment by the managers to look for a new form of addressing labour. I know and I have heard the managers speak to the possibility that they would wish to have labour flexible enough to move from one plantation to another. It is my view that if that is going to be part of the suggestions there will be for restructuring the industry, that proposals should reach the representatives of the workers as soon as is possible so that they can be properly discussed and a formula can be arrived at to avoid any difficulties that might lead to 1994.

We would not wish to be embroiled in difficulties with the Government or the new management of the sugar industry either during the rest of this year or at the harvesting come the new year because we are of the view that there is time enough between now and January 1994 *or all those problems which might, at this moment be outstanding to be addressed, and for those problems to be addressed in such a manner as to give satisfactory solutions to the problems that are involved. We are so concerned with ensuring that the workers who are also part of the public are properly taken into consideration in this matter that we have sought to have a worker involved in the management and control of the industry. 1.30 p.m.

Although we do not believe one Board member will be able to constitute full expression of the views of the workers in this matter, we are still pleased that there is a suggestion, in that regard, to have a member. Our position is that that will not be a bureaucrat within the organization of the trade union but that a sugar worker himself who has the knowledge and who has got the confidence of his or her colleagues in the industry; that person will be nominated to serve on the Board as the nominee of the Barbados Workers' Union.

The point which we are making here, Mr. Speaker, is being made against an appreciation of the fact that there is

still a lot of time which the Government is taking to put the institutions in place, the institutions that have to address the outstanding problems. We are hopeful that these matters which we draw to the attention of the Government would be noted and that those persons assigned to hold ongoing discussions with the labour movement will have, in advance, an idea of what the problems are that we are faced with, and that we will seek, in the not too distant future, to bring some answers to bear with a view to resolving these issues as soon as possible.

I am obliged to you, Sir.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, there are only one or two observations I wish to make in relation to this matter as we have had the opportunity in this House previously, as a result of the resolution brought in this House by the Barbados Labour Party to consider, in some detail, the proposals which have been put forward for the restructuring of the sugar industry in Barbados.

It is true to say, Sir, that it must be a matter of disappointment that it has taken well over a year and a half for these proposals to reach the stage where one can say with some element of certainty that the heavily indebted estates and the acreage represented thereby will come under the control of a single entity, the Agricultural Management Company which is a company owned and financed by the Barbados National Bank so far, and which will be able to bring to that acreage the alleged economies of scale arising from the management of that acreage by one group of managers. •

My understanding is, Sir, that it is correct to say as the Minister said, that there is or there are one or two areas with respect to the descriptions of the area to be leased, the need for Town and Country Planning permissions, the question of the valuation of the crops and the indebtedness of those estates to the Barbados National Bank still to be dealt with. But a formula has been arrived at, as has been said, for these matters to be settled within a reasonable period of time and if they are not settled, Her Majesty's courts in Barbados will no doubt deal with them. But that is not the end of the matter.

Barbados was unique in the African Caribbean and Pacific countries in that there was an intimate link between cane growing and cane processing. The factories in Barbados were owned and are owned by land owners. Indeed the constitution of the factory company is such that one can only be an at live participant in the management and control of the factories if one were a land owner. The ratio of ownership in the factories was tied to the individual ownership of land. The Government of course - and this must never be forgotten is the single largest land owner, and so the single largest shareholder in Barbados Sugar Factories Limited. There cannot be any question or doubt about that. The Government of Barbados, through its

entities has more land than Barbados Farms Ltd. That is a fact. They may not be farming it, if you are thinking of that. The Government of Barbados, through the Barbados Agricultural Corporation, and the Barbados Housing Corporation, has more agricultural land. The Government has more shares in the Sugar Industries Limited.

But the point that I want to make, Sir, is that a solution has to be found to continue the integrated arrangement that was in existence between those who farm the land and the processor. One of the consequences of this integration was that factory processing in Barbados does take place against a background of the factory element receiving a lesser share of the total receipts of sugar than in anywhere else in the Commonwealth or in the African/Caribbean/Pacific countries.

A solution to that problem and a continuance of that intimate relationship has to be dealt with. As of today that element of the change has not been solved. We must not fool ourselves that that intimate and important part of the restructuring exercise has been solved. Indeed there are many problems quite apart from the receivership problems - I am not going to deal with that because that is *sub judice* - there are still some very knotty problems to be ironed out in that respect. It must be remembered that of the 30 000 odd acres of agricultural land that we have devoted to sugar the heavily indebted estates and the other estates which are willing to participate in this management exercise though the Agricultural Management Corporation represent only about 60% of the total land holding. Outside of the Government, outside of the heavily indebted estates there is a significant amount of land holders who are owners and shareholders of the factory, of the processing arm who are not in this exercise. The muscle the Government has to get its way is entirely dependent upon its capacity to outvote those other shareholders.

In Barbados, let there be no doubt about it, we have long amended our laws to prevent the situation where because you are a dominant shareholder you can override on any terms and conditions the interest of minority shareholders. If there is one thing that the new Company law in Barbados has established clearly and without doubt, it is that minority shareholders have specific vested rights. There is no question about that. We still have to deal with that hurdle. 1.40p.m.

Now, Sir, one of the charges that we make, with some justification, is that it does not seem to us, on this side", that there has been a clear understanding of all the decision makers of the need to approach a resolution of these problems with a degree of urgency as is required.

I am one of those who firmly believe that a great part of the loss of production that has taken place in Barbados, has taken place because of the lack of finance flowing at the appropriate time to both the field element and the factory element and that is confirmed by this year's experience. This is an experience that we have had for the last 6 years. Because of the fall in our production, the processing of canes ends far earlier each year than previously and it is known that in Barbados, that if you really wish to make a frontal attack on the inhibitors to production namely grasses, pests, fertilisers and things of that kind you must start as early as possible and try and conclude that before the rainy season comes in. So that if your crop ends early you should try and see that the cultivation and the planting and the fertilisation take place between May and the end of July.

Now, it is known that this year in particular, this is a matter of public record, despite the fact that these problems were:- clearly known, clearly articulated, that in respect even those estates that agreed to lease, even in respect of the others, there was not a flow of funds. Up to this week there were-, still large land areas not being attended to because of a lack of finance.

Now, I believe that we are therefore by this action not only hurting employment in Barbados but we are also contributing to the problem of the 1994 production being lower than what it should be. So we must not stay here and think, Sir, that this effort at restructuring was not attended by problems which could not have been anticipated and dealt with. I am one of those who firmly believe that when we talk about the indebtedness of the sugar industry in Barbados and you fail to take into account that Barbados being a small country with a finite land area, it is almost impossible for the situation not to exist that in a worst case scenario the indebtedness of \$200 million would not be paid back for the simple reason that land prices in Barbados are extraordinarily high in relation to land prices in many other countries in the world. It is known that the more heavily indebted estates in Barbados happen to be situated in areas by the mere stroke of a pen there can be a difference in value of that land of between \$4 000 and \$40 000. That is a fact.

We must look at the debts in the context of that and I ain not even talking of an irresponsible policy of removing land suitable for agriculture for another use. I am talking about the granting of permission for non agricultural land, sour grass land and other lands for housing developments. So we must look at it in that context.

If you look at St. Lucy and you look at Christ Church and you look at St. Philip and you study and analyse the heavily indebted estates in those areas you will notice that those very estates are in areas where there is potential for

future utilisation and maximisation of values. So do not let us look at this debt as though it is some tremendous burden that will never be recovered. That has always been a myth and will always be a myth and will not bear examination. You have to look at the potential assets of the industry, do a careful analysis of what is agricultural land and what is the non agricultural land and a classic example of that is that whole hill side opposite St. Lucy's Church. If you look at that whole hill side you will see that every penny that that particular group of estates down there owes could easily be paid back by a mere stroke of a pen.

Aside.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Your colleagues do not have as much faith in you as they have in the Honourable Deputy Prime Minister. That is something we should look at. The more you analyse it the more you will see.

I want the public to understand and this is a very important point, Sir. There is a general feeling out there that by this new structural change that is taking place all of the problems of sugar growing and sugar cane production in Barbados are going to be solved.

I have been repeatedly pointing out to this Honourable House, whenever I have the opportunity to speak, that if you read the Booker Tate Report and you study it, the Booker Tate Report is not saying anything more than what has been known all along and it is that Barbados is a high cost producer, that Barbados has a management structure and an ownership structure which did not lend itself to the economies of sale and production comparable to competitors abroad. 1.50 p.m.

