
THE

House of Assembly Debates

(UNOFFICIAL REPORT)

PARLIAMENT 2018 – 2022

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, December 8, 2020

Pursuant to the adjournment, the House Assembly met at the Worthing Corporate Centre, Worthing, Christ Church at 10.00 a.m. on Tuesday, December 8, 2020.

PRESENT

His Honour A. E. HOLDER, B.Sc. (Hons), MSW, LL.B. (Hons), L.E.C. (Speaker)

His Honour Mr. N. G. H. ROWE J. P. (Deputy Speaker)

Mr. G. W. PAYNE Q.C.

Hon. R. St. C. TOPPIN, LL.B. (Hons.) (Minister of International Business and Industry)

Hon. Miss C. Y. FORDE, J.P., L.C.P. (Minister of People Empowerment and Elder Affairs)

Hon. D. D. MARSHALL, Q.C., LL.B. (Hons.), (Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs)

Mr. T. A. PRESCOD, J.P., B.A.

Mr. E. G. HINKSON, LL.B. (Hons.) L.E.C., LL.M.

Hon. Miss S. J. O. BRADSHAW, LL.B. (Hons.) L.E.C. (Leader of Government Business) (Minister of Education, Technological and Vocational Training)

Bishop J. J. S. ATHERLEY, J.P., B.A., B.Sc., PgD. (Leader of the Opposition)

Dr. the Hon. W. F. DUGUID J.P., B.D.S., F.D.S., F.D.R.C.S., (Minister of Housing, Lands and Maintenance)

Hon. W. A. ABRAHAM, LL.B. (Hons.) (Minister of Home Affairs, Information and Public Affairs)

Hon. Ms. C. S. V. HUSBANDS, B.A., M.Sc. (Hons.) (Minister in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade)

Mr. R. A. THORNE, Q.C. LL.B., L.E.C., Dip. Theology

Hon. I. A. WEIR, M.B.A. (Minister of Agriculture and Food Security)

Hon. A. R. FORDE, Rph. (Minister of Environment and National Beautification)

Hon. C. McD. GRIFFITH, B.Sc. (Minister in the Ministry of Water Resources)

Hon. P. R. PHILLIPS (Minister in the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security)

Hon. J. A. KING, B.S.S. (Minister in the Prime Minister's Office with Responsibility for Culture and the National Development Commission)

Hon. G. P. I. GOODING-EDGHILL (Minister of Transport, Works and Water Resources)

Hon. K. D. M. HUMPHREY B.Sc., M.Sc., M.P.A. (Minister of Maritime Affairs and the Blue Economy)

Hon. R. R. STRAUGHN, B.Sc., M.Sc. (Minister in the Ministry of Finance)

Hon. Miss M. K-A. CADDLE, B.A., M.Sc. (Minister in the Ministry of Economic Affairs)

Dr. S. E. BROWNE, M.B.B.S. (Chairman of Committees)

Ms. T. N. S.-A. MOORE, M.B.A.

Prayers were taken by Canon Father Ivan Harewood Mr. SPEAKER: The House is now in session.

MINUTES

Mr. SPEAKER: The Minutes of Tuesday, December 1, 2020.

Hon. Miss S. J. O. BRADSHAW: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that the Minutes for the Honourable House of Assembly be deferred.

Hon. C. McD. GRIFFITH: I beg to second that.

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

PAPERS

Hon. K. D. M. HUMPHREY: Mr. Speaker, I am commanded to lay the following:

1. Annual Report and Audited Financial Statement of the Barbados Port Inc. for the financial year ending March 31, 2018.

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2. Annual Report and Audited Financial Statement of the Barbados Port Inc. for the financial year ending March 31, 2019.

FIRST READING OF BILLS

Hon. Miss S. J. O. BRADSHAW: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that the Barbados Humanitarian Service Award Bill, 2020 be read a first time.

Hon. K. D. SYMMONDS: I beg to second that, Sir.

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

Hon. Miss S. J. O. BRADSHAW: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that the Anti-Corruption and Anti-Terrorism Agency Bill, 2020 be read a first time.

Hon. K. D. SYMMONDS: I beg to second that, Sir.

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

ORDERS OF THE DAY

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

Hon. Miss S. J. O. BRADSHAW: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that Standing Orders Nos. 6, 16, 18, 20, 42(5), 43 and 44 be suspended for the remainder of today's Sitting.

Hon. C. McD. GRIFFITH: I beg to second that, Sir.

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

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

ORDER NO. 1 – SECOND READING OF THE PESTICIDES CONTROL (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2020.

Hon. I. A. WEIR: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today, this speech I wish to commend to you and this Honourable Chamber an amendment to the Pesticides Control Bill, 2020. It reminds me, Sir, of my days as a primary school boy when you came early in the afternoon and no one was sure about how the wicket would play, so you were asked to open the batting and invariably that is the time when you get to bat for the entire day, and perhaps score 100 runs. In my days as a primary school boy, I have made about three

hundreds under such circumstances but I never excelled beyond then.

Asides.

Hon. I. A. WEIR: Mr. Speaker, a journey of 1 000 miles begins with a single step and this is a common saying that originated from a famous Chinese proverb. The quotation is from Chapter 64 of the Dao De Jing ascribed to Lao Tzu although nowadays we also ascribe this to Confucius. Mr. Speaker, the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security when I went there in 2018 had a tremendous amount before it in order that we may as follows:

1. Reach our transformational goals
2. Simultaneously, empower and enfranchise Barbadians.

Sir, this called for a fair amount of strategic planning and in so doing, there are a number of things that remain outstanding over prolonged periods and in some instances more than two decades. Such was the situation at the Ministry and we had to then arrange and prioritize how we would address this situation given the fact in some instances - I must be very clear but at the same time I want to be as candid as possible where this is concerned- the Ministry of Agriculture previously would have had Ministry of Agriculture and Water Resources or Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development. Sir, those attachments gave rise to a focus on some social developments that needed to take place in Barbados and, indeed, shrinking a gap between the haves and the have nots, therefore, you would find that many ministers in the Ministry of Agriculture with the additional responsibility for either water resource management or rural development would have focused a lot on those additions so that we can bring the country along, achieve the stated social objectives whilst at the same time manage agriculture. Sir, that contributed in a large way to a number of the gaps that were created in agriculture where one may easily argue that agriculture at many times was left to go adrift.

Sir, that has to be stated because for the first time in all of my existence and certainly for the first time where I have been following politics and I started as a little boy in 1971 and I have seen a Prime Minister decided clearly that the Ministry of Agriculture should carry food security and its focus should be on the development of agriculture and food security in Barbados and that we would bring along the farmers in this country and make agriculture once and for all viable, but equally, a sector where people will be drawn to it and that we can at the same time create new opportunities for people in agriculture. Mr. Speaker, that has to be re-enforced because at the end of the day what we are doing is that we are righting a number of wrongs over, as I said, it could be as long as two decades. Some may argue they may be more.

Mr. Speaker, if you drive around Barbados now you would see that right along that countryside there are many vacant lots, several acres of land, Mr. Speaker, overgrown by bush. You would also see, Mr. Speaker, that there are some plantations where the husbandry is not at its best and why some try -- I know that I am not supposed to call names, Mr. Speaker, if you drive from Holton on your way to Bridgetown or from Brereton on your way to Bridgetown, the aesthetics that you see along Edgecombe really is quick pleasing and as a good example for what husbandry and good agricultural practices should be like in Barbados, however, what happened at Edgecombe is that they have committed to getting people with weed whackers to go along and cut along the terrain so that you have this real beautiful aesthetically pleasing site compared to others who have chosen to use pesticides as a way out.

Mr. Speaker, pesticides contribute in a large way to agricultural success and we cannot rule it out completely, but at the same time we need to understand how we can strike a balance between the use of pesticides and labour and that, Sir, is perhaps a conversation that we need to have now more than ever. I am sure, sir, when the Minister of Environment and National Beautification gets to speak about this we would address the issue with biodiversity and I am sure that he would also agree with me that what we have had over the years is a complete dissemination of many of the good insects, butterflies, grasshoppers, and those are insects that serve a purpose and form a part of our biodiversity, but equally serve to tell us when the ecology is good. You may note that there are periods when you see a lot of white butterflies and during that period is when the ecology is perhaps at its best. When they start to disappear you know then that there are other insects or some other kind of pest that is taking over.

Mr. Speaker, we also live in a time when there is climate change and we have had several conversations about climate change, but unfortunately not enough action was taken prior to now where climate change is concerned and the fact that we have allowed ourselves to be having yesterday's conversation today is indicative of how we have treated to agriculture in the past. Sir, climate change does not only bring climatic weather conditions where we have either floods or on the other extreme prolong droughts, we are also now exposed to various types of crop diseases, animal diseases, pests, all transboundary simply because when you move goods and when you move plants and when you move animals or animal products, you are now at risk of moving various pests and diseases to our shores, but equally, many of the bad ones that we would not have seen over time or in recent times, Sir, would start now to come back so that they can act as predictors to destroy the good ones that we need. Sir, this is a situation that confronts us, therefore, it is necessary for us to have a conversation about the used pesticides in Barbados, but

overall, pesticides in agriculture and its impact on the environment, Sir.

The Pesticides Control Act, CAP 395 of the Laws of Barbados is the only proclaimed Act that barely seeks to manage the use of chemicals in Barbados. Sir, inasmuch as we are signatory to the Basel Convention and the Stockholm Convention and in recent times, after many years, the Rotterdam Convention, we have only got one piece of legislation that provides complete management so therefore, we have had to make the amendments to bring it in line with what is required in order that we can treat to this matter of the use and management of chemicals and pesticides in agriculture in a real meaningful way.

Sir, the Act previously allowed for the Deputy Chief Agriculture Officer to be the Chairman of the Pesticides Control Board. You would have your downline who reports to you the Chief Agriculture Officer as the Chairman of the Pesticides Control Board but you the Chief Agriculture Officer is the one for guiding policy, managing a technical team which includes your deputy and at the same time make decisions that your deputy must carry out, but he is the man that is the Chairman of the Pesticides Control Board so straight away you can see the anomaly. Equally, the Deputy Chief Agriculture Officer is not necessarily always a trained scientist and he may have to appoint somebody to the Board as National Insurance Scheme nominee. Sir, it would have been a real difficult thing for a Deputy Chief Agriculture Officer to go to the Chief Agriculture Officer and say I am appointing you as my nominee to the Pesticides Control Board. I think that should have been the other way around, therefore, the simple amendment to this Bill is to correct that and to allow the Chief Agriculture Officer to become the Chairman of the Board.

It goes a little further - and I will get into the details of the amendment a little later in my speech. It goes a little further because previously we did not have established under the Act a registry for pesticides and so it was a case of anything goes. That is something that we needed to correct so we included an additional Clause 3A to make sure that we have a Registrar of Pesticides and so therefore that Registrar would then be responsible for the maintenance of a register of pesticides.

Mr. Speaker, all of us would have heard of the case of Dwayne Johnson in California where his lawyers successfully argued that the use of Roundup or glyphosate could have been linked to his illness, non-Hodgkin Lymphoma. He was awarded a substantial sum of money in damages even though over a period of time successful arguments have been used to reduce the sum that was first awarded. I think he ended up with some \$76 million as opposed to \$200-and-something million that was up first awarded so that straightaway, Sir, you can see that we are

not in normal times and that once you have established precedent then you are responsible and it becomes incumbent on every single jurisdiction to make sure you take the necessary action (1) to protect people, (2) to protect the environment and (3) to make sure that we are protecting our biodiversity and the ecology and in so doing it would mean that you have to have a systematic structured approach in order to be able to accomplish this. Mr. Speaker, this is why now we are moving to have a real structured Pesticides Control Board that would then seek to manage a lot of what we are seeking to do as it relates to pesticide management in Barbados.

Mr. Speaker, I took to Cabinet during the COVID-19 shutdown period a Paper that spoke to the controlled use of Roundup or glyphosate in Barbados and that the Cabinet did agree that we should set out in very clear terms how we are going to manage pesticides in Barbados and at the same time how these chemicals would be accessible by the public, therefore, Mr. Speaker, in reality we are seeking to make sure that every farmer with a licence can still access these chemicals but that the person who lives, say for example, in St. Philip North or St. Philip South which is basically part of the agriculture belt of Barbados or even St. George North, and wants to use these chemicals to spray the backyard rather than a fork or a hoe then we need to manage that and to make sure that people are not just going into a hardware store or a chemical shop and have access to purchasing these things for home use. To my mind, Sir, we have reached a stage where the risk is too great and so therefore whilst I understand, because the sugar industry for sure still relies heavily on the use of chemicals, I am not so certain that we need to have chemicals kept in somebody's kitchen or a storeroom at home.

Mr. Speaker, the other thing is that the disposal of containers can create significant problems to the environment certainly to the aquifer. Indeed, we find that a lot of people dump in our gullies so that you have these containers being dumped in gullies and really and truly all this now needs to be managed and brought under control. In order for us to achieve this, Sir, the first objective is that we have to get buy-in nationally but equally we also have to get buy-in from all of the farmers in Barbados. Mr. Speaker, I would just cite an example, if I am to digress for just a moment, to say that I know that at the BAMC, the Barbados Agricultural Management Company Limited, there are several farms that have been returned to increase sugar cane production and during this current rainy period a lot of vines overtook the canes and so you would find that a lot of the cane fields as you pass them have a lot of vines covering the sugar cane. Sir, my view is that this requires labour but the common approach to this is to use a cart and a spray can and go through and spray off these fields. Obviously, it is going to take larger quantities of pesticides, Sir, in order to be able to combat what has taken place in terms of the large volumes of bush that are vines that

would have overtaken the crops and this then leads to greater quantities of these chemicals going into the soil and then when you get the heavy rainfall you get this water running off into the streets with chemical residues running off into the ocean which would impact our coral reefs and fish and equally into the aquifer. This obviously cannot continue.

