
THE

House of Assembly Debates

(UNOFFICIAL REPORT)

PARLIAMENT 2008 – 2013

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, July 6, 2010

Pursuant to the adjournment, the House of Assembly met at 10.10 a.m. on Tuesday, July 6, 2010.

PRESENT

His Honour MICHAEL A. CARRINGTON, B.A., LL.B. (Speaker)

His Honour KENNETH ST.C. BEST, LL.B. (Hons.), L.E.C. (Deputy Speaker)

Hon. DAVID J. H. THOMPSON, LL.B (Hons.) Prime Minister, Minister of Finance, Labour, Civil Service and Energy)

Mr. RAWLE C. EASTMOND, B.A. (Hons.), Dip.Ed., LL.B (Hons.) (Lond.), LL.M. (Leic.), J.P.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE, B.Sc., Dip. Ed., J.P.

Mr. R. St.C TOPPIN, LL.B. (Hons.)

His Excellency DENIS ST.E. KELLMAN:

Hon. Miss M.A. MOTTLEY, Q.C., LL.B. (Leader of the Opposition)

Miss CYNTHIA Y. FORDE, J.P., L.C.P.

Hon. RONALD D. JONES, J.P., B. A. (Hons.) M. A. (Ed.) (Minister of Education and Human Resource Development) (Leader of the House)

Dr. the Hon. DAVID C. ESTWICK, B.Sc., M.B.,B.S. (Minister of Economic Affairs and Empowerment, Innovation, Trade, Industry and Commerce)

Mr. DALE D. MARSHALL, Q.C., LL.B (Hons.), L.E.C.

Dr. WILLIAM F. DUGUID, B.D.S. (Comm.), F.D.S., FDRCS. J.P.

Hon. FREUNDEL J. STUART, B.A., LL.M. (Prime Minister, Minister of Finance, AG)

Hon. JOHN D. E. BOYCE, B.C.H., MRAC, (Minister of Transport and Works)

Hon. E. GEORGE HUTSON, F.C.C.A., C.A. (Minister of International Business and International Transport)

Hon. STEVEN D. BLACKETT (Minister of Community Development and Culture)

Mr. JAMES D. PAUL, B.Sc.

Dr. the Hon. DENIS S. LOWE, Ed.D., M.Ed., B.A., Dip. Theology (Minister of The Environment, Water Resources and Drainage)

Mr. ADRIEL D. BRATHWAITE, LL.B. (Hons.) (Attorney-General and Minister of Home Affairs,AG)

Mr. STEPHEN A. LASHLEY, B.Sc., LL.B. (Hons.), L.E.C. (Chairman of Committees)

Hon. PATRICK M. T. TODD, B.Sc. (Minister of State, Education and Human Resource Development)

Hon. DONVILLE O'N. INNIS, Dip., B.Sc., M.B.A. (Minister of Health)

Hon. CHRISTOPHER P. SINCKLER, B.A., M.Sc. (Minister of Social Care, Constituency Empowerment and Rural and Urban Development)(Leader of the House)

Dr. the Hon. ESTHER R. BYER-SUCKOO, M.B.,B.S. (Minister of Labour)

Prayers were taken by Reverend Canon Ivan Harewood.

MR. SPEAKER: This House is now in Session.

2009.

Mr. SPEAKER: This House is in Session.

MINUTES

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Members, Minutes of Tuesday, November 10, 2009.

Hon. R.D. JONES: Sir, I beg to move that the Minutes of the Honourable House of Assembly for its Meeting of Tuesday, November 10, 2009, which Minutes have been circulated, be taken as read.

Hon. C.P. SINCKLER: I beg to second that, Sir.

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

MINUTES

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Minutes of Tuesday, June 15, 2010.

Hon. C. P. SINCKLER: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I beg to move that the Minutes of the Honourable House of Assembly of its meeting of Tuesday, June 29, which Minutes have been circulated, be taken as read.

??I beg to second that, Sir.

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

FIRST READING OF BILLS

On the motion of Hon. R.D. JONES, seconded by..., the following Bill was read a first time:

1. Income Tax (Amendment) (No.2) Bill, 2010.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

Hon. C. P. SINCKLER: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I beg to move that Standing Orders Nos. 6,16,18,20,42(5), 43 and 44 to suspended for the rest of the day's Sitting.

Hon. R.D. JONES: I beg to second that, Sir.

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

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

ORDER NO. 4 – INCOME TAX (AMENDMENT) (NO.2) BILL, 2010

Hon. R.D. JONES: Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Bill before us can be considered simple amendments to the existing legislation of the Income Tax Act, Cap 73. It sets out to give legality to an incentive done as far back as 1999. I want to underscore that particular point. I believe in the Budgetary Proposals of 1999, that is about 11 years ago, the appropriate amendment both to the legislation and the Regulations was not done. This has resulted in some level of inconvenience if not hardship to persons to whom the incentives were in fact provided. Those are persons

involved in agricultural production and agro processing, or agro industrial production.

Sir, this morning we want to make right what is surely an injustice over the last 11 years. It is our view that the agricultural sector is an important sector to Barbados not only from the vantage point of providing food for our nation, but also as a means of providing employment for the myriad of farmers in the country and those involved in agro industrial processing. So this Bill seeks to address that hiatus between 1999 and this particular period.

Sir, what I hope to do is to give to some extent a snap shot of the importance of agriculture to Barbados. We know the history of Barbados would date back to around 1627 or there about when this country started by producing not sugar, but tobacco, which was the initial crop planted by the settlers on Barbados, the indentured servants and those who would term themselves as being part of the controlling class in Barbados. We knew that as a result of the history provided to us, because of the limestone cover of Barbados, the majority lime cover, the tobacco really develop into a viable crop and into viable production. By the early 1640s, Barbados had moved into the production of sugar, particularly utilising the technologies brought to the island by the migration of Safari Jews and persons who had certain Dutch influences, to assist the English owning class in the production of sugar. That was the staple crop of Barbados for many years and continues to be. Therefore, we have divided agricultural production into sugar cane agriculture and non sugar agriculture.

Sir, we are pleased to note that even in the most difficult times, we have seen a progressive increase in the non sugar agricultural production. In fact, up to, I believe June 15, 2010, the non sugar agriculture had increased by, I believe, 2.7 per cent, which is saying to us that our farmers are in fact responding to the call for the production of agricultural products in Barbados. For that, our farmers and all of those involved in agricultural production should be complimented. It is not easy in Barbados to be a farmer today. If I do say so, I have had some experience in the area of agricultural production. I do not have the kind of intense knowledge that I once had, particularly after leaving school as a youngster and being part of an agricultural community, not necessarily working on the plantation, that was more for the Honourable Member for St. George North who was captured within the bread basket, but unfortunately because of the absence of peasant farms in his area, he did in fact work on one or two plantations in St. George. He should be exceptionally proud of that.

Sir, where I lived at the time - and these anecdotes are important. There were several acres of land and I remember my father saying to me, "You are out of school now, you are going onto the Barbados Community College,

you have to look for some avenue to work.” Classes were usually in the evening. Having been taught by my father, grandmother, grandfather and all the members of the community, I knew how it was to plant potato slip, as you would call it, yams, sorrel, other vegetable crops and even sugar cane. In those early days it was not foreign in the planting of long joints of cane, but the digging of cane holes and the planting of canes in those holes. Even now there is an argument that particular technology assisted in higher yield than the current technologies which are utilised. That is a debatable question in relation to that.

Sir, our farmers are being disadvantaged by those persons who believe that they should be reapers of the crops...

HA69 10.30 a.m. Sequence 3

Tuesday, July 06, 2010

House A69, Sequence 04, 10.30 a.m.

Hon. R.D. JONES: Our farmers are being disadvantaged by those persons who believe that they should be reapers of the crops that others have planted. There should be some kind of humanity. Working in open field agriculture, in greenhouse agriculture or in any aspect of agriculture takes a certain degree of commitment and dedication because it is not easy to work with the land in the night. You have to work it when there is light. You have to work your lands in the day and use the night for irrigation purposes.

There are some persons who come in the night with a totally different story. They do not plant in the day but they reap at night. This is why the Government of Barbados working with the Ministry of Agriculture is hastily trying to bring to the Parliament, the amendment to the Larceny Act. Hopefully, when we recommence the House after our recess in a short while, we will be able to bring to the House that Predial Larceny Bill, to send a message to all of those who are involved, in essentially stealing from the property of others. The sad thing about it is that there are others in this community involved in trade, who are not averse to the purchase of the produce of farmers and small farmers in this country and we have to put a stop to this.

There are persons who reap crops in Barbados particularly when it is raining profusely because the soil becomes a bit softer, therefore they reap potatoes, jams, carrots, you name it. They reap the produce of farmers and then they retail this produce across Barbados. Sir, it is not only the persons who steal the produce but those who receive the produce. We have to come up with a regime. I know there is the attention of the Minister of Agriculture,

relative to the designing of a regime but I do not know all details as yet.

There are persons who go out and purchase produce and there is some sort of licencing regime, which will show that you purchased your produce, let us say from Mount Wilton Plantation or wherever a plantation is located and this is the quantity that you purchased, so that an inspector in the field can come and ask you to produce your authentic certificate of purchase. It is unfortunate that you have to reach this level as a result of persons being disadvantaged and their livelihoods are macaquered by those without a conscience. Sir, as a Government we have to say that those who steal from the farmers of Barbados are persons without conscience. It cannot be encouraged by those who are in retailing or those who purchase for their kitchens.

Sir, it is an unfortunate reality and regardless of the incentives provided, they are persons who will become frustrated. I remember I believe about two years ago, one of our better-known agriculturists, one of our better-known farmers actually ploughed back into the land out of frustration, acres of casava.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, only recently, at one of the Governments agricultural areas, in truth and in fact at Graeme Hall, on which the Ministry of Agriculture is located, where persons were propagating different varieties to improve the pounds per acre or kilos per acre that they are persons in the dark of the night, who ravaged that acreage of experimental crops of casava, Sir, and this cannot be condoned. Sir, we can bring to Parliament all kinds of incentives. We can bring to Parliament all kinds of Legislation but these things will come to naught, if we do not try with the citizens of Barbados to provide adequate coverage for our various farmers.

Sir, over time, the Government of Barbados has provided a plethora of incentives to farmers and today, I think we are going to share again because there are still people in our community who, for whatever reason, might not be fully aware and even though the Minister of Agriculture has, in the last 2½ years, stepped up its vigilance in that particular department, there are still gaps existing, relative to the knowledge of farmers in Barbados, as to what they can expect from the Government of Barbados as a means of support to the agricultural sector of Barbados. This is in keeping even with the 1999 rebate on agricultural machinery and agro processing machinery. Sir, even though people have not to date benefitted because if, in fact, the Ministry of Agriculture or the Ministry of finance for that matter, had provided the rebate under that particular policy, it would have been illegal and this, as I said before, had caused frustration.

We have had incentives for cotton development, for export promotion in agriculture, agro industrial processing,

spraying and weed control equipment, irrigation systems, pasture development, orchard development, assistance to registered agricultural cooperatives or organisations, agriculture and agro processing machinery, land cultivation, livestock development, retooling the fishing, poultry and livestock industry, farm security, farm management and agri business, support for farming organisations, resource, protection and management, post harvest technology, organic farming, new crop technologies, including greenhouses, and hydroponic systems, rebate on Land Tax, the support for youth in agriculture, Disaster Relief Revolving Fund, the Scotland District, Aquiculture, new technologies, cross border investment and rodent control. These are substantial but yet underutilised incentives for the agricultural sector of Barbados. It is amazing that in difficult economic times, persons resort to the fundamentals.

Sir, people go back to the land. In fact, it is saying that in good times, people should never leave the land. People should not abandon the land. Societies over time and we can go back to the early societies of Mesopotamia, Persia, Rome, Babylon, Roman/Greek societies, English societies, the development of the colonies of the new world, where the first important product was the agricultural product.

Great societies, and if you want to argue that the United States of America has developed or has emerged into a great society, the foundation of that society has been its agricultural base. The United States of America still produces, even though under threat now, large swabs of agricultural products, utilising its land, even though it is rice, sugar or cotton or whatever you want to call it. This was the basis for the development of the society.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, for some reason in Barbados and in the Caribbean, we have listened to the voices of others and we sought to move away from agricultural production, rather than look for alternative uses for our sugar cane, bananas, arrow root, nutmeg or whatever have been the products of Caribbean agricultural society, we sought to abandon agriculture and move into services. Sir, we moved away from the production of food for our people, into providing services for others.

House A69, Sequence 04, 10:40:14

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Hon. R. D. JONES: We have moved away from the production of food for our people into providing services for others.

I believe that here in Barbados we have come to the recognition that we cannot isolate or subjugate our agricultural production and move into either tourism

services, international business services or all of those to the detriment of agriculture. Mr. Deputy Speaker, that is why earlier I said that the increase in production, particularly in the non-sugar sector, is an important testimony to the work of the Ministry of Agriculture and its Extension Officers but more importantly to the farmers of Barbados who themselves are rallying to the cause. The Government of Barbados therefore has a responsibility to assist them in feeding the nation and in helping to reduce the high food import bill, which I believe could be somewhere in the region of \$650 million. It is quite a substantial import bill that we have in the country.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, there is even more room for agricultural production. We know that the cost of production tends to be quite high in Barbados but if we increase our technologies, our production methodologies and the number of persons consuming locally and the surplus is then provided for export in larger quantities, then we would be better off as a nation and more and more of our persons involved in agricultural training and agricultural education coming out of the Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic, the Barbados Community College or out of Trinidad and Tobago or Jamaica where some of our students go for advance education would see a viable occupation.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, let us look at some of the crops which we produce and their percentage of consumption. This would tell you that there is even more room for greater production. Let us look at something like onions. Onions is a crop that once reaped does not stand up to long storage time so it has to be utilised but a lot of it is utilised in our agro-industrial base through our seasonings, our pepper sauces and things of that ilk. Mr. Deputy Speaker, local production of onions in 2009 was 23.31 per cent of the amount that we consume, so there is room. At 23.31 per cent, let it round it off to 25 per cent, there is a gap for a filling of 75 per cent. We know that we might not be able to reach the full capacity but what is wrong in targeting incrementally over a five-year development plan for onion production to reach 50 per cent of our consumption planning and execution, we have the incentives.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am proud to note that in 2005, local production was 14 per cent of consumption; in 2006, 18.2 per cent and in 2007, 14 per cent. That is a dip downward of consumption. In 2008, it was not good, it was 9.5 per cent of production but there was a 14 per cent improvement in 2009 when you move from 9.5 per cent of local production of consumption to 23.31 per cent of local production of consumption. Mr. Deputy Speaker, we obviously would look forward to 2010 and 2011 but there must be an upward trajectory in all of these areas.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Cucumber is very well served. It has been in the 90s between 2004 and 2009. In fact, it

peaked in 2006 to 100 per cent Of local consumption, so persons were in fact producing cucumbers. For those again who have knowledge of agricultural production of cucumbers, they know that you can start reaping your cucumbers within five and six weeks, so there is stage production. We know cucumbers need water so irrigation is important when the rain is not falling or during the dry season. Many of our farmers have in fact been producing at maximum output so that we are almost at 100 per cent in cucumber production.

We have had fluctuations in the production of pumpkin, so that in 2009, the production was 22.02 per cent. That is low especially after we had reached a peak in 2004 of 50.19 per cent, so there is room in the area of pumpkin production.

We are not doing too badly with sweet peppers and hot peppers. Sweet pepper is in the region of 75 per cent and hot peppers in the region of 98 per cent. I believe that belies a situation in which the agro-processors still have the ability to import hot peppers for pepper sauce and other condiments from our neighbours within the Caribbean.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, there is a heavy importation of cabbage in the region of 62 per cent. We are only producing 38 per cent of cabbage for consumption, that is low.

Melons are used right across Barbados in the tourism sector, in the school meals sector and within our domestic environment within our homes. That, at 29 per cent, is low. We need to step up production also in that area.

The Chaplin of this House would know that in the war years, the Second World War in 1939-1945, we were producing in Barbados and surreptitiously exporting to other countries as well, eddoes, yams, sweet potatoes, pumpkins, tania, cassava and corn. You name it, we were producing it in Barbados. In fact, during that period of the history of Barbados, one saw the development of many corn grinding small establishments in Barbados. There may be only one now in existence that would grind what my grandmother would refer to as engine corn, which is maize. Guinea corn, for those again who understand their agriculture, is used in our famous jug-jug. It is the piece at the top that you grind into a fine meal. You cannot eat a lot of it because of its potency in your blood but we understand those. Those of us who had our navel string planted within the agricultural sector of Barbados and proud to say it, you do not run away from your food, would understand what those are. Unfortunately, we have abandoned a lot of the systems of agricultural production, agricultural survival and food consumption within this country.

I remember, and I do it occasionally, using the same grind corn to make what we would call pap sprinkled with a bit of coconut. That is more nutritious than some of the imported cereals that we now use and therefore it creates a viability because you are combining sugar production, which is part of our agricultural landscape and you are mixing maize and coconut. We produce milk in Barbados and if you want to have a little more flavour you can add a bit of nutmeg - I sound as though I know how to cook - and you stir it to taste and you have a nutritious cereal on mornings. That is how we assist persons in agriculture by utilising what they produce.

House A69 Sequence 5

10.50 a.m.

Tuesday, July 06, 2010

Hon. Ronald D. JONES: Therefore, I have combined very quickly four elements of agricultural production that will give you a nutritious breakfast on mornings. It contains all of the nutritious elements that a young child going to school would need. Sir, instead, do you know what we do? We force other things down their throats and they become hyperactive during the school hours. Teachers are also unable to control them because we give them corn curls on mornings. We also give them a set of corn curls to take to school as well. These corn curls contain things like yellow and blue dyes which circulate through their blood system. Sir, we do that when we have a history in this country, where part of the whole cultural framework of feeding our people is being produced on our lands.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, therefore returning to that particular indigenous format of feeding our people is not a betrayal of modern or contemporary nutritional habits. In fact, what it does say, like the gentleman whom the Honourable Member for St. James North went to his funeral only two Saturdays ago...

Asides.

Hon. Ronald D. JONES: You were there and you should have paid tribute to him because he held your hand and took you to school, even though he was older than you. He was a community practitioner, helping to rear a child within the community. The Honourable Member knows of the gentleman of whom I speak. Sir, when I went to that part of St. James many year ago and walked with him through his agricultural plot, of course, I did not leave empty-handed, neither had I gone there soliciting but in having a conversation with him and his recognition of the knowledge which I possess, he said that I would not leave empty-handed. Sir, he went into an outside shed and gave me pumpkins and two large yams, which had a little growth on them. I was also given buffettes, plantains and

bananas and I ventured from St. James to Christ Church. These were the persons who understood what it was to produce.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I like to speak of these things. If I go to St. George and stop in that part of St. George which I would not name because there are other Honourable Members who would go there and I might be denied, I could have large shaddocks. This is a fundamental discussion of what I am talking about. I would be given grapefruits, oranges and other produce from the breadbasket of Barbados, the St. George Valley, and long may it remain so. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I know that the Government of Barbados has identified, as virgin territory, part of that landscape for the production of agriculture.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to conclude this part of the statistics, which are pretty good, which deals with poultry for consumption. We are almost self-sufficient in poultry production therefore we must compliment all individuals, contracted farmers and processors for working with Government and with the people of Barbados in producing poultry for our tables and restaurants, et cetera.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, there is also fresh pork. I know there are many Honourable Members who, as a way of mixing with the people of Barbados, would go to the regular 'Pork Limes.' Only on Friday night, while passing the Wildey/Upton area, I saw an area what we would refer to as packed with people participating in wholesome activities, they were eating pork kebabs, barbeque pork, fried pork, souse; they were turning the pig into all kinds of pieces for consumption. Sir, again that is aiding our farmers, that is showing them that we have an appreciation of what they do. Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Honourable Member for St. Michael East would understand exactly of what I am speaking because having come from St. Andrew, he had an opportunity to clean pig pens or cesspools. There is nothing degrading about this and we have to tell our young people there is nothing degrading about producing for our consumption.

I remember some years ago I was absolutely amazed, as a teacher in all primary schools, we used to have a plot where we would take the students down to teach them about agricultural production. We would have either grown or purchased our seedlings from one of the nurseries out there. At that time I had brought five trays of different types of seedlings and I said to the youngster, can you go and bring the tray with the Chinese cabbage. Sir, I stood up and watched that youngster fiddled and pointed to each tray; that youngster had no knowledge of what they actually were. I think this is where adults have, in fact, betrayed the young people of Barbados. There are some young people who believe that agricultural production began in the supermarkets or in the shops of this country, rather than in the fields and greenhouses in the various

countries from which these produce come. We have to change that mind set.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to compliment up front the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development for revitalising the 4-H Movement in this country. In fact, I have certain knowledge that there was a major decline in youth contact with agriculture, with the almost demise of the 4-H Movement in Barbados. Sir, that particular Minister, 35 or 40 years ago, was one of the leaders of the 4-H Movement of Barbados. He remembers the contribution of the 4-H Movement to this elevation so much so that he is Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development today and has revitalised the 4-H Movement in our primary and secondary schools and in our communities.

Sir, I want to say that when good things happen we should applaud those good things because even if the 4-H Movement does not do field agriculture and they are involved in animal husbandry, in the rearing of rabbits, chickens, Blackbelly sheep or planting two or three banana plants around their homes, you could understand that within a matter of two years how many banana plants they could be producing for their families and communities. You could also imagine the amount of resource that can be generated because of the fact that the surplus would, in fact, be disposed of within the communities, either through gifts or sales. As a producer of agriculture, you can make that determination.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, our animal production is improving and once again the sharing of statistics is important. As I said before, I have used 2004 as my beginning year and 2009 my conclusion year because we are still early in 2010.

Pigs Slaughtered

	Year	Amount
2004	slightly over	26 000
2005	slightly over	29 000
2006	33	000

Mr. Deputy Speaker, look at the bars going up:

	Year	Amount
2007	34	673

2008 There was a decline to 33 335, just slightly over 1 000 pigs not slaughtered.

2009 It leaped by more than 4 000 more pigs slaughtered in Barbados. It leaped to 37 511.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we believe that pigs should be slaughtered in the certified slaughterhouses in Barbados therefore we are able to capture the statistics there. I know that there is no one who is slaughtering pigs or any other animals in the backyards of this country because of health and other phytosanitary standards.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, in relation to the slaughtering of cows and bulls, I hope you would understand, we have not been able yet to reach back to the level of 2004, when 1 175 cows and bulls were slaughtered in Barbados. It is inching back up from the low of 654 in 2007 to 725 in 2009 and so we are progressively moving in that department.

11.00 a.m.

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Hon. R. D. JONES: Sir, sheep is also moving up in that area and goats have begun to stabilise and rabbit production is also on the increase. It is saying that incentives put in place, once utilised appropriately, once given appropriately, that farmers, in fact, would respond. I know for certain that the moa now has on under its total control the whole issue of rebates and other incentives. We no longer have to sit and wait on the Ministry of Finance to do the processing, the accreditation of rebates and the other incentives under the process because the Ministry of Agriculture believes that you should go directly to the source and where the particular activity is performed. Sir, that decision was taken and now the Ministry of Agriculture dispenses the production of these incentives and these rebates.

Mr. Speaker, in the area of the incentives I have mentioned, just the broad heading. This particular amendment to the Bill and the regulations speak to rebate of agro processing equipment between the percentages of 18 per cent at the higher end and 10 per cent at the lower end dealing both with sugar harvesting techy and agro-processing techy to benefit from this particular rebate. It is important to note the length of time, and as legislators and executioners to some extent, we should have to apologise to those. (11:02) Sir, what is important is that this legislation states that even though it is passed today or in the Other Place, when it reaches them, that it is deemed to have come into operation on April 1, 1999, so persons who would still have expended resources for the various pieces

of techy can still become beneficiaries of the category for which the rebate is intended.

Mr. Speaker, I spoke earlier to the legislation which is to come before the House over the next few months and into next year, the Agricultural Sustainable Bill and I want to say from the Floor to the Ministry of Agriculture that we would want to see greater alacrity on the Agricultural Sustainable Bill and we might need to speak to those persons within the Ministry whose job it is to process these things with greater haste.

Asides.

Hon. R. D. JONES: There is nothing wrong with saying that. Sir, I beg no favours. I fear no hate. We need to have out of wherever it is currently the Agricultural Sustainable Development Bill. We want to debate it in this House. We want to bring it for the people of this country. We want to help farmers, those who are producing for us to eat with such a Bill.

Mr. Speaker, the Agricultural Protection Bill also needs to come before the House. The Praedial Larceny Amendment Bill also needs to come before the House. Sir, some of these are things which would have been in progress before...