It also has repeatedly pointed out that Barbados' dollar has a value in relation to the European currency of accounts which is higher than many other countries in the world. Therefore, there is no guarantee that Barbados will be a profitable producer of sugar given the fact that we receive the same price as other producers in the African, Caribbean and Pacific countries and given the- fact that as a result of the international pressure against subsidies within the European Economic Community and other big trading organisations there could well be a reduction in the amount that we receive for sugar in domestic currency terms. Of course, we must take advantage of the restructuring and economies of scale.

I want to say this, Sir. I have had the opportunity of hearing some of the people who are going to advise management companies and I want to tell them something. Barbados is not Africa. Barbados is not Australia. The approaches which may be appropriate in those countries are bound to be totally inappropriate, particularly in its human relations aspect, here in Barbados. I think that we had

better clearly anticipate and understand that there is going to be some rough riding and choppy seas when we come to the actual implementation of this management structure. That is a very important point. There is no question about it; that there have been some excellent paternalistic relationships in existence. Do not mind what they say. In truth and in fact, on a day-to-day basis this exists in the sugar industry in Barbados some excellent pursued relationships. I am not so sure that we are clear in our minds as to the new relationships that are going to be built up. Obviously, they are going to be built up only on the economic considerations. I have absolutely no doubt about that. You cannot say that you are going to move your unit of management from an average of one manager to 200 acres to one manager to 1,000 acres and tell me that you are not going to have great changes. People are not understanding the great changes that are going to take place in this area. More should be talked about it.

Sir, I do not want to trespass in any way on the matters that are before the Court. I am really and truly concerned, Sir, with the decision to continue to use the Barbados Marketing Corporation as the importing entity. The Barbados Marketing Corporation, with all due respect to its administration - (I am restricting myself to that) - and of the importation of sugar, does not have a record of which we can be proud despite the fact that we have tried our level best in here to question through Resolutions and through questions to find out why is it that the Barbados Marketing Corporation found it necessary to pay freight and handling Charges on a per tonne basis which was a record payment by any importer. That is something that the Barbados Marketing Corporation has to explain to the public of Barbados. I repeat it. The amount paid for freight and handling at the dock to move that sugar from Guatemala to Barbados on a per tonne basis is higher than it has ever been at anytime in the history of Barbados. It is a terrible thing and the answers which the Honourable Minister of Agriculture gave us do not deal with the problem. He skirted that part of the problem. Now we will deal with it. We will forever remind this Honourable House and the public of Barbados of those figures.

When you talk about monumental figures, the charges of freight and handling of \$1.5 are too heavy. Everybody knows that they were too heavy. The word is that St. Joseph was child's play to that. You would know that.

Aside.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: }o you know when you have a scale from one to 100? Wdl, one was 60 and the other one was 100. You go along. Now that is an important point.

Aside.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: If you are not going to ensure that these abuses do not occur, then it is necessary for us on this side constantly to speak of these things to see if we can jog the conscience of the people involved.

The position is, if the Barbados Marketing Corporation had any kind of self-respect, they would have put out a comparative statement as to the charges paid by them in relation to charges paid by others for the same service but they have never done it. They treat the public and this House with contempt, but they are not going to be able to continue to do it because it will forever be an issue. It is a shocking shame, scandal and disgrace that the charges which were paid by the Barbados Marketing Corporation for freight and importation of the Guatemalan sugar and for the handling and distribution at the Port. That is a fact. Everybody has written about it and they have never been men and women enough to tell the public.

Aside.

Hon.' H. B. St. JOHN: I am not going to be diverted, Sir. The basic position is that it is our duty in here to ensure that these leakages do not occur with public corporations. That is our duty. If there is one thing that there is unanimity in the world about today, it is that, in these harsh economic times of great unemployment and things of that kind that those who hold public office must not abuse it for their own personal use. That is a very serious thing. There is unanimity on that in the world-today. It is not unusual in times of stringent economic hardships. It is at that period of time you have a public who is very, very concerned about these things. There is absolutely no justification at all for the Barbados Marketing Corporation to participate in the management of the importation of sugar. Absolutely none! They have never been in it. It is nothing to do with them. It is just another gift by the Democratic Labour Party and Government to the boys. That is all. It is just for the boys so that they can wield patronage. That is correct, Sir. They can wield patronage. There is absolutely no necessity for it.

Now I want to say this, Sir. It is a fact of life and the Honourable Prime Minister knows this: that the days of the Barbados Marketing Corporation are numbered if we are to 'make any kind of progress in our negotiations with the multilateral institutions. 2.00 p.m.

As a Barbadian I feel ashamed to know that it is being noised abroad that one of the reasons why you have to get rid of an institution like the Barbados Marketing Corporation is that it lends itself to corruption. I feel ashamed of that fact, that people coming in here examining the record of a public corporation can find evidence to justify such a statement. I feel greatly ashamed of that. It is a shocking shame.

Now let us get it straight, Sir. This is a serious thing we are talking about. The very Agricultural Marketing Company you are creating now, over which the Government is the boss, the Government is bypassing that institution and saying it is still going to allow the Barbados Marketing Corporation to be the sole importer of sugar. What kind of logic is that? You are saying you wish to rationalise the sugar industry, that you are going to allow this Agricultural Marketing Company to be created especially for the purpose of importing fertiliser, for the purpose of carrying out the ploughing operations, for the purpose of managing the whole industry but the part of the industry which is responsible for the supplement between what is local production and the total consumption of sugar in Barbados you are going to hand that over to the Barbados Marketing Corporation. What is the logic of that? There is no logic in that. We wish to emphasise that on that point there has got to be a divide between this side and the other side.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that the Sitting be now suspended until 3.05 p.m.

Hon. M. A. KING: I beg to second that, Sir.

The question was put and resolved in the affirmative without division, and Mr. SPEAKER suspended the sitting accordingly. 2.05 p.m.

RESUMPTION Mr.

SPEAKER: This Sitting is resumed.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: Mr. Speaker, I rise to say a few words on this Resolution.

It seems to me that the question of where the sugar industry is today is vitally important to all of us. I share the view that the next 5 years are going to be very critical in terms of what that industry will mean for Barbados and I think it will be determined by a number of internal factors and a number of factors over which we have very little control.

As far as the internal factors are concerned, I believe there is an almost inevitability about the logic of economics. Persons will continue to invest in an industry only so far as that industry will give them the returns that will make it profitable for them to continue. I heard an honourable speaker today mention that there is still room for maximising the sugar lands in places like Christ Church, St. Philip and St. Lucy. I want to suggest that the evolution of the industry suggests that those particular

parishes which turned away from sugar a long time ago will suggest further that they are unlikely to get back into sugar in a very meaningful way.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: On a point of order, Sir. I do not think the Honourable Member heard me correctly. I said it was in those parishes where the estates were the most heavily indebted, but it was in those parishes that land had potential for non-sugar use, and I said St. Lucy, Christ Church. . .

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: I am recognising that I misinterpreted. . .

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Yes, it is the other way around.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: because it seems to me, quite frankly, that while historically sugar production in those areas would have represented good yields in terms of sucrose content and so on, the actual fact is that because of climatic and other factors non-sugar took over. Not only non-sugar in the sense that we are talking about non-sugar agriculture, but the fact is that the most booming industry in those areas is really real estate. You just have to look at all parts of St. Philip now and Christ Church, where there were sugar lands before, and know that real estate is the strongest area of development in those parts of the country. It seems to me that we will have to determine in the next 5 years, against a very realistic appraisal, whether in fact, even if we try to create the most comfortable and supportive environment for resurrecting sugar from where it is now, whether the economics and the logic of the market place will allow this to happen.

I do not think there is any particular age group of Barbadians who would like to be associated with the demise of an industry that has as strong a base as the sugar industry, but it seems, at the same time too, that we cannot be afraid if we have to burke the future, whatever decision we have to make, if we have to face them very strongly.

One internal factor alluded to by the Honourable Member who spoke was the question of the cost of the industry. It is going to be virtually impossible to bring down the cost of operating the Barbados sugar industry to a level that is very competitive with the rest of the world. That is something we have to take for granted. It does not mean that we cannot improve on where we are. We can do that by further mechanisation, by streamlining the area of processing and there are other things we can do, but clearly we are competing with people in our own region like Guyana, Trinidad and Cuba, and then we are competing with other producers in other parts of the world, which is going to make it very difficult. We are a very small producer also, on a very small scale, so I think we have to take our industry as it is, looking at the internal factors, and try to do the best we can.