Mr. Speaker, we need now to launch a very aggressive PR campaign, (public relations campaign) in Barbados if we are to achieve our stated objectives in terms of how we are going to manage the use of pesticides and chemicals in Barbados. I am saying this simply because you do not get buy-in by simply bringing an amendment to the Act and you simply do not get buy-in by operating in silos and so we have to start this conversation in a very structured, very strategically organised way. My view, and we have been discussing all of this at the Ministry, is that we also have to start in the schools where we educate our school children so that they would have a greater understanding of the dangers involved and the risks to human life when we use chemicals.

We also need, Sir, to educate farmers who are prepared to take the easy way out by using these chemicals rather than carry the cost, or I should say the initial cost because the cost is never ending when we are finished, the initial cost of employing labour to be able to get rid of many of the common things like river tamarind and cow-itch, things that have been a complete irritant, no pun intended, to agriculture and that if we could just start early in the process and that is the reason why we introduced the climate mitigation subsidy for the sugar cane industry so that you can incentivise farmers to start practising good husbandry and in so doing return to some labour. Mr. Speaker, I would be the first to admit that I am one that supports technology in agriculture. I strongly believe that the future of agriculture in Barbados must be built on the use of technology, greenhouses and indeed freight farms and that in order for us to be able to drive agriculture and get the scale we need to move to agro-processing in a meaningful way and not just what we have as a cottage industry where a person can give you some good sour sop punch but we do not have scale or I can get some good tamarind juice but we do not have scale or we can watch farmers grow pumpkins in Barbados, coming up to Independence Day, because we know that that is "conkie" season (and by the way I eat my "conkies" without raisins). Mr. Speaker, Sir, to a more serious point you see farmers with pumpkins that they literally have to dump after they, (1), cannot find enough market space or, (2), have to compete with imported pumpkins. This is only but one example of many that we have in agriculture. Mr. Speaker, Sir, a vibrant agricultural sector must be built around agro-processing and so we have to expand.

Sir, I would wish to be the first to confirm that the Barbados Agricultural Development and Marketing Corporation (BADMCO) is currently working with a programme with the current Farmers Empowerment and Enfranchisement Drive (F.E.E.D.) programme that we have, a programme specifically designed for us to reach food security in Barbados and at the same time empower and enfranchise Barbadians of a different age group, so that when many of those whom we would use perhaps as a repository of information for the young farmers coming on board (and I speak to those who are currently in farming but who are pretty much on the way out) that in order for us to have a vibrant sector, we then have to have younger people involved. That is the reason I say I am the first to agree that this must also be technology-driven.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, getting back to the point; when you have farms that are open-field (meaning that the only way you can do agriculture is through open field agriculture) and I speak to things like sweet potatoes, yams, eddoes, sugar cane, cane grass (and I cannot ignore cane grass because there is a lot of interest in that as well), that we then have to face the reality of recognising how we manage the use of pesticides. Therefore, the plan is that the hardware stores will not sell these things from a shelf to people who would walk off the street and would want to pick them up, but that in truth and in fact, you have to have a license or certificate to show that you are a legitimate farmer who has been approved to use these pesticides.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would want to reiterate and I cannot underscore enough the case with Wayne Johnson simply because it is important for us to note that while it is true that we have not had any such cases in Barbados, we cannot ignore the fact that this gentleman developed non-Hodgkin's lymphoma and that it was linked to the expose of glyphosate or "Roundup" and therefore, rather than sending a tractor with a cart and a spray can for our labourers to have to hook up on their backs and go through a field spraying, I believe that we have to address this through a more labor-intensive approach that would, (1), provide opportunities for people who will not necessarily be able to find a job other than in agriculture; (2), provide an opportunity for people who are perhaps waiting to be able to move to another level but has to start somewhere and therefore that labour intensity of which I speak is directly related to how we are going to reduce the use of these chemicals, but at the same time be able to benefit from greater agricultural yields.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, in the past when I go in Clifton, St. Philip, I had the opportunity of going with my grandmother (may God bless her soul) to Guinea Plantation where she was a member of what they call at the time "the gang". I would have gone with her many times and so she would have a designated area to weed. What she would do would be to take the cane tops and create a shade for me out of the

sun. I would sit there and watch her weed. Sir, back then we had less problems with fields being overgrown with bush as they are currently and equally, we had greater yields.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, many of the insects, including the fire fly that we hardly see now, were fairly pervasive. The grasshoppers, locusts and all those insects we had. Sir, only out of a conversation that I was having with a with the Minister of the Environment and National Beautification, he also drew to my attention that we are seeing now less frogs in Barbados. There is also a current mealy bug that has appeared in Barbados. It is seen at Walkers for sure but it can easily spread. What it does is that once you have it, it destroys all of the forage, so that the moment it appears within the space of, let us say, 48 to 72 hours, you start to see the grass turning, all the while getting dryer and dryer, browner and browner, until it disappears. This bug, Sir, can very well be treated with chemicals but the amount of chemical that you would need to be able to control and avoid this spread around Barbados would have severe consequences for the environment and for us as a people. Sir, when I said earlier that the cost is perhaps greater in the long-run, I refer to the healthcare challenges that would be created, where we would then have to increase the cost of healthcare in Barbados in order to be able to treat many of the challenges that we would have, certainly a number of cases of poisoning. Sir, in speaking to my Senior Veterinary Officer at the Veterinary Laboratory, he has already drawn to my attention that many times you have animals that would go out and innocently ingest these chemicals and would be brought then for treatment because they would be subjected to chemical poisoning.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I think I have said enough to bring context to what we are confronted by in this country. I have been personally doing some research on biodiversity. I think the work that is being done in the European Union is a tremendous amount of work that makes for very good reading and at some point in time I want to invite Barbadians to take the time out to do some reading on the work that they have been doing because they have determined, out of several studies conducted between (I think) 2010 and 2016, that 82 per cent of all species that we have that contribute to biodiversity are at risk of being wiped out -- (82 per cent, Sir) - that is nothing for us to ignore.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, if I were to check the Barbadian situation, (and I am giving a promise to this Honourable Chamber that I will do so) I am convinced from where I am and for what I have been able to check in my research, that Barbados is probably higher than 82 per cent. When we have conversations in Barbados about destroying things that people fear, many times we do not understand what it is we are destroying; and when we use chemical, in order for us to be able to give people the easy way out in

agriculture, we then destroy a lot of it. I know particularly among females that there is a fear of the green lizard.

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: Do not take that aside, Honourable Member. Ignore that aside.

Hon. I.A. WEIR: He is citing Sparrow.

Mr. SPEAKER: Ignore that aside.

Hon. I.A. WEIR: The green lizard also contributes to biodiversity, and you ask yourself why we would want to see it disappear altogether. Mr. Speaker, I must say to you, Sir, that I started to do some of what one would call backyard agriculture or backyard farming, so I started to plant things like thyme and parsley, chives and those kinds of things. I am pretty good at it, I must confess, but it took some adjusting of my schedule to be able to do so. The one thing that annoyed me more than anything else was at times when I started to dig up the soil, I would butt upon a frog under the soil. Sir, that happened over a period of time. Nowadays, I do not see them anymore and I can tell you that I did not use any pesticides but I certainly used a lot of salt and that probably contributed to getting rid of them, but salt in itself also is a chemical.

Mr. Speaker, the Amendments to this CAP 395 would be significant in order for us to be able to achieve all of what we are planning in the Ministry, and this equally would take buy-in from the Environmental Protection Department, where my officers at the Ministry and the that department work together to make sure that we can achieve these objectives. Mr. Speaker, we are also challenged beyond our shores, and it is worthy to note, Sir, that the more developed countries which we rely on, first of all, for the transfer or sharing of information, and secondly, many of which we go to in order to import a lot of these chemicals, are way advanced in terms of their management systems and how they treat to the use of these chemicals. Unless you are signatory to the Conventions which I mentioned earlier -- the Basle Convention, the Stockholm Convention and Rotterdam Convention -- then you are missing critical information that can run you into a large amount of challenges when it comes to the use of pesticides, Sir.

The promotion or shared responsibility among parties using chemical or pesticides, Sir, is one that you only achieve effectively under the Rotterdam Convention. Under that Convention, it is compulsory for those countries that are signatory to share information in terms of inputs and equally proper labelling. Sir, we are challenged with some products imported into Barbados where you only see the bare bottle, a label in a language you do not understand or which most people would not understand, and then the

contents are not clearly outlined. We therefore could very well be using stuff that would not necessarily be used in developed countries. We are also challenged with the fact that because we are unable to share or exchange information, you will find that Barbados' requirements are not known to the producers, so they cannot include Barbados when they are setting about to determine what you want or what you have banned or what you are controlling.

Our joining the Rotterdam Convention gives us responsibility and gives us a chance to be part of the annual conventions that include Stockholm, Basle and Rotterdam. This means that Barbados, for the first time, when the Environmental Protection Department attends the conventions, would be able to put the country's position. Previously we were not in a position to be able to do so, even though we had a presence at the Convention. We can now sit at the table and put Barbados' position. This is significant, Sir. What is more important about it is that there are several things which are being done to manage herbicides and pesticides, and I will seek to list a couple of them, Sir. They include:

- Harmonisation of chemical management which speaks to the establishment of chemicals management systems that are consistent with established international regulatory agencies;

- Strengthening of regulatory control mechanism by accessing technical assistance from other reputable regulatory agencies;

- Ensuring greater access to information on reasons for banning and restricting hazardous chemicals in other countries in order to improve decision-making regarding the importation of certain pesticides, which is critical to the decision-making process and will be critical to the Board as well;

- Identification of safer alternatives, because many times we act as though there are not alternatives when in truth and in fact -- again, my colleague would bear me out on this because he has been using vinegar and other things on his lime trees -- there are alternatives, and

- Accident management through the establishment of monitoring and reporting systems on pesticides poisoning; information of poison incidents caused by pesticides, and by extension other hazardous chemicals is important in the management of the chemical by a regulatory agency. At present there is no system on island that really gives us this. A toolkit developed by the Convention can be utilised in order to start the function of such a system within the Pesticides Control Unit.

Sir, it is important that we have a fully functioning Board under CAP 395. Mr. Speaker, the Rotterdam Convention sets out a number of recommendations that will form part of our management systems in Barbados, and there are perhaps going to be onerous at first but it is something which we must do in order for us to bring Barbados into a 21st Century existence and requirement. Sir, such recommendations will be to revisit draft laws for the management of industrial chemicals in an effort to bring Barbados on stream for a more effective chemical management system. These laws currently reside within the Environmental Protection Department (EPD). The Establishment of Chemicals Committee to strategise the move towards management of industrial chemicals and facilitate further collaboration and communication between all entities involved. The responsibility of the chemicals committee will reside with the Environmental Protection Department as well. Continue to pursue the updating of current pesticides laws to ensure that the articles of the Conventions are incorporated into law. Continue the assessment of the Pesticides Control Unit so that adequate resources both human and other are available to meet the requirements of the Convention. Then, commit to participation in the meetings of the Conventions which are held annually.

Sir, these responsibilities on these recommendations certainly cannot be taken lightly. As I view the amendment to this Bill, I wish to state and bring some clarity to what we are doing. Therefore, I would like to first of all cite that this Bill will amend the Pesticides Control Act, Cap. 395, primarily to change the composition of the Pesticides Control Board and to provide for a register of pesticides and also to make amendments so that the Chief Agriculture Officer or his nominee will now be the Chair of the Pesticides Control Board.

Sir, the insertion of Section 3A in Cap. 395 would have replaced what was in the old Act, so that the principle Act is amended by inserting Section 3 and the following function are now created.

“Functions of Registrar

3A.(1) The Registrar of Pesticides shall

a) be the secretary of the Board and shall perform such functions as are assigned to the secretary by this Act and by the Board;

b) be responsible for the general supervision of inspectors;

c) give to inspectors, on behalf of the Board, such information, instructions and directions as may be necessary for the operation of this Act;

d) keep and maintain a register, to be called the Register of Pesticides, in accordance with subsection (2); and

e) perform such other duties as may be assigned to him by this Act and by the Board.

In Section 3A.(1)(b) there will be the general supervision of inspectors because we will have to have an inspectorate in order for us to be able to carry out the management practices in making sure that people are not in breach. Sir those changes are basically what we have done in order for us to be able to address many of the things that I spoke to earlier.

Mr. Speaker, I now want to spend some time focusing on the sector, because, I believe that if we are going to use a system which seeks to manage the use of chemicals, then we also have to speak to the objectives of the sector in order that Barbadians can have a fair understanding on what is taking place and what we are hoping to achieve. It is almost like saying, where we are at now, where we want to get to and how we are going to get there.