Asides.

Hon. R. D. JONES: I am saying that these various pieces of legislation would have been before the authorities for some time previous to 2008 and now up to this current period of time. This is not a condemnation of anyone. There have been challenges but now we have to go pass these challenges and we have to bring those instruments which are important to agriculture in Barbados, not merely talking about them but, in fact, delivering them to the people of Barbados and, Sir, that is what we are need. (11:05)

Mr. Speaker, the Ministry of Agriculture has been given new life. Sir, I live just a stone throw from Graeme Hall. The Honourable Member for Christ Church South knows where I live. I am a constituent of his. He does not visit often because he does not have to. He knows that any time the election is called, he has all the votes where I live, every one, to a man, and to a woman, so he does not have to come and worry. Sir, the Honourable Member for Christ Church South is doing a good job too.

Asides.

Hon. R. D. JONES: I continue to respect your dead father.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable Member, let us get back on track.

Hon. R. D. JONES: Sir, in my home, I can still recognise some of the imports that his father brought for my home, that is why I continue to respect his father and his mother. I hesitate in passing that respect down to him but yet I am generous. Sir, I am making the point that there was time when I thought the Ministry of Agriculture of mor..., that the Ministry of Agriculture was dying. There was that time when one felt no dynamism, no motivation or no urgency within the Ministry of Agriculture but I am proud to say that now, one feels some urgency. Sri, I am not speaking at the time when the Honourable Member for St. James North was there because there was some urgency but in between that time after your exit, Sir, and the commencement of the work of the Honourable Minister of Agriculture, it was almost as though it was lethargic, it was almost as though we did not want to feed our people, it was almost, outside of the plethora of incentives because I would not deny that there were, in fact, a plethora of incentives, as though agriculture was going anywhere. Sir, that no longer exists.

Mr. Speaker, when I have conversations with the owner of Mount Wilton, in the constituency of St. Thomas or I go to St. George among farmers and have a conversation, or I have a conversation with members from Gibbons in the constituency of Christ Church East, with Mr. Egbert Maloney, who by training is an aeronautical engineer..

Asides.

Hon. R. D. JONES: I know those Maloneys from Wilcox from the time I was a young boy with his father who was part of the vestry system. Sir, this is the history and I remember history very well because history is something that we live. They were producers, not only of sugar cane but of other root crops in Barbados. The father has passed on but the son took up the agricultural production and are now producers of all kinds of crops but is noted for melons, potatoes, Chinese cabbage, squash and all these other crops by the kilos to be sold in this country and, Sir, I urge support for all of those. Sir, that is why we are still concerned that there is no closure to the problems in the Gibbons/Wilcox/Chancery Lane area with the leakage of fuel that affected production in that area. Sir, even though we know that persons continue to work to bring that to a close, we need to have closure sooner rather than later.

Mr. Speaker, the Ministry of Agriculture also deals with fisheries in Barbados.

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Hon. R.D. JONES: I know there was a time when we were concerned that Cou Cou will no longer have flying fish beside it, but I always listened to the Honourable Member for St. Lucy who have always said that flying fish are migratory in nature, and let us have no noise with Trinidad and Tobago because the fish will eventually return to the shores of Barbados. Sir, because of the work in stabilising the offshore environment, to some extent pollution and toxins going into the water, flying fish have in fact moved back towards our side and we have had increased catches of flying fish and dolphin in the country.

Sir, there is going to be work, I believe during the course of this year, at the Oistins Fish Market. It is no longer called the Oistins Fish Market. It is the Berinda Cox Fish Market. Once again I want to say that it comes out of a recognition that persons who have been involved in fishery should be recognised.

Only a week or so ago, we had the Fish Festival on the Western side of Barbados, but Berinda Cox has been recognised, not only was she a fisher lady but she was also an entrepreneur in the retailing and wholesaling of her fish to other persons in Barbados.

There will be the conducting of surveys in the sheep and goat population in Barbados. There will be an acceleration of green house technologies across the Barbados, the variety sourcing and testing of products to deal with our climatic circumstances and conditions. In the area of horticulture, you will have Anthuriums and orchid improvement projects; the optimisation of tube rose productivity, in the area of fisher cultural laboratory and the facilitation of security initiatives. We are not forgetting sugar can agriculture.

Sir, we talked sometime ago of moving towards utilising sugar cane not only for sugar or molasses, but also utilising the by-products of sugar for other technologies and other production. I heard information recently that the fuel cane tested in Barbados is not developing as we would want, so we will have to go back to the drawing board to look at that. It is an experimental activity as we look for greener technologies to be utilised in Barbados.

There is a lot of work to be done. The Government stands committed to work with all of the various important stakeholders in agriculture. The Government has gone even further in establishing the Hope Agriculture Institute in St. Lucy. There is still some work we have to do down there. We are putting the infrastructure in because this will be a semi residential facility. It is not only the theoretical exercise in a classroom with four wooden or concrete walls and you learn something from a book, but a true agriculturalist practices his craft. He interfaces with his

craft. In other words, he puts his hands in the soil. He puts his hands in the chicken pen or chicken coop or the chicken house. He tethers his sheep or he allows them to freely roam on his area. He is able to get forage from his open land to feed his animals, so he has to interface in a dynamic way. Through the establishment of the Hope Agricultural Institute, we bring authentic learning to our people who would otherwise go to the Barbados Community College, the Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic and our schools. Part of the exercise of the development of this Hope Agricultural Institute in St. Lucy would be young people interfacing with production.

Sir, 4-Hers are going into the authentic environment as part of their learning curve. We are also saying that as this project gets going, agriculturalists and farmers in Barbados will be able to come to the Hope Agricultural Institute and refine their various techniques, not only in production but also in Management, Marketing and Human Resource Management at the Hope Agricultural Institute. We are forging ahead with that exercise. This is one of the other deliverables of the Democratic Labour Party Government.

Sir, sometimes persons take their eyes off what Government is seeking to do and what the Government is doing, because they might be distracted by other voices, but these are hard realities. These are the practical implementations of the various promises or pledges that we have made. This one is evolving into fruition.

Sir, I want to thank all of the parties involved. A major committee was established comprising the Ministry of Housing, the Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development, the Ministry of Agriculture, and persons from the Barbados Community College and the Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic to carry forward this process. This is where you pull persons who can deliver. This is where you put person who can deliver together and say, deliver.

So the Ministry of Housing delivered in the vesting of the 45 acres or there about in the Hope Agricultural Institute. The Ministry of Agriculture brought its technical knowledge to bear on the process and the Ministry of Education brought its pedagogical knowledge to bear on this process.

I am proud as Minister of Education that we were able to bring this to fruition and we continue to unfold this project, so that within the next few months we should see this developing.

We have revisited the area of agricultural scholarships at the higher end. We are sending persons to Inter American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IAICA) and to Mona where agriculture is being done. We

have said to the 4-H-ers that we have put back the resources in our Estimates for your benefit', because of the burgeoning of 4-H Clubs across Barbados, and we have put it back in.

We are bringing a holistic development policy for agriculture not only through the incentives, through the rebates, through the provisions of support for the agricultural sector, but we have actually given teeth to these initiatives. The market we have made available to persons in production, look, on Fridays and Saturdays, without having to bother about a licence at designated locales across this country, come and display your ware, come and display your produce. Bring you car, your tent or tables and display your ware. We are inviting Barbadians, wherever markets are, to come and patronise the farmers and those who sell in our country.

In fact, I know that the Honourable Members on this side - I want to applaud Members who have taken on both urban and rural Barbados in an authentic way, who have said that they will have market days in their constituencies. They said they will have market days in their constituencies, so bring your produce out, bring your products out. Bring your guava, jellies, condiments and hot sauce.

In fact, I was not amazed because I know the creativity of Barbadians. I went to a market day recently at the Deighton Griffith School...

Asides.

Hon. R.D. JONES: I would like to invite the Honourable Member for Christ Church West, but the Honourable Member was not in Barbados. I could have invited him. He was in the cold climate of the Northern Hemisphere. He had already migrated and planted his seeds in Canada.

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House A69, Sequence 09, 11.20 a.m.

Hon. R.D. JONES: He had already migrated and planted his seeds in Canada, so much so I am told that even before he has resigned that somebody else would be running in that seat, so unceremoniously discarded, quite unfortunate, but they have been doing this to you for a long time, Honourable Member. They did not want you to run and now they do not want you to stay. Sorry, your father was a great man but that opportunity is there. It helps to deal with the cost of living.

We know and we keep working on it but it is still proving to be problematic. If we can interface with producers, where we can eliminate the intermediate person, from production to consumption, the cost variables can change, rather than adding increased value as we move through middle persons. Sir, you are saying to more persons to produce and sell so there is a direct relationship between production and consumption.

There is a bit of concern as far as markets are concerned. They are persons who are retailing all kinds of produce along the Highways and byways. Sir, even though we have no problem with that, it has to be planned and it has to be organised in a sensible and sequential manner. Persons who utilise the highways and byways on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays or whenever, must ensure that when they are finish, they do not leave the waste for the next day. It should be cleaned. Those persons who frequent you now are the ones who will be condemning you then, if you do not remove the waste from the Highways.

There are persons who need to utilise the markets that are there more. They believe that as you move across the country that you want the open space but yes, where there are markets provided that you must utilise those markets. Persons in agro industrial production who have come up with a sensible product, provide employment.

Sir, one of the things that hurt me, way back, I think it was between 1970 and 1976 and anyone can question me on my history was when Carmeta Fraser, now deceased, was part of the food development arena in Barbados, helped in the development of yam flakes in Barbados, instant yam. By 1976, with a change of Government that project was abandoned and discarded.

Asides.

Hon. R.D. JONES: No, not the yam itself but the refined product, the flakes. I was surprised going to London in 1995 and walking through Wembley Market like Brixton in London, meeting the Caribbean people, to see yam flakes being produced in Nigeria. This is the history. We abandon innovation. We abandon creativity but others do not because they understand the fundamental importance of agricultural production, and post agricultural production in their societies. They understood it well.

I also remember, Mr. Deputy Speaker, going to Brixton Market, and this is a bit anecdote, to get a breadfruit. Now any part of Barbados you can either buy it, if you want or you can beg for it if you want. If Honourable Members know me, they know that I will beg. I like to be honest.

One day coming soon, I am going to ask the Honourable Member for St. Michael North West to beg the

Honourable Member for St. Michael North East for something. I do not know what it will be but the Honourable Member can beg her. I will not.

Asides.

Hon. R.D. JONES: The Honourable Member for St. Thomas will know the history, her intervention caused it but going to Brixton Market and I am seeing sliced breadfruit. I am saying in Barbados we do not slice, you get a breadfruit so now, now knowing what is going on, I wanted to do a little souse the Saturday, so I asked for a breadfruit, and the salesman said to me £5 Sir.

Asides.

Hon. R.D. JONES: It was a Caucasian in Brixton Market, because even though it is called Brixton Market and one would believe that there is, a lot of Jamaicans and other West Indians, in fact, a lot of Irish, Scots and other persons were in fact, present in the market. I was so embarrassed that I actually bought a very small and tight breadfruit for £5, as a student, I could ill afford it but I was too embarrassed to say no. I went home and cooked that breadfruit and it was the hardest breadfruit I ever ate. I did not go back to Brixton Market to buy breadfruit because I could not afford paying £5 as a student.

Asides.

Hon. R.D. JONES: No, hard, because I like the yellow meat breadfruit. It was really hard because it was really green and you know that breadfruit turns black in the pot, those who can cook, but the Honourable Member for Christ Church West eats his food not from his pot.

Asides.

Hon. R.D. JONES: Mr. Deputy Speaker, as I was standing there another Caucasian lady came up to me and said, because I was asking for sweet potatoes as well, the sweet potatoes there were from Nigeria and Jamaica and she said to me that Barbadian sweet potatoes came in a week ago but they last no longer than one day, Sir, that is what she said to me.

Sir, we were producing potatoes in Barbados that were being shipped through the export promotion from the Grantley Adams Airport. I do not know who was the person producing it, sending sweet potatoes to England. She said to me that you have to come here early. This was our conversation because the Barbadian potato, that variety that was being sold, was viewed as top of the line. Today, there are no longer any Barbadian potatoes being sold in Britain. I do not know if airlift or the production or the dismantling of that processing part caused that but this is a Caucasian saying to a Bajan who knows about potatoes that

you have to come here when they are brought in because they do not last, Bajan potatoes in town and they disappear. We have abandoned those things which work for us, therefore, we have to pay more attention to hybrid varieties, greater production, public education, export of the surplus products or whatever.

I am proud, Mr. Deputy Speaker that in one of the premier agricultural production of the worlds, Brazil, we now have airlift. So we will be able to bring products at reduced prices and send products. Not only people will we be bringing, but merchandise flow between Brazil and Barbados. The Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central should be complimented. I do not know if he recognises the value of what he and his officers have done because not only are we looking to move people, we are moving produce between these two spaces, so he has belled the cat with one hand. People/produce. Goods and services will be moved in by this great work.

The Honourable Members on the other side will not get up and compliment the Honourable Member because they would believe that somehow they are praising him but on this side, we give Jack his jacket and if Jill wants to wear her skirt, we give Jill her skirt too. This is what we do as Honourable Members on this side.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, under the guidance and leadership of the Honourable Member for St. Michael West Central, there was Agrofest. Sir, when I go to Agrofest, once I am in the country and one sees the displays, the production, the knowledge being brought to bear, the school children flowing through interfacing with the rabbits, the young farmers of Barbados from St. Andrew, from River, from St. Lucy, from Christ Church still producing, using knowledge because they are bright people, for agriculture production, that is testimony that we still have some strong foundation on which we have to further build.

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Hon. R. D. JONES: That is testimony that we still have some strong foundation on which we have to further build. The farmer agencies like the Barbados Agricultural Society and the cooperatives have to step up more and more. Sometimes you hear little noises among them but they need to remove the noise and concentrate on production.

I just pass a bit on the fisher folks. I come from an area of Christ Church where as a youngster I used to go to Silver Sands for pot fish, to Oistins for fish, if the fish seller did not use to come round on his carrier bike selling fish, or to Long Beach for sea eggs and other pot fish as

well. To see now the development of Oistins and the fisher folks there... Yes, there have been a bit of reduction in production in these other areas but Oistins has stepped up to the plate. Weston in St. James, Six Mens in St. Peter and along that strip, Bridgetown, Consett Bay in St. John, Skeete's Bay and others are areas of agricultural production in fish, part of the food sovereignty of the nation.

Our fisher folks who go out on the sea in either in their day boats, their ice boats or their trawlers with long line fishing and even the sport fishermen who called it sport, they go to sport but they bring food to land, must all be complimented for their work.

This Government stays committed and would remain committed to the incentive regime. I know it had to be an oversight that the legislation, which should have been brought to complement the initiative of 1999 was not brought but it is now here so we do not condemn you neither do I condemn you, go and sin no more. You would sin in some other area but for this one we cast no stone, it is to get the action before those who are working in the fishing arena.

The Government again wishes to say to the farmers of Barbados we stand with you. We cannot say whatever you need we could give you. We believe that there is already a substantial regime in place. The Ministry of Agriculture is facilitating whatever it is you are doing out there in production. We know that there are challenges because of the giant African snail. Even though a lot of work has gone into trying to rid the nation of the giant African snail, there is still somewhat a progressive spread across the country and every citizen must be called to help combat this menace to agricultural and horticultural production in Barbados. Under the leadership of the Ministry of Agriculture, we hope that we could bring some clarity to the process and that we can in fact halt and reduce the spread of the African snail in Barbados but it is a hard task and all must be engaged.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I just thought I would open the debate because agriculture is so important to us as a nation. It is not only tourism that can bring in foreign exchange but local and domestic consumption. The export of surplus produce can bring in foreign exchange as well and we are pulling the systems together, agricultural training, making sure land is available to production and making sure that the incentives for greenhouse technology, aquaculture technology, hydroponics and irrigation systems are in place to assist our farmers.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, with those words, I therefore beg to move that this Bill be read a second time.

Hon. C. P. SINCKLER: I beg to second that.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. James North.

Mr. R. C. EASTMOND: Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is not without enthusiasm that I intervene in this debate and I trust that the basis for such enthusiasm would become obvious during the course of my modest presentation.

I would wish, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to commend you for the deep and passionate interest that you have shown in agriculture from your earliest youth up. This is not meant, Sir, to blend encomiums with flattery, it is offered with the utmost sincerity.

The Honourable Member for Christ Church East Central suggested that I attended a funeral and declined to speak at the funeral. I, now in reply, would publicly like to commend the efforts of Mr. Charles Moore, one of the earliest businessmen from the north of Barbados and apologise to his family for not being in sufficient voice to render an eulogy in circumstances where there was considerable grief and in circumstances where the interest of the Honourable Member for Christ Church East was by no means small and by no means contradictable.

Sir, I also would want, as I commend people who have paid their dues and done very well in agriculture in Barbados, to commend Angela Burke-Benskin who though not being an agronomist was a passionate farmer both of livestock and ordinary food crops from her earliest youth up and whose untimely passing is going to create a gap in agriculture in Barbados. Although, Angela Burke-Benskin did not attend the School of Tropical Agriculture at St. Augustine nor did she do agriculture economics, she was one of these earthly working-class people driven by a spirit of spirituality to do her best. She loved farming. Sir, I cannot speak here unless I mention two persons who have fought and fought and fought in their own distinctive ways to make their contribution. I want to single out Miss Oriol Linton as an outstanding 4Hers who unselfishly carried the movement even when the movement seemed to be lacking in energy and needing trust. I believe that Miss Linton, a qualified school teacher, is known to some Honourable Members. Mr. Hamilton Blackman also has to be singled out for the work he did in the 4H Movement.

Sir, one useful way of making a contribution to this debate from that side or this side is for us in a dispassionate way to ask ourselves where we have not done our best. Have we done our best in respect of the development of farmers cooperatives? We should ask that question dispassionately and honestly. We should also ask ourselves what factors contributed to our failure to have energized farmers cooperatives. The same question can be asked in respect of cooperatives of fisher folks. What things have stood in the way of the development of cooperatives among fisher folks? A lot of fisher folks complained that the off

boat price in the market that is had by the ultimate retailer is substantially higher than the price paid to them as boat owners and as actual people on the sea.

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Mr. Rawle C. EASTMOND: Mr. Deputy Speaker, this is one of the problems too where as far as on-land agriculture the farm-gate price to the farmer is lower than the final retail price paid by the consumer. Therefore, we must ask ourselves these things dispassionately if we are going to get producers involved in agriculture what, by way of our contributing to the removal of threats from them, ought we to do to ensure their survival.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, another area where we should ask ourselves in a detached way, where have we not done well enough. Have we demonstrated sufficient capacity to make use of better, sturdier and more-rounded fishing craft? Are we still too reliant on the “moses” culture and on the Anglo-culture? Are we still involved sufficiently in fish pot fishing? Is that declining? Is that declining both from the point of view that no new blood, no new persons are involved in it? Is it declining from the point of view that there are other ways of catching fish?

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I believe that many a youngster in Barbados, both male and female, has never heard of a fish pot in the same way that a lot of our youth do not know enough about our sea egg culture. I am raising these questions deliberately so that we as a Parliament can ask these question and can be honest with ourselves when it comes to the ultimate contribution that both parties would have made to agriculture over time. Another relevant question is, do we deliver the rebates to the farmers on time or do we frustrate farmers who qualify for rebates and incentives by making them wait too long?

Mr. Deputy Speaker, another question would be, where are we in respect of our success or failure in controlling the Giant African snail? Sir, the Giant African snail has become ubiquitous. Some months ago, some communities were mobilised, and I want to thank Mr. Joel Bannister from Porters/Mount Standfast area who mobilised a community. Sir, some communities were mobilised to deal with the Giant African snail; that Saturday, Mr. Banister who distinguishes himself as a Christian man, a community worker, a church worker, when he mobilised a few people, they picked up hundreds of African snails and destroyed them. Sir, the question of the African snail and its destruction is not irrelevant because it is a pest that is destroying agricultural crops. It is also frustrating farmers. Sir, in circumstances where some

farmers already either suffer losses of income, low minimal income, frustration from other threats, we have to do something about this Giant African snail.

Sir, in the same way, we have to detach and ask ourselves where are we when it comes to this nuisance called praedial larceny. More than 18 years ago, this Parliament passed legislation that sought to prove that people selling agricultural commodities were lawfully entitled to do so by the presentation of proof. Sir, we have to ask ourselves where are we in relation to this thing call praedial larceny, where there are those persons who go around, usually in the dark of night, and take farmers hard-earned crops and come to Bridgetown and make 100 per cent profit, minus the transport cost they would have incurred in relation to moving those crops?

Sir, too many farmers have suffered from praedial larceny; too many farmers also suffer the problems of stray dogs destroying livestock. We have to ask ourselves, have we taken sufficient measures to deal with this nuisance of stray dogs destroying livestock? Do we still licence dogs in Barbados? What do we do when unlicensed dogs become nuisances, destroying farmers produce?

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am sure that you know that at one point there was a firm in Fontabelle which was actually making American-styled chips made from Irish potatoes. There was a successful Irish potato project in Barbados, you can ask Marlon Frances or Carl Simpson. Sir, it had to be a situation where those Irish potatoes were produced under certain conditions. Sir, I am happy that we in Barbados have found a way of producing broccoli, which is one of the best things for the human body. At certain heights in St. Thomas and St. George, broccoli can be grown here. I believe right now that the Mount Plantation, St. George, has successfully set the stage for broccoli production which definitely diversifies our position with food.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, have we been truly able to influence and persuade our youth to eat yams, sweet potatoes, eddoes and such like? Between 1994 and 2000, farmers were reluctant to grow cassava because in that period the demand for cassava had so declined that the total production of cassava was quite low. It is now believed that cassava has certain qualities that can add to the health of people. Sir, believe it or not, if you go shopping, you would see that there are cassava flakes and cassava chips that are available. I am not sure from where they come but they are available in Barbados. The old people of Barbados believe in cassava and lived long.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, sometimes in these debates we have to be both nostalgic and folkloric. As a boy, there were different types of cassava, for example, poison cassava and roasting cassava. There was a type of cassava,

poison cassava, from which you had to extract the starch. The starch would be used to starch clothes, while the flour would be used to make cassava pone. The starch was use for pressing clothes and we would have saved a lot of money in importing Arawak starch from our neighbour. That variety is not grown anymore in Barbados. Have we done enough by way of heightening our agricultural exports, in circumstances where many a country loves Barbados hot peppers and Barbados sweet peppers? I am raising these as questions to try to ascertain, as we take stock of where we are, if we have done enough with regards to a number of instances of agricultural production and matters relating to agriculture. Have we developed enough agricultural exports in circumstances where St. Vincent, St. Lucia and Grenada have used LIAT a lot to get their products into Barbados? We have no problem with that because some of these products have the finest possible quality. We do need assurances that the folk at Pegwell and Gibbon Boggs are going to get a solution to their problem.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, 30 years ago, we did some work of hydroponics and today nobody can say exactly where are we in relation to hydroponics.