I think it is a very logical decision we, and successive Governments, have taken to try and support the markets that you have covered and your own domestic market. I see that as a sensible policy for the future. Try to come in anywhere around 75 000 tonnes and at the same time keep some capacity so that if you have to go up to 90 000 it is possible to do that because of the world market situation that is conducive, but basically that is where we are. I do not think we should ever cast our eyes longingly in any way in trying to restructure sugar to any scale that we used to enjoy 20 or 30 years ago. That to me is an impossibility.

It seems to me that in addition to those internal factors, the external factors, the most important one relates to the whole question of the currency arrangements that we enjoy. As long as we support a policy that we will not devalue the Barbados dollar, then we need to recognise that currency changes from time to time will make it less profitable to continue growing cane and selling sugar cane. 3.20 p.m.

I think a lot of the problems faced by the industry over the last decade or so have been problems not caused by local conditions but the fact of changes in the currency arrangements. Because we are paid in the European Currency Unit which is related to a basket of European currencies, when there are fluctuations in the value of that unit then the Barbadian sugar producer and manufacturer is at a disadvantage. I do not see that particular position changing in our favour easily.

Secondly, the whole question of the temper of the European person. It does not seem to me that the Europeans are going to maintain the same situation that they now have in terms of these special arrangements and protocols that we have enjoyed partly because of a certain amount of guilt caused by history and partly because I think the old sense of colonialism still allowed a certain kind of relationship between the Caribbean and those European countries. I think the Europeans are shedding themselves of that sense of guilt and they are being more ruled by the market than by moral and ethical considerations, the market becoming far more powerful.

I think the whole trauma in relation to bananas that other Caribbean countries are going through in terms of the banana market we will be going through those same problems in the case of sugar. At any rate, I think that is the most insecure position to be in as a group of countries and Barbados, in particular, to be always trying to second read what the Europeans will do in terms of our sugar.

I think a certain realism about what is happening out there will lead us to understand that even though for the next 10 years or 5 years we have to marshal our resources in sugar, at the same time we have to be thinking about

exits away from that kind of situation. We have to be thinking very clearly, if not sugar, what?

We have to be careful that we do not blinker our minds into a situation that because of history and association with that industry - and I am one of those who would want to see it there as long as possible because of what it means to us - that at the same time, if the international situation changes dramatically that we are not left without a fall back position so that if we do not have that foreign exchange coming from sugar that we know what we are going to do.

I think always that the planners at the level of policy and administration must have that fall back position in place. If we cannot produce the sugar any time, if it develops over a 2 or 1-year period that we find that it is no longer profitable for us to do this, then I think we should have a position that we can fall into immediately in order to alleviate those difficulties which can come from a situation like that.

I speak in these terms because I really believe, as I said before, that we are at a critical turning point in terms of sugar. Any perusal of the statistics relating to sugar, the fact that we are down for the last few years to 48 000 tonnes, tells us a lot about where we are as an industry. The fact that sugar is now just employing about 4 000 people and this is an industry that at one time was employing 60 000, tells us a story. You look out there and see who are the people lining up to go when those 4 000 move out. Show me where are the people lining up to go into the sugar industry. The young people who would normally be going there now have alternatives in terms of the hotel industry and so on. Therefore, you have to have employees who have a burning feeling about the area that they want to be employed in. Perhaps non-sugar agriculture might generate that type of enthusiasm and that passion from the younger people but I am not seeing it coming from sugar.

Then we have to look at the structure of ownership and control in the industry at this time. A lot of talk is going on about the heavily indebted estates, the not-so-heavily indebted estates and the ones that are not indebted to any extent. Now again in Barbados we are aware that a lot of these matters are dealt with behind veils and you are never too sure who are the people involved. We talk about sugar planters, but they do not have names in Barbados. We talk about the companies that own estates, but they do not have names either and people are not involved.

The Honourable Member for Christ Church South, I think, has some legal responsibility representing some of these estates, people who have been in sugar for some time. I really wonder, and he might be able to give us

some insights, as to how these people really feel about sugar. How do those people who are heavily indebted, who have been around for a long time in sugar, and their families, feel about the future of the whole thing? How do they feel about leasing out their estates for 12 years with some distant prospect after that of getting back the ownership again while, in the meantime, for those 12 years they do not have that old position of power and pride in making their own decisions? How do their children feel about succeeding? What is happening out there in terms of the traditional owners?

In my view, unless they have the continuing enthusiasm to be involved in the sugar industry, then there is going to be a difficulty in maintaining it. I do not see easily that a new group will come up overnight that will succeed and take over where this old group was before. I do not think things will happen like that. The experience that has been accumulated over the years is going to be vitnl in maintaining the industry. If there is ever a serious pessimism about the future of this industry among those people who have been there all the time, I do not care what support comes from this Parliament or anywhere else, as far as I am concerned, the industry will be doomed.

We have to look at the people in the ownership position or in control positions, in management. If they do not have that enthusiasm and feel there is nothing in it for them, I do not think the industry will be going anywhere, I have not been getting a feel quite frankly, but these matters, I guess, are being dealt with at the highest levels of confidentiality as one would expect with the nature of this business.

It is important to hear that particular group. In Barbados there are always some areas where you arc not too sure who is speaking for whom. We might be hearing the political aspects and how politicians feel about the industry but very seldom do you hear the owners coming up and saying how they feel about it. Yes, we have Barbados Sugar Industry Limited but very seldom do you hear that group of people expressing a view. You might hear the Minister of Finance. He has his duties on behalf of ihe people of Barbados to speak on issues. I am saying thai, sometimes he has a constitutional position to take and I am sure that he will do exactly what he has to do. I am sur^ he is also capable of doing what he has to do. But I am saying that sometimes the groups that are involved, you either hear their voices filtered through somebody else or in most cases you just do not hear their voices at all. You will hear what the unions arc saying on behalf of the workers but very seldom do you hear the sugar interests talking.

I ithink it is time that the sugar interests talk to Barbados. It is time that the sugar interests let Barbados know what their views are on this industry that is so

important. I think that as far as Barbados is concerned the bells are ringing. If we have to be importing sugar year after year for Barbadian consumption that tells us something about the industry. In fact we are talking about the oldest industry in Barbados and it has now reached a very critical stage where we have to be looking around for imports from some other Caribbean country to satisfy our local demands. That speaks volumes.

The whole question of who should be given the responsibility to import the sugar has been knocked around at some time. I think the sugar industry felt that they should be given the responsibility in order to make some easy money - from their point of view - to be used to defray their own debts. I believe that was a position taken by them but the decision has been taken and I think it has been a good decision, to bring the sugar into the Barbados Marketing Corporation.

I cannot speak on behalf of that body but it seems to me we are hearing again a number of innuendos and it seems that they are related to the administration of the BMC. I find it difficult, quite frankly, when politicians get in a House of Parliament and make charges against the administration of institutions where the public servants cannot in the same Chambers put their own point of view. I feel that is a fairly difficult position because I thought that what was said today indicated that you are talking about the administration of the BMC. I believe that is a very difficult position. It does not give the public servants an opportunity to put their own case and I believe we as politicians have to be very careful in the use of innuendo and attempting to put pressure on people when they perform their public duties. 3.30 p.m.

We can attack each other here in Parliament, or out there in the hustings, but it seems to me a very difficult position that you are putting public servants into when all you are doing really is allowing innuendo to take its course around them. It does not seem to me that you can substantiate any position which suggests that the administration of the Barbados Marketing Corporation was responsible for anything wrong in relation to things like the freight and handling costs of the sugar that came through the Port of Barbados. I therefore feel that somebody has a responsibility to make sure that they are saying that it has nothing to do with those persons in management positions, that they had any responsibility for the cost of freightage or the stevedoring charges at the Bridgetown Port.

Even so, if you are saying that those charges were higher than, as I understand it historically higher than any charges, where is the comparison? You should make those comparisons - the \$1.5 million alluded to. Compare that with any other comparable freight of any goods that came through the Port and look at the charges and see where in

comparison, they are different, where one is excessive and the other one could be considered normal.

It seems to me that when we make political points, because it seems to me that the sugar was made a political point - the Honourable Member for the City was on the whole thing from a political position - we say let us see what we can do with the BMC. Let us see what we can do with sugar, along with a former gentleman who used to be in this Chamber. Let us see whether the sugar was clean sugar or non clean sugar, and samples were taken to all sorts of specialists and so on. Sometimes in politics We can go so far in order to steal a march on the other side that we would take issues and beat them until there is clearly nothing in them.