Mr. Speaker, I took to Cabinet a paper that looked at the overall performance of the agricultural sector in Barbados and between the periods January to June we had a growth of 16 per cent in the sector. Of course this information was given to the print and electronic media and was also on social media platforms. However, Sir it would be remiss of me if I did not use this opportunity to reinforce that we have had an agriculture sector at a time when the country was under severe pressure, at a time when most other sectors would have been facing challenges, we were able to eke out a growth of 16 per cent between January to June of this year. Sir that happened at a time when the country was also going through severe drought periods. The drought periods this year were more prolonged than previous years. It just goes to show what is possible when one commits to achieving results.

Sir, it is unfortunate that we cannot plan climatic conditions, we can only seek to put measures in place to mitigate and for the second half we have had prolonged rainfalls like never before. With these rainfalls we have had also remind me of the days when I was a boy growing up, when you would have had heavy downpours sometimes more than an inch on any given day and in Barbados in some cases we recorded just above an inch in certain districts which really on par with what obtained in the past. Sir that contributed in large measure to many of the crop being damaged. For example, cucumbers and watermelons, and we all know that cucumbers are now carrying a higher price because of the scarcity.

The Ministry needed to respond to what is happening, because as I said we cannot determine. We can look, we can do all types of modelling and the Meteorological Office has been doing a fantastic and amazing work in keeping Barbadians abreast of what is happening by bringing us real time information and keeping us informed. As a matter of fact, they talked about the radar that was down for almost 20 years has been fixed, and whilst it is not up to full calibration, we have been able to fix that radar and the Government of Barbados committed funds to making sure that we get all of the new replacements parts, giving us a new radar in Barbados which we did not have for 20 years. Sir, I have to emphasise this and you would bear with me for so doing, because the phone calls that I get reinforce this point, that for the first time we have a Prime Minister that has committed to the development of this sector in a way that we have never had it before. The fact that she chose me as Minister would mean that I also have to live up to the responsibility of making sure that we can deliver in order for us to be able to grow this sector.

Sir, to manage what we are currently facing, the floods, I think this has been talked about for perhaps over two decades as well that we had to move to water harvesting in Barbados to capture some of runoff water which would otherwise flood fields and cause damage to acres upon acres of crops. Hence, we brought a supplementary Honourable Chamber for \$5.9 million in order for us to create reservoirs in Barbados so that we can bring relief to the farmers going forward. Hence, in 2021 we will now have reservoirs in Barbados and mind you the proper management of the use of chemicals, reservoirs that will not have chemical residue. We are now going to establish reservoirs at River, St. Philip. River in St. Philip has been talked about since Adam was a lad.

Sir, no relief has been brought to the farmers again for possibly over two or three decades. While I seek not to apportion blame, again it would be remiss of me as Minister to not highlight to the public of Barbados the work we are doing to ensure we can bring relief to those farmers who are currently suffering severe flood conditions when we have extreme climatic conditions in Barbados. The process has already begun with the reservoirs. There is a Stantec study that was done. I believe it was done in 2010 and that study we are also using to inform the decisions we are making, so that River in 2021 when the rains return we will see dams at River to capture the water and bring relief to the farmers so that they do not continue to lose their crops.

We are also going to repeal the Three Houses Spring Act which currently is perhaps over a hundred years old and in repealing that Act put a management structure in place for access of water coming downstream, so that all farmers would also have access to water coming from that

stream. What happens currently is that you would find there is damming taking place along the stream and those further downstream do not get any water and so, you do not have an equitable distribution. Mr. Speaker, when we repeal the Act we would then make it easier for farmers to access water coming downstream by using slewsksates and a management system that would obviously involve the BWA and the BADMC in order for us to manage that effectively.

The riparian Act allows for people who are living along the stream where the water actually passes along their property to be able to dam for 48 hours and in one instance for 72 hours as it related to Three Houses plantation. However, in terms of all others they were not allowed to either block the stream or dam water. It has now become common practice for any and everybody to dam or block. Therefore, we have to now put a proper inspectorate in place, empower the BADMC to act and use a structured system where you will have slewsksates and an irrigated system going to farmers as well. What would you have?

You will have the stream still functioning and equally the dams as well to give a continuous supply of water, and we should reach the point where they would have a year-round supply but that the name "River" in itself speaks to exactly what it is. When it rains, you will get a river so the entire area floods out. I am pleased to note that even though we may not reach 100

percent perfection on this, we are certainly going to transform what is happening there into an area where water can be harvested, crops can be saved, farmers can continue to harvest and that we all will be in a win-win situation.

The late Professor Right Honourable Owen Arthur said to me at the Job and Investments Committee meeting when I did a presentation on agriculture, and if I may use his words Mr. Speaker, he said, "Young man agriculture real hard. Agriculture is not easy. It is a major challenge. Pick the four winners, work with those and build on that". This is the exact approach I am taking as it relates to this sector in order for us to achieve the growth we need and keep people employed. Mr. Speaker, River will be a winner because when we finished with the transformational work over there, then more farmers will come back because what we have now is people leaving out of frustration.

They are leaving out of frustration because they understand that either they will be challenged with praedial larceny, floods or prolonged droughts. It is not easy. Mr. Speaker, this solution speaks to how serious we are as a Government and about empowering and enfranchising people. I have to say to you that it is my fervent wish that more people will seek to take advantage of the opportunities that are available in agriculture.

I saw a farmer in one of our daily newspapers lament loss of a field of watermelons. I read it and felt very sorry, but he actually said the yield from that would have been \$60 million. It is interesting because on another day and conversation, perhaps, if I had asked what is he yielding from this field I probably would not have been told \$60 million. However, to yield \$60 million from one harvest of watermelon is a significant sum. Therefore, when we move to Spring Hall Land Lease Project as well which is a project which started under the Minister of Agriculture at the time, now called Sir Richard Cheltenham, was created to also empower Barbadians but also contribute to our food security.

This project basically had over 300 acres of land available to farmers in rural Barbados. What has happened over time is that you would find the wells have become clogged up completely, illegal dumping and all types of activities taking place. Mr. Speaker, they too have been impacted by severe floods and would have lost large sums in crops that were flooded out when we experienced heavy rainfall. The dams will also be going to Spring Hall. I am currently in conversation with a private sector entity to bring Lears as well. They started off at 10 million or 15 million gallons. When I looked at the project we are planning for Lears, we have moved it to around 22 million gallons of water and the work is going on there also.

Mr. Speaker, all of these items are mentioned in the Throne Speech so this is the Ministry actually starting to deliver on things stated in that speech. When we spoke about a legislative framework, chemicals would form a great part of that framework. Mr. Speaker, we spoke also to how we would treat to the issue of praedial larceny because my team and I, which is the way I prefer to express this, can do all the great things we want to do around chemicals and their management. Certainly, the environment will benefit. All Barbadians will benefit.

However, the downside to all of this is that while you may have more production and greater yields, praedial larceny is an absolute problem. Mr. Speaker, we are already in conversation with the Chief Parliamentary Counsel (CPC) to ensure we have the legislation repealed. The Cabinet has already agreed to this and that we and that we will now be introducing technology, Sir, that seeks to give farmers a chance to track their produce and so the legislation that was passed in 2017 spoke of giving people receipts. We do not believe that receipts are an effective tool because you can get all types of forging and copying of receipts, et cetera, and we have moved to certificates or bar codes that are driven by technology which are not very easy to replicate so would find that farmers now would have the protection of traceability through block chain technology where their crops can be traced from the field straight through to the end users or to the consumer. In there, Sir, when you use your mobile phone in a

supermarket or by a vendors stall to check the bar code, you would know which farm it came from, when it was harvested, what chemicals used, and you will have a tremendous amount of information before you. Sir, that makes it difficult for people who are stealing crops to be able to sell them unless people are prepared to encourage a black market system where crop theft is allowed to prevail. Mr. Speaker, we are also working with the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) to introduce fattening systems for animal through chips and the FAO has committed through the Technical Corporation Programme (TCP) to be able to commit to Barbados at no cost to us. There is no cost at the back end either so that we can do a mapping of all the breeding stock of our animals, all of the stock that we have in Barbados and be able then to do a meaningful tracking right across Barbados of all the animal we have. Sir, this helps us also to determine what chemicals were being used but equally, if they are diseases, if you get an outbreak because of the chipping system you are able to track faster where outbreaks are taking place than currently what obtains so that the repeal of the Bill that seeks to address praedial larceny will put us then within a 21st century existence and bring greater protection for farmers in Barbados.

Mr. Speaker, these are but some of the things we are doing at the Ministry because they are several others including an entire restructuring of the Ministry of Agriculture, looking at posts that are relevant, posts that need to be changed to help bring them in line with what our objectives are and we have already gone through the process with a consultant and would be ready to lay these before the Cabinet of Barbados, Mr. Speaker, so that one pillar within that entire structure is how we manage chemicals and the treatment to the Pesticides Board which also falls under the Ministry of Agriculture. Mr. Speaker, I believe that these are absolutely necessary measures that we would need to put in place over and above the amendment that is taking place and to help us then to see farmers have a better day and to bring agriculture in line with what is a 21st century requirement. I have chosen not to speak to cotton, sugar cane and all of those because a time will come for that. I am particularly focussed on how we are creating a management system for chemicals within the sector and how people can benefit from being involved in agriculture.

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

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

Bishop J. J. S. ATHERLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I listened with interest to what the Honourable Member for St. Philip South, the Honourable Minister of Agriculture, presented to the Chamber this morning. What interested me though was what he did not say and it is along those lines I would like to speak today.

My father was a hard drinker, Mr. Speaker. He liked his alcoholic beverages and he would drink daily. I have never seen him lying in the gutter, I have never seen him stumbling on the road, but indeed after bouts of heavy drinking he would still drive and safely so, strangely enough. He died in his 90s and he drank every day from the time I knew myself. I have never seen him sick a day in his life except for about five weeks before he actually died when he suddenly took ill and in his 90s, my father was very active, mobile and very vocal too and he would even sometimes go into Bridgetown using the ZRs. He died in his 90s when he suddenly took sick one day and lasted for about five weeks beyond that. My father grew quiet in the early stages of those last few weeks. He was a very dark man, but his complexion seemed to become even darker and on his skin all kinds of welts broke out all over his body. I am not here to suggest that he died as a result of anything having to do with the use of chemicals and pesticides, I have my suspicions on that, but that is not the point I really want to argue today because when we took him to the doctor he was diagnosed with having another problem which probably and ultimately would have taken his life any how in short order, but I do recall that just about two or three days before he took to his bed and assumed this very quiet disposition, a company sprayed about the house on the outside as we would want to have them do from time to time. It is still my view, up until this day, and based on much of what the doctor also said to us, that while he laid on his bed asleep he ingested much of what they sprayed around the house on the outside and the result of that was what you saw forming on his skin and which caused him to take to this bed in the first place even though in the course of examinations subsequently, diagnosis of another problem that was given to us and he died shortly there after.

I say that to suggest to you, Mr. Speaker, my concern in reference to the particular debate before us has more to do with the impact of the use of the storage and disposal of chemicals and pesticides pesticides in Barbados on human health and also on our environment than having anything to do with the administrative adjustments which this Bill purports to make. These adjustments may be important and maybe they would serve well to strengthen the institutional framework around the Aims and Objectives of the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security with respect to the management of the production and the use and storage and disposal of chemicals and pesticides in Barbados, but I would have wished that I could have heard much more emphasis placed on that than on some of the other things I heard. I heard a lot of

references to Basil as some people call it, Stockholm and Rotherham. All of these things are very important. I suppose we live in a world and we are part of that global community and we subscribe to some of the institutional stipulations and the regulatory frameworks associated with those institutions but I would have preferred to have had the Honourable Member spend a bit more time affording the House, the country and myself some information which respect to the impact of the use and disposal of chemicals and pesticides in Barbados, how that impacts human health and how it impacts critical elements of our environment.

Our ground water is absolutely critical and important to us. In recent years we have been having a growing number of complaints about serious discolouration of the water even in the absence of temporary outages which may impact the colouration of the water and even in the absence of heavy downpours which again may impact the colour of the water. We have had complaints especially not only from rural Barbados but even from parts of St. James Central, St. James South and even parts of what I call upper or northern St. Michael with respect to discolouration of the water in Barbados. I wonder if the Minister has any idea or to any extent any knowledge as to the level of contamination of our ground water induced by the use of chemicals and pesticides. Mr. Speaker, this to me is very important.

We have protected water zones in Barbados and we have fairly firmly enforced laws with reference to those protected water zone areas and we have done so especially with reference to building and structural development, that is, the construction of buildings, but I wonder what is the level of collaboration and the level of scrutiny that obtains across ministries with respect to the matter of pesticides and chemicals used in farming and agriculture and that impact upon the ground water system in Barbados. I see farming operations either in what I believe to be protected water zone areas or quite near protected water zones in Barbados, and whereas we are fairly forceful in terms of how we apply the law with reference to protecting water zones from construction, I am not too sure that we are as diligent when it comes to the matter of agriculture and I am just wondering if anywhere in the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security or if anywhere in the mind, in the head of the Minister of Agriculture and Food Security there is any knowledge as to the extent that agricultural efforts, agricultural pursuits, through the use and disposal of chemicals is impacting our ground water system. That is seriously a concern of mine and I raise that query, hopefully I could get a response from the Minister to that point as to the extent to which our ground water is subject to threat as a result of chemicals used in agricultural production, agricultural activity.