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Mr. R.C. EASTMOND: Sir, in a small little island like Barbados, hard pressed for space, hydroponics could actually save and see production, where rather than have your production spread across an expanse, you actually have your production ascend onto a height, saving space in the process and, at the same time, making use of modern technology.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, notwithstanding the length of the speech of my predecessor, the substantive measure before this House is to, more or less, validate a policy that was to go back to April 1, 1999 and, Sir, this is interesting, Sir. The primary purpose of the legislation is to give effect to something that should have happened 11 years ago. This raises the question of certain systemic matters. The Democratic Labour Party would have delivered a Budget sometime last calendar year. The Democratic Labour Party now has to go and calculate whether a lot of what they proposed in that Budget that needs legislation has gone anywhere. Sir, because of difficulties where this Parliament has to await the outcome of work done by non-politicians, we have to find formally, by which, in minuting our files, we alert those technocrats on whom we rely as to the urgency of particular matters. Sir, I am saying that in a situ where this matter ought to have been dealt with as far back as April 1, 1999, nobody who is an actual politician can be blames for this. This is something that was administrative and I would want to call on the senior public officers that

when budgetary statements are made, they should become familiar with them within two weeks or three weeks and then the political call should be communicating with them on files to indicate the importance of getting legislation done on time. Sir, as you well know, if retrospective legislation is not clear, clear, clear, a court required to interpret it might very well be tempted to knock it out as having no effect because, historically, as far as statutory interpretation is concerned, law courts do not particularly like retrospective legislation. They prefer prospective legislation and where retrospective legislation is controversial and ambiguous they are going to interpret it against the legislation. Sir, luckily for us, what we are doing is here is such a good thing that we do not have to fear the problem of a court of law knocking out this amendment.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I raise this question of the systemic question of legislation coming slowly to Parliament. Sir, I want now to consider a number of matters that are by no means irrelevant to the business of agriculture. Sir, Barbados once had an entity called the Barbados Marketing Corporation. In those days, Sir, the thinking among politicians was that Government should be an investor and a participant in business activity. Sir, that was the thinking but then it was realised that many a Government-funded and Government-run institution operated inefficiently, encouraged a lot of wastage, encouraged a lot of irregular practice and such like. Sir, then a paradigm shift was made from the thinking of the 50s, 60s and early 70s to move away from direct Government investment to offering incentives to private enterprise to get involved in production. Sir, that paradigm shift has to be considered in the context of this debate because this debate is about providing incentives for agro processing.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we, in Barbados, had hoped before 1994 to have had a multi-purpose agro processing plant just below the GAIA. It was supposed to be multi-faceted, it was supposed to be an agro-processing plant, well run by persons who have had a history of success in business in other areas but that agro processing plant failed. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am not permitted to speculate as to the reasons for its failure but it was supposed to be located right below the GAIA, capital was invested in it, it started operations, it seemed to have suffered a problem of current inflows of capital to meet the current expenses and it seemed also to have suffered the problem of a shortage of inflows of raw materials to process. Sir, it failed.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, what we are doing here today is ratifying a budgetary decision to offer incentives to agro processors. I would want to commend the Pine Hill Dairy, which though it started as a producer of milk has diversified its product, and which Pine Hill Dairy is not unaccustomed to a shortage of locally produced raw

material, and which Pine Hill Dairy has been able to locate where to get raw material from. Sir, this is a very serious point. The Pine Hill Dairy would have attracted criticism from a number of people who felt that as a dairy it has no right being involved in things like food production and such like but agro processors do know how to spread risk, agro processors are justified in not sticking to one item and in circumstances where there is an anti-milk campaign amongst some people who claim to be lactose intolerant, the Pine Hill Dairy might have calculated that it had no future specialising in only one product. Sir, the point I am making is that when it cannot source local raw fruits, it knows where to source them from, The quality of its range of fruit juices is great and it is one of the few exporters of agricultural products in this country.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the reason I am mentioning this is that as we decide consciously to build an economy, as we decide consciously to provide something for posterity, as we decide consciously, Sir, to make a contribution this country, in terms of feeding this country, in terms of encouraging better approaches to the health of this country in terms of not relying on one staple, in terms of getting rid of mono crop, in terms of creating linkages among different sectors, then there is every justification for taking the approach I am taking in this particular debate.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, were it not for the length of time taken by my friend, I would really expatiate at tremendous lengths for equal time and you must forgive me, Mr. Deputy Speaker, if I let you down by coming in a little short but I am not about to finish left. I am not to finish yet. Sir, I did mention that Cynthia is not stopping me from doing anything. She is a source of tremendous encouragement, she has a nice, kind, heart, and she is one of the more outstanding Members of Parliament in Barbados, known in every community and in every respect, she is a winner at every level and in everything she does.

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R.C. EASTMOND: Mr. Deputy Speaker, the topic at hand is providing incentives for agro processing. Agro processing means taking raw agricultural products and converting them into what economists call finished products, or sometimes converting them into what some economists would call intermediate products. It therefore means that converting raw agricultural crops into processed crops involves science and involves technology. I am therefore making a public call for us in Barbados to undertake research with the aim to see where we can take our raw agricultural products.

There are people called fish processors in Barbados, and we wonder why they are called fish processors. They

are processors from the point of view that they take product closer to the consumer. By the context of processing generally, processing can take you to packaging and it can take you to putting things in cans. It can take you too to converting an original product into a relatively new product. It is not farfetched for us as a Parliament to suggest that more research should be done for more than one reason.

First of all, research should be undertaken to see what value our fruits, our root crops or vegetables have on the human system. Research should be undertaken too to see where, when we have raw fruits and raw vegetables and root crops, where we can take them at the level of having them packaged or canned.

Sir, of relevance is this. There are some agricultural products prone to gluts. When farmers experience gluts, farmers' incomes drop. If you have agricultural processing, you could assure the farmer because the farmer is not forced to sell cheap to avoid spoilage. The glut, experience has shown that when farmers experience these gluts, they drop the price dramatically, not because they really can afford to, but because since they are dealing with perishable commodities then they are victims of gluts.

Sir, with agro processing, where there is a market within an agro processing framework for a crop that would otherwise be subject to gluts, we can save the farmers a lot of frustration, keep their incomes at a certain level and ensure that we are even able to process and can different commodities to replace some of the junk dumped on us from abroad.

Sir, there are those Barbadians who go into supermarkets and are exposed to junk dumped from abroad. We in Barbados and the Caribbean have come to a stage, when in thinking highly of ourselves and looking at our mirror image, ought to have the confidence to take risks. Since risks are risks usually associated with investment, but you know the greater the risk, the greater the return. The older Barbadians who I would say like 90, and who would have seen the evolution of Barbados, the versified economy from 1950 to now, could tell you the history of how Barbados has developed based on providing more props for our economy.

Sir, in the context of agro processing, one of the remarkable things about agro processing - let us look at yams. There were some yam flakes that we do not see now. Let us look at sweet potatoes, eddoes and breadfruit. Those are normal things that people put in a pot and cook. Then, as part of our production, we have things called fruits, many of which are proved to be excellent for health. It would seem to me that the time has come when we should enhance our fruit production, because fruit production lends itself more readily to agricultural processing than

cucumbers, casava and yam. Sir, we should, therefore, as we consider this debate, press ahead with what advantages there are in processing of fruits.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, there used to be a fellow called Watson. I do not remember his correct name. His nickname may be 'Erin or Ersil'. He died about the age of 43 some years ago. He was from the area of East Coast, St. Andrew. When he was born the doctors gave him eight years to live. Watson was an out and out St. Andrew man, employed by the Ministry of Agriculture. There is a road that runs from Bloomsberry to Belleplaine, Spring Vale Road. Prior to 1991, every Minister of Public Transport and Work was the Representative for that Spring Vale Road. Every year that Spring Vale Road used to wash away. It has stopped. Mr. Watson, who unfortunately is deceased did some research in the area and found that there were many springs under that road. He developed a system by which he got the springs conjoined and channeled through one pipe, while at the same time doing supportive work.

Sir, as you know, that Spring Vale Road has not been seen to collapse since 1996. We thank the Almighty for the life and contribution of the late Mr. Watson and the Ministry of Agriculture's staff. That Spring Vale Road is the infrastructure to an area where fruit abounds. Note, that in the context of a debate on agro processing, that infrastructure becomes relevant. This Spring Vale Road could open the avenue to Haggatts, with cherries, 'five fingers', and 'five fingers' is now becoming a popular Vitimin C, Cambolla, alias 'five fingers', and tamarinds.

Sir, they have also been experimental with mangoes. I am seeing so many mangoes now that I am tempted to quote a man from Speighstown called Virgo, who is no longer with us. His girlfriend Ververly was buried last Saturday. Virgo had the opportunity to educate people in St. Peter and to tell them we should look at the processing of fruit. You are seeing so many mangoes now in Barbados, on the ground. A lot of those should be processed for mango juices, give the owners of the trees an income, give the people a naturally produced native drink, and look to export what could be exported.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, permit me to talk about agriculture for two minutes, in respect of the growth of interest in agriculture. Whenever there are hard economic times, the informal sector emerges.

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House A69, Sequence 14, 12.10 p.m.

Mr. R.E. EASTMOND: Mr. Deputy Speaker, permit me to talk about agriculture now for two minutes, in

respect of the growth of interest in agriculture. Whenever there are hard economic times, the informal sector emerges. A lot of the agriculture growing now is produced by small people, who in response to the harsh economic times, have decided to grow their own plants. A lot of them are able to grow their own plants because a Barbados Labour Party administration decided that rather than have bureaucracy control the seed store that the 4-H Movement be granted the seed store and be permitted to run that seed store. Barbadians are going to that seed store.

I am heartened to say that even in a densely populated place like St. Michael, you are seeing many people grow some cabbage, grow some thyme and such like, in response to the harsh economic times. Between 1986 and 1990, Trinidad and Tobago (Trinidad) had a hard time with its economy but its agriculture did spectacularly. Trinidad actually had two evaluations between 1986 and 1990, not to be forgotten.

Their response was build agriculture and if you read of Japan and evolution over the last 70 years, experts have concluded that the spring board off which Japan became an economic power was agriculture. Mr. Deputy Speaker, we are going to support this because this is our own policy and if you want to say, Sir, it was our fault that it did not come before, then, Sir, people are free to say so.

I would want the Honourable Member for St. Michael North East to speak to the issue of sugar and fishing which are close to her heart. I am the grandson of a successful fisherman, one of the finest fishermen. I will put his name in the record, Fitzwilloughby Duke Walcott, a legendary character from Porters, St. James, father of a man called Harold Walcott, father of a current man called, Lawson Walcott, a first classed fisherman. I will also put in the records, Sir, the contribution made by the Verity Beckles' father Debaucher and their contribution to fishing.

The Honourable Member for St. Michael North East is going to speak specifically to fishing and to sugar.

Sir, the Honourable Member for Christ Church East Central correctly addressed the question of the involvement of youth in agriculture. My reading of the situation, Sir, is that young people are not interested in being raw laborers on plantations or on the ground. The young people are interested in being farm managers. The young people are interested in being agricultural entrepreneurs, business people and to that degree, Sir, we have to locate the technology to help them urgently.

The technology is going to get around the problem of having to look for expensive labour. The technology is going to produce efficiencies. The technology will fast track things, Sir. We need a regime by which we rigorously pursue an educational programme, designed to assist all

those youthful potential agriculturists, who see no future in being a hewer of wood and drawer of water but who see a future as genuine farmers.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I take no comfort in the fact that our farmers are grieving over the cost of water. As a boy growing up, Sir, many farms had their own water supply. As a boy growing up many backyards had a well. In the years before the universal spread of pipe water in Barbados, there were all types of waterways, wells and such like in Barbados.

The reality today, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is that water definitely is too expensive for farmers. At the same time though, I have to be fair. Farmers themselves must make sure that they do not waste water and farmers themselves must make sure that when the rainfall comes, they capture it. These are issues, Sir, that have to be examined in the context of any debate on agriculture. Permit me, Sir, at a time when we are looking at this matter, notwithstanding the fact that our multifaceted proposed agro processing station up near Fairview at the airport failed, we still have a measure of agro processing in Barbados. Do we have any place in Barbados called Aunt Mays? Does that mean something? Aunt Mays is an agro processor. Auntie Brown. We still have agro processors. We still therefore have to encourage them to seek out what special incentives they should get. We need too, Sir, to identify the future of processors at the level of small and micro business. We need to also identify the future of peasant farmers.

The peasantry of Barbados has been largely responsible for the food supply of Barbados, while the planter class was largely responsible for sugar cane but the planter class has got wise. As the fortunes of sugar cane has tended to fluctuate downward, the planter class has diversified into many a root crop out of having little choice. With sugar costing more than you can get for it, many a plantation, Sir, has become the locust of food farming. Yet we have to applaud the efforts, Sir, of the peasants who have done a lot to diversify our agriculture.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, today, the contribution being made by non sugar agriculture, Sir, is greater than the contribution made by sugar outside of foreign exchange and by sugar. In other words, if you look at our localised economy and what goes on in our economy sugar wise and non sugar wise, food farming and non sugar production are doing better than sugar in our local economic framework.

Sir, Government should look at the role of the peasant. Government, Sir, should facilitate private investment in agriculture. Government, Sir, has to fast track existing incentives and press the programme. This Government has to build on the Barbados Labour Party's land for the landless programme. This country has to build on land for the landless. This country should, Sir, also in

light of a number of variables favourable to Barbados on the international front, especially in Europe, look to capture new opportunities. I am going to conclude now, Sir, but let me say this to this Honourable House, there is a future, Sir, in flowers. Mr. Deputy Speaker, there is a future in flowers. Floriculture has to be developed. Incentives have to be provided for floriculture. In Europe there is demand for ginger lilies and a whole range of exotics and we are placed to at least make a start. Our country's name is very richly enhanced at the Annual Chelsea Flower Show. Let me take this opportunity to congratulate all those who brought Honour to Barbados through their performance, not only this year, but for the last ten years or so.

We should be able, Sir, to capitalise on two things, that there is an existing demand for Barbadian cut flowers in Europe and that based on our success at Chelsea, we should be encouraging this country through its private sector, Sir, to get involved in the business of the production of flowers. We should tread carefully.

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Mr. R. C. EASTMOND: We should tread carefully. We should look at the implications of the cost, of transport and such like.

As I close, in a small area with a limited land mass and in an area where greenhouses matter a lot in the life of the cut flower business, let me single out Tom Hinds operating out of Surinam, St. Joseph and a man called Mr. Taylor who I believe is the son of the famous Edgeton Taylor. Edgeton Taylor would have been one of the legendary characters of the north just like a man called Boyce was a legendary character from Mile & A Quarter. They are legendary because of the contribution they made in business and in community life.

Mr. Taylor lives in Newbury, at least, that is where the farm is. Mr. Taylor has set up a greenhouse. Mr. Tom Hinds went down to Surinam and was able to diversify agriculture there using media to produce the crops. It is not necessary for flowers and different crops to have to grow in mud and soil, you could actually produce certain crops in coconut husk.

In any event, as I repeat the fact that there is a future in flowers and that we should seek to be exporting flowers, let me also say that Government has to study this whole question of agriculture in the context of agriculture in greenhouses. We have to be mindful of the fact that the capital investment may not be that low.

You would recall, Mr. Deputy Speaker, before you enter this Honourable House that the last Administration

had set up the Urban Enterprises Fund, the Rural Enterprises Fund and a lot of funds to promote people access to funding for various economic purposes. I therefore take particular pleasure in taking part in this debate.

This is the debate that has to take into account the risks and the uncertainties facing agriculture. The risks are measurable. When a farmer makes zero after his ten sheep have been destroyed by a strayed dog or when a farmer makes zero after all of his produce have been stolen by a predator coming anomalistically in the night in the cover of darkness to steal from a bona fide farmer and when a farmer suffers crop failure and makes zero income, these are the types of risk to which farmers are exposed.

I mentioned a risk that we can deal with, the risk of gluts, producing low incomes. Agriculture is supremely sensitive. There are uncertainties that go with agriculture such as the weather. You could be told to go and plant in September and then some serious rains could come in September as you plant up and then all is washed away. You could plant up at a time when your best advice is to plant now and if you plant in the wrong setting, then you could lose the efforts of your produce. Mr. Deputy Speaker, that is why we have to continue looking at the greenhouse culture, the hydroponics and search for technology.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I recommend that we look to technology in Germany and Sweden where there is a high emphasis on greening and where Sweden, I believe, is able to produce machinery that is able to take out the weeds and the bushes from the land and leave the real plant alive. I think they have managed to achieve that.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, in the context of all that I have said and all that would be said by my colleague, the Honourable Member for St. Michael North East, we therefore regret that we were not able to do this thing the right way legally 11 years ago but are thankful for the opportunity to humbly take part in a debate that was very ably led and a debate which I believe at first glance would have looked to be annihilated or what some people would call before today a possible "poorakey" thing.

I thank you, Sir.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. Michael North West.

Mr. J. D. PAUL: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to participate in this debate from the point of view that I believe that the particular amendment that we have here to the Income Tax Act, Cap. 73 is important in terms of the clarity that it gives to the concessions that are given to persons within the agricultural sector.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I also believe that it is important from the point of view that what we can see developing as a result of this particular amendment to the Income Tax Act, Cap. 73 is the further development of small businesses in this country in which this Government has made a significant investment in terms of trying to advance the social and economic development of people within this country.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, to a large extent, when we talk about agriculture, many of us like to talk about agriculture in the context of the good old days, however, one of the things that we need to recognise is that the good old days are just what they were, the good old days.

Sir, agriculture has to survive in an environment in which it has to compete with other activities for scarce resources. In that regard, I think that we need to applaud the work of the current agriculturalists who have been able to maintain the activity despite the challenges that are being experienced in the current environment.

Sir, we cannot actually underestimate the kind of challenges which agriculture faced at this time not only from the natural environment but also from what we would call the natural progression of time in terms of the changes that are taking place on this earth as far as man needing the land to at least accomplish certain things to help with the development of the human race.

Sir, when we look at agriculture today, it is changing to an extent where a lot of the innovations that we are seeing today would surprise agriculturalists who were around 50 or even 60 years ago. Sir, in that regard, we need to recognise that this particular provision, which amends Section 12A (1) of the Income Tax Act, provides to agro-processors the opportunity that if they bring in agricultural equipment for processing purposes then they are able to get access to that incentive.

Sir, one of the things that we have recognised is that years ago a lot of emphasis was placed on the primary product. Today, when we look at the agricultural products that are being consumed, we recognise that they are changing in terms of their nature and in terms of the content because of changing consumer taste and the fact that consumers themselves are becoming more sophisticated.

As a matter of fact, sometimes we forget that corn flakes is really corn but it is a processed commodity. In Barbados, we have not allowed for the processing of our primary agricultural commodities into commodities, which consumers can more readily consume.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we also have a situation that despite initiatives in the past, we have not and we did not

give the kind of support that was required then. Mr. Deputy Speaker, we have to applaud the initiative that is being taken by the Government now in recognising the role that agro-processing can play in making local agricultural products even more appealing.

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12.30 p.m.

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Mr. James D. PAUL: Mr. Deputy Speaker, in the case of housewives or persons who have young children, sometimes when they look at helping these young children consume certain local agricultural products, I know there are difficulties in doing so. Sir, in some cases, especially in today's age where there is the television and the influence of overseas tastes and diets being shown on television, you have a situation where children are more attracted to hot dogs and corn dogs, et cetera. There is also a situation where sometimes you do not have the kind of active promotion of locally-produced agricultural products on our televisions.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, this fact is not only in terms of what is shown on local television, we forget that when we look at the ordinary soap operas that come on television, we see that these people do not consume yams or breadfruits. Usually their snacks have to be fries which are not produced in Barbados. Therefore, in terms of the ordinary programmes that we watch, we do not have the local foods being shown as something that one would normally eat. Sir, children become influenced by things such as these, that is why we have a situation where any opportunity we can have to develop local products, we must take it. We must not underestimate the importance of this particular provision which seeks to assist those persons who are engaged in agro-processing, utilising locally-produced agricultural products, to get the kinds of equipment which would allow them to develop foods which, for instance, more of our consumers, both children and adults, can consume.

Sir, sometimes we take for granted the kinds of commodities which can be processed, which we can make even more attractive to the consumer, for example, our hot peppers. We sometimes do not even recognise that our hot peppers have a unique taste. As a matter of fact, one of the things that we do not even recognise is that when it comes to certain products in Europe, for instance, the reason certain European processed products have a unique taste is that the person producing that commodity claims that because that product is produced in a particular region of Europe, for example, in France or Italy, that is what gives them that unique taste. Sometimes we do not even recognise that in the case of Barbados, for instance,

Barbados is one of the places in the region where you can grow carrots. Sir, you would talk to housewives who would tell you that they can taste the difference between a locally-grown carrot and an imported one. What we do not understand is the fact that it is produced within Barbados environment sometimes gives products a certain taste profile which might not obtain from countries, for instance, when they are produced overseas.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, a typical example of this is our local poultry. Sir, the Democratic Labour Party has to be given credit for the development of our poultry industry. Sir, one of the things that we do not recognise is that if it were not for the foresight then, in terms of the Barbados Agricultural Development Corporation which provided a market to local poultry producers who, at the time, were now starting out their farms during in the 1960s, they would not have been able to get a market at least to sell their chickens. Sir, furthermore, when we look at the fact that our importers and retailers in Barbados are more oriented to the purchasing of foreign produced products... I want to say that we have to give the Democratic Labour Party credit for the foresight they undertook at that point in time, of creating the market environment in which our local poultry industry could have actually survived. I think we need to recognise that.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, going back to the question of the taste profile, what is more important is that you would find on a regular basis, even around Cropover time when we have visitors coming from the United States of America, that you have a situation where many of our visitors want to buy our local chicken to take back to the United States of America. The reason being they usually claim that our locally-produced poultry taste different from that produced in the United States of America. I do not know whether or not it is the sunshine we have, I do not know whether or not the case is due to the local ingredients we use as far as the production of the feed is concerned. I do not know whether or not it is the local water. The point is that when you speak to a lot of Barbadians who come from the States, they will tell you that the taste profile is different.

Sir, that even applies to our local pork. As a matter of fact, when we look at the 'Proper Pork' brand, there are some legitimacy in claiming that it taste different from that of imported pork. As a matter of fact, we sometimes do not appreciate the special taste profile which foods produced in Barbados have, and that sometimes is what makes it even more appealing to the visitor.

Sir, for example, in my constituency there is a place called "Eight Ball", in St. Stephen's Hill and I would want to invite as many Barbadians as possible to invite as many locals or tourists as possible to "Eight Ball". Sir, "Eight Ball" has a menu that features local dishes as much as

possible. Sir, not only that, if you go into Third Avenue Long Gap, there is a place operated by "Sharon." That young lady serves some excellent food. Sir, when you recognise that there are places in this country where you can eat, where most of the food served is locally grown...There is another one in Belfield, operated by "Brassy," which serves some of the best pudding and souse in this country on Saturdays.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to say that one of the things we do not appreciate in terms of local cuisine is the fact that the reason Barbados has been able to earn its reputation in terms of the kind of culinary delights that it offers tourists, is based on the fact that we are able to utilise locally-produced foods. Sir, I want to go even further than that, one of the things we do not recognise in terms of this particular piece of legislation, is this. What I have seen happening in Barbados today is that you have a number of persons, housewives and men, who, for instance, are not able to find employment in the traditional means. Some of these persons have taken a reasoned decision that they prefer to deal in the area of food, and have been able to develop the hot sauces of which we speak, the jellies and the jams.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I remember two years ago the Rural Development Commission did a course with some young persons, to show them how to utilise locally produced agricultural products to do a number of different things. They produced cassava flour and breadfruit flour among other things. When we think about cheesecakes, we talked about cheesecake made from breadfruit flour. These are things that were done by local Barbadians but using the normal home appliances.