So for a while Barbados was regaling under this thing about whether the sugar from Guatemala was good or bad sugar, hygienic or non-hygienic. Then you moved from that and it was a question of whether or not P.S. International, or whether one man had a record or the whole Company had a record. When we beat such issues and find there is no substance, sometimes we do not know when to put them to sleep. We beat the stuffings out of these issues. We are here to discuss the whole question of making provision, quite frankly, very solid provision in law, in terms of how the sugar should be imported into Barbados and it has spawned another issue about the freight, handling costs, and so on because we are always looking for something on which to lay blame. That is all we are trying to do.

It is a very simple issue. There is nothing much in this Resolution, quite frankly. Therefore I have no difficulty whatsoever in giving my support to it.

I thank you.

Hon. D. W. BOWEN: Mr. Speaker, I want to address the matter of the agronomic aspect of the restructuring of the sugar industry and at the same time take the opportunity to respond to a number of queries raised by Honourable Members on the other side.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I have said on a number of occasions in this Honourable Chamber that the Government has taken a decision to transfer the operations of the River and the Belle Plantations, which formerly were under the aegis of the Barbados Agricultural Development Corporation to the new Management Company. I want to state that the interim management provided by Booker Tate has been overseeing the operations of these lands. It is our intention to transfer the lands to the Agricultural Management Company as soon as possible.

Now, the Honourable Member for St. Joseph raised a number of queries which I as Minister of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries must respond to. In relation to what is being done with these lands, let me say that fertilisers,

weedicides and indeed cultivation have been undertaken. There is a spurt in the plowing activity in a number of these fields. We are also preparing some of the lands for mechanisation in keeping with the whole restructuring thrust. We have an arrangement with the Barbados National Bank for the disbursement of funds to the highly indebted plantations for the purchase of fertilizer, weedicides, and so on. We are proceeding with the preparation of the other ADC lands in like manner.

With respect to the highly indebted plantations the Honourable Member for St. John spoke of the fact that several of the leases have been signed and that the interim management had started the preparation of the lands, as indeed we have done with the Government lands. This will continue until the selection process is completed and the highly indebted plantations are handed over to whichever company gets the contract. Under the restructuring programme, Mr. Speaker, the Government will pay specific attention to agronomic practices such as optimal fertilization levels as well as proper variety and selection. Special attention will be paid to these aspects of the restructuring.

We will try also, Mr. • Speaker, to mechanise substantially more land than we have done in the past. We will also maximise the acreage of non-sugar crops we will produce within the sugar rotation cycle. As we have said over and over again on this side, while sugar would remain the core around which other agricultural activity will take place, we will not be diverted from our course of a sound agricultural diversification policy. We have clearly enunciated that policy and we will continue in that regard. I know, Mr. Speaker, that the technocrats in the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries, have been trying to come up with an incentive programme to encourage the non-indebted plantations to increase their performance and we will continue to see what can be done and what assistance can be given.

Emphasis will be placed, Mr. Speaker, in the future on reducing the acreage of ratoon. We are going to encourage them to plant more new canes. As you know, Mr. Speaker, one of the perennial problems of the sugar industry has been that there has been too much ratooning and this has caused low acreage over time. 3.40 p.m.

I would want also, Mr. Speaker, to reiterate a point that was made in here and elsewhere that whoever is selected will have responsibility of the industry for the short-term and that we will ensure that a local team will be in place to work hand in hand and to train with the overseas consultants to ensure that there is the requisite transfer of technology during the management period.

Mr. Speaker, if I could respond to a number of matters raised by Members on the other side. Let me start and deal once and for all with the question of the importation of the sugar and the matter of the amount paid for freight and handling of that sugar. I have said time and time again that the contract which was entered into by the Barbados Marketing Corporation and PS International was for the purchase of sugar at a cost of US\$393 per tonne from Guatemala to the bond in St. Philip. I have said that over and over again.

Aside.

Hon. D. W. BOWEN: We had absolutely no control over the freighting arrangements and the cost of freighting. As a...

Aside.

Hon. D. W. BOWEN: You accept that.

Aside.

Hon. D. W. BOWEN: Good, good. There was an arrangement where in order, obviously, to save foreign exchange PS International asked the Barbados Marketing Corporation to pay a certain amount of money to Sea Freight International. That amount of money was included, was part of the US\$393 per tonne. If they wanted to pay Sea Freight International US\$200 out of US\$393 as freight charges that was their business. What we did was to pay US\$393 which went out by competitive tender and was awarded to the lowest bidder. That must be made abundantly clear, Mr. Speaker.

Aside.

Hon. D. W. BOWEN: But we have absolutely no control over that. The amount was for US\$393. It was the lowest tender. As a matter of fact the nearest tender to that was for US\$394 which excluded certain Port charges. If you add on those Port charges that probably would have been US\$450, US\$460 per tonne.

Aside.

Hon. D. W. BOWEN: Because I have said that 100 times.

Mr. SPEAKER: Just one moment. I am sure the Honourable Member knows very well that that is not the order in this Chamber.

Aside.

Mr. SPEAKER: I am certainly not referring to the Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central. I am not referring to him. He has been given the opportunity to

make his case. I want other Members to observe the Standing Orders. Continue.

Hon. D. W. BOWEN: Mr. Speaker, I have also stated that we tried to source the sugar from Guyana, from Trinidad, from Belize but they were unable to provide the sugar. We have said that over and over again.-That is why it did not come from CARICOM.

It is instructive that the cost of the sugar that is now being sourced from Guyana is more expensive than the cost of the sugar that was imported from...

Aside.

Hon. D. W. BOWEN: The people out there are not saying so though.

I think that that adequately covers the question of the freight and handling charges which were paid. I say for the final time, Mr. Speaker, it was a local currency payment out of the US\$393 CIF for the cost of sugar which we were instructed to pay on behalf of PS International.

Other queries were raised by other Members on the other side. The Honourable Member for St. Joseph enquired what was being done to get production up in the short term especially with respect to next year's crop. Let me state that we are rehabilitating our best ratoons to ensure that we realize not less than 50 000 tonnes of sugar next year. In the medium term as I have already said, over and over in this Honourable Chamber, we hope to harvest from 24 000 annually an output of at least 75 000 tonnes of sugar.

The Honourable Member also raised the question of maintenance and repairs at the factory if we are to start grinding next year. The receiver has been written asking that Booker Tate be allowed to identify spares needed for the factories and he has agreed. The Ministry of Finance has approved funds for the ordering of spares out of the BAMC's budget. This has been done. All these matters are under control.

The statement was made that Booker Tate is only interested in sugar. I believe that this matter will be taken care of by the very wording of the tender document and in the tendering process. In any event, Mr. Speaker, let me hasten to add that in negotiations with Booker Tate as the interim managers we have made it abundantly clear to them that they must operate within the context of Government's agricultural diversification programme.

I have no fear that non-sugar agriculture will continue to flourish in the future. We know only too well, the Central Bank Reports speak to it, that non-sugar agriculture has increased by some 30% over the past 5 years. Given

the thrust of the Ministry of Agriculture in respect of non-sugar agriculture I expect to see a continuing growth in this area.

The Honourable Member for St. Michael Central; raised the question of the land use policy. We are in on-going discussions; with the IADB and indeed with all the relevant partners including the trade union movement over the formulation of the land use policy bearing in mind that we have already taken a decision in principle that 45 000 should be retained for agriculture, 30 000 for sugar and 15 000 for non sugar.

With respect to the workers' future, the workers in the highly indebted plantations - this was raised by the Honourable Member for St. Michael Central, again the BAMC lawyers as well as the lawyers for the farmers - and I believe the Honourable Member for Christ Church South is aware of this - have drafted letters to be sent to the workers confirming their future employment in the industry. This point needs to be made that they at the BAMC on the one hand and the farmers and their attorneys on the other hand have come up with the wording of a letter which would be sent out shortly to the workers concerning their future in the industry.

I do not know that there is much more that I could add to the debate, except to say, Mr. Speaker, that it is noteworthy that in a release over the weekend the court appointed receiver stated that he was able to repay all the BNB loans and interest.

Aside.

Hon. D. W. BOWEN: This is more that could be said in the past. 3.50 p.m.

This is more than could be said in the past. It shows that there is hope for the sugar industry. This comes at a time when the price received for sugar was less in real terms because of a devaluation of the pound. While the price was the same because it was paid in ECUs, in real terms when it is translated to pounds we received less, but the court appointed Receiver was still able to carry out his financial obligations to the Barbados National Bank.