The Honourable Minister himself referred to runoff water in Barbados. We know how the system works, we

know how the flow works. There is a lot of water coming from the hills running through the valleys coming down and ending up along the coast and impacting our coastal and marine environment. A similar question, therefore, and, I did not hear the Minister give any indication that there is any concern with reference necessarily to that or any high level of concern even though he did mention how that flow operates and the fact that we lose a lot of water through the runoff that ends up in the oceans, but how is our coastal marine environment being impacted. That is obviously critical to our development and there seems to me to be an increased level of consciousness and an awareness on the part of this Government as to the role that our coastal and marine environment can play in the development of Barbados not only with respect to tourism appeal but with respect of course to fisheries and other sorts of activity. If we have this volume of water that is running out of the hills and fields and going through the gullies and ending up in our oceans, certainly there must be some degree of impact upon our coastal and marine environment. We have been complaining or expressing concern I should say about coral degradation and the decimation of our coral assets offshore from the island and if we are that concerned we really need to make sure that we are possessed of a high degree of certain knowledge as to the type of impact that is taking place on that environment. It seems to suggest that there needs to be a very high level of coordination between the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security and the Ministry responsible for coastal environmental matters in Barbados whichever ministry that is. Sometimes we are not too sure and there may be some overlap and certainly there needs to be serious collaboration between these two ministries because our coastal environmental assets are really significant resources upon which the island would find that it has to make greater reliance. Whatever degrades that environment degrades our value, if you understand what I am saying by that, and makes us a lot less attractive and appealing to those who come and visit. It is also less attractive and appealing to nationals and to residents and has implications also for fisheries, and I am sure my friend at the far end out of Honourable Member for St. Michael South would agree wholeheartedly with me on that matter, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, now, I mentioned a little bit about my own personal experience and my own personal sense of what befell, unfortunately, my father. But another area I wish the Minister would have addressed and I hope surely the Honourable Member would pay some attention to that, has to do with the protocols and prescriptions which we have in place, if any, with respect to the internal use of chemicals (the use of chemicals internally). We have heard loud expressions in one or two instances where people were very uncomfortable, certainly dissatisfied and disquieted, over the fact that chemicals were used in their internal environment and impacted on them. I think this is what happened at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. I think the

Minister while speaking mentioned one particular chemical which has been mentioned to be a serious concern to many Barbadians. But what are the protocols, if any, and what are the prescriptions which apply to the use of chemicals internally? We contract various cleaning enterprises to come into our various edifices, whether it is a church, a business house or the institution of Parliament, to do cleaning. But what level of attention is paid to the elements which constitute the materials used for such cleaning? What are their likely impact upon those who occupy those spaces?

Mr. Speaker, Sir, you know better than anybody else, perhaps, we are in the process of doing some environmental cleaning and rearrangements in the Parliament of Barbados but then that space still has to be maintained after those repairs are completed and we make recourse back there, that place has to be maintained, it has to be cleaned. But what is being used to clean the place and what is the likely effect that is having upon human system, especially upon persons who may have already existing ailments?

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I do not say these things simply to use words, I say them because I consider them to be important, how we use them in business places, how we use them around the properties of domestic dwellings, but are there proper prescriptions and protocols? Are cleaning enterprises, those who have pesticide/insecticide chemical dispensing companies, are they governed by protocols and prescriptions based on studies and research which establish the soundness of what is used and the un-wisdom of what might otherwise be used, or is it left simply to management to determine what they use, when they apply chemicals to your property, Mr. Speaker, Sir? Mr. Speaker, Sir, in that case that would be a lot of chemicals, based on the size of the property, I imagine. I might be wrong, but I imagine.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, you are rather wrong.

Bishop J. J. S. ATHERLEY: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I take that back because I do not even want to be wrong with respect to yourself. But very seriously, is it left to the management of these companies to determine what they use? Is it left to their own internal research to determine what is used, what is healthy or otherwise not so healthy? Or is there a framework in which these protocols have been or are being worked on?

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I speak in this way because I believe that when we formulate policy, [that] we do so based on that kind of thinking; policy when it is prudent and effective response to issues that are either already existing or are likely, potentially so, to exist and therefore it is out that kind of a context that we have policy formulation, and the administrative changes that are being

suggested may very well be prudent and necessary. I am not debating that, I am not arguing against that, I am simply that when you get on the ground and you deal with existing realities or potential realities, especially when we talk about human health and the environmental health in which we all must work and must survive, then we have got to be concerned with those types of things.

Now, Mr. Speaker, Sir, poor black people in Barbados are exploited in more than one way. The Honourable Member for St. James Central, I am sure, will loudly agree with me, that poor black people in this country have been for long years, and are still currently being exploited in several years. It is not only when they are denied their day in court in a proper and convenient, I should say, and soon order or soon fashion, it is not only that, it is not only when they are not paid sufficiently for the work they do for capital private interest in Barbados; it is not only when their just and legally prescribed benefits are denied them and the unions must get up and make noise and quarrel with Government and the capital interest and all of that; it is not only in those contexts that poor black people in Barbados are exploited but I wonder what is the situation on agricultural and farm lands in Barbados with respect to the level of exposure to which poor black people in Barbados are subjected because they are forced in their work to use chemicals, pesticides and other elements which may, in fact, be detrimental to their health? I have a serious concern [with that].

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I take the matter of the exploitation of poor black people by anybody, any business or any entity, even the church, very seriously and it still remains a scourge upon this national landscape that in 2020, that we still allow too much of that to be ongoing. I know that there are a sufficient number of voices in this place, and a sufficient number of spirits in this place, that those matters will not continue to exist without being highlighted and being protested and being countered. I want to know if there is any, at all, concern at any level in the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security or in any other relevant ministry as to what is befalling poor black people who work in agriculture on estates in Barbados and who have every day to use chemicals. Is it provided? Is it prescribed? Is it mandatory? Is the law enforced? Are they being allowed to protect themselves through the use of protective gear? Is it something which falls into the realms of the subjective? Is it what a farm or an estate provides? Is it what a manager sees fit? Is it what an estate can afford? Is it what the worker chooses to wear? It is question of proper protective gear as you work in the context of agriculture and especially if you are dealing with chemicals and pesticides. This becomes an issue for me. It certainly becomes an issue for me and I am sure that it would be an issue for my honourable friend, the Honourable Member for St. Philip South as well. Mr. Speaker, Sir, my real point

is simply to ask what is the position and what is being done with respect to these matters?

Mr. Speaker, Sir, for a long time, and coming from the bosom and mouths of those who research and study these matters, it has been felt for a long time that there was a high level of concern, or that there needed to be a high level of concern about these matters, while they did at the same time expressed that there was very low capacity on the part of Government and other institutions to respond to, so that you have high level of concern because ground water is exposed, this is exposed, that area is exposed, this is a threat, there is a high level of concern in these matters that a low level of capacity and capability to respond. I think therefore that this presents a disaster waiting to happen. The recent goings-on up at Lower Estate bring into focus again the need for us to be vigilant and robust in dealing with matters of disposal of waste, especially waste that is highly chemically constructed or composed. The event of a by-election brought this into focus again. It should not take such events, and obviously there is a problem which Government has committed to addressing in the shortest possible time. My understanding of the problem is that although there is no dumping going on there now and the fact that you have not properly sealed what was once used as a dump, it left persons exposed to various health threats and other discomforts as a result of chemicals still being able to reach them in the privacy of their homes. I am simply saying that when it comes to the matter of disposal of toxic waste, contaminated waste and chemical waste, I do not know we can afford to be lax in a small space like Barbados. We have to be very muscular on that.

I am sure that the Minister of Agriculture, the Honourable Member for St. Philip South, is of that disposition, and when it comes to those things we have to be very muscular and robust. There are some things that Government may play a little with, if I may put it in that language, but there are some things which Government absolutely cannot play with. The disposal of chemical substances and toxic waste is not something that we can let continue to happen in the dark of night in the gullies of Barbados and in the unseen spaces across this island. It is persons like yourself, Mr. Speaker - I almost said fellows like you -- who at the end of the day fall prey and subject to those types of things.

While I am on my feet, let me ask this because I have not heard or I may have missed it, but I remember raising this in this House while in the Other Place. I think the Honourable Minister then responsible for Energy, the Honourable Member for Christ Church East, was the point man on this. It had to do with the cleaning up of the old Mobil site at Bay Street. I do not know if that is a job that is done, but my understanding of the situation then was that it was something which was very urgent and that it was a

massive public health disaster waiting to happen. I am just asking what the latest on that matter is. I will not say any more on that today but I certainly do genuinely ask about the Mobil site at Bay Street which constituted a threat because it was not properly secured. You are dealing with a massive load of left-behind waste that was not properly disposed of and posed a threat to the area immediately and, by extension, to the wider Barbadian community. I have not heard much or anything said about it since those days. Of course, being the kind of person I am, I will assume that it has been properly taken care of and fully so, because we have not heard anything more about it. I just want to ask so that we might be told. I thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, for giving me a hearing.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member for Christ Church West Central.

Hon. A.R. FORDE: Mr. Speaker, Sir, first of all let me congratulate and thank the Member of Parliament for St. Philip South. He said that he was in his younger days and if you go back, I do not know how many years, he was a cricketer of certain acclaim. He said he opened the batting and he made hundreds, but I want to say today that what he presented before this august Chamber was a Gordon Greenidge innings. It was full of technique and class at the same time. I want to congratulate him for that, and I want to say that in this august Chamber we have a number of cricketers. We have 30 cricketers in here. Thirty cricketers. The Member of Parliament for Christ Church West, you are a spin bowler although you bowled a googly, and the Member of Parliament for St. Philip South will play those later right back down the pitch; metaphorically speaking, of course.

Mr. Speaker, my point today is that we have a team of players. A team, in the cricketing sense, means getting everyone to achieve more; even you, the Member of Parliament for St. Michael West. This is not like the Chambers prior to 2018. You may have to revisit the song by the Tradewinds called 'Cricket In The Jungle'. It was a façade. Mr. Speaker, I want to you and I want to thank the Member of Parliament for St. Philip South for correcting an anomaly or an oddity as it related to the Board and the Chairman and Deputy Chairman and who should sit on the Pesticide Control Board. There is an anomaly which I would like to correct; an anomaly or an oddity that seeks to destroy the way of life, animal life and plant life. That oddity is this: As we seek to mitigate and adapt to the vagaries of climate change, the oddity which I speak to is one which speaks specifically to the fact that in agriculture and in terms of agricultural activity, this world is exposed to 30 per cent of greenhouse emissions from that one industry. That is something which I would certainly like to speak to today.

Mr. Speaker, the reality is that fumigants which we use in the agricultural industry are 300 times more potent than carbon dioxide, which is the major greenhouse gas as we know it. When we talk about climate -- and I know the Member of Parliament for St. Michael West spoke about the agreements to which we are signatory -- we are also signatory to the Paris Agreement or the Kyoto Protocol, which speaks to the fact that we have progressed along with the rest of the world. I want to say today that as the president of Latin America and the Caribbean as it relates to the forum, this forum will seek to not only bring a sustainable post-COVID response but a green economic recovery as it relates to how we as small island developing states treat to the vagaries of climate change. I also want to say that we have to fight, along with the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of Maritime Affairs and the Blue Economy, collectively to reduce our greenhouse gases and the effect on the ozone layer.

Sir, the reality is that temperatures have risen over the last three months and have staggered between 0.13 degrees Celsius and 0.17 degrees; increases every day. That is why on some days you have extreme heat and the next day you have flash flooding. When these temperatures rise because of the greenhouse gas effect, we know what happens to the ozone layer and the damage, Mr. Speaker. This is the layer that protects this earth from the UV radars of the sun, and when it gets hot, another in a circular way, the cryosphere or the area responsible for snow melts, giving rise to the effects which my good friend, the Minister of Maritime Affairs and the Blue Economy, the Member of Parliament for St. Michael South, will speak about later. This is responsible for the increased rise in sea levels; four millimetres over the last year and damage to the reef as we know it, damage to the shoreline.

Mr. Speaker, I am saying that we now have to look at other measures of controlling our pests. A pest is anything that can bring disease, cause annoyance and change the basic ecological habitat. That is what we are trying to control: those pests. Mr. Speaker, as the Minister what I am saying today is that in terms of the environment of the earth, as we know it, I have a responsibility to talk about the alternatives, Sir. That is what I am going to do today, Mr. Speaker. I am going to talk about the alternatives to the pesticides and the fumigants. They have alternatives and that is what we call in my Ministry biological diversity. That is why we again and the Member of Parliament for St. Michael West is not only in ear shot but also in eye shot. We are also signatory to CITES, which is the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species. Those species that are endemic to Barbados, and we are the 117th country that signed onto this Convention in 1992 which speaks to the way we protect our world fauna and flora, the plants and the animals. Not only are we protecting them because they are endemic and as you the Member of Parliament for St. Michael West eluded to, that

we are signatory to international conventions, but they are an essential part of biological ecosystem management.