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MR. J.D. PAUL: ...such as this, which would actually help to even further that kind of creativity that we need to see in terms of local Barbadians ss doing things in a very creative way. Sir, not only that but there is one thing we need to recognise in terms of the whole question of geographical indications. We need to recognise that the more of our products that we can actually utilise in terms of the production of local foods, we would be able to ensure that even as a destination in terms of tourism, we would be able to ensure that we continue to have that kind of uniqueness in terms of attracting the kind of tourists that we want to attract.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I also want to deal with some other issues. Sir, for instance we are very traditional in how we sell coconuts in Barbados. This is understandable because usually, we would like to know that when we have our Sunday dinner, we can go by the wayside to the

coconut vendor, who cuts the coconut, and we can have a fresh coconut. Sir, what we have not understood is that in the Asian territories, we have a situ where they are now discovering the process of actually bottling coconut water and giving it a longer shelf live. For instance, instead of cutting the coconut and consuming it immediately, we have a situation where the shelf life of coconut water is being expanded. Sir, not only that but one of the things it offers us is the ability to actually create another industry creating the opportunity for us to utilise the lands that we have around Barbados which we call rab lands. Sir, I do not believe in the concept of rab land. I believe that every single square foot of land in this country could be utilised by one plant or another. Sir, the production of coconut offers an opportunity to provide employment for people. Mr. Deputy Speaker, the point I am making is that here is an innovation again, which this particular amendment that we have to the legislation can actually facilitate.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, before I move off the topic of coconut, I also want to say something. I think that we have to commend the work of the Ministry of Agriculture in trying to ensure that we keep our borders free of plant pest. Sir, we forget the red palm mite which is on our borders in places such as Trinidad and Tobago and, Sir, in the same way that when we fought against the mealy bug and other pests that came into Barbados from our neighbours, we have to ensure that we give the veterinary Section of the Ministry of Agriculture, the appropriate authority in order to ensure that we protect our borders from pests. Sir, in that regard, we have to commend the personnel and the Minister within the Ministry of Agriculture in its efforts to try to ensure that we do not get that devastating pests that can actually lead to the demise of the coconut industry if it comes to Barbados.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I also want to go on to some other products like golden apple. Sir, we know that the golden apple juice is one of the most healthiest and nutritious juices that you can have in Barbados. One of the sad things that I must lament is the fact that we have a tendency for us in Barbados, as soon as we see a tree, to cut it down. Sir, that is unfortunate because sometimes we do not even appreciate the fact that a tree even during the time of a storm provide protection to building in a way that we do not know because trees act as natural wind breaks and we do not even recognise that.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, one of the problems we have in Barbados in terms of natural vegetation is that we do not actually appreciate the importance of natural vegetation in terms of ensuring that we protect our natural environment and, Sir, we need to recognise that.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I go back to the issue of the golden apple. Sir, the golden apple juice provides Barbados with a source of revenue which we are failing to take hold

of. I have a situation where constantly at the BAS people would come to me and ask me if I know anyone who has golden apple trees and we have a situation where poor Barbadians are encouraged to cut down the tree. Sir, I would want to encourage the Ministry of Agriculture that one of the things we need to do in this country is to teach those persons who have trees how they can take care of them. One of the things we need to recognise is that, from time to time, in the growth of a tree, it comes under stress from disease, pests or whatever and there are certain basic things we can do with a tree in order to ensure that we protect it. Sir, it is like the human body because very often we do not recognise that you do not just put a tree in the ground and let it grow, and do not look at for the fact that it might be infected with wood ants or some pest and there are things that you do to prevent these things. Sir, I would want to encourage the agronomist in the Ministry of Agriculture to ensure that when you see there is a difficulty with a tree, that you call the Ministry of Agriculture, ask them to come out and give the requisite advice. Sir, one of the thing that we do not appreciate in this country, especially during these hard economic times, when we know that people are looking at agriculture, people do not recognise the revenue earning potential that a tree offers to that particular person. When you see a golden apple tree, Sir, the sales that can take place from a golden apple tree is amazing.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have said that I do not like to look back but I remember when I lived at Lenox Avenue, Goodlands, Deacons Road, when Millar had the tamarind plant in Deacons Road, we had a tamarind tree in the yard and my mother would collect the tamarind to carry to Miller and sell them to help pay for something.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am making the point that, as a nation, we need to get back to basics. We need to recognise that the thing around us that we take for granted from time to time, that those things we should try to utilise in terms of supplementing our income during these hard economic times. Sir, the same creativity that our foreparents showed during these hard economic times, we need to utilise in terms of trying to ride our way through the current economic difficulties that we are facing. Sir, I am saying that agriculture in its many forms offer us a way of actually facing the challenges that we are faced with today. Sir, that is what we need to recognise.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to say this. We have a propensity to oversell the ability of the services sector to take Barbados out of its current economic difficulties. Sir, I want to say that we must be realistic. I do not know of any sound economy that can stand up on one foot. We have to be careful of those persons who would want to tell you that Barbados is a song and a dance, entertaining the tourists and building golf courses. Sir, I am saying that there are things that people can do that would not cost anything in

terms of investment that could help them through these economic times.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I also want to go on to another issue. Sir, when we look at the whole question of the developments, sometimes developments are happening in agriculture and we are not even aware. Again, this particular piece of legislation could help to bring out those things. We have a situation in Barbados now where we have an investment by a gentleman in St. Thomas. Sir, we talk about the pork industry but our pork industry under this administration is growing by leaps and bounds. Sir, I am sure the Honourable Member for St. Thomas would be interested in this.

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J.D. PAUL: We have a situation where we now have a full-scale laboratory in St. Thomas. We are moving away from the days when we had the travelling boar that used to go out servicing. We are taking away the choice from the boar. In other words, we are moving away from the situation where you had a boar going out to service the sow. We are becoming more technologically savvy. We are carefully selecting our best boars to produce the best semen to impregnate those sows. What we are seeing in Barbados too as a result of the use of artificial insemination, is a better quality pork being developed. These are the kinds of innovations that are happening within the agriculture sector, which sometimes many of us are not even aware of.

Sir, as the Honourable Minister of Tourism will tell you, he enjoys his pork. I am trying to say we need to applaud the agricultural sector for the kind of innovation they are making. These are the kinds of initiatives you can expect to see as we pass this particular amendment.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Honourable Member has five more minutes.

J.D. PAUL: Sir, I also want to look at the role of State institutions as far as furthering the work in the agricultural sector. I also want to say the same about Southern Meats.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, one of the mistakes which we made in terms of the abattoir services in this country is this. I thought we were, as a country, a bit naive when we thought that we could have operated a private sector abattoir in this country. I do not know of any place, even in the under developed world, where any country in the under developed world was able to operate a private sector abattoir and do it successfully. It has not been done.

One of the points that I have constantly made, we must view an abattoir in the context of the under developed world, as necessary as a hospital is to the maintenance of health within human beings. We need to recognise that. Therefore, it is a social good which Government must feel itself committed towards financing, because it is necessary to the health of our agricultural sector. I think that we made a mistake when we were listening to the supplication of the private sector that they could have done it, and it turned out that they could not have done it.

Sir, in respect of the abattoir that is located at Balls, Christ Church, I really think we need to give credit to the fact that the operation has continued to play a significant role with regard to development of the live stock industry. Again, I make the point that we need to continue to support these kinds of initiatives that are going to help the agricultural sector.

I also want to look at the issue of the BDMC. Very often, I think we need to recognise Government's foresight in terms of ensuring that the BDMC continues to play a critical role with regard to the development of the industry it stands. Sometimes we tend to forget that there are certain areas of activity, where Government has to continue to play a role if we are to see the orderly development of the sector.

Sir, there are some areas where the private sector will not go because it is not in their interest to go. It is not financially rewarding at that point in time. The chicken industry, if the Government did not take the steps that it took at the time to actually invest in the industry, the poultry industry would not have been where it is today. That is one of the things we need to recognise.

Even in the context of our present stage of development, it is necessary for Government sometimes to take a stakeholding interest in some initiatives. For instance, you would see the benefits of that in the long-term. When we look at the development of the agricultural industry sector in Brazil that is the kind of approach the Brazilian Government took. The Brazilian Government invested a whole set of money in terms of the building of pens for farmers, providing them with a lease transfer basis, and in some cases turning them over altogether. When we see the development there, it did not happen by accident.

Sir, in that regard, I want to compliment the Minister of Agriculture for proceeding with this particular amendment. I not only compliment him, I think we should do that. I also think that as far as this is concerned, this particular amendment offers an opportunity for the development of small business as it relates to the agricultural sector.

I also believe that this particular amendment would provide the spinoff, in terms of the creation of employment opportunities for Barbadians, who, even to this day we are encouraging to get into the area of business. Right now, we are putting the things in place to facilitate that. We want to see a response from entrepreneurs in this particular area that would encourage them to get into these new areas. Let us help to create that kind of diversity that we need in the agricultural sector. Let us help to create that new employment which we need. Let us help to create the kind of product that will bring diversity to our tourism product at the same time.

Sir, with those words, I thank you very much and good afternoon.

SUSPENSION

Hon. C. P. SINCKLER: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I beg to move that this House be now suspended until 2.15 p.m. this afternoon.

Hon. R.D. JONES: I beg to second that, Sir.

The question that the House be now suspended until 2.15 p.m. was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER suspended the House accordingly.

HA69 1.00 p.m. Sequence 18

Tuesday, July 06, 2010

House A69, Sequence 19, 2.18 p.m.

RESUMPTION

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: This Honourable House is resumed.

I am in receipt of the Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday, 29th June, 2010.

Hon. C.P. SINCKLER: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I beg to move that those Minutes be taken as read.

Hon. R.D. JONES: I beg to second that, Sir.

Hon. C.P. SINCKLER: Mr. Deputy Speaker, if I may on the Minutes, I think it was remiss of me in my capacity as Leader of Government Business in the House to have notified the House that Mr. Ariel Brathwaite, the Member of Parliament for the constituency of St. Philip South, has now joined the ranks of the frontbench as Attorney General and Minister of Home Affairs of Barbados. I think for the benefit of the media, he is not

acting Minister, he is the Minister of Home Affairs and the Attorney General of Barbados.

I just wanted to alert the House and as you can see, the seating arrangements have changed, consequent on that appointment.

Asides.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: If there are no corrections or observations, let those Minutes be confirmed.

At this stage, I want to congratulate my colleague to his elevation to the front bench and I hope that he will do of his best on the frontbench and, as his predecessor did, ensure that law and order is maintained throughout this country.

The Honourable Member for St. James Central.

House A69, Sequence 19, 14:20:14

Tuesday, July 06, 2010

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. James Central.

Hon. E. G. HUTSON: Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I rise to make a small contribution to this debate before this Honourable Chamber to amend a section of the Income Tax Act to make provision for the description of agricultural business to include the business of agro-processing.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Barbados has traditionally over the years been operating pretty much at a subsistence level with our agriculture. The production of agriculture over the years has been targeted towards the satisfaction of local demand with very little emphasis being placed on the export. Crops and so on that were produced were always of a seasonal nature with very little effort being made to ensure a consistency of supply over the course of a 12-month period.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, when we think in terms of fishing, there has been very little over the years in terms of developing our processing of fish to ensure that fish is in adequate supply throughout the calendar year and have the benefit of levelling out prices and so on. The same thing happened with our agricultural production. A lot of it has traditionally been pretty seasonable with these ups and down.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we heard the Honourable Member for St. James North this morning speak in terms of gluts in the production of or in the growing or reaping of our agricultural process. This have been a challenge for the

agricultural sector over the years. Efforts have been made in terms of the whole question of agro-production. These go as far back as the 70s efforts by Carmeta Fraser in terms of her "Food Comes First" programme and the efforts to develop the agro-processing section of our economy and produce goods like her breadfruit flour and sweet potato chips.

We heard the Honourable Member for St. James North in his eloquent style this morning speak about what needs to happen in agriculture and so on. When I sit and listen to Honourable Members on the other side sometimes I wonder whether they have been in Opposition for 20 years. It amazes me that there are all of these ideas as to what needs to be done with the agricultural sector. The fact of the matter is that agriculture has been neglected by the Barbados Labour Party in Government for 14 years, that is the bottom line, so whatever is going to be said this afternoon by Honourable Members of that side we have to put it in its proper perspective and recognise that their agricultural programme was either non-existence or it was a failed programme. That is one of the reasons why after 11 years we are having to make this amendment this morning to that particular initiative of 1999 because of the lack of attention that was given to the agricultural sector over the years.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, you know that I am not one to spend a lot of time dealing with the Barbados Labour Party, I prefer to speak to and to deal with the initiatives of the Democratic Labour Party going forward and other matters I believe we should be addressing.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, when I think in terms of this agro-processing initiative, this is a challenge that I am glad to see that the current Minister of Agriculture is making efforts to develop and to bring back on stream because it is the direction that we have to go as we try to develop our agricultural industry.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is incumbent on those persons who are engaged in the sector to embrace current technologies that have been around for some time. I am thinking in terms of your hydroponic and your greenhouse initiatives. A lot of these initiatives are initiatives or techniques that would aid in the yield of your agricultural produce. The greenhouse initiative are things that do not...

As I said at the beginning, Barbados is an area of limited space and there is great demand on that limited space for housing, for agriculture, for entertainment in terms of sports tourism, things like golfing and horse racing, and also for commercial demand so we need to be able to utilise that space that we have and those areas that we have allocated to agriculture to get maximum production out of those areas.

I think that the Ministry of Agriculture needs to be at the forefront of the initiatives as far as greenhouses and so on are concerned and should encourage the small farmers in this country to embrace the technology and have those greenhouses constructed and positioned to increase their output.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, when we think in terms of our manufacturing sector, particularly the medium size and smaller businesses, a lot of the things that we manufacture are based on agricultural production. When we think in terms of the juices, the jams, the jellies and those sort of things that are made by many businesses in Barbados, they are all part of the products that are produced in the agricultural sector and therefore the opportunity for further expansion of those businesses in terms of getting raw material is dependent upon and is a function of what we do in terms of our increase yield and our increase production within the manufacturing sector. Over the years, when we walk through Barbados we have seen the Bajan cherry. Some time back when the other side was in Government, there was an initiative to have a programme, I think it was in the Indian Ground area and also one in Haggatts, where we produce our Bajan cherries for processing purposes to supply the processing functions.

House A69 Sequence 20

2.30 p.m.

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Hon. E. GEORGE HUTSON: Mr. Deputy Speaker, there was an initiative to have a programme in the Indian Ground and Haggatts areas, where we could produce our Bajan cherries to supply the processing function. Sir, now if you were to walk into those areas, you would see that the grass is as tall as the cherry trees. Sir, those things have been pretty much abandoned because of lack of support by the Government of the time, in terms of encouraging and developing that agro-processing function.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we need to be looking in that direction. As I said, the small businesses need to be looking to help develop and support the local farmers. There needs to be that initiative developed and have that working together to develop their own business. Sir, there is a direct synergy between the two functions, the agricultural production and the increase in agricultural production which we need to pursue, and getting our manufacturers of condiments and so on to be able to use those locally produced foods and herbs, including onions and the like.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, on the question of farming, I had the opportunity about six weeks ago to visit Barnwell Farms in the constituency of St. Thomas and so I am pretty certain that the Honourable Member for St. Thomas would

be very familiar with that farm in Rock Hall. Sir, this is a pig farm where, being able to access Government funding and Government support, the owners have been able embrace a lot of the new and current methods of animal husbandry in the development of that particular farm.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, although there are several initiatives that, over the years, have been articulated and passed within this Honourable Chamber to support the farmers, some of the challenges facing farmers have been accessing that funding. Sir, with respect to that particular farm, I know the grants that had been applied for had taken so long to go through the bureaucracy of the system, that instead the businessman was able to go ahead and advance the development by the reinvesting of monies earned on the farm, as well as his own capital from private sources, in the development of that particular farm. Sir, that is now one of the major farms in terms of pig production on our island.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, as a Government we are looking at the way the various initiatives and funds allocated to the agricultural sectors are used. We are making sure that those funds are passed through the system quickly and without much bureaucracy. I think that is one of the responsibilities we will have to ensure, that the technical people within the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development would ensure that bureaucracy is cut to a minimum. This would support the farmers and get the production going in the same way that Barnwell Farm has been able to develop.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, as I said before, farmers need to be able to embrace the new technologies and to engage in documenting of records. Sir, when you visit that farm, you would see that the record-keeping is in such detail that we are able to monitor a piglet from birth, through its varying developing cycles, to the point where it is either ready for slaughter or whether it has been picked for breeding purposes. Therefore, to be sure that you are carrying your quality stock into the breeding programme, you need to be able to monitor that particular piglet from birth, right up, watching for things such as the rate of growth. You need to be watching for other things, for example, if it is a boar, you need to be recording the sperm count to see if it would be a good sire. Likewise, if it is a sow, you need to make sure that the nipples, et cetera, are the maximum that it can have. These things impact on the ability of the breeding sow to be able to get proper yields.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, at that farm there are adequate and detailed records being kept. This is the sort of level that we need to be able to take our farmers, where they can understand the importance of documenting the records of their particular product, be it pig husbandry or fruit farming. These are applications of the current technology which has been around a long time. We have to encourage the technical people at the Ministry of Agriculture and

Rural Development need to be able to encourage our farmers to keep that record and to be able to develop their businesses. Sir, by extension, manufacturers needs to be able to do similar things with their manufacturing companies. One of the challenges I think that we face in Barbados with a lot of our small manufacturers is that people are not prepared to take the next step with their production, they are comfortable in their little corporation where one person only is responsible for production, administrative and sale function. Sir, we need to encourage our smaller businesses to be more outward-looking. We need to be encouraging them to look at the application of business techniques, where you would have an element of specialisation so that if your area of expertise is within the administrative function, then you can employ or out-source the marketing function. You can do the same thing with production. Sir, in this day and age as a company gets bigger, it is impossible for one person only to effectively control and manage a particular area.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we want to be able to help our small businesses and that, as you know, is one of the thrust of this Government in terms of developing our young entrepreneurs and encouraging them to be able to develop their business.

2.40 p.m.

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Hon. E. G. HUTSON: ...in terms of developing our entrepreneurs, and encouraging our young entrepreneurs to be able to develop their businesses. I know that the Honourable Member for Christ Church West, the Minister of Economic Affairs, Trade Industry and Commerce, has been pushing that particular point of view in terms of the assistance that we need to be able to give to our small entrepreneurs and the development of that sector. There is that big linkage and need for the two sectors to be able to work closely together in terms of what they are doing.

Mr. Speaker, certainly at the airport we have tried to encourage and create opportunities for some of our smaller manufacturers and so on to have dedicated outlets where they could sell their produce directly to persons who are traveling through the airport facility. We have been speaking to the cruise ships in terms of the need for them to purchase provisions more from within Barbados and some of the other islands because when we speak to the cruise ship we try to speak as far as possible from a regional standpoint so that we are encouraging the development of our brothers and sisters in the Leeward Islands and so on. We have been encouraging our cruise ship stakeholders to purchase more provisions from Barbados from the manufacturers. I know they are doing quite a bit with the chicken breast right now and we are trying to get them to purchase more of the rums, seasonings and different

products that we are producing here in Barbados, our beverages, fruit juices and so on. Sir, those are some of the initiatives that we about within the Ministry of International Transport as we try to support the work being done in the other ministries.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, there is also the whole question of research and development that is required within our agricultural sector going forward in terms of the research on the various herbs and so on that we produce in Barbados, the properties of those herbs and trying to get that particular development and initiative off the ground and working and, I know the University of the West Indies (UWI) has been trying to plan and do a bit in that area, so hopefully we should be seeing the benefits of that in the not too distant future.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, it would be remiss of me in doing this presentation not to also mention in respect of agriculture that we need to address the whole issue of stray animals and so on, that are doing a lot of damage particularly to our smaller farmers. Certainly, I have some challenges within my own constituency in Prospects and back in the Trents area where there are stray animals that will get into the gardens of people that will also create a sort of a security issue because you know how it is with the ladies. You do not want to be coming home at night and encounter a horse in the middle of the road or a sow in the middle of the road and, Sir, these are some of the challenges.

Of course, the ladies would refuse to pass that road and then it becomes a problem. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have had on a number of occasions to report these things to the Ministry.

Asides.

Hon. E. G. HUTSON: Yes, they would attack your car too, especially, given the colour of your vehicles and the places you would frequent, so you would have those challenges particularly in the area. Sir, we have to address that question of stray animals.

Mr. Speaker, I believe, if my memory serves me right that legislation in respect of the control of stray animals is currently being reviewed within the Office of the Attorney-General to address that particular issue.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Government is moving ahead. You have heard the Acting PM, in his presentation this morning speak about the whole question of praedial larceny and matters surrounding that particular issue with the farmers. I do not have any complaints from any of my constituents in respect of that so, obviously, it is not a major problem for us in St. James Central, to the best of my knowledge but I know it is a serious problem within the

farming area Gibbon Bog in Christ Church and a few other areas in Barbados. Sir, that is a serious issue that is confronting farmers and the Government.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, with those comments, again, I want to support the amendments to the Income Tax Act in respect of the whole question of the agro processing industry in Barbados.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I thank you.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. Philip North.

Hon. M.A. LASHLEY: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I rise to make a brief presentation on this Bill to amend the Income Tax Act, Cap. 63. The primary purpose of the amendment is to make provision for rebate to the person who carries on agricultural business, including agro processing business and, of course, where that person imports machinery into Barbados to be use exclusively in that business.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, it has been reflected so far in the record of this House that this amendment is an outstanding amendment, for some 11 years and so, today, we come here to put the icing on the case because, from my understanding, the farmers have been receiving incentives on the proposed amendment at a particular time.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to congratulate the Ministry of Agriculture for bringing back the vibrancy, the enthusiasm and at least bringing agriculture back on the front burner of the programme of the Government. Indeed, we must all congratulate the Ministry of Agriculture for his sterling work and contribution thus far.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we have seen the Minister revitalised the important movement of the 4-H Movement and, indeed, I must say that the fact that he has focused on the 4-H Movement, he is also focusing on this country's youth and the future of agriculture in this country.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I must also congratulate him because, under his watch...

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Hon. M.A. LASHLEY: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I must also congratulate him because under his watch he has presided over increases in crop production. In fact, when we look at the statistics in 2009, in terms of crop production, the highest levels of increases during the year was reported for the root crop sub sector, a 69 per cent increase in overall projection. Indeed we must congratulate

the Minister of Agriculture as he continues his sterling work.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, further to that, it is also evident that yam production increased significantly, onion production increased by 88 per cent; casava and sweet potato increased by 48 per cent and 36 per cent respectively. Of course, there were also increases in vegetable production and when we look at the live stock production, that sector recorded an overall growth of 2 per cent.

Sir, there are some issues in the agricultural sector that we have to look at. The Acting Prime Minister this morning spoke at length to a number of issues. One of the burning issues is the issue of praedial larceny. Time and time again there has been a lot of discussion about how we will treat this problem of praedial larceny. Do we by way of public education, or do we by way of legislation try to treat to this issue of praedial larceny.

Only recently in Sandford, St. Philip, I know there was an attack. I speak, not going into any evidence, but I speak barely to the facts that allegedly a farmer was attacked and of course that farmer is still hospitalised. I recognised recently that there was a reward in the paper placed by someone or the family, to any persons who would have information that would lead to the apprehension of the suspect. My heart goes out to the family. I wish him a speedy recovery and I wish his family all the best.

Sir, the question is, I would make this call that we increase the penalty for praedial larceny, particularly the person who commits the offence and also the person who aid and abets the offence. Mr. Deputy Speaker, you practice in the law courts over time and in many of these cases, either the presiding judicial officer would say to the court, it is the receiver that keeps the person who commits the act in business. So we must look at dealing with the receiver with stiffer penalties. I mean that person who collects, knowing, having full knowledge that the particular person committed an illegal act to gain possession of the goods.

Sir, a farmer who works day in and day out, as we would say, takes the hot sun, takes the rain, forked during the day and during the night, hoping that at the end of the day he can take those crops to a legitimate person who is involved in agriculture to get his profits so that he can continue his business, but someone, as we have said in here today, in the dark or the dead of the night can come up with some plan, knowing full well that there is an outlet out there. I am asking how can we do it through public education? If we increase or we place stiffer fines on the receiver and the person who commits the acts, I believe it

would act as a deterrent to persons who have any idea of committing acts of that nature.

Sir, my heart goes out to those farmers who have suffered at the hands of those perpetrators. Certainly, we must look at how we are going to police it. I believe we should have a special unit within the Royal Barbados Police Force, to deal with it specifically and to target those individuals who commit those acts and also the receivers. The receivers are just as guilty as the person who commits the act.

Sir, when I look at the land for the landless programme - I have mentioned to the Minister of Agriculture time and time again, here is someone, who has been given land, who makes an investment, sometimes putting all their life savings into the programme, but the lease tells him that he cannot put a dwelling house at the said land. I believe that if you are asking me to invest my savings in a business, I should be given the opportunity to at least place some sort of house, whether it is a one-bedroom or two-bedroom on that property so that I can employ someone as a security officer, or whatever, or that I can stay during the night on that land and watch my investment. I believe we should go back to that arrangement, look at the lease and make the necessary amendment to allow the farmer to build on the land, but subject him to a 10-year or 20-year lease or whatever, that would be palatable to both the landlord and also the farmer who is in possession of the land at the particular time.

Of course, the other issue with the landless programme at River. The farmers at River, most of them suffer from water shortage. I see them tracking up and down with the water cart. I know that there is some attempt, and I know that the Ministry both the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry responsible for the Barbados Water Authority are not sitting down. I know they are putting things in place to ensure that the farmers at a River, get adequate water supply to their farms at River, St. Philip.

Again, I would support and encourage the Minister of Agriculture for his attempt, his zeal and enthusiasm in bringing initiatives and programmes to assist those farmers in the Land for the Landless Programme.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, again I want to congratulate the Minister of Agriculture for implementing the Budgetary Proposal by the substantive Prime Minister when he introduced open markets, which was geared at assisting those farmers and vendors who had no outlet. Also assisting persons in the countryside who want to increase their income, given the fact that this is an economic recession, and they have an outlet to gain some sort of income in order to send their children to school, and to enhance the survival of their family.

HA69 15.00 p.m. Sequence 23

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House A69, Sequence 24, 3.00 p.m.

Hon. M.A. LASHLEY: I must say I know that the first attempt was well organised. They had farmers and vendors and there was a response and I know that the Minister of Agriculture is going back to the drawing board. Indeed, I know very well that he had a successful market at Hilda Skeen in St. Philip, through the rural development, when he was responsible for that Ministry.

Asides.