It shows to my mind, Mr. Speaker, that with effort the sugar industry could be returned to a state of viability. With those few words, Mr. Speaker, I lend my support to this Bill. I thank you.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADS HAW: Mr. Speaker, I have heard ...

Mr. SPEAKER: Just one moment. Was the Minister winding up the debate?

Mr. DeL. O. kRADSHAW: Mr. Speaker, I have heard this debate time and time again. I have heard the Government side responding to concerns from this side and it appears to me that all that happens during the course of debates regarding agriculture, is who has tried and who has won a debate and who has scored more points.

I am going to be quite frank. The time has come when we in Barbados, and I mean the Government now, have got to understand, sugar and agriculture must no longer be made into a political football. It should not be the kind of issue that it is at this moment. You can talk about Booker Tate and the revival of the industry, the indebtedness of the sugar plantations, and the whole lot. But, Mr. Speaker, I want to hear and Barbados wants to hear, when are we going to get the results? When are we going to see the canes in the air, the canes reaped and the results showing more than 75 000 tonnes? Everybody is speculating. It should not be a debate as to whether you have had more or less produce than last year or 5 000 tonnes more than we produced this year.

I think we have got to look at the future of agriculture, sugar and non sugar. We have to look at whether what we project for agriculture, sugar and non sugar is the best thing for Barbados and the workers involved.

As this measure comes before us we are talking in terms of a percentage of levies so that we can deal with the indebtedness.

Mr. Speaker, I want to know, after you would have paid off or solved the question of the indebtedness of the plantations I want to know what is going to be the future. Are we putting agriculture on a sound footing that would serve Barbados in good stead for at least the next 20 or 25 years? That is what I want to know, because all these measures seem to me to be short-term measures, stopgap measures, that will not augur well for this country.

I have heard an Honourable Member from that side say that there was a time when Barbados was employing some 60 000 workers. Today no more than 4 000 workers. That Concerns me, Mr. Speaker. It has some serious repercussions for Barbados. Why have people not been attracted to agriculture? It does not matter how much Booker Tate revives this sugar industry, it will depend on the workers.

Have I heard any one from that side state clearly whether they have got the relevant training to deal with agriculture once it is revived? Nobody has mentioned that and that is crucial. We are talking in terms of mechanisation and we have not heard what sort of training. What about the young generation who are not attracted to agriculture. We have not heard one word as to what

Government proposes to do to get them interested in mechanisation and to learn more about it. Let us understand. It is not sufficient to state that Booker Tate would be reviving the industry and Barbadians would be working alongside them. That is not the correct policy. That would only be a short-term arrangement. What about the workers who are going to be in the field? Have we got any specific programme? Has Government enunciated a policy in respect of agriculture and the training of the young people who will be called upon to get involved in agriculture? Until we recognise the people who have broken their backs in the sun working in agriculture and we recognise that they have been treated badly and we need to show that we care about them, we will get nowhere with agriculture.

I do not care how much indebtedness is taken care of, if you do not give some comfort and give the young people a reason to believe there is a future in agriculture and that they have got an interest in agriculture, it is going to be of no avail. You have got to let the Government understand this.

We are talking about agriculture. I regularly drive through the country and I am seeing lands in St. Joseph and in St. John which were good productive areas for sugar cane, they have all gone, they are runaway with grass and bush. I am inviting Members of this Honourable Chamber to drive through the country and then they will see what is really going on rather than come in here time and time again talking from books but not understanding the practical side of what is going on in Barbados.

There are small farmers out there who have deliberately decided not to get involved in agriculture because firstly the cost of freight is prohibitive and secondly in some areas where there is non sugar agriculture where people would like to get involved there is the question of irrigation. I want the Minister and the Government to address these points. It is all right to talk about Government's plantations having irrigation available to them, but I want to know what programme Government has put in place or is contemplating to solve the problems of the small farmers who want to get involved in non sugar agriculture and do not have irrigation. I have heard an Honourable Member from that side come in here and requested lands for some young people in the Belle so that the young people could get involved in agriculture and provide themselves with work especially in these times. What has become of that programme? I want to know. What in fact you are doing is discouraging the young people. When the young people have heard people make appeals on their behalf requesting lands and have been turned down you must ask yourselves what are you really telling the young people.

This is not enough. I want to recommend to the Government that they should find ways and means of treating agriculture seriously whereby they can provide the backup service of irrigation and funding in order to assist agriculture.
4.00 p.m.

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Now let me tell you. I do not care what the Government tells me. It sounds like a bare joke. When some plantations would like to engage agricultural workers, they have not one red penny to pay. The young people out there would like to work in agriculture but when they go and apply at the plantations, Mr. Speaker, they are being told, "Sorry, we would like to employ you but we have no money." That is the problem. When we continue to talk about the youth, I say that the Government has got to re-look again. We have to understand that. Some young people have told me that they have applied for a job and I have been asking them why do you not get a job. They say that we have been to the plantations and asked for a job but were told, "Sorry, we would like to help you but there is no money." I want the Government to address that. I want the Government to tell me how soon they will be in a position to provide the money or make the money available. I am not saying that the Government has got to pick up the taxpayers' money and put it in the hands of some of these plantations. But I am recommending to Government to make a window open for these plantations that would like to have money to continue. Not all of them, Mr. Speaker, are badly managed. I want to make that point quite clear. Nobody from that side can get up and say that all the plantations are badly managed. Some of them are well managed but we must understand the times in which we live. We must understand that.

Have we not observed that the older generation who used to cut the canes are now dying out or retiring? Are you not watching that? Who are we going to replace them with? That is another question. If you are going to replace them, how are you going to re-tool them? That is what I want Government to address. You must think in terms of that. What is happening and it is clear to me is that there is no clear policy on agriculture. I say that because, if there was one, all of these things would be put in place to address the problem. I am saying that.

Sir, I know about agriculture and I am going to say this. If the Minister wants to know, I doubt if he knows what is a "break" of cane. He cannot get up in here and say what is a "break" of cane. He does not know that. He does not understand that. It is a term used in agriculture.

Aside.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: What I am saying is that you have to know. We are talking about tonnage. Sometimes I hear debates on agriculture and I sit back and I listen. It is not sometimes the vast amount of land that

you put in production of canes. It is the quality of canes. That brings me back to the point where at Groves they used to have a plant that used to go into the quality and breeding of canes. We have not heard much about the variety of canes, the BS100 and all that sort of thing.

Aside.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: What I am saying is that I would hope that the Minister does not get involved in this because when you say that I would like to ask this. While I am aware that Government continues to have that programme, is he aware that many of the poor farmers cannot afford to get the best quality of canes or the best quality shoots? They cannot. You are talking about a small farmer. We have to look at the quality.

The Minister talked about fertilizers. Now that is another area. If the Government is serious, we have to look and see how best we can have fertilizers distributed to all and sundry. It is not sufficient to say that River and the Belle are two plantations that have been handed over and we have started with them. But let me say something to you. We really make mock sport of people in Barbados. People watch us. I remember there was the time when the late Errol Barrow went out there cutting canes with a bill and it was probably something to give the young people something to aspire to. You see the present Prime Minister went into the Belle and planted some canes. We have seen that. But what I am saying is that although some attempt was made to encourage young people to get into agriculture, nothing has happened. We have to use a different approach. The answer does not lie with all of us in here. I think that we have to go out and ask some of the farmers why.

Let me say something to you. It is a question of the network of roads. A couple of weeks ago I listened to a programme where the people were complaining in Fruitful Hill, St. Joseph where the road is so bad that they are crying out to have the road repaired. Now if you know that is non-sugar and it helps to contribute to the economy of Barbados, then why not have some sort of road network whereby those people can go in and out and transport their produce?

Aside.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: I have to quarrel. I do not take my responsibilities lightly. There is no sense coming in here and talking in a soothing voice on matters that affect this country. I am seeing the society out there. You said that we have young criminals in the country. We always criticize them. I am only asking the Government to understand and realise that there are lots of areas involved. If you do not put in the roads, do you know what is going to happen? You are going to have a lot of Rastas out there. The Police and Defence Force will have problems in

finding them. If you do not have a proper network of roads, you would not only help them but we would be able to alleviate some of the crime in Barbados. Let us understand what is going on.

Aside.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: I am not referring to the Honourable Member for St. Michael West. I mean other Rastas.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir. The Honourable Member has correctly identified me as a Rasta, Sir. But he cannot curse all Rastas. All Rastas are not criminals. The only point that I would make, Sir, is that the Honourable Member should choose those Rastas who he means.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: Mr. Speaker, I have not cursed any Rastas. If the cap fits the Honourable Member, let him wear it.