Mr. Speaker, I do not want to only speak about animal control but I will also speak about plant control as it relates to biological and ecosystem management. There is threat of African snails and everybody in Barbados knows it. African snails are a big problem and for a long time we have used all types of chemicals to seek to control these snails. They are a broad category of chemicals that we do not only control snails but also pest. You would hear about the organic phosphates, carbonates, Malathion that helps control the mosquitoes and the kerosene oil. You have heard about those chemicals, but the adversity about using chemicals, DDT which is the organochloride is now being completely banned in all countries including Barbados, so we do not have to worry about that. However, one of the things about these chemicals is that they produce hydrocarbon which can naturally mix with the oxygen in our free atmosphere and form carbon dioxide the leading greenhouse gas. That is the problem.

What I am saying, they are biological ways to control these pests and I just mentioned the African snail. Mr. Speaker, a lot of persons in here like to make omelet and scrambled eggs on mornings and they have organic gardens outside. Mr. Speaker, these same egg shells can be used to decorate your garden, which is a way of controlling the African snails from going into that garden bad in a natural way. I know they have all types of creativity, but our Barbadians are creative people. Along with putting down the egg shells, I am sure you can find a creative way to enhance the beauty and aesthetic of your garden. That is a way of controlling without using chemicals. I have an organic garden at home and I can tell you I have African snails all over except in the garden space. Do you want to know why? Mr. Speaker, something as simple as planting garlic along the strips stops the African snails from venturing into the garden. You can also use parsley and thyme around the garden. You can even use saw dust, because they have a lot of carpenters in Barbados and they do not know putting saw dust in areas lining around the garden which also helps to beautify the garden also keeps away the African snails. Some farmers use copper metal sheets around the plants and it works. Charcoal can also be used although I am not encouraging anyone to burning fire and it can be bought from the remnants of wood fire and put in your garden to help control the African snails. These are important ways and these are simple things that you have at home already. Then you talk about the whole trust of the five R's, reduce, reuse, recycle, recover and now repair, because as a young man I used to repair bicycle tires, I never throw them to be dumped. That is what we have been talking about and if you are serious about Barbados and the way we are going to take Barbados, we must be able to get full purchase for everything we use. That is the simple conversation I want to have.

We have a problem with mosquitoes. My colleagues heard me talked about my favourite the leaf-tailed gecko or the ??? Everybody wants to know where I am going with this. I heard the Member of Parliament for St. Philip South said that these lizards scare some fear sex. They had a song by Sparrow that said otherwise. Mr. Speaker, the reality is that these lizards that people would seek to destroy are endemic to Barbados. They are known for this country. They are endangered species now as I speak. They are part of our biological diversity and our ecosystems. They help to manage that which is a pest as we know it. Mr. Speaker do you know what they do? A mosquito can lay an egg on a leaf and that egg can live 10 years, survive the test of times until the conditions are right to hatch. Do you know what these lizards do? They eat the eggs and larvae. That is biological control. They are responsible for eating a lot of the insects that we are spraying the pesticides to control. Along with that, if they are properly cared and nurtured, we can get back to the numbers so that we can recognise in Barbados that we have done our bidding, not only as a country but as part of our international commitment in terms of our endangered species. The leaf tailed gecko is what I am speaking about today in terms of our biological control. We have all of the animals and insects to help control the problems that we have and the Minister of Health will not have to tell Barbadians that we have 200 and 300 cases of mosquitoes. I heard the Member of Parliament for St. Philip South spoke about the pollywogs, the good old bajan frogs. When people hear me talk about these things they asked Minister where are you going with it? However, you know one of the things about frogs, again, they are responsible for eating the larvae, a lot of the small insects that are causing problems. They are also in the water beds and the stagnant water with the responsibility of getting rid of our mosquito larvae population.

Mr. Speaker, before COVID, mosquito deaths were the number one in the world in terms of vector-borne illnesses. Two million died per year of mosquito borne illnesses. COVID have not killed that much so far in a year, so the mosquitoes still running the Usain Bolt moment. They are still number one in terms of the deaths. However, we have to look at biological controls. I will ask a question. When last did we saw a dragon fly? Do you know what a dragon fly does? It eats the adult mosquitoes. Dragon flies have a voracious appetite for mosquitoes and nowadays you do not see any flying around. This is what we call biological control.

The Minister of Health will not have to get trucks fogging all over Barbados if we take some interest and time looking at our biological ways of controlling these things. You heard the Minister and the Member of Parliament for St. Philip South spoke earlier about the ???..... ladybug. Do you know what is the natural biological control for the ??? ladybug that seek to destroy a

lot of plants? The ladybird beetle, years ago your grandparents would say if the ladybird beetle land on your skin it is good luck in Barbados because it would save us from the ???..... Mr. Speaker I know you are a lucky fellow and you will like a lot in your constituency, not only for good luck but to help control that which is causing a lot of problems. These are called biological and natural methods of controlling our pests, and if you are serious about a country going forward we have to be serious about the way how we lend our support to these natural things.

Mr. Speaker, there are a lot of plants that we use together in an organic farm or space that have a symbiotic function and approach. They work together. One may have a root structure that runs horizontal and the next may run vertical for different reasons. The Minister is now talking about vetiver grass on the side of the highway. Whether it is vetiver grass or line grass because of the horizontal group network, it is able to protect the land from eroding or cause soil erosion.

These are the types of conversations we must have as a country if we are serious about reducing our carbon footprint and at the same time ensuring the integrity of our biodiversity and ecosystems. The monkeys which we called the invasive species, again, they are not only the best seed distributors in the world but they are also responsible for eating a lot of insects that wreak havoc. I agree they must be controlled and it is what we are doing along with the Ministry of Agriculture because we provide the science, so there would not BE random behavior and everything is done in a scientific way where we control the amounts.

This is why I am saying to persons who are involved in illegal dumping into our gullies and ecosystems that this is what is causing our natural biodiverse species to move from their natural environments and go into domesticated spaces. We have to be able to control them and as the Minister responsible for the environment, I along with the Minister of Agriculture will be looking at alternative methods of controlling our pests without having to use these harmful and toxic substances and components. Mr. Speaker, as the Member of Parliament for St. Michael West eluded to, we are signatory to the Rotterdam Convention which seeks to control our pesticides and the harmful pesticides, but there is a reason.

There is wisdom in it. They are able to give a lot of technical and financial support with a lot of conventions, so that we are able to augment our policies locally as it relates to our natural conservation, ecosystems and ecosystem management. My simple conversation with Barbadians today is that we have almost everything at home to help manage our pests and control them. I am sure if every Barbadian can get a Lavender tree and put in their homes, the smell of the Lavender tree can be used as a natural

mosquito repellent, including Rosemary and Basil as we know. Our elderly grandmother would take the Soursop leaves, split them for the scent and put them in the house as a deterrent for mosquitoes.

These were natural things. There is the Citronella plant but unless the leaves are broken, it really does not make any sense. These are things in terms of our biological control years ago. I am now asking the NCC which I have responsibility for to start looking at mass producing these things so that every Barbadian can a Rosemary or Lavender tree at home. We can sensitize persons about the use of Basil. Those things are responsible for naturally protecting us from those harmful species. This is the way we have to go if we are serious as a country not only to achieve what the Minister of Agriculture is trying to, but to also save our ecosystem and help manage it.

Sometimes, we often refer to ourselves as funambulists. We have to walk the tightrope sometimes. If we are serious about our country, we have to walk that tight rope. As the Minister responsible for Agriculture said, sometimes have to balance between the effect of getting something done within a specific period of time and the labour, and other alternatives you have. We have to start somewhere and I am saying today, and making a clarion call to Barbadians that we have to start looking at biological methods of controlling our environment. We understand the problems as it relates to the Greenhouse effect. We understand the vagaries and the challenges of climate change with hurricanes and natural disasters such as what is happening in Holetown.

Each time it rains, we get flooding. We understand, as the Minister eluded to, the problems as it relates to our water supplies if you get chemical infiltration because of these pesticides and chemicals we are letting into the atmosphere. This is why, again, I am raising my vocal chords in here in an unshackled way to tell Barbadians that the scourge of illegal dumping will not be the Grinch that destroys my Christmas not as long as I have breath as Minister responsible for the environment.

We have to get clean in this country. I spoke about the Trade Winds earlier. There is no sense having an iconic song called "Beautiful Barbados" by the Merryman and Barbados remain like this. It makes no sense. We must not only have an iconic song representing how beautiful our country is but it must be the new way of life. This is what it must be; a philosophical change to the environment. It will help the Minister of Health with all the problems as it relates to mosquitoes because it is those illegal sites and the indiscriminate use of garbage disposal. There is the random behaviour of throwing bottles and the Member of Parliament for St. Michael South; Minister of Maritime Affairs and the Blue Economy will speak about his success

in terms of reducing the amount of bottles and containers that are not biodegradable.

The Member will speak about that because it is the perfect habitat for mosquitoes to breed and multiply. These are the types of conversations we will have as a country because the only way we are going to achieve success in the fight against the pesticides and maintaining our relationships with international countries as it relates to our National Determine Contributions (NDCs). We are going to be telling the world as a leader in the small-island developing States that this is what Barbados is doing to contribute to our reduction in Greenhouse gases. With a million trees, we will reduce our carbon footprint by 48 million tons.

This is what we will be telling out international community. The reality is that every year we produce as a small country 2 million tons of carbon dioxide. It is too much for a small geographical space. We have to start with every child and this is why that beautiful little girl, Maria, said that it is small thoughts and big matters, but it is big thoughts and big matters as far as I am concerned. When she told Alana Broome that she wanted to be a fighter for the environment and wish to tell those persons who are involved in illegal dumping to stop, she is saying to stop. The Book of Isaiah along with the pious individuals who I know are in here would tell you that a little child should lead them.

Therefore, if Maria has the fortitude to say “stop”, then every Barbadian should be saying “stop”. I do not mind the children in this country being the active players in this entire fight. I do not mind because I follow the virtues of the Bible as well which says a little child shall lead them; the Book of Isaiah. The reality is that we have a problem in this country as it relates to illegal dumping. The Minister has brought measures to control our pesticides. We are saying we are serious about reducing our carbon footprint and saying as a Government we will not walk in front the good people of this country because they may not follow.

We will not walk behind because inadvertently they may not lead. We will walk by their side as a partnership with the people of this country because we understand that partnership is important in this whole sustainable development thrust. The only way that we can have a better, cleaner and greener Barbados is if we have every Barbadian committed putting their hands to the plough in unity in this fight, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I am obliged.

SUSPENSION

Hon. Miss S. J. O. BRADSHAW: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think that is a good place for us to break for lunch. Therefore, I beg to move that the Sitting be suspended until 1.45 p.m.

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

The question was put and resolved in the affirmative without division, Mr. SPEAKER suspended the House accordingly.

RESUMPTION

Mr. SPEAKER: This Sitting is resumed. Before the suspension this Honourable Chamber was debating the Pesticides Control (Amendment) Bill, 2020 and to that we shall revert. The Honourable Member for St. Michael South.

Hon. K. D. M. HUMPHREY: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise, of course, to support this Pesticides Control (Amendment) Bill, 2020 and as you would appreciate, Sir, it has direct bearing on that which I am chosen, tasked and privileged to do every single day.

As I was listening to the Honourable Member present the Bill, Sir, I reflected on the fact that for all of us alive in this particular generation, we are realising that across the world, in many places, our overall population is increasing though not necessarily the case in Barbados and with the increase in population it would then to demand greater use of the land. We combine that population increase, you could look at urbanisation, the idea would be eventually that agricultural land would diminish across the world. This Government says it is committed to putting more land into agriculture. It is an interesting thing. Ultimately, Sir, the reality is that pesticides became a major component of the way we dealt with agriculture over the years and for obvious reasons, person introduced pesticides to be able to control pests and that is the primary reason why these pesticides were introduced, but Newton's third law of motion tells us when a force acts on a body and equal and opposite force will act on some other body or as known normally, for every action there is an equal and opposite reaction. For those of us, Sir, who have responsibility for the ocean and for the environment as the Honourable Member, my friend, who spoke before me so eloquently, we have realised that there are things that we must now do to make sure that we take care of the space that we occupy. I remarking to the Honourable Member for St. James Central as we were leaving this place before lunch that this generation, in fact, the people who are alive today, not even necessarily this generation, those who are older than myself, people in my age range and those who are coming, this moment in time is a defining moment for

all of us and that the choices we make over the next few years, the choices we make over the next year and two years, and certainly the choices we make over the next decade would determine the way people would live, the quality of life for everyone who come after us. It is an enormous responsibility, Sir, so when we bring a Bill to amend the pesticides that are being used in agriculture or that affecting the soil or affecting the marine space, we do so cognizant of the fact that we are carrying a burden in a way, Sir, not only for this generation, but indeed for future generations and that is the context within which I feel we need to see these Bills.

Initial reports would suggest, Sir, that a third of crops across the world use pesticides and there are still pests and people would feel that the response obviously then would be to use more pesticides. I am suggesting that as the Honourable Member for Christ Church West Central spoke earlier, that we need to have more pesticides, yes, but a different kind of pesticide, a more organic base, but worldwide pesticide usage is around 5 million tons per year with a value of US\$26 billion. This is big business. Pesticides are big business and for those who produce pesticides, of course they are going to challenge it, but I think when we look at the cost of what it is costing the world, what it is costing Barbados, what it is costing just the people who live here, now is the time for us to make some serious changes, Sir, and we must look a more refine use of agrochemicals, using biological and cultural strategies.