Hon. M.A. LASHLEY: I know that the Minister is a man full of ideas and I know that recently, he came with a proposal and a plan to look at redeveloping those same markets. It was only recently at a seminar that the Honourable Prime Minister requested that we look, not only at lands in the open spaces in the St. Michael's area but open spaces owned by the Crown that are not suitable for housing but open spaces in the heart of commercial areas that we can use those same farmers again to put people into work, also to allow persons who are not working to gain a dollar and to work for an honest living.

Sir, that is the proposal that is coming again. I know that the defacto Member for St. Peter will indeed introduce and implement those programmes.

Certainly, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I will speak passionately about agriculture because, of course, coming from that background, the Honourable Member for St. James South, he is not here in his seat, but we came up in the Bayfield area fishing village. His father was a boat owner. My father was a boat owner. His father was a fisherman. My father was a part time fisherman and carpenter. I was a part time fisherman so there is a passion in me, in relation to agriculture. I recognise that in the Bayfield area, you had fishermen down there whom actually sent to school their children out of fishing. When the fishing season was over, they then went and dug sea eggs, legally though, and they were able to sustain their family by being in the fishing industry.

They passed on fishing to younger generations and I know youngsters who own boats and are fishing. They are able to make money to build houses, buy land, send to school their children and uplift themselves. I want to congratulate those hardworking members of the society, the fisherfolk, not only those in Bayfield but those in Oistins, Christ Church, the City, St. James and St. George, although we do not have any sea in St. George, but, of course, we know that some come from St. George, but the Honourable

Member for St. George North is a fisherman but the whole of Barbados.

I forgot to mention the Honourable Member for St. Thomas that, of course, we have fishermen from St. Thomas too. In fact, the first fisher woman is my family from the same Bayfield in St. Philip.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I believe that this Government is on the right track with agriculture and the agricultural industry, Sir, and the fact that you build linkages, the fact that this Government is now establishing an agricultural school, that speaks volumes.

Asides.

Hon. M.A. LASHLEY: Years ago, this country shunted aside agriculture as a subject as youngsters did not aspire to go into the agricultural sector. The traditional thing was that you go to school and you will become a doctor or lawyer but now with this agriculture school, this can now build a future for young persons, the young generation that wants to be involved and have a future in agricultural industry.

Sir, for me I want to congratulate the Minister of Education and the Minister of Agriculture for their visionary policies because they worked steadfastly and they work in a swift manner in terms of asking the Ministry of Housing and Lands to acquire the land and put a lease in place. I know that the infrastructure work has started for the proposed school and, Mr. Deputy Speaker I believe that this is a historic occasion in Barbados' Development of the agricultural industry. This Government through the able leadership of the Honourable Member for St. John, through the able leadership of the Minister of Education and the able leadership of the defacto Member for St. Peter, they have now pull together a policy that you can go to a School of Agriculture in Barbados. This is the reality, an agricultural school, I hope in St. Lucy.

The Minister of Education was very modest this morning but I believe that is a major achievement for this Government because we must highlight it and we must go now to the primary schools and do some public education on this matter and tell those primary school students that there is a future in agriculture. There is now an agricultural school and they now could move at full steam ahead in their studies in agriculture.

Asides.

Hon. M.A. LASHLEY: Mr. Speaker, I believe respectfully, also the incentives that the Honourable Member for St. John mentioned in his budgetary proposals, the Ministry of Agriculture should do a public education and a public relations programme because there are

numerous initiatives mentioned by this Government that was put in place and that the farmers are benefitting from those initiatives. We need to do some PR, and some public education so that more farmers could come to the Ministry of Agriculture and access those initiatives.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I said that I would give a very brief presentation to this matter because I fully support this matter. Indeed, I want to reiterate the fact that I am calling for stiffer penalties for those who commit offences under the Predial larceny Act. We must punish those offenders. We must punish the receivers and we must punish the perpetrators of the Act so that those farmers can be able to enjoy their investment in agriculture and they can move forward and that the industry can now be placed on a platform, where all will enjoy the fruits and also enjoy the profits of their investment.

I thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. George North.

Mr. G.W. PAYNE: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I rise in this debate to lend my support to this Amendment to look at the incentives that were given since 1998. Of course, Mr. Deputy Speaker, one can say that even though these initiatives were debated by the budgetary measures of 1998, even though they were not implemented by law, many farmers received their incentives. One has to note and the public must be educated by the fact that once the Minister of Finance delivers his Budgetary Proposals, they become law even though the enabling Legislation is not passed.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. Philip North.

Hon. M.A. LASHLEY: Mr. Deputy Speaker, on a point of order. Any proposal in a Budgetary Proposal will only take effect, if there is some Legislative instrument or amendment to bring it into force. In fact, it must gather the force of law first, before it is accepted as a proposal.

Mr. G.W. PAYNE: Mr. Deputy Speaker the Honourable Member for St. Philip North must know that when the Minister of Finance delivers the Budgetary Proposals in Parliament that they come into law. There are certain provisions that must come back to Parliament.

House A69, Sequence 24, 15:10:14

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Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Honourable Member for St. Philip North must know that when the Minister of Finance delivers the budgetary

proposals in Parliament that there are certain provisions that must come back to Parliament in this legislative form. The Honourable Member for Christ Church East Central did say this morning that some of these incentives were passed on to the farmers in the agro-industry.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is important for us therefore to say that both governments since 1966 have spent tremendous efforts, policies and programmes to promote agriculture as a leading sector in this country. Surely, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we have noticed a move away from the mono-culture of the 1950s and 1960s when Barbados could have boast of more than 16 sugar factories at the time. After this date, we notice non-sugar agriculture playing a vital role. In fact, there was a time when we produce more than 100 000 tonnes of sugar annually. Today, we are producing less than 38 000 tonnes of sugar. Agriculture, as far as sugar production is concerned, has declined by more than 50 per cent from 1950/1960 so that today all of the land that was producing sugar is now into non-sugar agriculture or into housing and therefore those small farmers that depended on sugar production are now either into sheep farming or pig farming.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, one has seen a departure from sugar production into small scale production. In my constituency, it is noted that there has been an increased in pig production over the past 20 years. We have farmers in my constituency who are producing more than 50 pigs at any one time because there is a demand for pork. We have seen too that there is a demand for the black belly lamb so that the demand for non-sugar agriculture continues.

Two years ago, the Government came in here and boast that they were spending a lot of money in the Constituency Councils, at that time I think they were spending \$5 million, it is in the records of this House, and in the camps and whatever and I told the Government that more money was being spent in the Constituency Councils and the camps than what was being given to the farming community.

Hon. C. P. SINCKLER: On a point of order. I think the Honourable Member is either misleading himself or misleading the House but either way I think he is misleading. When we speak about farmers, we speak about the totality of the farming community in Barbados not only the small farmers but the medium size and the larger farmers. The farming community receives in excess of \$30 million, so for the Honourable Member to suggest that the money allocated, not spent, to the Constituency Councils and the summer camps is more than what is given to farmers in Barbados is really doing a disservice to this House. The Honourable Member really should just move on from there.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Two years ago in a budgetary proposal, I think it was 2008, I made the point that the money allocated on a budgetary line to the farming community was less than \$1 million.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is important for us to note, if the Government is now boasting about agriculture, that it was that side which boasted a couple years ago that they did not want to see a blade of sugar cane growing in this country. Is that not what they were saying? It was that side, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I do not remember who said it. The Democratic Labour Party came...

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Christ Church East.

Hon. R. D. JONES: On a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the House. The history of the Democratic Labour Party has surely aptly demonstrated our commitment to agriculture. For the Honourable Member to try to interpret a notion of a cane blade speech when he cannot interpret it is really out of hand and misleading the House.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Deputy Speaker, it needs no explanation. You go to the people at Ellerton and you said to the people at Ellerton, I hope one day that not a grain of sugar cane would be grown in Barbados. What explanation that is? There is no need for an explanation of that. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am saying that the Democratic Labour Party killed agriculture in this country.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. Michael North West.

Hon. C. P. SINCKLER: On a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the House. First of all, he cannot produce any evidence that was ever said. Secondly, cane is not grown in grains. A grain of sugar cane!

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Speaker, we know that the Honourable Member lives in St. Michael and he does not understand sugar. It is a blade not a grain. That was said several years ago. Mr. Deputy Speaker, whether or not it was said several years ago, it is now in the realm of all Barbadians that it was said by the Democratic Labour Party and so said so done.

Over the years the Democratic Labour Party never paid much attention to agriculture. I am glad to see, now that it is recessionary times, that the Government has now changed their heart and their tune. Honourable Members have said that the new Minister is enthusiastic and energetic about the agricultural sector and we are happy because we expect the Government to put more money in the bread basket of St. George, in places like Groves that

was calling out for water for years and the sinking of wells. We expect the farmers of Groves to get some water. We expect the farming community in St. George to get some of the incentives that the Government is saying that they are giving. I am calling on the farming community of St. George to go down to the Ministry of Agriculture and line up and ask for the incentives and tell them to not only put it on paper that they want to see it in practice.

I am saying to you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that many of these incentives that were given over the years were given on paper but most of the time when you go to the Ministry of Agriculture the implementation process seemed to take for years and it is non-existent. Many farmers have cried out over the years.

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Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Deputy Speaker, for many years farmers have been crying out, and I want Government to understand that agriculture did not start in 2008.

Asides.

Hon. E. GEORGE HUTSON: Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Honourable Member is misleading this House and for sure he is also misleading himself. The Honourable Member said that this incentive has been in place for 10 years, yet the Honourable Member is asking the people of St. George to go line up. Sir, to do what? Sir, the Honourable Member needs to be consistent.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Deputy Speaker, this Government is saying that so much incentive is now being given. Sir, I am saying that those persons who are growing cotton or rearing pigs or sheep, those persons who are doing all of this growing in the agricultural sector, should now go to the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development and line up and ask for their incentives because the Minister said there is so much incentives that are being given there. Sir, if these incentives are there, those incentives need to be passed onto the people.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want this Government to understand that these are not new incentives, throughout time incentives have been given in the agricultural sector. There was a time when Extension Officers would go around and help farmers. I am not sure that these Extension Officers are now doing the job they are supposed to be doing. Mr. Deputy Speaker, if you go through many parts of Barbados, you would see a number of trees such as banana, guava and fruits trees that are affected by blights,

yet you cannot find an Extension Officer. Sir, I am saying that the work that is to be done by the technocrats needs to be put in place. I am also saying that people need to go to work to do their job.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, this Government comes here and says what a fine job it is doing but the reality is that there is still a lot of work out there to be done. Sir, there is still a lot of work out there to be done to small farmers across the length and breadth of this country who are suffering. There are many small farmers rearing pigs, who are still selling those pigs at the same prices at which pigs were sold 20 years ago.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the point I want to make is that there is a marginal profit in agriculture and so many farmers do not benefit by large profits therefore the Praedial Larceny Act passed in 2000 needs to be implemented. Sir, many farmers are suffering tremendously because of praedial larceny, which was explained through this Honourable House today. Small farmers across Barbados are losing their pigs, sheep and cows in large numbers but they cannot go to the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development to get replacements.

Can you imagine a person losing all four pigs? Can he or she go to Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development and say that he or she has lost their four pigs or that they have lost all of their turkeys, onions or cassava? Can you imagine, in today's society, where a person has lost everything, they do not have any insurance nor can they get any replacement, yet Government comes here and says they are "O so good for the farming community." If you would want to improve the agricultural sector of this country, Government must do like what is happening in North America. I have preached this all the time, that you need to put money into agriculture, although it is money that you cannot get back.

When the World Trade Organisation first introduced their measures back in 2000, I argued then that Canada and North America were providing direct subsidies to the farming community and therefore farmers were able to sell their produce at low prices but the World Trade Organisation came into existence and said there must be no subsidies for the farming community. Sir, most Third World countries that followed those dictates realised that they were too late and that the farming community in most developed countries still received direct subsidies. Sir, that is why agricultural produce could be sold so cheaply and produced so rapidly because of the fact that farmers get direct subsidies, they get subsidies in terms of providing money to provide employment. For example, you would find a farmer with 25 or more acres of land would get three workers per 25 acres, which would be paid for by State, to help to provide employment for those persons in society.

What we are saying is that if Government wants to help the farming community, Government must provide direct aid to those persons who are suffering. Government must provide direct aid to those persons who can provide the evidence that they have lost their crops, that they have lost all of their sheep, pigs, goats, et cetera, because of praedial larceny. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to say that some farmer out there should take the Government to court because the measures were introduced. I am not saying that it should be this party or that party but measures were introduced. Sir, for example, if I as a farmer were to lose all of my sheep, which cannot be replaced, who would be responsible? It must be Government's responsibility. Sir, security is Government's responsibility.

Asides.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Honourable Member for St. Philip North came here and pleaded an apology because one of his farmers has suffered a tremendous loss. Sir, the Honourable Member did not argue that the man who has put his lifetime savings into his farm, who has suffered tremendously at the hands of criminals, is also in hospital fighting for his life. Sir, the Government should bear that cost because the Government must be responsible for the security of the farming community. When Government does this, you can then say that Government is moving towards providing help in the farming community.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Honourable Senator has five minutes more in which to conclude.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am of the view that not only do we need to look at praedial larceny as a big issue in Barbados, I think too it is the marketing of produce that is important. You can sell all your coconuts along the highway, you can pick an old man's coconut and sell them at 1 000 per cent profit because of the fact that you would have not paid anything for them. The old man does not make any profit because he cannot follow the criminals but criminals make a lot of money in vending.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to say to this Government, marketing is a big thing. Again, I am sure that some of them have done the historical perspective to know that marketing has always been a big thing for black people, even in the days of slavery. Sir, even in the days of slavery, black people had a market day set aside that was honoured by the whites. Sir, throughout the history of Barbados, a market day was set aside. There was always a market at Eagle Hall and in Bridgetown. Sir, people always had market days.

Asides.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Deputy Speaker, it has nothing to do with the State, the State should never intervene in setting aside a market day. Why should the State get involved? The State wants to control too many things. The State should only provide the market facilities and allow market forces to take its toll but the Government should not become involved in markets, the market day was set aside through our cultural perspective. It has nothing to do with any Government. Whether or not the Government sets aside a market day, people are still going to sell their produce; people will always be involved in vending.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am saying that we need to be clear on agriculture, there is room for agriculture, especially in recessionary times. In recessionary times, people must eat, drink and wear clothes and therefore the Government needs to divert all attention at this time.

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MR. G.A. CLARKE: Sir, people must eat, people must drink, people must wear clothes and, therefore, the Government needs to divert all attention at this time...

Asides.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: The Government must not come in here and pretend that all is well... Sir, we sympathise with the Government because there are recessionary times throughout the world but throughout the world persons are putting measures in place to help the agriculture sector because people must eat. Therefore, if you know the agriculture sector must produce, you must put direct subsidies to help them at this time. Sir, that is the point I want to make that we need to produce food but, at the same time, the farming community must buy manures, fertilizers, they must pay workers and they must plough the field and the cost of these things have gone up over time. Therefore, I am calling on the Government to help provide the direct subsidies that exist in North America to the farming community and let justice prevail. Sir, at the same time, Government must recognise that praedial larceny is a fact. I am not sure that policing will help but those persons who can prove that they have lost all their life savings because of praedial larceny, the Government should help provide that help to those people.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am obliged to you.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. George South.

DR. the Hon. E.R. BYER-SUCKOO: Mr. Deputy Speaker, thank you very much for allowing me this

opportunity to come in on this debate this afternoon. I just have a few comments that I want to add to this debate. It is relatively rare but a good opportunity to have this discussion on the developments around agriculture and on the challenges that agriculture has been facing so far.

Sir, it was made mention of earlier and we have seen that in Barbados, for example, our sugar cane industry has evolved from a sugar industry to a sugar cane industry. We have seen that evolution based on market need, based on other forces and based on the technology that is available to us so we know that in Barbados we are moving away from a primarily sugar production to where we have seen a sugar cane industry and using the byproducts of the sugar cane, other than the sugar, for fuel and so on. We need to tap into that if we are to see the development of agriculture in this country. Sir, it is acknowledged by farmers, big or small that it is hard to find workers to work in agriculture. Sir, even overseas where Barbadians would have gone overseas on the farm labour programme, we understand that we are seeing less and less Barbadians who are interested in working in the Farm Labour Programme in Canada and, certainly, it is almost null and void now in the H2A Programme in the United States of America. Sir, Barbadians are not so keen to leave the comfort of their homes and go overseas to work in agriculture and even less so in Barbados. It is hard to find local persons who are interested in working in the agricultural area.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Honourable Member for St. James North mentioned this morning that Barbadians are not so keen on working in the fields but are making a business out of agriculture in developing products that may not be directly from the soil but in the processing of these foods and dealing with the byproducts of some of our crops.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we have heard time and time again in this Honourable Chamber and elsewhere discussions on the demise of agriculture as related directly to how much land is in agricultural use. Sir, as an island of just 166 square miles, we know that land is limited but I daresay that with all the technology that is available to us today, the yield of agriculture, the size of our agricultural exports of our agricultural business does not necessarily need to be directly related to how much land we have in agriculture. The technology is there that agriculture as well as agro-business, other businesses coming out of that need not be just directly related to how much land we have in agriculture. Sir, that is important and, certainly coming from St. George, the bread basket of the country, it is important that we realise that. We are very concerned in St. George when we see tracks of land taken out of agriculture and put into housing but thankfully, the policy of this Government is just to use the margins, the ribbons, wherever possible for housing and not taking prime, arable land and putting it into housing.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we cannot do away with agriculture. Sir, no country should do away with agriculture and we need to continue planning. I commend the Ministry of Agriculture for the strides that he has made so far in his tenure and the plans that he has in place going forward.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the role of the Ministry of Agriculture first has to be focused around food security and foremost and in today's economy where we are looking at unemployment, there must be the consideration of job creation as we look at the development of agriculture... (15:37)

(15:37) SUSPENSION

HON. C.P. SINCKLER: Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that this House be suspended for five minutes.

Hon. J. STUART: I beg to second that.

The question that the House be suspended for five minutes was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. Speaker suspended the House accordingly.

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Tuesday, July 6, 2010

RESUMPTION

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: This Honourable House is resumed. The Honourable Member for St. George South.

Hon. Dr. E.R. BYER-SUCKOO: Mr. Deputy Speaker, we were on the issue of agriculture as we looked at the incentives and the development of agriculture. I was making the point that if we are to see the development of agriculture, we have to focus not only on food security, but also on the area of job creation and the development of enterprise. We have noted that Barbadians and in particular young Barbadians are no longer keen to be field hands, but they want to actually own their own enterprise and that can even include areas of agriculture. Certainly, in the area of food security, we seem to be on our way to securing that goal as we have heard from the Ministry of Agriculture that they have increased significantly their production of certain crops, yams, onions, casava and sweet potatoes have increased significantly. Sir, vegetable production increased by 12 per cent. These are figures which we have for the year 2009. Mutton, milk and egg production also increased...

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House A69, Sequence 29, 3.50 p.m.

Dr. Hon. E.R. BYER-SUCKOO: The statistics for 2009 also indicate that mutton, milk and egg production also increased by 5 per cent in 2009 so we are moving towards food security. In terms of the sustainable development of agriculture, we have to look at job creation. We have to look at human resource development as well, developing those skills that are needed for agriculture.

We know that agro business is not only about big business. Indeed, it has a lot of potential for small businesses and for feeding families, in cottage industries, for women to find themselves employed and even for young people to gain employment, even small businesses. We have seen where seeds and other by products of the crops can be used in making particular jewelry. Shells and so on from the sea can be harvested also and used in making jewelry. We know of many, in particular women, and some of our young people who are making earrings and chains and so on, then on the food side, the seasonings, the jams, and the creativity that we see coming out with the jams and the packaging of the jams and the different flavours, the spices that are being marketed also. Sir, I know there are a couple of people here, one in particular coming to mind, developing flavoured butters, flavoured butters you can buy, garlic butter, peppered butter, parsley butter or whatever. These are the creativity of our people and it can be expressed through agro business.

In the various flours, we heard of the casava flour, the breadfruit flour and so on. The juices and various confectionaries that can also be prepared from our products. We know of our tamarin and gooseberry but there are a variety of things that can be done. There are wines being made and I have seen wines being made of just about anything that you can put your hands on. I have wines being bottled nicely and they can also be marketed and create, if not big businesses but create an opportunity for a family to be able to sustain itself, to be able to send children to school, these small businesses. Sir, this is where we need to help our young people and our women to develop the skills, not only for agriculture but for developing the business around the agriculture.

There is a mindset that we need to address with our young people. They need to view agriculture and, not only the young people but their parents and their teachers also need to change their mind set to agriculture so that they view agriculture differently. Agriculture should not be viewed as a fallback position, if you did not do well in school, then you are going to have to end up working in somebody's field. We should really redefine agriculture and redefine the potential for agriculture, and let our school system, our universities address the system around agriculture. The university should be offering degrees, not

only in the business areas but in the new technology that is emerging around agriculture.

I am happy to see that the Barbados Vocational Training Board offers skills that are related to agriculture. I know also that they do tractor and operation of the tractor and using the tractor to plough fields and so on. These are some of the skills we know are put to use in agriculture and are being taught at the Vocational Training Board.

One of the interesting projects that is coming out of the Barbados Vocational Training Board, we heard the Honourable Member for St. Philip North speaking earlier about, is fishing, the history of fishing and his relationship with fishing and about the potential for fishing.

The Barbados Vocational Training Board is currently developing an Apprenticeship Programme in professional fish harvesting. They are now looking to bring that on stream and to that end, I know that they are planning a visit to Newfoundland very shortly to examine a training programme that is being conducted there by the Professional Fish Harvesters Certification Board of Newfoundland.

The goal of the Vocational Training Board in observing this, is to observe this model that is used for the training and certification of apprentices and professional fish harvesters at various levels. As well as to gather resources on ship riding and fish processing. They are looking to examine the delivery and evaluation methods for teaching, looking at the curriculum and the training content, as well as the process for accessing and accrediting this programme.

While in Newfoundland, there will also be visiting workshops and work sites to look at the vessels and the fishing communities to determine the methods and the facilities that will be needed for maintaining a training vessel. Sir, it was determined that in order for Barbados to see its fisheries develop, that we had to train more people to handle the boats, not only the boats that are currently being used in Barbados but it was established that newer boats will come on stream, bigger boats which will allow folks to go further, to go deeper, to have bigger catches as well.

The training was necessary so there will be training for new and young fishing crews for employment in the fishing industry, to fish and captain day boats, line boats and long line vessels over a sustained period and to upgrade and certify the skills of existing boat captains, cruise and fishermen in the types and application of modern fishing industry technologies and to train and certify young persons in particular in boat building and ship right skills and techniques, and to certify boat owners and fishermen in business management and cooperatives to

enable them to maximise profits from their catches. And also to certify existing fishermen, as well as new and young fishermen in a specialised skill in on-boards fish handling and even butchering skills.

This is just another area that agriculture is being looked at, another area for development in agriculture and indeed, for the business side of agriculture to be developed.

We have heard about the history of agriculture. As I said, in St. George we are particularly concerned, we know that people need houses, we have not seen housing developments in St. George South for some time, many years and now we are seeing housing and land becoming available in the area. We are concerned that it is not good arable land that is being used but as I said before we had a break that it is the ribbon and the margin areas that are going to be used for this programme.

Sir, because St. George in particular has a rich agriculture history, one of things we in St. George and various stakeholders in St. George are looking at is capitalising on that agricultural history. We have some of the oldest plantation houses in St. George, some of the biggest plantation houses, Buckeley Factory that is no longer in operation. There is a lot of agricultural history that is right there. Drax Hall is one of the biggest plantations, so we have this history that we can capitalise on in the area of tourism and bring jobs into the communities around agriculture.

We recognised and I have said it before that when the tour buses pass through St. George with the tourists on board, there hardly is a reason for them to stop in St. George. We have very few offerings for them in St. George. They may stop at the Gun Hill Signal Station and they may stop at Orchid World which is in Groves in St. George but we need to capitalise and we are looking now at capitalising on our agricultural heritage, our agricultural history to create an agro tourism product. We are working and we are in discussions with EPA and with other organisations to create tours and stops along the way that we can share that heritage with people, develop products. We are inviting our young people to develop products around that, to create things that they can sell when tourists come around.

Buckeley Factory, for example, is one entity that is no longer in operation but we have looked at various projects and when I say we, I mean the Government of Barbados has looked at various projects to capitalise of what we have there at Buckeley, the history and what Buckeley Factory has meant to us. Sir, we are working to bring this agro tourism focus, especially in St. George.

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Dr. the Hon. E. R. BYER-SUCKOO: We are working to bring this agro-tourism focus to St. George. We have looked at projects around the world involving sugar. It is not just about sugar production. It is about having people come in and see what the history of sugar cane is. It is not just how the plant operated but what life was like on a sugar plantation, what it was like to live the life of one of the field hand in sugar, what it was like to ordain the live of a pan boiler and those kinds of things. Those are projects that we are working on that can be developed in agriculture that are related to agriculture.