Mr. SPEAKER: At least the last place where cursing would take place is in this Chamber.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: That is right, Mr. Speaker. I support you, Mr. Speaker, on that.

Now what I am saying is that we have to look at this seriously. Agriculture can provide this country with the most needed jobs. Let us understand this. I am not going down the road on the quality of sugar and the debate which has really occupied the attention of this Chamber. But let us understand that there are people out there who would like a job. I am concerned that people from the constituencies of St. Michael would want to find work if they could go where there is agriculture and apply and find employment. I know that. 4.10 p.m.

If you are neglecting agriculture and you do not look at agriculture from the aspect of jobs, what else do you have or what else are you putting in place of agriculture when we know that 4 000 people are out of work? For instance, you cannot plant a crop, especially canes, this year to realise next year. It depends on the time. You have to know the time. I know about time. I will say something to you, Mr. Speaker, it is time that we realise that there are a number of people out there who would like to do things, but they are not seeing the Government setting examples. I want the Government to understand clearly that the unemployment situation could look a little better if the Government pays some attention to reviving agriculture and making a concerted effort.

I have heard the Minister. While I can compliment him for taking some steps and for some initiatives, there is

still a long way to go. We are talking about three, four and five years. At the same time what are the young people going to do when they come out of school? They cannot get jobs in the Government, they cannot get jobs in the private sector and you are asking them at the same time to get involved in agriculture? You are not thinking in terms of inviting them to form co-operatives. The Government should be providing them with incentives to form co-operatives and making funds available, a window, where they could draw money.

Mr. Speaker, I am going to say this, finally. It is difficult for anyone, for any small business person, to get money to start a business. The young people would like to get involved. First of all, they cannot buy the land, and secondly, they have no money. I would hope that Government would look at that particular aspect so that the young people could be given a fair chance and an opportunity to get involved in helping to develop this country even further.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker, I just need to respond to a few issues that have arisen since I introduced this Bill.

The first point I want to make relates to the contribution of the Honourable Member for St. Joseph who in his opening presentation made the point that there is a need for greater public awareness or education by the Government about the restructuring of the sugar industry.

Now let us look at who stands to benefit from the restructuring of the sugar industry. Not exclusively the Government of Barbados. The Government essentially has been the only entity that has taken the bull by the horns and sought to restructure the industry. There has not been any proposal on behalf of any group in the sugar industry, to the best of my knowledge, financed by them for the restructuring of the sugar sector.

I do not own a plantation and may never own one. The Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central and I have had constantly to make the point to the Directors of BSIL and to the sugar growers, in the presence of their attorneys-at-law, that it is as much in their interest to co-operate and also to proselytise the position we have jointly agreed on as being the way forward for restructuring of the sugar industry. The only time you can ever hear from the planters in this country is when they cannot get money out of the Barbados National Bank. We have had to work with them, and I am saying the Honourable Members on that side have had to work with them when they were in Government, and they know exactly the kind of thinking one is dealing with.

Aside.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: I am not criticising them. They are like a lot of other people in Barbados too. When they can extract money out of Government and find ways and means to avoid paying taxes and a whole range of other social obligations, they open their mouths very loud and attack the Government, when in fact they are essentially attacking the people of Barbados because when the Government extracts taxes out of them it is for the benefit of the society as a whole. That is the only time we ever hear from these principal actors in the sugar sector.

Imagine that we chose a course of agreement, consensus, with them and on not one single occasion in the past year has anybody who stands to benefit, financially or otherwise, from this restructuring effort, other than two principal planters in Barbados, said anything in favour of this restructuring programme. The restructuring programme does not take the land out of their hands, you know. After the 12 or 18-year period, however long it is, a debt work out solution which is feasible should mean, one hopes, if it is viable, that the plantations will be back in their hands. That is the course that we chose, so you try to go the route of consensus and it takes a whole year to negotiate leases.

I am saying to the Honourable Member for Christ Church South now, as I have said before, of all the Members on that side, that it must not fall from his mouth to be critical of the pace at which the restructuring of the industry has taken place, because he has been an integral part of the arrangement for that restructuring, and if the progress has been slow, I have never negotiated anything in the entire issue, and he is one of the principal negotiators. Do not put the blame over here, because I do not sign leases, I do not make terms of leases. Two weeks ago at a meeting sugar growers were saying that up to that time they had not yet seen the lease, they do not know what is in it. I said I could not believe it. Do you mean after a year of negotiations? What that really meant in my view, was that they did not want to sign it. I am not putting the blame on the Honourable Member for Christ Church South for that, because I know better than that, but I will put the blame on him for giving the impression that the Opposition is totally sanitised, that they have nothing to do with this and that all the woes for the restructuring of the sugar industry should be placed at the feet of this Government.

We cannot have two positions in here. If the Trade Unions have to conform, we all have to conform. If we have special knowledge on anything, we must put it on the table. If the Honourable Member for Christ Church has an allegation to make about delays which he can put at the feet of this Government, make the specific allegation. I am very serious about this. Say what it is that we did not do and let me or the Minister of Agriculture respond to that particular point, but it must not fall from the mouth of the Honourable Member for Christ Church South to raise the

issue of delays, because the year that was spent negotiating the lease I spent doing other important things and each Cabinet Minister here spent doing other important things too, and the people who were paid to do what they were supposed to do and the persons for whom they were acting could have or should have expedited it.

I am not saying, Mr. Speaker, that the Honourable Member representing people may not have a viewpoint that is different from ours. Valid points came up in the negotiations, very valid points came up in the lease arrangement, points that obviously were not seen at the beginning, but could not have been seen, and that is so also on the issue of BSIL, because all this talk about buying the shares in BSIL and taking it over - that was in the newspaper, some neophytes who obviously did not consult with you, they are not in here now, rushing to the Press saying the Minister of Agriculture must resign and the people in the Ministry of Finance must resign because they had other routes. They should have bought shares. At what price? When you buy the shares if you do not have control of the land the shares do not have voting rights. So what shares are you going to buy, shares that do not have voting rights? They have not analysed anything but they are the first people to jump in the ring, giving the impression that they understand. 4.20 p.m.

The intricacies of the sugar industry are unbelievable and the Honourable Member for Christ Church South has to admit that this process of restructuring - in fact he did admit it - I do not want to challenge him - has been attended to by many problems, overlapping interests. I cannot understand how the Honourable Member for Christ Church South can talk about freight costs. Why do you not ask the people who used to import sugar before how much they were paying for the Bonds for storing sugar? Why do you not ask that because eventually that obviously was passed on to the Barbados consumer and the BMC was not importing it then? Somebody should provide the difference in the price that the then importers of sugar...

Why does the Honourable Member for the City if she feels so strongly about public accountability... It is not only us in here who must be accountable. People must be accountable at all levels and the directors of public companies here in Barbados who have shareholder and have members of Boards, some of which you all are directors of, should ask for accountability too.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. To this day, in all the debate on the Guatemala sugar we have not heard a single word from the Chairman of the Barbados Marketing Corporation and they are the ones who must be accountable.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: They don't ever ask any director of any public company in Barbados. Well, I blame the shareholders of Barbados because they feel that they own shares but they have no power. What the Honourable Member for Christ Church South says about protection of minorities in Barbados is right but people around here do not take on that. They buy shares and believe that the 3 men who sit down at a board meeting call the shots and they are powerless. Even after what we went through in the Barbados Mutual Life Assurance Society exercise which should have helped Barbadians to understand where their power is to this date.

Nobody wants accountability from the directors of any public company in Barbados. The only people who must give any form of accountability in this country are politicians. Nobody else must defend their public record, the position they take, the way they administer public assets, the way they take up people's money and squander it and a lot of that happens in the private sector.

You are a director of a public company. Do you raise those issues when you sit down in the board rooms or are you in the smoke-filled corridors where brandy and whiskey is drunk and where political leaders years ago used to be chosen?

I want to make the point that the need for public education cannot be thrown at the feet of the Government. We have a debate here in which you raised the exact- 3 issues you raised before. I mean the Honourable Member for St. Joseph. He came back with the same 3 issues which we answered months ago. He has not lifted his voice once either in condemnation, support or analysis. He has not made a point of any discernment in relation to restructuring of the industry but every time there is a debate the 3 issues come up. Get production up. We have appointed interim managers to do that. I understand they carried out a major planting programme. Government advanced \$3 million for that purpose out of the Consolidated Fund.