The difference between this pollutant, because pesticides are a pollutant at the end of the day, after they have killed the pests, Sir, if they do, they linger in the environment as a pollutant. The difference between this particular pollutant and other pollutants is that we introduced it deliberately. We used this deliberately. It is controlled by man, it is not like a byproduct, it is what we are doing deliberately, Sir, therefore we can control it. These pesticides kill a range of things. I went this weekend, Sir, because I started seeing some centipedes around the house and you know how that goes - the madam panicked -- and if you look at the bottle you would see these thing would kill centipedes, roaches, flying insects and imagine the insects. These pesticides are so vague and vast in the things that they would kill, I am pretty sure they include humans, it is a serious thing and the fact is that we had not paid enough attention to these things in the past. I commend the Honourable Member for St. Philip South for the Bill that he is bringing, but if you look at the danger in the chemicals themselves and you combine that with irresponsible usage, which is the case sometimes, you are talking about an accident waiting to happen. In fact, I believe that the world is now reaping that which we sowed in many ways and we have now to be very, very careful so the misuse of these agro-chemicals can put many species at risk, many species in the marine environment, on the

terrestrial space and its improper use has a direct threat on health. I heard the Honourable Leader of the Opposition make his remarks about the direct threat on health and it is something that you have to take seriously. I believe this amendment Bill allows us to do so. I also recall, Sir, last year I was having a conversation with another Minister in one of the island and he told me that the country was looking at going into marijuana production and persons came in from Canada and when they came to this particular island, and they studied the soil, the results of the studies of the soil said that there was no way they could grow the marijuana in these areas, none of the areas that formally grew sugar cane at the time because of the concentration of the chemicals in the soil. I fear that if it is not good enough for marijuana then I do not know how it could be good enough for us to be growing vegetables, fruit, and offering these things to people as healthy options when the the soil from whence it came, Sir, is polluted, therefore, it is one of these things that I believe we now must look at a lot more seriously and we must guard against it and we must act very quickly too. Yesterday, Mr. Speaker, -because, of course, I am going to talk about the marine space -- I had the opportunity to walk along Carlisle Bay. I was not just chilling. I do not get to do that these days. I walked along Carlisle Bay with a gentleman, Sir, who is an environmentalist and together we walked and we made a notation of what forms of life we saw. We were trying to make a note of the fish that you can see on the nearshore because you know when you go to the beach sometimes you see fish at the nearshore. As a boy going to Pebbles or going to Brown Beach we used to see a lot of fish and we were looking to see if we would see cockles, fish, crabs, birds, because the birds would eat the worms in the nearshore and in the saw, you know, sometimes you would see the birds on the shore. We saw two crabs, two very small little crabs in the whole time when we were there up and down for about a hour and a half and a lot of garbage, all kinds of garbage. Now the sea is being used by people who go there as a dumping ground, but more bothering and more troublesome to me as we walked along that area, was that we saw about four or five major areas for water run off so that the water that comes off of the countryside or wherever it comes from, Sir, comes down through the City, through my constituency sometimes to yours, definitely down through the constituency of the City represented by the Minister of Health and to my next door neighbour, the representative for St. Michael South Central, but these huge areas where the water runs off, if you go to the beach you would see where the water runs off a whole set of moss and settlement just there. Whatever comes off of the land, all of the pollution runs then straight into the sea and two things bother me about it, well more than two but, I will mention two. The first is the ferocity with which it comes because we have not found a way yet to properly slow down the water as it comes or to capture the water so that we do not so much wastage into the sea anyhow. Then the second that bothers me is whatever is in the water... The way that it

works is that the water comes down and as you know it picks up everything that comes with it, so we are talking about the pollutants that are in the water from the farms and so on but it is also picking up diesel from the cars because you know people still leave diesel cars all over the place, and that is something that we really have to address still because in my constituency there are still areas where you see a lot of old cars and the diesel underneath the cars and that pollutes the water source as it runs into the sea, and we really need to look at that. We really need to talk about an integrated coastal zone management plan as we look at the entirety of the thing, looking at the watershed management, the way we capture the water and so on and so forth.

Mr. Speaker, it was just very interesting to see that as we walk along there you could hardly see fish or crabs. The guy referred to it as the Dead Sea but I would not go that far, but I also know that COVID-19 has taught us across the world that where human activity ceased or where human activity was restrained we saw the natural environment healing itself so I know that if we properly control some of these areas and some of these things that we do the natural environment can heal itself and that what we are facing is not some inevitable doom and gloom scenario but that human beings can control the outcome that we are facing. This Bill, Sir, must be also seen in that context.

You have to understand, Sir, what I call the path of pesticides. The chemicals are sprayed on the land, water molecules via the rain, the watering or the ground system, flow almost like vehicles that transport from the land into the water all of these chemicals into the ocean, that is the way it flows now, and moving along with the ferocity that I mentioned and a whole lot of destruction...

I listened, Mr. Speaker, Sir, to the Honourable Leader of the Opposition who raised some very interesting points about the idea of what is happening in the marine space. Uncontrolled pesticides pose the greatest threat from both ground water, runoff, discharge and from storm water runoff. It would, Sir, because if you have the wanton use of pesticides across Barbados, and that is why I explained first the runoff into the ocean, you could understand that with that amount of pesticides it would obviously pose some threat but interestingly enough a study was done because there are periodic studies done, the Ministry of the Environment checks the water quality all of the time and there are very few cases where our water quality has pesticides and different things above the accepted level, very few, so there was always monitoring of the ocean space. There are very few incidents that there is anything for Barbadians to be particularly alarmed about but I feel that in this context we now must test differently and test further so that we now must also test the fish and the near shore and the vegetation because oftentimes what occurs is

that as these things ingest the chemicals while they may not stay in the water because of the way the water moves and ebbs and flows the fish and the vegetation may have the chemicals in them and we have to be able to test for those in Barbados. In fact, in Barbados I find that we now have to be able to test for a lot of things because even for me and I am sure for the Minister of Agriculture and Food Security, the Minister of the Environment and the Minister of Health and Wellness perhaps, we often have to send overseas for results for tests that we need to be doing in Barbados and it is a very costly exercise. I have been trying to get some results on some plastics that I sent away now for months. Unfortunately, the laboratory that we use persons in there came down with COVID and so now we must wait but I think Barbados has to get to the point where it can test for some of these things.

Sir, we know that the pesticides would kill larvae, it would kill juvenile fish and it bio-accumulates in some plants and so on so it is something that we really have to pay attention to, but I give the assurance that when we test we do not normally find anything necessarily for Barbadians to feel panic about but nonetheless we also know that the quality of our near shore as reflected in the life is still not the same. We also have seen the situation with our corals definitely not being the same and so we need to do more testing and we also need to do a different kind of testing.

Mr. Speaker, what does that have to do with me in terms of the ocean and the blue economy? I feel, Sir, that this world is in a way a house for all of us to live in. Yesterday during our discussion with the Heads of meeting we looked at the blue economy as a house and the foundation of that house must be a healthy ocean. Whether it is the coastal zone or the exclusive economic zone, we are talking about a healthy ocean as the foundation of the house and that everything that we do, all of the pillars in this house must reflect our interest in taking care of that ocean space and that we must treat to it sustainably. In our house none of us would do deliberately things to damage our house but unfortunately if you look at the chemicals you are using, maybe I do not know, but I know for sure when I look at the chemicals I am using to clean the house, some of these chemicals are also fairly dangerous and there is a move now for people to be using a lot more organic materials in terms of cleaning their houses. Sir, I joke but I take it very seriously that in a way what is required of us in this generation is to go back to the future. For us to get to the future we really got to go back and do the things that our foreparents used to do, things that we discarded. I heard the Honourable Minister of Environment speak today and the Honourable Minister of Agriculture and Food Security about using old remedies to be able to treat to some of these issues. Sir, people who had scoffed at these things, because it is the way of the educated oftentimes to scoff at the formally uneducated not recognising that the real

knowledge often lies with those who never went to a university in their life but who went to the university of life, and Mr. Speaker, Sir, they often understand how to treat to these things so when the Minister of Environment speaks about it, as Minister of Environment I hope we takes it seriously and when the Minister of Agriculture and Food Security does so I also hope that we take it seriously.

Sir, we have to look at maritime and marine transport. Again, Sir, during COVID there were areas where large ships would traverse that had not seen any kind of life in years. People assumed all of that life was dead and once the ships were not travelling any more we saw life return which tells me the ocean space can heal itself. It also tells me, because we also have to be practical, I mean we have to be able to move people, we have to be able to eat from the sea, we have to be able to do these things, that we have to be able to do so in a sustainable way and that is why I feel like going green and green energy is going to be very important as we go forward the kind of material that we use to fuel our ships.

Sir, Barbados is now in the process of changing its legislation and the Port of Bridgetown is already in the process of changing the way it does business to be able to become the world's largest green maritime hub and to put us ahead of the curve so that our legislation reflects our desire to move toward the 2030 Objectives that we have set for ourselves to be fossil fuel free by a certain time in our existence or at least carbon neutral but all of these things are tied in.

Sir, the question was raised this morning as to if there is consultation between us. Of course, there is consultation between us. We talk a lot of these things. We just had a meeting. We are looking at collectively we are going to respond to the situation in Graeme Hall. The Minister of Agriculture and Food Security and I had a meeting and we are looking at how Barbados position itself to best be able to export to the European Union. The Minister of Environment and I were having a conversation very recently and we were discussing the invasive lion fish and what we can do collectively so of course there is conversation and there is consultation also on the turtle, so there are also a number of areas where we collaborated. I also feel because collaboration must not be confused for any kind of overlap which was the hint given, what we experienced in the Government is that in the last few years if you look at almost any ministry the amount of rot decay that happened whether physically, figuratively or not is so tremendous that I cannot imagine, to be honest with you, and I imagine that it may happen eventually, that any person could say to themselves that we do not have work to do every single day. When you look at the markets, the state of the markets would freak you out. We are working every day to bring the markets into some proper state. When you look at where we were in shipping, we were so

far behind, the reason being that people felt that you needed to have a minister responsible for this, one responsible for that. When you put a minister with responsibility for 20 things, then he cannot get down to be able to roll up his sleeves and gets the work done. So that shipping tied onto tourism never got attention in this country and that is why we failed the audit from the International Maritime Organisation in such a terrible way. We will not fail it again, though, Sir. But if you look at it, Sir, the same thing happened with agriculture, you had the Agriculture and Fisheries where Fisheries felt, in many cases, that they were the outside child, that they never got the full attention that they should get, that is why in the very near future you are going to see us bring some legislation in here, as we did recently, to continue to transform that space. But a lot of this work is necessary work under the visionary leadership of the Honourable Leader of this country and representative for St. Michael North-East.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, when I think about this Blue Space, Sir, and the fact that we created it as a house: with pillars, a foundation, pillars looking at sustainable marine transport, sustainable fisheries as we go forward, the healthy oceans, our own health, biotechnology as well, and then coastal development and how we build out on the coast, Sir, they are all very important and all tied to this. Mr. Speaker, Sir, the conversation must never be felt that we came here simply to do a Pesticide (Amendment) Bill, 2020, that is not tied to something larger. Sir, the Government has been very steadfast in its vision and trajectory that we have set for ourselves, so that everything that we do nothing here is happenstance but a sound system rooted in a vision that Barbados must become by 2030 fossil fuel free or carbon-neutral but beyond that, that lives matter and people matter.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, at the end of the day, for all that we do and all the good that I believe this Government has done, one of the things that we must also do is to advocate on the international stage for change, and the Honourable Member for St. James South knows exactly what I am talking about. Mr. Speaker, Sir, first of all, we could not ban enough plastics to [be able to] stop the sea from rising in Barbados. We cannot ban enough pesticides to effect the quality overall of the ocean space. We are just too small, but unless we do these things so that we can go on the international scene and tell the people to look at what this small country is doing, moral driven leadership driven by an idea that the world is bigger than ourselves, we have to say that these are the things that we have done and to make a case for Barbados.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, you can guarantee that almost every year somebody in the region is being affected by either a Category 4 or 5 hurricane, so we are doing our bit and so you can tie this to what is happening in the

environment [Ministry of Environment and National Beautification; you tie it to what is happening in agriculture [Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security]; to what is happening in energy [Ministry of Energy and Water Resources]; to what is happening in the Ministry of Maritime Affairs and the Blue Economy, so that there is a collective and that we combine our collective intelligence and collective efforts to right a wrong and this is how this Bill fits into the overall scheme of things.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, before I close (I do not intend to be long) I feel as if when we considered what we have done to ban plastics, I also feel that we need to go further and that there are microbeads in a lot of the cosmetics and other things that we use, like shampoos, detergents, that stay on for ever and ever, amen, but they are consumed by fish, turtles, they affect the corals. Sir, I tell my staff all the time as well that we needed to have a conversation daily with Barbadians so that they could understand what it is that we are doing and why we are doing it. Sir, we only have one Barbados, though, it is not like we have two or three (Barbadoses) we have one Barbados (sic!). Sorry, Sir, it slipped out. Mr. Speaker, Sir, we only have one Barbados and we must do all that we must to be able to protect it. Mr. Speaker, Sir, I used to see it and I used to think how glorious it was. I saw somebody releasing a whole set of balloons over the sea at a celebration. As they let go of the balloons and they were pretty but that hurt me to the core. Mr. Speaker, Sir, what happens when those balloons are released is that you enjoy a moment, you get to celebrate for two minutes taking pictures, then these balloons (these plastic things) stay in the air for a bit but then they end right back in the sea. Sir, I believe the time has got to come when we must look at these balloons too. We really have to start thinking seriously about how we manage some of this space. We have to find alternative solutions to the chemicals, as the Honourable Member is doing, but I feel we have to find alternative solutions to how we celebrate, the things from which we eat, the things that we eat all together. I feel that the time has come for us to start thinking about things differently.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am forever indebted. As you know, Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am a social scientist and the Honourable Member for St. Michael South-Central is [both] an economist and a social scientist, but I am thankful to the Honourable Prime Minister for giving me this opportunity to serve in the Blue Economy. Mr. Speaker, Sir, no matter what happens to me for the rest of my life can never be the same (sic!).