Bulkeley Factory has always been a landmark in St. George South. Last year we had our first open market at Bulkeley Factory. We have heard about the various open market around the community. Bulkeley Factory has been closed and it has been a dampener on the life of the community in St. George South. In St. George South, you woke up to the sound of the horn, you took lunch at the sound of the horn and you retire for the day at the sound of the horn. Life was centred around Bulkeley Factory. There were more jobs in the St. George South area at crop time because Bulkeley Factory was in operation and now with the demise of Bulkeley Factory, we are certainly feeling that in St. George. All of the vendors who would come and sell lunch and so on around the area are little businesses that can be lauded.

We think that we can still capitalise on Bulkeley Factory by using just the history of Bulkeley Factory and creating tours and so on around that and allowing people to come and sell products that may be related to agriculture not necessarily food products but jewellery or whatever. Persons can create jewellery out of something from the sugar cane, who knows. People are creative and would come up with things because we see furniture coming out of the sugar cane so there are products that can be developed. Mr. Deputy Speaker, we would want to invite people to create whatever craft or foods they have around this theme and come and sell their wares and bring some life into the area, again centre around our agricultural heritage.

We had an open market at Bulkeley Factory last year and there was a good response. People were so nostalgic about Bulkeley Factory that everyone came out. It was a fair-like atmosphere. We are doing the same thing again this Saturday from six o'clock. We would be having an open market where there will be vegetables, fruits, food, craft and sweets on sale. There will be performances by the children and other performances to bring life again to Bulkeley Factory. That was not meant to be an ad but my colleagues, yes, you all are invited, I see them looking at me. We are not going to give up Bulkeley Factory so easily

in St. George South. As long as we see that we can do something around it, we will.

Separate and apart from Bulkeley Factory, we have a strong agricultural heritage around our people. Life in St. George is centred around sugar cane and agriculture in general. Everybody benefitted. When crop time came around, everybody had a little plot. They would cut the cane and the donkey cart would take it down to the factory. My grandmother had one such plot adjacent to the house.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want again to make the point that if agriculture is to be sustainable, we have to make sure that our youth are involved. I am glad to see that the policy of this Government and of the Minister in particular continues to be the development of agriculture and the development of new products in agriculture. We have to make sure that the mind set of our people towards agriculture changes so that they see opportunities to express their creativity in agriculture and recognise that agriculture is not just about the same humdrum thing every morning where you get up early and go into the field and come back and you have the same routine life. Our young people want opportunities to express their creativity and agriculture can afford them that. It is an area that even the scientifically-inclined can go into. Our young people who are scientifically-inclined are often directed along a different path but they need to see that there is an opportunity in agriculture for those persons who are scientifically-inclined.

We also need to address legislation. We have heard about the praedial larceny legislation and the other bits of legislation that need to come and we eagerly anticipate those. We also heard about wages and the remuneration package and even ideas of profit sharing, ways to make agriculture more profitable for the people who are involved.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, agro-business is big business and we are glad that we brought this legislation here today to provide incentives in agro-business because certainly that is the future of agriculture and it has my full support.

I thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Christ Church South.

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to join this debate and add my support to the measure at hand, which started discussion this morning very early with a sterling contribution from the acting Prime Minister and Member of Parliament for Christ Church East Central. Sir, ever since he spoke, the Members on that side have been struggling with each other to establish the more agrarian contact than the one before. It is almost as if there is a new

birth on the side of the Barbados Labour Party with today's demonstrated interest in agriculture, an interest which is not supported by the facts and figures that we are examining daily. The track record of the Barbados Labour Party in terms of satisfying agricultural need in Barbados is not one to be so proud of. I think it is summed up when in taking his seat the Honourable Member for St. James North commented on the fact that some on his side would refer to the debate as a "poorakey" debate. We know exactly who the member and what the member was speaking of. Sir, it puts the debate in context.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we are not basing our contributions today on any new found interest but on a two-and-a-half year record, which has already seen tremendous improvements in the agricultural sector. The Honourable Member for St. George North has a way of speaking in this Chamber and dropping hints here and there so he made his passing glance at the canefield and no more cane blades in Barbados, pretending that was the basis of the Democratic Labour Party position on agriculture.

Sir, in 2008, the Honourable Prime Minister, the Honourable Member for St. John, made his budgetary presentation on the 7th of July and in the section on agriculture he was at length to point out among other things that we were going to make sure that the benefits which the farmers and workers in the agricultural industry were to be able to take advantage of would be available up front to them and that they would be able to use those benefits...

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable Member, for the record of the House, could you quote the exact page you are reading from.

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: I am on page 67 of the Financial Statement and Budgetary Proposal of 2008, Sir.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you.

House A69 Sequence 30

4.10 p.m.

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Hon. John D. E. BOYCE: Mr. Deputy Speaker, the point was being made that the actions and the incentives that the Democratic Labour Party were introducing, would make sure that farmers and participants in the agro-industry benefited up front. Therefore, whether it were monies that were made available for greenhouse development, shade houses, tunnels, irrigation systems for modern agriculture, they will be available up front, to the tune of some \$15 million.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we now come to the question of markets. Sir, the Honourable Member for St. George North again attempts to throw poo-poo at the question of markets and open markets as presented by the Democratic Labour Party. Sir, I want to quote in particular from the same document at page 76, I want to quote from the presentation of the Honourable Prime Minister. It says:

"The licensing and location of vendors is a major public issue. We must find a solution. I have consulted widely on this issue. I am of the view that Barbados needs to reestablish a market day or days every week on which farmers, stall operators and vendors, whether licensed or not..."

Mr. Deputy Speaker, that is the point. It continues:

"May bring their produce to a central location and sell their products from 6.00 a.m. to 6.00 p.m."

Mr. Deputy Speaker, that is a clear position of this side, that is a clear position of the Prime Minister and Government of Barbados today; that separates us from them. Sir, we have set about in a systematic way in our constituency...

The Honourable Member who just sat has spoken to a market day which she is going to facilitate on Saturday at the Buckeley Factory area. The Honourable Member is going to make sure that she facilitates that market for vendors, whether licensed or not, to sell their produce. We are continuing to create and establish areas, whether in the City or outside the City, for these activities to occur. It is a separation of us and them. Sir, that should put paid to the argument that the Honourable Member for St. George North tried to proffer.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the question of the success of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development is not based on what we say or on how much we say in here today, so much as it is based on the facts and figures as reported by Central Bank of Barbados for the year 2009. Sir, when we talked about crop production, the highest level of increases during the year was reported from the root crop sub-sector. There was a 69 per cent increase in overall production, yam production increased significantly, increasing from 279,600 kgs in 2008 to 824.29 kgs in 2009. For the record, this is a 195 per cent increase.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, what are we talking of here? We are talking of a Barbados economy which depends substantially on tourism, for instance, to maintain our economic viability. Therefore, a strong agricultural sector guarantees that we can support our visitors, that we can provide food for our visitors in our hotels and our restaurants to use, while, at same time, reducing our over-dependence on imported crops.

Asides.

Hon. John D. E. BOYCE: We are not saying that we are not going to import crops, of course, we have to. Sir, the Honourable Member for Christ Church East Central was at pains in his statistical presentation to point out where the differentials and gaps are closing or opening, as we go through the whole realm of products which we import and which we produce for ourselves. Sir the point is that the figures which he quoted should be extremely important to our farmers because it demonstrates where the gaps exist and where they need to target their production over the immediate future. Therefore, there is no question that the agricultural sector is on a good footing. It has the full support of this Honourable Chamber and although there may be questions, from time to time, about whether we are producing enough sugar cane, how we produce our sugar cane...

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Honourable Member spoke about ploughing the field laterally, rather than digging the cane holes. Sir, it is strange that only on Sunday night I was having a discussion with a farmer in Barbados, who talked about this same thing. We talked about the fact that in the olden days when we had cane holes, there were actually short crops that were grown in these cane holes, while the sugar cane was in its early stages. These crops not only produced food but they had the miraculous ability of destroying the weeds at the same time or keeping the weeds down. Sir, there is a nexus, there is a beautiful synergy in which the agricultural sector has always had a hand, in terms of balancing the way we use our lands.

I believe that it is this kind of local knowledge which, if applied correctly and at the right times, could bring back our total agricultural production to sustainable levels, even while we grapple with how we finally treat our sugar cane product, whether we break it down into a multiplicity of products, for example, specialty sugars; whether we continue to make a stable sugar which we either export or consume locally; whether we go to ethanol production; whether we go to substitution; whether we go to making a myriad of byproducts such as paper or board. The point is there is an opportunity by carefully examining the total mix of our agricultural production that we need to make a hand of.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, let us again talk about the way that the Democratic Labour Party has gone out there to the people and have said let us make sure that when they go into their agro-processing, that they make sure those products are in supreme positions and that there is high visibility of those products.

Asides.

Hon. John D. E. BOYCE: Mr. Deputy Speaker, there has always been a Barbados Agricultural Development and Marketing Corporation shop at the airport for some time now. Sir, what have we done? We have rebranded the shops at the airport.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Deputy Speaker, on a point of order. The Honourable Member is constantly misleading this Honourable House.

Certain remarks made by the Honourable Member for St. George North were ordered to be expunged by Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Please continue, Honourable Member.

Hon. John D. E. BOYCE: Mr. Deputy Speaker, the facts are there, we are talking about the airport market. We said that it was not enough for our market to be just lipping along like it was, we said we would rebrand it and we rebranded it by the name of Carmeta's. What is Carmeta's? Carmeta Fraizer was a stalwart and an icon in the agricultural industry of Barbados. There is no honour of which she is not worthy. Sir, we have already brandied and Barbadianised the market by introducing Carmeta's. We have gone about saying to our locals and to our visitors that here is the market brand for the Barbados Agricultural Development and Marketing Corporation and it is Carmetta.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the important thing is that at the airport and in many of our supermarkets around Barbados, especially because of the high visibility at Carmetta's, we can see the range of products which are offered by our agro-processors in Barbados.

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Hon. J.D.E. BOYCE: Indeed, in many of our supermarkets around Barbados but especially because of the high visibility at Carmeta's, we can see the products that are offered by our agro processors in Barbados. There are about 29 processors which are listed here.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, a lot of Honourable Members on the other side do not listen to the Barbadian news. They come in here and talk about the last thing that they heard on NBC or CNN. They do not listen to what happens in Barbados. There was an indepth interview with a Mr. Goddard last night who spoke to the issues of Carmeta's and spoke to the products that were available and I am delighted, Sir, to repeat for emphasis. Sir, for instance, he spoke about Lionel's sauces and dressings and I am going to be one who will look for this barbeque sauce called

Lionel sauce and dressing. He makes golden apple sauce and he makes hot and spicy barbeque sauce. We must promote them among Barbadians, we must promote them from this Honourable Chamber and we must ask Barbadians to promote these products. (16:21)

(16:22) Mr. Deputy Speaker, the important thing is that we now branded a shop at the airport. It has high visibility like any of the other brand name shops at the airport and we are inviting Barbadians and visitors alike to take advantage of this opportunity of a newly decorated and newly branded shop at the airport which displays our products for all to see and take advantage of.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we have to speak a little bit about livestock production. Sir, this time I am going to speak especially to the question of fish production because I represent a constituency where fishing is a very important business activity. Sir, only last week, we celebrated Fisherman's Week in Barbados and in Oistins. Let me start by congratulating the fish vendors, the fish boat owners, the Oistins Users Association and the Bay Garden Association of Oistins for an activity very well done and well appreciated by all Barbadians.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I believe that we are on the cusp of a cooperation at Oistins which will see the Bay Garden, the Oistins Users Association, the Fisherfolk Association, the Fish Vendors Association and the Small Boat Owners Association come together under an umbrella organisation. Sir, not an umbrella organisation that delimits any activity on the part of one member but one which helps to represent the views of the broader ambitions of the activity. We become like a facilitator, so that the Oistins Fish Festival, the Oistins User Day Celebration, the Oistins Vendors Day and the Fisherman's Day can become a bigger and better activity. After all, Sir, remember that fish is now the meat of choice among a number of Barbadians and visitors. Of course, the Oistins Bay Garden is the cuisine of class and choice, rated by the world's leader in the industry, Zagat. Sir, when you get a rating from Zagat, we are doing well and we intend to maintain and facilitate the maintenance of that high rating by the Zagat Organisation.

Asides.

Hon. J.D.E. BOYCE: The Zagat rating occurred in 2008.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: : Mr. Deputy Speaker, on a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the House. The Zagat rating occurred in 2007/2008. The Oistin's Fish Market was renovated by this side. When they became the Government, again, they are piggy back riding on the programme left in place in Oistins the Barbados Labour Party Government.

Hon. J.D.E. BOYCE: Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member did not say anything that I did not say so I will continue. Sir, the Zagat rating is one which we need to hold on to and treasure, not for Oistins alone but for Barbados, for the many visitors who check Oistins on a Friday, and on a Saturday. Sir, I want to see them there on a Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday too, and on a Sunday, so that we have a sustainable product because the facts are that many of the vendors on Oistins cannot survive on merely Friday's activity and Saturday's activity. They need to have a predictable and sustainable business environment in which to operate and it is incumbent on us, as an admin, to make sure that this occurs and, Sir, this is what we are here for. If the Honourable Member feels that is building on something, well it is building on something. We are going to build on whatever we have. We built on the ABC Highway debacle and we are going to build on anything else that we have to build on. Sir, we are going to make it right, we are going to make it better and we are going to make sure that all the repairs that are required at the Oistins Fish Market are carried out and not left the way the Honourable Member for St. George North left them. We are going to make sure they are paved, we are going to make sure the car park is paved and drained properly as is appropriate. We are going to make sure the leaks are repaired and that the Oistins Fisherfolk can rest comfortably. We are going to make sure that the sidewalks are built so that members of the community can walk from the hotels and walk from their homes and that Barbadians can walk from their homes and enjoy the ambience of a beautiful little town in the evening.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, it brings pride to me as a representative when I hear of these successes. Sir, just to speak to fishing alone and probably make a plug for a little more accuracy. Sir, in 2009, an estimated total of 347 tons of fish was landed in Barbados. These values represent an increase of around 8 per cent over the total catch recorded in 2008. The total landings recorded during 2009 are now the highest reported since 1998. Sir, let me say a little bit about that because there are still a number of issues of persons and fisherfolk who do not necessarily record all their catches. Sir, I think this is a mistake and they must be told this. If you are not recording your catch, you are not allowing the Fishery Department or the Ministry of Agriculture to record your true contribution to GDP in this country and then your benefits may be shortchanged. If you let us have the full record of your catch and we are able to put a true record of your contribution to the Gross Domestic Product in this country, you automatically demand more and greater attention. Sir, this is a plug which has been made before but which I want to join in asking that we look at very seriously and make sure that...

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Hon. J.D.E. BOYCE: This is a plug which has been made before but which I want to join in asking that we look at very seriously and make sure these things are achieved.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we have to therefore understand where our focus will be as we continue this journey through a very tough economic period in the world's history. Barbados has been doing well, but has been doing well not because of laziness or sitting back, but because of the hard work of this team. The hard work of the Democratic Labour Party Ministers in tough times under the leadership of the Honourable David Thompson, we continue to stay focus and on the job. We bring Barbadians along with us and assure them of our commitment to the success of this country.

Sir, we have seen it in tourism where our Minister continues to battle with all markets around. We have seen him enter now the Brazil market and I am saying here, let us take the opportunity to get visitors out of Brazil. We have been to Canada and we have seen our largest growth in Canada for a long time, and a sustained growth with the introduction of West Jet, and, of course, along with came an increased participation of Air Canada. We continue to benefit from this. Sir, there is Jet Blue out of the United States and we continue to battle with this. I believe very soon we will set our sights even farther in the East making sure that we take advantage of every opportunity available to grow the market in Barbados. These are tough times and these need tough decision, and these times need tough leaders. We are committed to this programme, to make sure that Barbadians continue to enjoy a reasonableness in their standard of living.

Sir, in housing, well the record speaks for itself. We have sat here and listened to many presentations, from the Honourable Member for St. Philip North and the team of the Democratic Labour Party. We need to work to make sure that the benefits that agriculture presents to us, the benefits that the agro industry offers in terms of growth and sustainability are also supported, and the other sectors of the economy to ensure that Barbados remains and to keep that flag flying high.

Sir, we are committed to this programme, as I said, and we are committed under the astute leadership of the Honourable Member for St. John and this team of the Democratic Labour Party Members, to making sure that full advantage is taken of these opportunities, while Barbados fights its way out of this world economic recession, and continues to hold its head high in the Caribbean and in the wider community.

I am obliged to you, Sir.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for the City of Bridgetown.

Hon. P.M.T. TODD: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I rise to support this Bill before this Honourable Chamber, which we know seeks to amend the Income Tax Act to make provision for rebates to be given to a person who carries out agricultural business, including an agro processing business, where that person imports machinery into Barbados to be used exclusively for that business. I reiterate the point exclusively because clearly the intent of the legislation is not to promote abuse, where it may have been rumoured in past years we were not sure machinery brought for agricultural purposes was utilised exclusively for that purpose. We do not wish people to use this scheme to import lavishly, for example vehicles that would not be used in agriculture but for personal usages. I am confident that the farming community would act in good faith and utilise these concessions to promote their business in the interest of national economic development.

Sir, we heard from the Honourable Member for St. George North, suggesting that these agricultural incentives available to the farming community are not well-known and are not well subscribed to, but nothing could be further from the truth. Sir, I would have viewed GIS Programmes, which have been repeated on Channel 8 concentrating on a half hour package on the various agricultural incentives available to the farming community. I remember Dr. Blackman from the Ministry of Agriculture was featured in that presentation. Indeed, a number of recipients, practicing farmers who have received these various incentives gave personal testimonies to this effect.

For example, I remember a young Caucasian farmer involved in pasture development. That is the growing of grass for the feeding of farm animals. The young lady was able to heap praise upon the Government for giving her access to pasture development. For example, in that Scheme a rebate of \$500 per hectare or \$202 per acre, or 30 per cent of cost, whichever is less, for the establishment of improved pastures. This incentive programme enable rebates for a maximum of 100 acres or 40.5 hectares per holding. This young lady was able to get a head start in terms of expansion of her pasture lands due to this agricultural incentive programme, a Barbadian farmer was telling the public that she was able to get this incentive, and there are others.

I remember a farmer who was involved in live stock production, a pig farmer. He has seen, even bare-back one morning, washing down his pens. Again, benefitting from another agricultural incentive. We saw a young lady who is engaged in the exportation of Barbadian produce such as breadfruit and other produce to the UK, as the Honourable Acting Prime Minister mentioned, about the great demand for the local agricultural produce, ground provision, by the Barbadian and indeed the West Indian diaspora be it in the UK, North America, Canada and other places. Sir, this young lady is so excited, as seen in the programme, that

she actually offers a scheme in which her team would visit old ladies' homes throughout Barbados, pick the fruit for them and give them a financial payment for this. This is exciting. Again she was able to indicate to the public that she benefited from the rebates and incentives given by the Government through the Ministry of Agriculture.

For example, a rebate of 30 per cent of the cost up to a maximum of \$10 000 per exporter per year, on the cost of international transport and freight for primary agricultural products. Sir, for technical assistance, a fund of \$250 000 to assist producers and marketers in the conduct of feasibility studies, access to new technologies and the implementation of quality assurance schemes relating to the export of fresh agricultural produce and so on. Sir, we also saw others indicating the extent to which these various incentives were able to assist them in making sure that their businesses were viable.

I would invite the Honourable Member for St. George North to do the necessary investigation before making such blanket statements. Indeed, I would take the opportunity to encourage Barbadian farmers to contact the Ministry of Agriculture at Greame Hall, to become acquainted with the many aspects of their incentive programmes which are available to the public, and not to be deterred by any perceived red tape. We must have best practices and accountability. We cannot just give money to people...

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House A69, Sequence 34, 4.40 p.m.

Hon. P.M.T. TODD: We must have best practices and accountability. We cannot just give money to people as they turn up without doing the necessary checking to verify that these persons do in fact engage in farming and their businesses are legitimate, registered and so on and so forth, so that this is quite acceptable if we are going to be doing business in a transparent manner. And so this should not discourage these persons from accessing these funds because the technical assistance and monetary assistance will go a long way in increasing the likelihood of these businesses surviving because we know that many small businesses have challenges in first few years of their existence, in terms of breaking even and making a profit eventually, so any incentives given by Government would be welcome.

The Honourable Member for St. George North also complained about extension officers but according to the Ministry of Agriculture, they have extension officers at their Headquarters at Graeme Hall, at the north district, encompassing St. Lucy, St. Peter and St. James.

Certain remarks made by the Honourable Member for St. George North were ordered to be struck from the records by Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Hon. P.M.T. TODD: Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

I am enlightening the Honourable Member for St. George North and the public that indeed the Ministry of Agriculture has a vibrant Extension Officer Service. As I said, they are available from the Ministry of Agriculture Headquarters at Graeme Hall, from Greenland to service the northern district of St. Lucy, St. Peter and St. James, the Scotland District based at Greenland, St. Andrew, St. John and St. Joseph, the central area of the country, encompassing St. Thomas, St. George and St. Michael, based at the Animal Nutrition Unit and the South East District encompassing St. Philip and Christ Church based at the Home Agricultural Station. These Extension Officers actually go into the field and service the farming community.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, as I said, the list of incentives is very extensive. I remember on that same television programme, a lady of Caucasian and European extraction engaging, I believe, fruits farming in the Scotland District. Again there is an incentive here for orchard development. This is commendable where farmers are taking the risk and engaging in agriculture.

There are other incentives, for example, for spraying and weed control, a rebate of 50 per cent to a maximum of \$800 on the purchase of spraying equipment for the spraying of crops, weeds and livestock. Let me take this opportunity to encourage best practices, in terms of the use of these very serious chemicals, in terms of weed control because you often see persons with plastic containers on their backs containing these chemicals and they are walking through the fields spraying. They should not be spraying without the necessary safety equipment, be they gloves, goggles, breathing apparatus and boots because these chemicals can endanger one's health, in terms of permeating the subcutaneous layer of the skin, the pores and getting into the bloodstream, causing serious harmful effects. We should encourage members of the farming community not to be a penny wise and pound foolish but to ensure that their health is safeguarded in this regard.

Sir, other incentives we have include incentive for irrigation systems for registered agricultural cooperatives, agricultural and agro processing machinery. We talk about agro processing and in this scheme we have a rebate of 18 per cent of the purchase price on agricultural and agro processing machinery, excluding sugar cane harvesters. In land cultivation, there are also incentives in livestock development as I mentioned earlier, in terms of incentives for farm management and agro business. We have a rebate

of 50 per cent of the cost of developing waste treatment systems up to a maximum of \$15 000 to agro business engaged in the treatment of agricultural produce and fish waste, to produce useful byproducts.

I have been thinking here, Mr. Speaker, of the bio gas production. I remember first seeing this in Guyana in the 1990s when a delegation of the young Democrats visited Guyana and we visited their Reform Schools for Boys and Girls and they had a bio gas digester, where the animal waste was put in the digester and it produced methane gas, which was used to provide cooking gas.

This is state of the art technology, in terms of renewable energy sources and green environmentally friendly approaches to agriculture and this is commendable, Mr. Deputy Speaker, so these incentives help to stimulate best practices in terms of agricultural development.

Sir, one or two other incentive we have available include the retooling of fishing, poultry and the livestock industries, farm security, support for farming organisations, in terms of assisting farmers in their empowerment of a team, in terms of registered farmers and fisherfolk organisations to become self sufficient and self reliant as well as to assist them in their buy local campaign and due diligence practices in related issues to make farmers more competitive and WTO compliant. Certainly within our Ministry of Economic Affairs, we have a competitive programme funded with international assistance just started where well-trained economists at Masters level and so on are coming together to really assist in the productive sector in the society in terms of best practices to improve their efficiency, achieve their economies of scale to ensure that we can become more competitive so that our products can really be able to find markets abroad and, of course, locally.

Sir, within the agricultural sector these incentives assist in this regard. We also have incentives in terms of resource production and management, post harvest technology and organic farming. Mr. Deputy Speaker, again, these are very state-of-the-art approaches to ensuring that we have agricultural practices that do not in any way threaten the very delicate eco system in which we live.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, this reminds me for example that there are international agencies such as the United Nations Development Programme, which has assisted countries like Barbados, in terms of organic farming.