I don't plant anything to do with sugar canes. I will bring the cassava for the Honourable Member for the City. I want her to be in good health for the battle ahead.

' A major planting programme, I understand from the people involved, and the Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central has indicated that there has been major planting, the benefits of which will accrue in 1995 crop. There is a crop on which one has to cut one's losses. One hopes it will not be the 1994 crop. One hopes that you could still maintain the present level or get it higher but you have to understand that in the restructuring process there is a crop on which we are going to have to cut our losses. That was said from the beginning. We said it here when the Honourable Member for Christ Church South brought the Private Members' Resolution that there would be a crop on which the transition will be felt most. We

hoped it would be last year's. You were right about that, but it was not because the restructuring exercise has taken longer.

Now we hear the Barbados National Bank has not been extending credit but we have made the point in here that the Barbados National Bank is also going through a restructuring. It is not a development bank and the same way that people carry deeds down at Barclays Bank and elsewhere the Barbados National Bank has to adopt certain prudential approaches to lending and will shortly be under the control of the Central Bank via the Financial Intermediaries Regulatory Act. It has to clean up its act. It is as simple as that.

Now, the problem is that some people in the sugar sector have only been told recently that they have to bring in their title deeds and they want to resist. If I was getting money without putting up any deeds and the security was uncertain, as they allege, I would not carry any deeds anywhere either. What you are really saying is continue to lend them on the same basis on which they were lent in the past, throw away taxpayers money, give them as much as they want, let them do as they like, they don't have to restructure anything. Well, we have already said that it is not business as usual. Those who get those resources in their hands have to manage them properly and have to provide security for them. That is all we are saying.

Let's move on to the issue - I am not dealing with these agronomic points. The Honourable Member for Christ Church South made the point about the Booker Tate Report. The Honourable Member for St. Peter who is not in his seat has said elsewhere publicly that the Government has adopted the Booker Tate Report. We took the Booker Tate Report. The tender documents were prepared, but Booker Tate did not set any agenda for the sugar sector in Barbados or for the non-sugar sector. The Minister of Agriculture has made that clear that even if Booker Tate gets the long-term contract it has to abide by the terms and conditions which the Government through its technical officers in the Ministry of Agriculture and Finance have set out.

Those tender documents were not hidden and if the Honourable Member for St. Joseph was doing his homework he would have solicited those documents or would have asked the Leader of the Opposition, because he seems to have his tentacles stretched into every part of the Government, to solicit that documentation for him. He would have looked at the terms and conditions of the tender and he would see for himself that a properly thought-out process for the management of the sugar industry and for non-sugar agriculture has been set out.

The person who eventually gets the long-term contract for the sugar industry has to abide by the politics which

the Government sets out. The policy on diversification as far as I understand has not changed. We have had several opportunities to debate the sugar industry: interviews on radio, interviews with the Chairman of the Agricultural Management Company, interviews with the Minister of Agriculture, the Prime Minister has stated the position on the sugar sector, interviews with the officials of the Ministry of Finance. If that is not public education I do not know what is.

The objectives of Government's agricultural policy are well known. So that particular argument, in my view, is unreasonable. There are a couple of technical issues that relate also to this financial reform too.

The factories are not presently being prepared. It is true that the workers are not presently working. A decision has to be taken. Either we will have to advance money to the Receiver temporarily but both BSIL and the BNB, as I understand it, are coming to some accommodation as to how to move from here, whether they wish the Receiver to continue or whether they wish to go another route. 4.30 p.m.

They have to make that decision. But we cannot simply throw away more money so that the idea that lack of finance is a problem is not as important as the fact that once that finance is advanced it must be advanced on the basis of Government's restructuring plans.

Now, the Honourable Member for Christ Church South knows that when the receiver was appointed by the Court a committee was set up in order to advise the receiver. I want to know, and I *vill* be checking myself, whether that committee's advice was listened to, whether their advice was sought and that is in relation to the restructuring and receivership. I would bet you that the results of that investigation, if somebody carried it out, would be alarming. That is a valid question and if you ask me that question I would have certain things to say. When you are dealing with these issues the Honourable Member for Christ Church South also knows that one of the principals of one of the competing companies for the tender process was able to give advice and be retained.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: On a point of order, Sir. The Honourable Member is imputing to me that I know about the principals of one of the tendering companies giving advice. Obviously the Honourable Member is suggesting that there is impropriety and that I know of this impropriety. I want to make it abundantly clear that in this debate I specifically made it clear that I would not deal with any matter relating to receivership because the matter was *sub judice*. I specifically said that. I want that to be made clear that I have absolutely no knowledge of anything to do with the receivership. I was not involved in the receivership in any way or in any fashion and I have never

made any speech to date in this House with respect to the receivership. I specifically said that so do not say that I know anything about anybody involved in the tendering process. I have nothing to do with that.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: I am not imputing any impropriety either to the Honourable Member for Christ Church South or anybody else in this Chamber or outside. I am saying to you that it is a well known fact.

Aside.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: I cannot go so far as to say you know since you have said you do not know that persons were retained at BSIL who were principals in one of the competing entities. That is well known. If the Honourable Member says he does not know, I can tell him later but I believe that if he addresses his mind to the issue he would be able to tell me who it is.

Nobody from Booker Tate was advising the receiver or Barbados Sugar Industries Ltd. Booker Tate was retained by the Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs to provide any advice solicited by those entities to the sugar sector and the receiver had a full hand with the receivership. What I understand is being disputed is the fee. There is nothing wrong about talking about anything else but I am saying that a free hand was given and the Government did not intervene either in the appointment of or in the operation of the receivership. Even the things that we had a right to do in respect of advice to be given via that committee apparently that advice was not solicited. I want to make that position very clear so that a lot of the criticisms in relation to the restructuring exercise are unreasonable. I am saying that although the Honourable Member for St. Joseph may wish to give the impression that because of technical details the Government has lost sight of the overall goals, on two occasions the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries has set out what the overall goals are. The restructuring process is, in fact, to assist in meeting those overall goals in a timely manner.

The issue of lack of finance, we have already agreed to a certain level of financing for the sugar sector. This was debated in the Estimates. It has not been a secret. Money has already been advanced from the Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs to the heavily indebted plantations at a rate of interest of about 4.8% which, as I understand it, is what is the average rate of interest that would be applicable to the securities for the debt which would be taken out of the Barbados National Bank.

The Government has also been looking at ways in which it can assist the non-indebted plantations in securing finance from the banking system, should that be necessary. However, my understanding is that the majority of them are now able to secure that financing albeit on different terms

because the banking community is slightly more cautious now about lending to the sugar sector obviously until they are certain about some of the changes that will take place.

Now, it is quite correct that there will be great changes in this industry. I am glad that the Honourable Member for Christ Church South has noticed that. These great changes are taking place now but should have taken place a long time ago. I am saying that if those persons who had this great expertise would have put their minds to it instead of fooling around with price support and all other kinds of paper-over mechanisms...

Aside.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Imagine that price support is argued now today in this House as the saviour of the sugar industry? What foolishness are we listening to? In what way did the price support mechanism address the critical issues of restructuring of the sugar industry? It amazes me that the Barbados Labour Party and their spokespersons are constantly putting forward frivolity and trivia, all kinds of papered-over efforts which they call restructuring and a well thought out scheme of price support would have saved the sugar industry. What are we coming to? The price support mechanism did not work and those who conceived it have to take the blame. The Honourable Member for St. Peter has said on several occasions that it was not properly monitored.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member is misleading the House. There has been no occasion in relation to the price support in which I have said that it has not been properly monitored. I would really like those remarks withdrawn.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: I have sat through many stories by the Honourable Member for St. Peter in this Chamber about price support. He may not remember all that he said because he shifts so quickly from position to position...

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: On a point of order, Sir. Remarks have been attributed to me that I am saying I have never said on the floor of this House. I am asking that those remarks be withdrawn because they are going to misrepresent the records of this House.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member has complained about a statement but if the Honourable Member on a point of order gets up and puts the record straight and the Chair accepts that as a point of order, there is obviously no need then to withdraw the remark because it has been put on the record in its true form.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker, we have had several debates in this Chamber in which the Honourable Member for St. Peter complained that the

relationship or linkage between the price support mechanism and diversification...