Asides.

Hon. K. D. M. HUMPHREY: Mr. Speaker, Sir, it makes you begin to think differently about the world. When I think about what we are doing, I think about the other things and I do wish that when the Honourable

Member wraps up, that the Honourable Member would talk about some of the other things that we are doing. I mean, I have heard the Honourable Minister of Agriculture and Food Security speak about vertical farming, about these amazing transformative things. Sir, to be able to do more with less and to do less damage and give people more. Mr. Speaker, Sir, this is a serious matter. I feel as if we have an option and there is going to be a time when we need to choose to do that which we have always been doing, or we could choose to take the bull by the horn and to lead. Mr. Speaker, Sir, it is very clear to me that this Government has chosen to do the latter and we are determined to lead on some of these very, very challenging issues.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, as I close I want to thank you for giving me this opportunity to speak. I believe that adaptation is going to be the center of everything that we do. I ask Barbadians to bear with us. Sir, we also have to spend more time educating the public, but that we are acting in their interest. Mr. Speaker, Sir, I know that many people may ask why are we so concerned about the ocean or about the sea but Sir, the sea is the giver of life. It really is the giver of life, it is the balance, it is the variable that balances the equation. Mr. Speaker, Sir, without it none of us would be here and so I am therefore very indebted and thankful to the Minister of Agriculture and Food Security for this Pesticide (Amendment) Bill, 2020, to be able to take some of these dangerous chemicals off the ocean, because it would mean greater fish for the fishermen; it would mean greater sales for the people in the markets so that they could go home and feeds their children; it would mean that our tuna will get a better price when it is put on the international market. Sir, all of these things are tied because at the end of the day this is about livelihoods for Barbadians, it is not about banning for banning sake, it is about people being able to live in this country. Mr. Speaker, Sir, it is on that basis that I would chose to associated myself with this Bill and give it my full support. Mr. Speaker, Sir, with those few words, I am obliged to you.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. Michael South-Central, you have the Floor.

Hon. M. K-A. CADDLE: Mr. Speaker, Sir, as I sat and listened to the interventions on this Bill today, I felt that what was emerging was like a kind of a (I cannot say “band of brothers”) I would have to say “four horse people of the climate crisis”. Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Minister in the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security, Minister of Environment and National Beautification, Minister of Maritime Affairs and the Blue Economy and the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Investment, the four of us have the great task -- and I would not wish to be in any other company to carry out this task -- of making visible and making real the issues related to the climate crisis and how we as a Small Island Developing State are going to be able

to respond. Sir, we find ourselves collaborating - the Ministry in which I work in particular along with the Ministry of the Environment and National Beautification -- on not just the financing issues because we have established a climate finance and climate resilience committee that works on these issues, but also, as the Honourable Member for St. Michael South just outlined, we collaborate on what are the messages for advocacy. What do we want to say to the international community about how their actions affect us, but importantly, about how our small actions -- even though we do not contribute as much as larger countries -- also affect and benefit them? The reason we developed the roofs to reefs idea and project has a lot to do with what those who spoke before me outlined, and it is the fact that everything is linked; every action that we take has a consequence, and while we may do something in the north, eventually you will end up seeing the impact in the south. Although we may do something in the Scotland District and think it will end there, eventually it will make its way to the ocean and to the reefs. This is natural capital and these are natural assets which we have and which are very valuable. We think they have no value because we do not immediately see that value or because they do not have a dollar sign of them yet but I know the Ministry of Maritime Affairs is working on being able to value them. It is not just for the sake of doing that. It is to be able to say, "This is why we have to protect this asset. This is the value of what we are protecting."

Therefore, Sir, when we come up with these ideas, the roofs to reef programme in addressing everything from the security of people's homes and built infrastructure to the protection of the coral reefs and making sure that we protect that patrimony of the Barbadian people from which we all benefit; from which those who live here benefit and those who come to invest benefit. When we come up with these ideas, it is not just for the sake of doing so. It is not just to sound bright. It is to be able to show that these things are related, that these things have a relationship. I will not spend too much time on things that Honourable Members before have discussed, Sir, but I do want to say a little bit about the links between the substances that we consume and are exposed to, the agricultural sector we are discussing today, and the health of ourselves and everything around us.

Sir, the Ministry of Health and Wellness is developing a very bold and very necessary national cancer control plan for Barbados, and it starts to make visible and to provide solutions for one of the things that we know is particularly troubling, for those of us who live here. We know that when it comes to the incidence of some cancers, in particular women's cancers, there is an important problem which we have to solve, and one of the things which I am very happy to see and know is that we have Barbadians working abroad -- I do not have permission to call their names but I think many of us know who they are

-- who are looking at not just the treatments which others have developed but also really what some of the drivers are and the causes and the things in our environment that make young women in Barbados vulnerable to these types of cancers. This is the type of original research that is required, that we are a special population, we are a population that is predominantly the descendants of enslaved African people. There are certain things about our genetics and our physiology that, quite frankly, the research in other places does not concern itself with as the first point of call. They may get around to us as a group later if they have the money, but we have to mind our business, according to expression, "drunk or sober, mind your business". We have to concern ourselves with the health and wellbeing of people who look like us and move like us and talk like us.

Sir, when we start to examine the ways in which pesticides affect the natural environment and affect our own health, I think this has to be part of a broader conversation about how we have to be more than just takers of knowledge from other people. It brings me to look at the issue of food labelling, Sir, the issue of food testing. We import so much of what we eat. There is something I noticed some time ago, and the Honourable Member for St. James South will be able to attest to this in her work in the Ministry of Foreign Trade. It is the fact that there was a time -- I see it less often now -- when you would see specially labelled goods for export to a particular area, and it would make me wonder, "What is going on with this and what is in here that is okay for us in the Caribbean to eat, and is okay for those in the African Continent to eat, but the people who exported it do not want to eat it?" Therefore, when it comes to what we are putting in our supermarkets and in our minimarts and in our corner stores, and saying to Barbadians, "This is good to eat," we need to concern ourselves with whether it is really good to eat. Just because it comes in packaged up, it does not mean that we should not, in terms of food standards, be looking at whether these are really items which our people should be consuming.

Sir, I do not want to start naming products because then that is going to put some of our businesspeople in a particular position, but I do think that we have to look also at farming practices of these things which we import. I am pescetarian, Sir. I eat fin fish only and no other creature in the ocean and no other creature on land, but even with that restriction I still have to be worried and be concerned about what is in the fish that we take from the ocean for the reasons which the Honourable Member for St. Michael South just outlined. Energy cannot be destroyed. It just ends up somewhere else in another form, so we really have to stop. Just because something is in a box or a package and it is stamped and labelled "made in somewhere" and ends up here, it does not mean that we should be consuming it. I would like to see us get to the place where

we do standard food testing across major items that Barbadians eat that are imported so that we can understand how these things are affecting our population.

Sir, in the intervention from the Honourable Member for St. Philip South, one of the things that became very much apparent was the tremendous effort of the Ministry of Agriculture to transform that sector. I think while most Barbadians and most of the Honourable Members appreciate the importance of that sector, I think the Honourable Member would agree that, apart from the Honourable Prime Minister, I am perhaps the one who confuses him the most about making sure that we can really maximise the impact of that sector on all the other parts of economic activity. The Ministry of Investment has a job to do in terms of making sure that we can get the best value from our assets and that we can have a real strategy in terms of how we apportion assets to make sure that Barbadians can benefit. When it comes to the use of land that is, of course, on a small island -- one of our greatest assets -- I have spoken in this Honourable Place before about the Physical Development Plan and how key it is as a document. We have a physical development plan from 2017 that we are updating into a 2020 document and from the first quarter of next year would be taken to the countries to have some consultations. One of the things that I have been emphasising is the euphemistic way that I would use, where the Honourable Member who introduced this Bill, is that the agriculture sector has to identify, has to have a strategy for the relative use of agricultural lands with other kinds of development. Because, we have to make sure that when it comes to not just the kind of gross food targets in terms of tonnage and so on, but when it comes to the nutrition security of the country, and I say nutrition security because people can eat but that does not mean that they are nourishing themselves. Hence, we talk about nutrition security because we want to make sure that people are not just getting a number of calories but that they are getting calories that nourish their bodies and allow them to be their best selves.

I sat with the Honourable Member for St. Philip South as we had to work and wrestle with the idea of how do we bring that issue of nutrition security to bear in the context of the COVID pandemic, because, one of the things that we knew for sure was that healthy people are best able to withstand the virus. A big part of that of people's health profiles is the kind of foods that they eat. I say this to emphasise the point that the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security and the work that they do is not just about where you are from or how many sheep you grow. It is really central to the way that we live our lives. It is central to how we are able to nourish ourselves. It is central to our livelihoods. It is one of the sectors that can have tremendous multiplayer benefits across the economy. When I continue to emphasise to the Honourable Member that we need to have a joint strategy across housing,

investment, renewable energy, and agriculture and how we plan the use of land and how we make sure that we get the best value from it, that is one of the reasons why.

Sir, speaking of the use of land, I would not be able to retire from my feet today without making reference to a particular track of land in the constituency of St. Michael South Central. Now, the area between Pine Plantation Road and Pine Road that covers the back of Pine Gardens, the back of Collymore Rock, Britton's Hill and Belleville area, that that is bound by those areas, it is what we consider one of the assets of the constituency. Also regrettably at this time it is one of the potential hazards. I have had discussions with my Honourable colleagues, those for whom this matter would be relevant, to talk about how we can get the best value from that area, because in the interim there are some risk that are posed to the people who live in that area. When it is dry it is prone to fire and because it is a water course it is difficult to traverse. Sometimes it is difficult to access the fire or to access the area that is giving problems. It provides cover to certain individuals who maybe seeking such cover for reasons for which you may not be aware. It represents a safety issue, but it also represents a missed opportunity. We had this conversation recently in discussions on how we finalise the physical development plan to look at this matter of use of water courses.

Now, there is a general feeling that because something is a water course you do not touch it. I understand that we have to preserve the biodiversity that is important. However, if we are really going to make use of limited assets, then we have to settle in it. I understand there is a policy in that regard, but we really have to settle and help people understand what is possible to be done in that area. I would love to see the area be made available to residents of the area and surrounding communities to be able to farm, to be able to do vertical farming, to be able to apply the kinds of technology that I know the Ministry of Agriculture is working very much on. However, to provide farming opportunities to many of the young people in St. Michael and the urban corridor who will not necessarily consider farming and agriculture, agricultural technology and agro processing, something to which they had access before.

I know that the people of St. Michael South Central are interested in these kinds of opportunities. In that area of land, I believe that we have the opportunity to convert from a potential threat in some cases to a real provider of livelihoods for the people of that constituency. I am making the plea on behalf of the constituents that this be addressed. I know that we have had lots of rain. It made clearing the area very difficult. I am pleased to see the sunny skies that we have enjoyed recently and I am hoping that that encourages the Ministries responsible to attack the area and

to turn it into something that the constituents can really benefit from.

The final thing I want to speak to in my short intervention, is something that perhaps you do not always speak about, but I am happy to see that the Ministry of Agriculture has finished the work and closed the circle with respect to the facilities that are available to women agricultural workers as they are out in the fields on a day to day basis. This was something that was for a long time an outstanding issue. I think that it seems perhaps like a minor thing or nuisance. However, any issue that has to do with people's dignity can never be minor. For a long time, we had women agricultural workers who did not have the appropriate facilities, like bathroom changing facilities and the appropriate privacy to be able to work outdoors without bother and worry. I note that the Ministry of Agriculture has made good on promises to address that. I think that the role of women in agriculture and in farming is one that we perhaps do not talk a lot about, but we talk about transformational leadership and transformational change. I do not know if people have seen the reports on the COVID response in countries that are led by women, but it has from our reports that they are far more successful than the countries led by men. My mother is a small farmer and even now with the container farming that she is doing in the little barrels, she is still a small farmer. My mother had a kitchen garden. It sent us to school and extracurricular activities. The practices that women farmers employ, the innovation that you find when women had to come up with solutions for small scaled farming,

employ and the innovation that you find when women have to come up with solutions for small-scale farming because no one is necessarily paying them any attention in terms of extension services and so on because they are small.

They are keeping a kitchen garden to feed their families and in many cases to feed their communities. A lot of the techniques that they use are some that can address this issue of how do we rid of these harmful pesticides. My mother grew all kinds of things. She sold them to the supermarkets. They sought her out because her produce was of high quality. It was large. It was without the use of pesticides and I think that if we listen to people's stories and document the ways in which they are able to do this, we would be able to learn a lot in terms of how we might be able to decrease the use of pesticides.