I know there was a system at Bawden, St. Andrew with the connection of seedlings where the disabled community has been assisted with this area where they may have physical and other challenges but this gives them an advantage in terms of the patience needed to be able to deal with those delicate seedlings. I know that programme has

been given UNDP support and I was at an event where a number of the farmers were present in their numbers.

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Hon. P. M. T. TODD: I was at an event where a number of the farmers were present and spoke glowingly of a potential in this regard to make these disabled persons more independent and self-reliant and therefore less dependent on State welfare handouts.

Indeed, talking about the United Nations Development Programme, I know that they have assisted in the black belly sheep rearing sector. I remember that at the opening of Agrofest a couple years ago, the UNDP representative here actually signed, as part of their small grants programme, a cooperating agreement, a Memorandum of Understanding or whatever you want to call it, with the agricultural sector here. I remember the Barbados Agricultural Society signing on to that programme that would enable small farmers to get assistance in terms of improving the genetic stock of the black belly sheep in our country to ensure that the integrity of the genetics of the black belly sheep is maintained and you do not get cross breeding to reduce the uniqueness of the Barbadian black belly sheep which we know produces large quantities of progeny in a given breeding season compare to other breeds of sheep and of course the high quality of the meat. This is indigenous Barbadian black belly sheep that others around the world would wish to steal from us so we have to protect it with great fervour.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we have one or two other rebates and incentives I would wish to refer to, for example, the rebate on land tax and the support for youth in agriculture. We have just come out of a very well executed National Youth Forum held over the weekend. The Minister of Youth, Family and Sports must be congratulated for his interest in helping young people to develop their entrepreneurial spirit. You have the Youth Entrepreneurship Scheme which gives a lot of technical assistance and training. Within the Ministry of Agriculture, you have tangible financial assistance to assist these young up and coming farmers to the extent that an annual allocation of \$250 000 to meet the cost of administering a farm attachment mentorship programme under which young people selected to participate will receive a weekly stipend and farmers would receive professional fees for serving as mentors.

You know, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that Miss Undine Whitaker, the Government's Special Envoy on poverty eradication and the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals has spearheaded in the last few years a programme similar to this in which she has brought young

people together and gave them a small stipend to engage in agriculture both in terms of farm agriculture and animal husbandry.

We have also the Disaster Relief Revolving Fund, another agricultural incentive, the Scotland District Incentive, which promote fruit farming within the Scotland District and helps in soil conservation and so on. We have incentives for aquaculture, new technologies, cross border investments and of course hydroponics. Hydroponics is a very exciting new area. Within these incentive programmes, we have incentives for new crop technology, greenhouses and hydroponic systems.

I know that recently within the City of Bridgetown we have had the provision of greenhouses at my own church, St. Patrick Roman Catholic Cathedral on Jemmotts Lane where the Monsignor was able to get the assistance of the InterAmerican Institute on Cooperation for Agriculture and others to set up a greenhouse where rain water is captured from the roof and use to irrigate the greenhouses, which have produced lovely tomatoes and herbs such as thyme, parsley and so on. This has been very exciting with the use of farm mature, sheep mature and so on, to increase the nutrient levels within the soil because as you know, Mr. Deputy Speaker, in urban Barbados the soil quality would not be as good as in the agricultural belt.

I was at Harrison College recently for the opening of a pretty massive greenhouse there. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I take this opportunity to reiterate my call for the older secondary schools such as Harrison College to ensure that agricultural science is offered to students up to CXC level. I note that for decades now the newer secondary schools have offered agricultural science at the general proficiency level at CXC and many people have been able to go on to the University of the West Indies, St. Augustine Campus to read for a Bachelor Degree in agriculture and go on to post graduate studies and to go on to make agriculture a career. Agriculture is nothing to be scoffed at and therefore we should not believe that agricultural science as a academic subject should not be offered at the older secondary schools. We are sending the wrong signal in my view if we perpetuate those eaten grammar school prejudices and therefore I congratulate Harrison College for having the foresight to open the greenhouse. I believe that the next step would be to offer agricultural science to CXC general proficiency level.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, a former student of mine at Queens College was featured on the television programme recently. She is now a graduate in agricultural science and is heavily engaged in hydroponics and greenhouse technology.

I know the Israelis have been able to specialise in this area because they have limited arable land. Most of

that Middle East area would be desert and they are able to use hydroponics and they are able to provide technical assistance to developing countries such as Barbados. I believe that over the years a number of our students would have actually travelled to Israel to be trained in these modern techniques. Barbados has a limited land space and so hydroponics and greenhouses enable us to really increase crop yields with the decreasing acreage of land available for agriculture.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we also talked in this debate about the link between food production and agro-processing and I support this. The Honourable Member for St. Michael West Central mentioned that this legislation would definitely help to propel forward the entrepreneurial class, the small business sector in our country. Within the Ministry of Economic Affairs, Trade, Industry and Commerce, the BIDC has an incubator programme where at our Small Business Centre at Fontabelle we have actual physical facilities where initially on a three-year basis new businesses, emerging businesses, small businesses and micro enterprises can be housed there at concessionary rates and be provided with secretarial and other technical assistance to enable them to have a realistic chance of really cementing their businesses and developing them thereafter.

In fact, at this same location is housed a very promising wine production facility where you have high quality wines being produced, which is well-labeled using local art of a very high quality. I have actually tasted some of these wines. There are wines made from Jamoon and other fruits such as golden apple, which are very tasty and very marketable and could be exported. In fact, attempts were made to export the wines in the past. The owner actually could customise wines from specific fruits which individual clients may wish. Mr. Deputy Speaker, you could see the link between agricultural production and agro-processing.

I toured that building with the new Chairman of the BIDC and he was so impressed that he said straightaway that we have to really assist this entrepreneur to in developing this very important product in terms of export and local production.

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5.00 p.m.

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Hon. Patrick M. T. TODD: Mr. Deputy Speaker, this is just one example, for example, as other have mentioned the tremendous potential in terms of the production of tomato ketchup, so that we would not have the unfortunate situation as occurred in recent past where we had farmers

having to throw away thousands of pounds of tomatoes because there was a glut and other marketing challenges. We can now engage in production of tomato paste. Sir, tomato products are very nutritious in terms of the fact that they contain lycopene, phyto-nutrients and antioxidants that assist in the fight against cancer and other harmful diseases.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I remember at least a decade ago we had a venture where a European concern, over a number of weeks or months, had collected Barbadian cherries, had them frozen and shipped to Europe to add to their jams and jellies to increase the vitamin "C" content. Sir, vitamin "C" is a very powerful antioxidant, it aids in the healing process, it is also a premium in terms of it being a natural resource, as opposed to it being synthetic vitamin "C". Sir, for example, the acerola cherry is sourced for Latin America to increase the vitamin "C" content in products. We have Barbadian cherries which are very high in vitamin "C" but we need agro-processing to enable us to maximise the development of products related to this important ingredient.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we have breadbaskets within CARICOM, be they Guyana, Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, Dominica where you can engage in joint ventures, where they supply the raw agricultural product and we do the processing here for export to the region and beyond.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would wish to say, as I had made the point earlier in terms of encouraging Barbadians not to be deterred in terms of going through the application process and procedure - the red tape - in accessing these agricultural incentives, by the same token, within the Small Business Development Unit within the Ministry of Economic Affairs, Fontabelle, we have a microenterprise branch facility which gives entrepreneurs of microenterprises - not having five or more members of staff and an annual income of a certain amount - a grant of up to \$5 000. This administration has been able to provide this fund. We have actually provided a Supplementary in the last financial year and currently the funds are almost depleted. There was such a high demand for these funds.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable Member, please wrap up now.

Hon. Patrick M. T. TODD: Mr. Deputy Speaker, in closing, I am saying that some people may not wish to come forward and simply fill out an application form; that their business name does not have to be incorporated, only registered; that all they have to do is to fill out the application form so that the Business Development Officers can do their due diligence, making sure that it is a viable or legitimate business. Sir, the funds can then be disbursed without much of a long waiting period.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is worth the while, it is a grant and as many of these agricultural incentives are grants and are there for you the Barbadian farming community, you the Barbadian entrepreneur to access, I invite them all to come forward. The officers in the various ministries of Government are willing to assist them and so it is up to those persons. I thank you, Sir.

Hon. Christopher P. SINCKLER: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I join this debate rather belatedly because I had not intended on speaking this afternoon. Sir, I do not want to contain my presentation to comments made by the Honourable Member for St. George North but I think that as we strive for fairness and balance, it is only important that some of the mythology associated with his speech in relation to what has or has not been done by the Democratic Labour Party Government for agriculturalists in Barbados be exploded, certainly addressed and that we say a few other things.

I think the Honourable Member for Christ Church South, quite correctly building on the excellent presentation of the Acting Prime Minister who introduced this Bill into the House, sought to identify and itemised, where necessary, those areas of intervention in the 2008 Budgetary presentation by the Honourable Member for St. John, in his capacity as Minister of Finance. Sir, the Honourable Member provided specific, not generalised, incentives to the agricultural sector in Barbados. Indeed, I think that after that presentation, many agriculturalists, both practitioners and those in the research field, lauded that presentation as perhaps the first time that any budgetary presentation in Barbados has seriously focused on the issues relating to agriculture.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, it really is quite surprising, disappointing even, to hear the Honourable Member for St. George North say that the Democratic Labour Party has not done anything and is not doing enough for agriculturalists in Barbados. Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Honourable Member was at pains to go back to some speech that was delivered by somebody about "no cane blade in Barbados." He said "no cane grain in Barbados." He then changed it to "blade."

Sir, he is funny, because during the period of 1976 to 1986, when the then Barbados Labour Party Government had literally colluded with people in Barbados to run the sugar industry into the ground, it was the Democratic Labour Party who had to come to office, under the now Prime Minister, who was then Minister of Finance, and to lead the most comprehensive restructuring of the sugar industry in Barbados. Sir, that was done to the advantage of two important and critical elements in Barbados: first, for the sector itself, to give it an additional lifeline of about 15 to 20 years, which the previous Government under the Barbados Labour Party did little or nothing to improve upon. In fact, today as I speak, on retaining office this

Government has now to come and put in place a second restructuring plan for the sugar industry in Barbados, after all of the palaver we heard from the last Government about “fluid” cane and removal of preference. There has been no serious intervention. We now have to provide not only resources but also a restructuring plan for the sugar industry, not once but twice, after the Barbados Labour Party destroyed it. Sir, I am a little surprise to hear that.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the second contribution that restructuring did was also to save the Barbados National Bank, which the Honourable Member conveniently failed to recognise or remember that the previous Barbados Labour Party Government placed a considerable amount of liability, the indebtedness, of the sugar industry on the portfolio of the Barbados National Bank; that you launched a Barbados National Bank and then put a sugar industry debt around it like an albatross and asked it to carry that burden. Sir, we did not only save the sugar industry, as a Democratic Labour Party Government we also helped to restructure the sugar cane portfolio, its plantation debt at the Barbados National Bank and probably saved that bank too to the stage where it was restructured and became what it is today, a fantastic institution to which the last Government took the opportunity to sell a substantial part of the shares to the Republic Bank of Trinidad and Tobago.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, let us talk about agriculture. I heard the Honourable Member making the point that this Government so hates agriculture that we have been fiddling around with the acreage under cultivation and under livestock rearing.

Asides.

5.10 p.m.

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Hon. C.P. SINCKLER: *Asides.*

Hon. C.P. SINCKLER: No, he has to catch a plane, so he is off to the airport. Sir, that this Government so hates agriculture that we have been fiddling around with the acreage under cultivation and under livestock rearing. Sir, I would point out for the Honourable Member for St. George North that we do rear pigs in Barbados and not grow them, that we grow canes but that we rear pigs.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Honourable Member had the temerity and the intestinal fortitude to be lecturing the Government of the Democratic Labour Party about acreage under cultivation and what has been moved out of agriculture. I also heard some members of the Other Place making this point and, indeed, writing in the Press, and I am not going to get into any fared debate with people in relation to that but the facts must be put on the table

because everybody in Barbados knows or should know, and after now will know, that the previous Government, whom the Honourable Member for St. George North claims love agriculture so much led an unmitigated, unrelenting and unceasing assault on agriculture in Barbados, hidden behind the guise of a Robin Hood land use policy in reverse.

Aside.

Hon. C.P. SINCKLER: It was in reverse, taking from the poor and selling to rich foreigners in Barbados.

MR. G.A. CLARKE: Mr. Deputy Speaker, on a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the House. The whole notion of taking agricultural land out of agriculture started in 1976 under the late Excellent Errol Barrow, when Fairfield Plantation and Rowans Plantations were taken out. Sir, ever since then, the demand for housing demanded land. There is nothing wrong in taking land out of agriculture if you are going to give it to poor people for housing. The Democratic Labour Party started the slide of agricultural land when they released the lands at Westmoreland for the rich and famous. Sir, it started under the Democratic Labour Party and it is a fact of life.

Hon. C.P. SINCKLER: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, that is why I say that you do not have to dispute facts, all you have to do is establish them and let anybody draw their conclusion. Sir, I am going to start from 2004 even though they were in office from 1994. Sir, in 2004, they were, by my recollection, applications totally 208 hectares of land, agricultural land via applications to the Town Planning Department under the previous Government to be moved from agriculture into high-end residential and commercial activities. Sir, of those 208 hectares, 123 hectares were granted. They were taken out of agriculture and put into other activities under the last Government.

Asides.

Hon. C.P. SINCKLER: Gregg Farm was one of them too but I am not going there. I am going to keep to what we have here, Sir. Mr. Deputy Speaker, in 2005, 313 hectares were advanced to the Town Planning Department to be moved out of agriculture under the Barbados Labour Party and put for golf courses, villas and condominiums and of that 123 hectares were given out of the 313 hectares but yet the Honourable Member gets up in here and sanctimoniously claims that this Government has been taking land out of agriculture and putting it into things other than that.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, let us go to 2006. Sir, in 2006, 338 hectares, 41 of which were approved out of agriculture into other purposes. Sir, add up that for me and tell me how much it was in those three years alone. We are not talking

about the other 10 years, we are talking those three years alone. Sir, this wicked and dangerous assault on agriculture by the Barbados Labour Party and now we are to be lectured about it.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, what we have said is that the Physical Development Plan designates a certain amount of acreage to go into agriculture and I can say today, Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, without fear of contradiction that the Minister of Agriculture and the Minister of Housing and Lands in this country have been scrupulously meticulous in ensuring that we maintain that balance and that we.... those acreage remain in agriculture. Sir, never mind the fulminations about what happened at Brittons with two sedge ways, two buffer zones, he should tell us about what happened at Friendship Plantation where over 100 acres were taken out of production, some of the best onion lands in Barbados were taken out of Barbados.

Asides.

Hon. C.P. SINCKLER: You would pretend you do not know about it but I know. Sir, some of the best agricultural land in Barbados was taken out of production and use to do something else.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Deputy Speaker, on a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the House. Sir, as far I could remember, the land at Friendship Plantation was taken out for the Botanical Gardens. Sir, that was taken out, I think in 2005. It was not taken out for housing. It was taken out for the activity of the Government to benefit the people of this country. In fact, it was shifted from one aspect of agriculture to another.

Hon. C.P. SINCKLER: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I never said it was taken out for housing. I said it was some for the best producing land on Barbados for onion production.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Deputy Speaker, on a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the House. The land that the Honourable Member is speaking about was not in agricultural use at all, it was considered to be rab land. In fact, it is the land going from the Combermere School right up to the highway and it has not been in farming for nearly 40 years. Sir, the Honourable Member cannot say that this wicked Government was providing a botanical garden for the benefit of Barbadians and tourism cannot likened it to a wicket Government.

Hon. C.P. SINCKLER: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I know of many lands that layed fallow under the pretense that we are going to leave them there until such time as you can bludgeon the Town Planning Department and get a willing Government to move them out of the principal purpose for which they were provided. Therefore, the Honourable Member can talk whatever he wants but I know what I

mean. Sir, if the Honourable Member wants to talk about taking land out of anything, we can go to Bennetts and the issue of the Molyneux well but I am not going to go there, not now, because we have changed zones designations in this country in order to facilitate people, so the Honourable Member should not come with these crocodile tears because these crocodile tears for agriculture do not impress anybody in Barbados.

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Hon. C. P. SINCKLER: So do not come with these crocodile tears. These crocodile tears for agriculturalists do not impress anybody in Barbados, because we know that the Barbados Labour Party Government has led one of the most vicious assaults on agriculture. He spoke about vendors. What can we say? What can we talk about vendors?

Sir, we had the people down in Temple Yard begging the last Government for 14 years, but do you know that Government only began in 2008. There was no Government in Barbados before that. Those people were harassed, bulldozed, arrested, accosted, every possible negative was said about them, and left down there to suffer by the last Government. Yet we are hearing that this Government has no heart. Even though this Government has been at pains, as the Honourable Member for Christ Church South said, and the Minister of Agriculture had spoken to on repeated occasions and acted on, that we have put the most facilitating mechanisms in place for vendors in this country to be able to ply their wares, to sell their produce and to do other things.

Indeed, as Minister of Rural Development, responsible for the Rural Development Commission, I have always held a very fluid position on it, whenever such time as the Ministry of Agriculture had called on us for assistance in setting up farmers' markets throughout communities in this country, we have done it to give the vendors a chance to sell their produce. So we have nothing to hide when it comes to vendors. It is not us who ran the police through Shepherds Alley. No Government that could facilitate a Shepherds Alley could come and lecture somebody about vendors in Barbados.

Asides.

Hon. C. P. SINCKLER: You do not want to take responsibility for anything. Just as the Honourable Member does not want to take responsibility, this Honourable Member in particular for conspiring with the last Government as a Member of the Government to close down Bulkeley Factory. Even against the plaintive cries of the former Honourable Member for St. George South, Sir

Louise Tull, QC, when he said he felt like an outside child, he did not even had time to inform him that Bulkeley Factory was going to be closed down. Yet they are now lecturing the Democratic Labour Party. They closed down the Greenland Agricultural Station.

Asides.

Hon. C. P. SINCKLER: Take responsibility for it.

Sir, lets establish early o'clock that the Barbados Labour Party has no credibility, no locus standi in this Chamber to lecture anybod on agriculture. Lets establish that early. Now that being established, what do we need to do as a Government and what have we been doing in this particular regard.

Sir, we know the Botanical Gardens, we are still waiting on it. Do not worry Barbadians will benefit to the extent that we can, but we know they do not have that credibility.

Sir, agriculture is important to any country, and Carmeta Fraser, the late great lady from my constituency, always said, "Eat what you grow, and grow what you eat." We live by that credo. We believe as a small open economy, we can, (1), for foreign exchange purposes, reduce the importing of all of our food. It cost money, and, (2), it compromises the integrity of our food security system. You want to ensure you have some level of agriculture. We have determined that there are certain things in this country that we can do, certain crops that we can grow, certain processes that we can engage to allow us some minimum level of self-sufficiency.

Sir, even as we seek markets outside of Barbados to supplement that which we cannot produce, and that delicate balance between our need to import as a country and our need to produce for our people it has to be met. We have been trying over the years, not just this Government, but I assume successive Governments to find that delicate balance, that line which demarcates what we want to do in this country. It has to be a multi player multi sector approach.

Sir, when the Honourable Member for St. George North was speaking, he was so contradictory if it were not a serious debate I would have laughed out in here, and probably incur your wrath. On the one hand he was saying Government, Government, Government, Government. Government needs to do this, Government needs to give this incentive, Government needs to get this body to do this, then on the other hand he concludes and said, Oh, there is too much Government.

We have to make up our mind what we want, and the fundamental fact is, after the period of colonialism,

particularly in the post Independence economy of Barbados, a deliberate decision was made to diversify this Barbados economy out of agriculture and into other activities, tourism, manufacturing, financial services, so that we would have different planks on which to base a modern economy. That is the second 50 years of the last century.

Sir, in doing that, and particularly in the period 1976 to 1986, a substantial amount of the subsidies that the Honourable Member is now calling for were shifted away from agriculture into other activities. We do not blame them because that was their vision. That was the great vision that people talked about. This great economist Tom Adams saw a vision for a Barbados as a modern light manufacturing producing economy, with financial services as part of the model, but recognised that some irreparable damage was done.

Asides.

Hon. C. P. SINCKLER: Once we establish that is what happened, successive Governments have been clawing back to regain the position of agriculture within the main loop of the economy, but that is not going to happen in the way we believe it is going to happen. We are not going to wake up one day, put incentives in place and agriculture reassumed its position as King in the Barbados economy. Those days are over. What we have to do, however, is to make strategic interventions by the State, by the private sector and by the agriculturalists themselves to ensure we create an enclave of specialised activities within those areas of agricultural production, that will allow us to do a number of things, (1) reduce our food import bill; (2) improve our nutritional spread in Barbados with high quality food produced right here in this country for which we can verify and vouch for the quality; (3) we have to look to see in those small sectors, one or two, in which we can gain some competitive advantage to export. There will not be many because there are many low-cost producers of agricultural products around the world, and the international trade regimes which we follow, now, are so demanding that it is unlikely that we will be able to compete internationally in agriculture, but there are some things that we can do. Like Sea Island Cotton, which we know we have some advantage in and which we know is one of the highest quality of cotton in the world. So we can invest in that.

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Hon. C.P. SINCKLER: There are some things that we can do like sea island cotton in which we know that we

have some advantages and we know is the highest quality of cotton in the world so we can invest in that, Sir.

We know that we can do some processing of foods, therefore, along that line we have to work with the international trade agreements to create intellectual property in agriculture. This is where the action is and it is not like promoting this or that commodity, we do that for domestic production and domestic consumption but when we want to earn money out of agriculture, we have to use our knowledge. I can give you a classic example.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Barbados is a leader in the production and development of sugar cane varieties. There are some sugar cane varieties now that are being harvested and utilised in places such as Mauritius and Thailand. That is intellectual property that has gone abegging. There are millions of dollars we could be gaining from that, that we are not gaining right now.

The West Indian Cane Breeding Centre that we have here in Barbados produced hundreds of varieties of sugar cane, some with high sucrose content, some with low sucrose content, some that can withstand water high fibre content. It is there and that is where we have to go and we have to establish a base in the intellectual property, particularly in the areas once we get out of the basic stuff into processing, in relation to geographical indicators so that we can brand our stuff and maintain it as ours and sell it to the world and whoever use it thereafter will have to pay us a royalty for doing such things. Sir, this is where we have to go in relation to this.

Sir, we then have to change our attitudes as Barbadians. We have to change the mind set so that Barbadians understand that a country that is virtually self-sufficient now in casava production, as I see from the notes, can increase domestic production of casava to be milled into flour, which is a healthier alternative than wheat flour.

Asides.

Hon. C.P. SINCKLER: Sir, we can utilise the byproducts of casava. There is a lot of talent and a lot of knowledge that this Barbados poultry sector in Barbados, which is one of the best any part of the world can share with many countries.

I saw Grenada trying to put a case to the WTO to have poultry products, which they put up for liberalisation removed from liberalisation because they wanted to invest millions of dollars into poultry production. Barbados can assist in that particular regard as well.

Then, we have to look at how we can generate, economically, meaningful employment in agriculture.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Honourable Member had five minutes in which to conclude.

Hon. C.P. SINCKLER: Thank you, Sir.

Sir, this is not only to work in the fields but to carry out research in laboratories, to work in processing firms and to work in marketing firms.

When you look at the incentives which were given by the Honourable Prime Minister in this Budget, there are incentives for every possible area. We spoke about predial larceny the Honourable Prime Minister and Minister of Finance provided an incentive rebate for farmers who utilise up to \$10 000 of resources putting in appropriate security systems to monitor their farms and that was up to \$1 million on a first come, first served basis.

I would really know how many people have taken advantage of that and, in fact, what the Prime Minister did, Sir, he said that the agriculturalists should be like every other sector in Barbados, not getting their incentives as a rebate as the end but getting their incentives upfront like every other sector.

Sir, one cannot say that things have not been done in that particular regard, therefore, we are talking about protecting our environment, providing economic activity and job, securing our food supply to the extent that we can as a small country, earning money through the high end value-added activities in agriculture. This is what has been taking place and that is why this Government intends to take agriculture. The fact that one year after this Budget, we have seen in the face of the worse possible recession in the world, that in Barbados the non sugar agricultural sector has been able to stabilise its performance and grow in significant areas. This means that these Budgetary proposals did in fact work, and that we will continue to seek ways to do so and that is why we are here today, that eleven years after that Government put an incentive scheme in place and did not come to Parliament.

Asides.

Hon. C.P. SINCKLER: You were breaking the law then.

They did not put the incentives in place, we have come here to clean up this matter, as we have had to clean up many things.

Asides.