Mr. SPEAKER: I am not anticipating the Honourable Member but I would advise the Honourable Member to just move away from that.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker, I will not deal with it. The point is that the price support mechanism was unsatisfactory and it has been acknowledged on that side of the Chamber on several occasions. I am not going to say by who now. You are not going to tell me how to debate. They may not remember and I must say that there are some people, as I said, whose flexibility in public positions has been so considerable since I entered this Chamber that even when I put to them almost verbatim what they have said, they deny they said it or meant it and then want to accuse people of fabricating stories. 4.40 p.m.

This is not the first agricultural debate I have had in here. I am not a novice at this. I make the copious notes for the simple reason that one would assume that those points were seriously made. If somebody wishes to deny the seriousness of their point, I will accept that. I have probably chosen the wrong person to quote. That is the problem.

The point is, Mr. Speaker, that the price support mechanism was no solution to the sugar sector. There is no basis on which Honourable Members over there can pretend that they have any major solution. The Honourable Member for Christ Church South was the Prime Minister and Minister of Finance in this country and has not advanced any arguments then about major restructuring of the sugar industry in this country nor taken any...

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: On a point of order, Sir. If the Honourable Member is talking about me in relation to the sugar industry when I was Prime Minister, may I ask the Honourable Member to read the file of the Barbados National Bank in which as long ago as 1985, in a communication between the Ministry of Finance and the Barbados National Bank, the issue of the indebted estates was raised. He cannot come in here and say that. I categorically refute the statement that he just made that the Honourable Member as Prime Minister in my time never made any statement or anything about the sugar industry. I categorically refute that statement and I cite the specific example of that. Put that in the record.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: This issue of indebtedness is not putting forward any arguments for restructuring. I specifically said that the Honourable Member did not advance any argument in relation to restructuring. I am nothing to do with what he wrote to anybody. It is not my business to pimp around in files. I

have said so in here on several occasions. I do not do it and I do not intend to begin now. Either there are results on the record, either the public of Barbados can see the tangible results or they cannot. And in every area of economic activity in this country - and this is what galls some people - we have carried out major restructuring, in the tourism sector, in the industrial sector, in the agricultural sector, in every single sector there has been restructuring. The Honourable Members on that side simply cannot accept that these reforms are taking place. They cannot accept it. That is the whole problem.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: On a point of order, Sir. The Honourable Member has said that they have carried out major restructuring of the sugar industry, of tourism and of manufacturing. I agree, Sir, at the price of record unemployment.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker, if the Honourable Member for Christ Church South, it is true he is not an economist but he is widely read, can point to me of a country in the world that has carried out major restructuring without or in a situation where unemployment did not exist I want to hear that country. The whole purpose of restructuring of an economy, in case he does not understand it, is because that economy does not have the capacity to employ, to grow at the rate at which you want it to grow and develop. So you restructure it precisely to do that. If the Honourable Member for Christ Church South does not understand that then it is testimony to the fact that none of those reforms which we have spoken about would have taken place under him or under the Barbados Labour Party. I now understand why no reforms of any major significance were carried out. I am saying that they have been timid souls in the face of the restructuring of the sugar industry. Not one of them, in the face of this restructuring, has been able to put any creative ideas.

Meanwhile they are in the middle of the restructuring at a different level, not at policy-making. They are down there on the ground drafting and are in court and so on. But at the level of policy they have abdicated their responsibility to the people of this country to restructure the sugar sector and are getting up in here talking boldly as if they have the answers. I deprecate that approach.

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, please.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: That is the point I want to make, Mr. Speaker. I want to make it very clear that they will go down in history in relation to the sugar industry as the people who were on the other side of the restructuring, not in the vanguard of change.

The Honourable Member for St. Peter, former Chairman of ADC, the Honourable Member for St. Joseph, former Minister of Agriculture and others have had a chance. All of them have failed. We have carried this restructuring process forward and I am certain that, notwithstanding all of the commentaries about the viability of the sugar, that based on this restructuring programme and assuming that many of the variables which Booker Tate and which the Honourable Member for Christ Church South in fairness to him have raised could affect the future viability of the industry, that there is some hope in relation to the sugar sector. We have given a commitment in relation to the restructuring and will support that commitment not just by talk but by the allocation of resources to restructure the sector, something that has not been done as efficiently and as productively as it could have been done in the past.

I do not mind all the smiling faces. I know that no matter what, at the end of the day this Administration is going to be credited in the future for the major restructuring of the sugar industry and many other sectors, but the sugar industry in particular and we are going to carry these reforms right into the year 2000 and will not be sidetracked by the agents of misinformation, the agents that wish to retard change, keep it back and pour cold water on every effort that we make to get the productive sectors of this country going again and getting more Barbadians employed.

The question that the Bill be read a second time was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

On the motion of Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON, Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair and the House went into Committee on the Bill, Mr. L. L. BRATHWAITE in the Chair.

COMMITTEE Mr. CHAIRMAN:

The House is in Committee.

Clauses 1 and 2 inclusive were called and passed.

Clause 3 was called.

Hon. M. A. KING: Mr. Chairman, there is an amendment which I am proposing to Clause 3. In lines 2 and 3, let me put*, up on line 2:

"A levy is imposed (\\ every tonne of sugar or part thereof of sugar imported into Barbados by the Barbados Marketing Corporation during the year 1993." In lines 2 and 3, "a levy is imposed on every tonne or part thereof of sugar imported into Barbados by the Marketing Corporation during the year 1993". I think the words by the Barbados Marketing Corporation should be taken out because it

unnecessarily narrows it. So I am moving that the words "by the Barbados Marketing Corporation" be taken out so that the clause will read: 4.50 p.m.

"Without, prejudice to any tax or levy raised by or under any other enactment but subject to this Act, a levy is imposed on every tonne or part thereof of sugar imported into Barbados during the year 1993 and every subsequent year of such amount as the Minister may prescribe by order".

Subject to that amendment, Mr. Chairman, I support the Bill.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I beg to second that.

Hon. M. A. KING: I beg to move that Clause 3 as amended stand part.

The question that Clause 3 as amended stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without 'division.

Clause 4 was called and passed.

Clause 5 was called and passed.

Clause 6 was called and passed.

Clause 7 was called and passed.

Clause 8 was called and passed.

Clause 9 was called and passed.

Clause 10 was called and passed.

Clause 11 was called and passed.

Clause 12 was called.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: In respect of Clause 12, Mr. Chairman, in the first line of subsection (2) delete the words at the end "on the tables of and replace them by the word "before". The subsection should read:

"A copy of such report shall be printed and laid before the Senate and House of Assembly and published in the Official Gazette not later than 3 months after the report is completed".

With that I beg to move that Clause 12 as amended stand part.

The question that Clause 12 as amended stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

Clause 13 was called and passed.

Clause 14 was called.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: In respect of Clause 14, insert the word "who" after "Any person" in Clause 14(1) and delete the word "who" at the beginning of (a), (b), (c), and (d) so Clause 14(1) would read:

"Any person who -

- (a) fails to pay any import levy payable by him;
- (b) fails to keep records or books of account as required by or under section 6;
- (c) in connection with any import levy, makes any statement which he knows to be false or does not believe to be true;
- (d) in connection with any import levy, wilfully, knowingly or negligently produces or makes use of any record, book of account, return or other documents that is false; or".

And (e) will remain as it is. I beg to move that Clause 14, as amended stand part.

The question that Clause 14 as amended stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

On the motion of Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON, seconded by Hon. B. M. TAITT, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported the passing of one Bill, with amendments, in Committee to Mr SPEAKER who resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

On the separate motions of Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON, seconded by Hon. B. M. TAJTT, the Bill was read a third time and passed and cited as the Sugar Import Levy Act, 1993.

GOVERNMENT NOTICES

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, Sir, that brings us to the end of Government Business.

Government Notices, Sir. I am commanded to lay the Immigration Forms and Fees ...

Mr. SPEAKER: What the Honourable Member should be asking now is ...

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I thought I had heard the Clerk say Government Notices. I beg leave of the House to revert to item Government Notices since some notices have come since the beginning of Parliament.

Mr. SPEAKER: If there is no objection then leave is granted.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I am commanded to lay the Immigration (Forms and Fees) (Amendment) Regulations, 1993, the Barbados Citizenship (Amendment) Regulations, 1993, the Passports and Travel Documents (Fees) Order, 1993.

Mr. Speaker, that brings us to the end of Government Business.

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I beg to move, Sir, that this House do now adjourn until next Tuesday, July 20, 1993 at 12:00 o'clock noon.

Hon. M. A. KING: Seconded, Sir.

The question was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr, SPEAKER adjourned the sitting accordingly. 5.00 p.m.

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Mr. C. LeR. (St. Michael Central)**