Hon. C.P. SINCKLER: Sir, therefore do not let us split hairs in agriculture, let us agree that we can work together.

Asides.

Hon. C.P. SINCKLER: It does not matter. The only persons who had original thought were Adam and Eve and the Leader of the Opposition, only the three of them, so we will build on everybody else in that particular regard.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would want to commend this particular piece of Legislation to the House. I also want to commend the substantive Minister of Agriculture for his outstanding work in this particular field. He has brought a new breadth of fresh air to agriculture.

I would close with this because the Honourable Member for St. Michael West Central spoke about agriculture and he is so modest, he did not want to say, that in the same 2008 Budget that this Government under the Minister of Finance increased the subvention to the Barbados Agricultural Society from \$100 000 to \$200 000 too, to help all those small farmers from St. George that the Honourable Member for St. George North participated in helping to get some of their land out of agriculture into housing.

We brought them back into agriculture through our activities. Therefore, we have nothing to be ashamed of and will continue to support the agriculturists in this country as long as the resources allow us to do so and, of course, our will and ability continue to shine upon them, even as they seek to help us to grow what we eat and eat what we grow.

I am obliged to you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Christ Church East Central.

Hon. R.D. JONES: Mr. Deputy Speaker, as I rise to bring this particular debate to a close, I wish to commend all Honourable Members of the House for their contribution but more particularly the Honourable Members from this side whose support of the Legislation and their words attached to that support were in fact quite outstanding. It goes to show that on this side of the House, there are men and women who, yes, have to carry the responsibilities of their particular portfolio, still have a wide knowledge of other areas of developmental activities for Barbados. The discussion on agriculture has surely demonstrated that breadth of knowledge and that understanding of the role that agriculture has to play in the development of Barbados.

They surely underscored by their contributions that agriculture has to play in the development of Barbados. They surely underscored by their contributions their commitment to agriculturists, to farmers, and all of those involved in the various chain of production, from primary products right through to processed products.

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Hon. R. D. JONES: They surely underscore, by their contribution, their commitment to agriculturalists, to farmers and to all of those involved in the various chain of production from the primary products right through to processed products through the agro-processing industry of Barbados.

At the outset we said that this was a Bill to give legislative currency to the rebates provided way back in 1999. We found that over time we have had to do some cleaning up to ensure that the actions are not in the breach but that they are supported by the necessary legislation, so I am indeed grateful for the support.

The Honourable Member for St. Michael North West has spoken to the words of the Honourable Member for St. George North. It is sometimes a bit facetious when the Honourable Member for St. George North gets up to speak. Mr. Deputy Speaker, we all know that the BADMC had a shop at the Grantley Adams International Airport for a number of years but that shop used to sell any and every thing from any and every body from every part of the world. It has taken a deliberate decision to recognise the name of the late Senator Carmeta Fraser who preached about the indigenous nature of agricultural production at agro-industrial processing and they made a policy decision to rebrand this particular enterprise and name it Carmeta's to give greater focus on indigenous production at the level of cottage industries where men and women who are able, in hygienic conditions, to make the sauces, condiments, spices, jams, jellies, pepper sauce and hot peppers in the various forms, are given an opportunity to have their products sold.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, one cannot criticise that kind of synergy where products are being moved from the fields and the greenhouses of Barbados into processing of these various products and into a shop owned by the Government of Barbados. The Honourable Member for Christ Church South has already spoken to the 29 enterprises, and growing, that have placed their products at that shop. We have spoken of the beef and lamb stew marinade; the pork marinade; garlic pickle; golden apple sauce; hot and spicy barbecue sauce; zesty onion radish; mango chutney; and ginger pepper jelly. There is creativity. Yes, some of these things have their origins in other Caribbean cultures but the Government has provided space in Barbados where persons who are fused with Barbadians are able to utilise their ingenuity utilising Barbadian grown products have those products placed in that outlet. This reminds me that between 1971 and 1976, I remember it well, the late Right Excellency Errol Walton Barrow's Government of the time, through the BMC, as it was called at that time, told

farmers, especially small farmers, to produce and whatever they produce they will buy, grade and sell. We know that in the production of simple things like carrots you could have from grade A right down to grade E. Grades A and B would find their purpose in the shops being sold raw and Grades C, D and E could be turned into juices, et cetera, some could be canned. Mr. Deputy Speaker, small farmers saw that as an opportunity because they did not have to worry about selling, they just had to worry about production.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, that was one of the first casualties of the Barbados Labour Party in 1976. Again, this is another area of economic activity not recognised as being viable by the Barbados Labour Party, so those structures which were put in place were immediately dismantled. I spoke earlier this morning about yam flakes, instant yam, which too was a casualty of that particular effort of dismantling agriculture in Barbados, of giving hard food to the farmers of Barbados. That is what was essentially happening under the leadership of the Barbados Labour Party's regime at the time.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, also in that little shop by the BADMC you can find chili pepper sauce, black pepper sauce, cassava flour and breadfruit flour. These are small businesses operating in hygienic conditions in attachments to the homes of people. That means we have gone full cycle because we are taking the raw product and we are refining it and making it easier for those who want to prepare tasty dishes, so they have a product that they could use and manipulate.

There is also coconut oil. We knew that in the villages of Barbados coconut oil used to be made, now it has reached a more highly refined state to be sold at Carmeta's, which is owned by the BADMC. There is also rum cakes and those things which are known to all of us by Mrs. Ursula Francis. There is also sugar cakes, nut cakes, fudge, guava cheese and mango cheese by A and A Delights. We have to provide opportunities for entrepreneurs because this is what this essentially is, entrepreneurial activity by people in Barbados.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am hoping that one day coming soon a product called "Boost Mah", which was developed by a young woman in the constituency of Christ Church East Central, a product which when it took off was essentially being used by men... I know that those members of the other side, particularly the Honourable Member for St. George North can well do with some of that product.

Asides.

Hon. R. D. JONES: You can use some of that product Honourable Member, it might enhance your capacity and not only would your reputation go before you

but you would be able to back up that reputation, which you have developed over time.

We talked of the concessions and the incentives for farmers.

I have made the point that no longer do farmers and all of those who are looking for the concessions and the rebates have to go through the Ministry of Finance, so you have this intermediate stage. The Ministry of Agriculture has been charged with the responsibility to deliver, so there is one to one correspondence, if the Honourable Member for St. George North understands that kind of relationship. I am the farmer, I go straight to the source, I get the resources that I need, that is what is happening.

If the Honourable Member for St. George North would pay a little more attention rather than running about the place pretending that he is some medium size contractor, then he would be able to come to this House...

Asides.

Hon. R. D. JONES: There are up front concessions in a variety of areas, in the whole livestock arena, cattle; pigs; sheep; goats; poultry; rabbits; live fish fry and fingerlings; and live crustaceans intended for breeding or rearing for food.

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Hon. Ronald D. JONES: Mr. Deputy Speaker, these are all up-front duty-free concessions for agricultural inputs, you do not need to output then to recover, these are all up-front concessions, you get them at the point of entry so you do not have to go through the difficulty.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, another up-front concession is in relation to planting material: sea stock such as sea moss; cuttings of plants used for planting materials; bulbs, tubers, tuberous-roots, corms, crumbs and rhizomes; seeds, fruit and spores of a kind used for sowing. Mr. Deputy Speaker, these are up-front concessions, so a farmer does not have to bring in whatever it is that he plants in his field, then expends the resources, then look for a draw-down, that farmer gets those concessions up-front.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, a third up-front concession is in relation to machinery and equipment: ploughs; harrows; sub-soilers; motor mowers (sickle and rotary, not less than 7.5 h.p.); rotovators; planters and transplanters; fertiliser spreaders; cultivators; boom sprayers; hand or knapsack sprayers; dusters; ridges.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, there is a whole list of up-front concessions including: poultry-keeping machinery; brooders; incubators; forage choppers; forage harvesters. Mr. Deputy Speaker, there is a whole list of up-front concessions. Let us understand what we are talking about, everything is included in there for farmers to produce, farmers who get up-front concessions.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Honourable Member, I know now slouches under the table because he does not ...

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: On a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading this Chamber. Sir, these incentives were always given. This is nothing new. Sir, the point I have been making all along is that despite the fact that these incentives are known, it is very difficult to get them out of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we heard the Minister on the radio engaging in a lot of public relations but when you go to the Ministry, what happens next. That is the point I am making. Sir, these incentives have always been there from the time that Adam was a lad. How do you get those incentives?

Hon. Ronald D. JONES: Mr. Deputy Speaker, if I did not know the capacity of the Honourable Member for St. George North to actually dance, I would believe that he would be considered a good verbal dancer. Sir, his accusation was not necessarily that some of these concessions were not available but that they were in the Ministry of Finance. I now told him that in order to speed up the process we have moved them into the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development. Sir, the Honourable Member is therefore finding another form of criticism.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Honourable Member simply wants to prove the point that nothing is happening to farmers but the farmers at the ones who are speaking. Sir, the testing of the proof of the pudding is in the eating, and farmers are producing. Farmers will not produce unless they were receiving the kinds of incentives such as rebates and concessions and that their products were being utilised by Barbadians. This is a fact, they are not just producing out of nostalgic conditions or circumstances, they are also looking for revenues to support their families, either nuclear or extended, and support their communities. Therefore, let us stay focused on the facts. We know there is still a lot of work to be done but that Governmental resources are not inexhaustible. What we need is a greater synergy between production and consumption. We need those who are involved in the hospitality sector to commission farmers to produce for them watermelons, cabbage, beets, Chinese cabbage, regular cabbage.

Asides.

Hon. Ronald D. JONES: Mr. Deputy Speaker, there is nothing wrong in managing an economy, you would not get the beans in glut but you would get sustained production so that the earnings of those in the fields can be sustained. Therefore, we are able to do more research in better varieties, in preservation.

There is so much wastage of produce in Barbados that it is frightening. I remember some years ago, under the Barbados Labour Party at Fairy Valley Plantation, there was the establishment of an agro-processing factory. It lasted just as long as the Honourable Member for Christ Church West lasted as an Honourable Member of this House before he moved off to Canada. It was quick and short.

Asides.

Hon. Ronald D. JONES: Sir, they gave lip service to the process.

Asides.

Hon. Ronald D. JONES: You are a classical Member of the Barbados Labour Party, you do everything and then you say you do not know anything about it, that reminds me of the Honourable Member for St. George North who was Minister of Transport and Works during the previous Parliament, who said he did not know anything about the ABC Highway. He said that it was beyond him. He also said he did not know anything about SSS, the construction company. This is what they are known for, that is their behaviour so it does not surprise me that the Honourable Member for Christ Church West says he does not know anything about that. Sir, we throw away too much, we allow too much of our foods to spoil.

Asides.

Hon. Ronald D. JONES: Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Honourable Member for Christ Church West needs to stay in Barbados and to assist his constituents. If the Honourable Member is unable to become engaged in the work of Parliament, particularly dealing with this Bill, the Honourable Member should surrender his salary. He should resign and give someone the opportunity to serve and to contribute to a debate such as this Bill.

Asides.

Hon. Ronald D. JONES: Mr. Deputy Speaker, no longer is there a constituency office.

Asides.

Hon. Ronald D. JONES: It is still on Government's land, and closed.

Asides.

Hon. Ronald D. JONES: I have already introduced you to “Boost Muh,” that is going to help you.

Asides.

Hon. Ronald D. JONES: Mr. Deputy Speaker, this debate has shown that the Government of Barbados is interested and is working for the development of agriculture in Barbados. It will remain a critical part of our economic development agenda as well as our social development agenda because we know when we can have persons in the rural economy producing products for the Barbadian economy and for export, that they families will be well- taken care of; that they will be able to construct their homes; that they will have their vehicles for leisure and production; that they will be able to utilise the hospitality and recreational services across Barbados. Sir, there is a synergy between everything we do, one leaps into the other and the other leaps into the other and we then get the holistic process taking place across the country.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, do not let us cry and complain, let us work together because that is what we need. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have seen and used several products coming out of Thailand, where they have taken surplus agricultural products and have used various preservative methods with the various tropical products and they bag them and they are nutritious snacks so that you have, for example, mangoes that are preserved and properly bagged. These bags contain no more than five or six pieces of mango, yet the price is US\$2 per bag. What is wrong where our farmers in Barbados can produce the right amounts of mangoes, moving them from the primary stage to that secondary processed stage for consumption. Is it not better for a young child in school to be snacking on preserved mangoes appropriately sliced, than corn curls or on any of the blue, yellow and red food dyes?

Mr. Deputy Speaker, preserving our carambola or “five fingers,” can also be done, utilising solar technologies and all of these other products to assist in entrepreneurial development and utilising what comes from the earth.

6.00 p.m.

Tuesday, July 06, 2010

Hon. R. D. JONES: We have short-changed ourselves in this country particularly under the Barbados Labour Party when they were looking to shut down agriculture in Barbados. Sir, Graeme Hall was to be sold by the Barbados Labour Party. Sir, this is what was happening, they were abandoning agriculture and leaving the farmers on their own. Sir, they were abandoning the Home Agricultural Station and they were abandoning

everything. They never saw the importance of agriculture, it was about selling off the land so that it could fetch its highest value and, therefore, they stand condemned. Sir, if not for the resilience of the African and the European who conjoin in this place, there would have been no agriculture in Barbados because there was no leadership by the Government of the Barbados Labour Party. Sir, as I have said, I do not like looking back but when the truth is being denied, the truth must be told. Sir, they have done literally nothing and one was a whole mass of declines right across the board but thank God, the rescue team has come and we are working. We know that we cannot bring everything to the fore in one fell swoop but as we move up the ladder piece by piece, stage by stage, that the farmers and agriculturists of Barbados would continue to produce, that citizens of Barbados would continue to purchase their produce, that those who are thieves, stealing the crops of hardworking farmers would stop, would cease and desist. We cannot put electrified fence around every single plot of production regardless of the sensible incentives which were offered in 2008. We just cannot do that. Sir, Barbados must not be a society of electrified fences and persons have to respect the properties of others. There is a lot of value-added as you move the product along the food chain towards the consumption chain. You can purchase from the farmer, sell and have value added rather than stealing from the farmer, and as you steal, you destroy more than you steal because you do it in a hurry and you trample on the fields of the hard work of men and women of Barbados.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, (18:03:10) would bring to this House, it is being worked on, I have mentioned the various pieces of legislation, so that we would not only be seen as a place where golf courses would have taken up every piece of arable land. Sir, Durants, Rockley, Apes Hill, Westmoreland, Bushy Park, Black Bess and Lancaster, all, every piece, as you would say, nook and cranny, was approved under the leadership of the Barbados Labour Party. Sir, it is difficult to bring back into production land which has gone into golf courses. Sir, probably you could plant some fruit trees but in many instances the soil is so poisoned that it takes some time before you are able to use it for any form of production.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, again, the Honourable Minister of Housing must be complimented. We working along with Town and Country Planning and we are shifting from the outward spread to the upward spread because you can build a house on 2 000 square feet and are using the zero lot line at Coverley, which is a beautiful development. I hope Barbadians make use of the 1 300 houses which would be completed with all the amenities there by the middle of 2013 or thereabout. Sir, all of that is part of recognising that we have scarce land resources and there might necessarily be competition between housing, recreational use and agriculture in Barbados so we are going upwards. Sri, if look at the housing at Country Park Tower, they are

beautiful. I hope that those persons who are able to gain access to them would keep them in their pristine condition. Sir, that is housing that I have seen in metropolitan countries.

Asides.

Hon. R. D. JONES: Condominiums, that is what they are and persons scramble to get that type of housing and they pay premium rates for those types of houses. Sir, other will go up because we want to conserve land for agricultural purposes. Sir, at Stuart Lodge - I am sure I am not going to speak out of turn - at Eckstein Village, I believe we are going to have some upscale housing climbing from the ground to the sky. Sir, upstairs is limitless space. We can touch the stars, that is our goal.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, at Brittons Hill in the constituency of St. Michael South Central, again, conserving space, you go upwards with housing solutions with the appropriate amenities, either shared space or a particular space. Sir, this is what Government is doing. We are utilising Crown's land in the urban area and further up from Country Park Towers almost above the National Housing Corporation, we will go upstairs again with housing for Barbadians because we are conscious of the agricultural reality but we are also conscious of housing a nation and helping every last person.

Asides.

Hon. R. D. JONES: I was going to call it helping each and every person.

Asides.

Hon. R. D. JONES: You can call it help or heap because we are building a heap of houses. (18:07:21)

Mr. Speaker, this was an important debate on agriculture. We have not had time before to do that. We sought, through the access of this amendment Bill, to do that. There will be other times in this place and in the Other Place to expatiate, that is the word used by the Honourable Member for St. James North, on this particular activity.

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

Hon. C.P. SINCKLER: I beg to second that, Sir.

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

On the separate motion of Hon. R. D. JONES, seconded by Hon. C.P. SINCKLER, the House resolved itself into Committee, Mr. J. D. PAUL in the Chair.

H/A69/18:10 Sequence 42

Tuesday, July 6, 2010

On the motion of Hon. R.D. JONES, seconded by Hon. S.A. LASHLEY, the House went into Committee with Mr. CHAIRMAN in the Chair.

COMMITTEE

Mr. CHAIRMAN: This Honourable House is in Committee.

Clauses 1 to 3 were called and passed.

On the motion of Hon. R.D. JONES, seconded by Hon. S.A. LASHLEY, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported the passing of one Bill in Committee and Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER resumed the Chair.

On the motion of Hon. R.D. JONES, seconded by Hon. S.A. LASHLEY, the Bill was read a third time and passed and cited as the Income Tax (Amendment) (N0.2) Act, 2010.

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. C. P. SINCKLER: Mr. Deputy Speaker, that brings us to the end of Government Business for the day. I beg to move that this Honourable House do now stand adjourned until Tuesday, August 6, 2010, at 10.00 a.m.

Hon. R.D. JONES: I beg to second that.

The question that the House be adjourned until Tuesday, March 6, 2010 a 10.00 a.m. was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. Deputy Speaker adjourned the House accordingly.

18.10 p.m.

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CLARKE, Mr. G. A. (St. George North)
EASTMOND, Mr. R. C. (St. James North)
HUTSON, Hon. E. G. (St. James Central)
JONES, Hon. R.D. (Christ Church East Central)
LASHLEY, Hon. M.A. (St. Philip North)
PAUL, Mr. J. D. (St. Michael West Central)
PAYNE, Mr. G.W. (St. Andrew)
SINCKLER, Hon. C.P. (St. Michael North West)
STUART, Hon. J.
TODD, Hon. P.M.T. (City of Bridgetown)

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EDITORIAL NOTES — NOT PART OF THE REPORT

Prepared with the transcript; for checking against the recording and the Minutes.

EDITORIAL QUERIES

Points noted while preparing this report from the edited transcript. The text has not been altered except where stated.

Q1. Masthead. The session is not stated in the source, so no session line is printed.

Q2. Minutes. The source records the confirmation of the Minutes of 'Tuesday, November 10, 2009'; the Deputy Speaker then calls 'The Minutes of Tuesday, June 15, 2010', while Hon. C. P. Sinckler moves those of 'Tuesday, June 29', with a seconder's line reading '??I beg to second that, Sir.'; after the suspension the Minutes of 29th June, 2010 are moved and confirmed again. A stray line reading '2009.' also stands after the opening words. Printed as in the source. Please confirm.

Q3. First Reading. The procedural note reads 'On the motion of Hon. R.D. JONES, seconded by..., the following Bill was read a first time', the seconder's name being missing. Printed as in the source.

Q4. Order No. 4, speech of Mr. J. D. Paul. After the Deputy Speaker's words 'The Honourable Member has five more minutes', the rest of Mr. J. D. Paul's speech (about 740 words, beginning 'J.D. PAUL: Sir, I also want to look at the role of State institutions') is run on under the Deputy Speaker's label in the source. Printed as in the source.

Q5. Order No. 4, Member for St. George North. The Deputy Speaker calls 'The Honourable Member for St. George North', but the next speech and a reply to a point of order are labelled 'Mr. G.W. PAYNE'; after the take-slip at about 3.10 p.m. the same reply is repeated in fuller form under 'Mr. G. A. CLARKE', who continues the speech. The 'Mr. G.W. PAYNE' label may be wrong. Printed as in the source. Please confirm.

Q6. Order No. 4, reply of Hon. R. D. Jones. Either side of the take-slip at about 5.40 p.m. the sentence beginning 'They surely underscored by their contributions...' appears twice in slightly different wording. Both are printed as in the source.

Q7. Order No. 4, Committee. The source carries two motions for going into Committee: one seconded by Hon. C. P. Sinckler with 'Mr. J. D. PAUL in the Chair' and one seconded by 'Hon. S.A. LASHLEY' with 'Mr. CHAIRMAN in the Chair'. The Act is cited as 'Income Tax (Amendment) (N0.2) Act, 2010'. Printed as in the source.

Q8. Adjournment. Hon. C. P. Sinckler moves the adjournment until 'Tuesday, August 6, 2010', but the procedural note records the House adjourned until 'Tuesday, March 6, 2010', a date before this Sitting. Printed as in the source. Please confirm the date.

Q9. Order No. 4, other points. The Income Tax Act is cited as 'Cap 73' by Hon. R. D. Jones and Mr. J. D. Paul and as 'Cap. 63' by Hon. M. A. Lashley, and the Deputy Speaker refers to Mr. G. A. Clarke as 'The Honourable Senator'. Printed as in the source.

DEBATE SUMMARY

(Editorial summary — not part of the record.)

The House of Assembly met on Tuesday, 6th July, 2010 at 10.10 a.m.; the Speaker, His Honour Michael A. Carrington, opened the Sitting and the Deputy Speaker, His Honour Kenneth St.C. Best, presided for most of the day. Minutes were confirmed, the Income Tax (Amendment) (No.2) Bill, 2010 was read a first time on the motion of Hon. R. D. Jones, and Standing Orders were suspended for the rest of the Sitting.

The only Order taken was No. 4, the Income Tax (Amendment) (No.2) Bill, 2010. Mr. Jones, described by Hon. J. D. E. Boyce as acting Prime Minister, said the Bill would give legal effect to a rebate on agricultural and agro-processing machinery announced in the Budgetary Proposals of 1999, which had been paid for 11 years without the necessary amendment; the rebates ran from 18 per cent at the higher end to 10 per cent at the lower. He said non-sugar agricultural production had risen by 2.7 per cent, spoke of praedial larceny, the 4-H Movement and the export of local produce, and was called back to the Bill by the Deputy Speaker during an exchange about a Member's late father.

Mr. R. C. Eastmond spoke on farm-gate prices, hydroponics and the meaning of agro-processing. Mr. J. D. Paul described a pig breeding laboratory in St. Thomas, argued that an abattoir is a social good the Government must finance, and praised the role of the BADMC. After the suspension, Hon. C. P. Sinckler informed the House that Mr. A. D. Brathwaite, Member for St. Philip South, had been appointed Attorney-General and Minister of Home Affairs, and the Deputy Speaker congratulated him. Hon. E. G. Hutson spoke of an abandoned cherry programme at Indian Ground and Haggatts, and Hon. M. A. Lashley cited a 69 per cent increase in root crops in 2009 and called for stiffer penalties under the Praedial Larceny Act.

For the Opposition, Mr. G. A. Clarke supported the Bill but argued that many farmers had received these incentives since 1998, that agriculture ‘did not start in 2008’, and that more had been spent on Constituency Councils and camps than on farmers; he raised praedial larceny and the marketing of produce. His speech drew points of order from Hon. M. A. Lashley, Mr. Sinckler, Mr. Jones and Mr. Hutson on whether budgetary proposals take effect without legislation.

Dr. the Hon. E. R. Byer-Suckoo said mutton, milk and egg production had risen by 5 per cent in 2009 and described agro-tourism plans for St. George. Mr. Boyce quoted the 2008 Budgetary Proposals and spoke of the BADMC shop at the airport and the Zagat rating of the Oistins Fish Market, over points of order from Mr. Clarke.

Hon. P. M. T. Todd listed incentives such as a rebate of \$500 a hectare for pasture and 50 per cent of the cost of waste treatment systems up to \$15 000. Mr. Sinckler accused the former Government of taking good agricultural land out of production, and Mr. Clarke replied on points of order that this had begun in 1976 with Fairfield and Rowans Plantations.

In reply Mr. Jones listed up-front duty-free concessions on livestock and other agricultural inputs. The Bill was read a second time without division, Clauses 1 to 3 were passed in Committee, and the Bill was read a third time and passed. On the motion of Mr. Sinckler the House was adjourned; the date is given in the source both as Tuesday, 6th August, 2010 and as Tuesday, 6th March, 2010.