The last thing I want to say, Sir, is that there is a lot in 2020 that as we look back we had to adjust to. I think there are many things that we did not think we would be doing. In a lot of ways, we had to simplify our lives and I think the issue of food, how we nourish ourselves and how we make fresh food available to all people is important. I have said before that we have somehow internalized the

narrative that it is expensive to eat healthy. I believe that is not necessarily the case but that we have to make it easier or more accessible for people to be able to eat well. However, I think as another Member said before me is that we also have to make this a part of the public discourse.

We need to have conversations not just about the food that we eat but everything that we ingest, interact with and how that affects us. I think one of the things that we are realizing is that we flourish and thrive when we work as communities. I think that the issue of being able to get together with groups of people and I do not like the word "cooperative" because sometimes people think that it has to be extremely highly structured when really I grew up in a place where people often rotated what they would plant in the same plot, and got the benefits of that activity.

I wish to only say, Sir, that the legislation we are seeing before this House, even some of the smaller amendments really point out to us that even in the context of this pandemic the transformational agenda of this Administration continues. We have not taken our eyes off of that commitment we have made to the people of Barbados to bring everybody along as we work to transform this country. With those few words, I support this amendment.

Hon. Ms. C. S. V. HUSBANDS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise with my colleagues to support this Bill because of its tremendous importance to us as a country and to our participation in international activities such as trading agro-products in various parts of the world. I am very pleased to have heard my colleague share so well on the issue of the pesticide management, what it means for the environment, what it means for water and food security.

Indeed, agriculture stretches across many boundaries. It is not only the backyard farming. It is not only the commercial farmer. We are talking about what we are doing in terms of exporting. We are talking in terms of our compliance to international conventions. The Honourable Member for St. Philip South would have mentioned some of the conventions that we have signed onto with regard to the management of pesticides. Indeed, in the division of Foreign Trade, many engagements and agreements that we have all have components that pertain to the safe, effective management of chemicals and the use of pesticides, and doing sustainable agriculture.

Therefore, it comes to the attention of the Foreign Trade division to look at what it is Barbados is doing in relation to the management of its agriculture and pesticides. I am extremely pleased to see this here. Even the FAO and the WHO are looking at increasing our cooperation in the field of chemical safety. This is now becoming a very important part on the world stage. It is important to us because of our goals. We have goals pertaining to food

security and as the Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central opined, one such goal is nutritional security as well as the growth of regional agro-production.

One of the things, Mr. Speaker, that has taken the attention of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Heads of Government at the 31st Intercessional was how are we going to grow this region. How are we going to diversify our economies? One of the figures that stick out very much in the statistics when you look at the imports for the region is that we import something like \$5 billion worth of food products and agricultural produce. In Barbados, we import \$700 million in terms of agricultural and food products; a significant sum. Therefore, we are importing a great deal of what we consume.

The CARICOM Governments recognized that there was a need to address this and therefore establish a programme by which they were going to seek to cut \$1.25 billion from our food bill, so that we can reduce by 25 percent our imports by 2025. This is the 25 in 25 Programme. To achieve this, the revolution and transformation in agriculture is fundamental to that. Therefore, as the Honourable Member for St. Philip South outlined the various strategies and initiatives that are being done at every level in agriculture, it helps us to understand the importance of the pesticide management in relation to achieving that overall goal. Why is that? In order for us to export to the EU, Africa and CARICOM, one of the things that we have to meet are sanitary and phytosanitary requirements. Even down to the pesticides that we use, the goods are tested to see if they meet the international standards. Therefore, the only way that as a region or Barbados as a nation can participate in a programme of agricultural production is for us to meet the standards that have been required of us. What is the fallacy behind that, Mr. Speaker? While international agencies are asking of us those requirements, it has been stated by the FAO that close to US \$1 billion in unsafe pesticides and chemicals are sold to developing countries annually. While others are busy protecting their own citizens and economies, they are shipping to our countries chemicals, et cetera, that are unsafe.

Therefore, when we say that we are in a battle and fight, that we have to guard our own business, that no

one out there is looking out for us, that unless these nations have governments who have vision, who have guts because you need guts along with governance, because you have to be able to stand up and say no, I am happy to report that this Barbados Labour Party (BLP) Administration, whenever it has had to get up and say no, it has done so. We have carried the fight in many an international organisation to be able to preserve what is best for Barbadians. On the one hand, you have the requirements you have to meet, but on the other hand, you have a

situation where you are importing pesticides that are not in our best interests and that is why having pesticide management is important. Not only the regulations but the enforcement of the regulations, but it also calls for vigilance at the border and this is where our customs, and the Ministry of Agriculture are important in ensuring that certain things do not come in or get distributed any part of the country if we are to do proper pesticide management, but it is not only in relation to the customs, et cetera, but you also have, between the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade, one of the quoted sub-committees that have been set up is for foreign trade to work with the Ministry of Health in looking at the whole issue of food, looking at the issue of labelling, looking at the issue of the chemicals that are found in those foods, identifying the things that are injurious to Barbadian health and making sure that we use our trade policy tools to help us identify and keep out that which will not be to the Barbadian's best health to ensure that we are able to protect our population.

The other side of that coin, if you are going to defend against imports then we have to grow what is necessary to be able to give us the food security and create a good supply. Among the passions I have for this area, Mr. Speaker, is that I believe as the Ministry of Agriculture keeps building out our agricultural production and especially around products that are natural in the Caribbean. I believe that one of the things we need to do is to trigger the food technologist to be able to take those basic agricultural products and create from it, healthy food, new nutritious foods that we can package and that we can manufacture and that we can export because we have to take advantage of the new wave that is going across the world where everyone is looking at health and looking at what they are ingesting.

I believe that where the Honourable Member for St. Philip South is taking agriculture is actually positioning the country to be able to look at what are some of the possibilities for healthy eating where we can develop a new line of snacks for our children so that they are not consuming corn curls and consuming a whole lot of other things that are not good for them and that we can get into a market that is breaking out in a new way. Mind you, they will always be those, Mr. Speaker, who will enjoy their pizza unless they put something really healthy on it. Barbados then has a tremendous opportunity in which it can engage in the reproduction of products that can be marketed across the world that meet all the necessary standards and making sure that we use our pesticides effectively and use organic approaches, all of these will assist us in being able to achieve this.

If we are going to succeed, one of the things then is that there has to be a disciplined approach in the country with regards to compliance to new standards. From every

Ministry and I am sure, Mr. Speaker, that you would have heard a number of ministers sharing over the months about the various initiatives that we are pursuing. Along with every initiative you are hearing standards that are being required in that particular industry and what this means is that Barbadians must change how they operate in relation to that particular issue. It means enterprises have to change how they conduct themselves in the space so that there are able to meet standards. So what is going to be necessary is for us to build a Barbados in which a disciplined approach to our lives and the management of the element of our lives becomes central to what we do and this means a disciplined approach to farming. I believe that if we can successfully help our farmers to transition to new techniques, to use proper methods for the care and management of their farms, the irrigation, taking control of pests, et cetera, we can build world class farmers here in Barbados. I believe that if we can achieve that, we can have safe foods, safe water and I believe this will create the foundation that we need in order to participate in regional agro-production.

To be successful, it means there are three levels at which the community has to operate. First, you have the responsibility of Government and this is what we are honouring today, this is what we are complying with today, that Government has to be able to bring the necessary legislation, but not just enough to do the legislation, it is the enforcement of the legislation now that is going to be important so that we are able to state firmly and with confidence that Barbados ??? international standards in relation to how it delves its pesticide management and that they can vouch for the quality of the food which they offer. It also means that you must have pesticides registration. It means you have to exercise control over the actually sale and you would have heard that the Honourable Member for St. Philip South talked about the need to get a license in order to be able to use a particular chemical. Along with Government, industry now is important and here in the Caribbean we have not yet developed, at least none that I know of, enterprises that really look at the development of pesticide control substances or approaches and perhaps that might be an opportunity for us to be able to investigate and research better ways of the management of pesticides and to be able to take something to the world in terms of turning out enterprises that can offer these as products or services to the farming community in CARICOM and further abroad. Internationally, there is a lot of assistance for countries which are seeking to transform their agriculture. Indeed, in the post-Cotonou Agreement that will soon be signed between the European Union (EU) and the Cariforum countries, one of the areas that comes up for consideration in the agreement is the issue of smart sustainable agriculture and what we have noted in international organisations is that they are seeking to assist various countries in being able to establish the analytical laboratories which we need to be able to do the necessary

investigation. That is one of the shortcomings that Barbados has suffered from for many years and has limited our ability to be able to trade with Martinique or Guadeloupe or Suriname because we have not had the lab services to be able to test our product and therefore vouch for its quality but I can assure the country that the Minister of Agriculture, the Honourable Member for St. Philip South, has that well in hand.

Mr. Speaker, if we can be successful in the effective use of the pesticides, if we can be successful in being able to development the sanitary and phytosanitary legislation, if we are successful in being able to get laboratory services, the success of the Honourable Member for St. Philip South in achieving these things will help to drive the success of Barbados for a very long time into the future and he would have left a powerful legacy for us as a nation and for the security of our people because if we can succeed in this, Barbados would be able to get involved in a regional production programme and this has been very important. The heads of Government have been driving this particular process. They have created the formation of the CARICOM Private Sector Association which brings together the private sector from across the region and they have tasked them with the 25 in 25 Programme to be able to reduce our import bill in the region by at least \$450 million and move it gradually until we are able to get to our desired goal, and this is something to which I look forward.

I am also equally pleased to share that we have had the formation of the CARICOM Manufacturers Association where a number of manufacturing associations around the region have come together to form a regional body so that they too can look at how they can move forward in terms of production, and one of the things that they would be seeking to cash in on will be the manufacturing of agro products.

Sir, I know that in Barbados that we often say that our private sector tends to be laid back, tends not to step forward and tends to avoid risk, but one of the things that I have been seeing over these past two-and-a-half years is that we have a number of businesses which are now stepping forward, thinking outside of the box and stepping out and doing new things and so we have a number of them that are seeking to get involved in the agro production area and so I am looking forward to Barbados having a diversity of products to be able to bring to the market.

Mr. Speaker, I just want to end by congratulating the Honourable Member and also to share to also congratulate the other ministries that worked assiduously together to help us advance the benefits for Barbados in terms of what we are going to do in the transformation of our economy. Many times I have heard, Mr. Speaker, people do not seem to hear when we speak and this is unfortunate, I wish more people would listen to Parliament, but so often you hear

people saying there is nothing happening in agriculture or we do not have an agriculture plan and I am wondering where are they and what are they listening to because we are constantly announcing what we are doing and what people can look forward to and I am so pleased that the initiative which the Honourable Member for St. Philip South has started has not only galvanised the commercial farmers of Barbados but it has also galvanised the regular citizen.

Mr. Speaker, between COVID-19 and the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security there has been such a tremendous interest in everybody looking to grow something. Even in a constituency as urban as St. James South there has been an explosion of people who formerly did not have time to grow anything who are now engaging in growing things in their backyard. Mr. Speaker, one of the things that I am looking forward to is the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security being able to assist them by helping them to know the best ways in which to manage pesticides and the best ways in which to manage their crops so that they will have success in producing wholesome food that they can put on their tables.

Mr. Speaker, I just want to thank you for the opportunity to share and to thank the Honourable Member for bringing to this House the issue of pesticides management giving us the opportunity to take control and to improve our health by making sure that we do not use harmful substances in the management of our agricultural production.

I am obliged to you, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. Philip South.

Hon. I. A. WEIR: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to start by thanking all of my colleagues for the contribution they have made in support of this Bill and to say that I am extremely pleased to know that we have recognised the work that is being done in the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security. I am sure the team at the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security would be happy to note the tremendous support that they are getting from my colleagues as far as the move towards our transformational programme and to bring agriculture into the 21st Century.

Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member for St. Michael West asked a few questions which I would seek to address. The impact on coastal and marine environment was handled very eruditely by the Honourable Member for St. Michael South. Equally, whether pesticides go into the water reserves, collaboration between the ministries, implications for fisheries, protocols for prescription for use of chemicals, all were addressed very eruditely by the Honourable Member for St. Michael South.

The Honourable Member did however ask about the situation on farm lands with the use of pesticides and I am happy to report that there is a Health and Safety Committee at the BAMC, the Barbados Agricultural Management Company Limited, that deals specifically with these things. People who work in the fields dealing with pesticides or chemicals are given the appropriate gear to wear. This is part of a review process that takes place where they must comply so the BAMC is compliant.

Sir, I have a document that clearly outlines, and I can make this a document of the House because it is important that I cover some of the things that are captured here... The BAMC undertakes to comply and to act in conformity with all of the statutory health and safety requirements and the International Labour Organisation, ILO Conventions C155 and C184 Minister, and so therefore the BAMC is compliant and people who are working using pesticides or harmful chemicals are given the appropriate gear. The document goes on to address...

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, the document is from where? What document is it?

Hon. I. A. WEIR: It is a document from the General Safety and Health Policy Statement from the BAMC, so I can make this a document of the House, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, that I believe should address the concerns that were raised by the Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Speaker, I would like also to mention that in terms of testing we have had conversation as I mentioned before at Cabinet to deal with the strengthening of Barbados' national agriculture health and food control systems and once the Unit is established and we have the resources Barbados also would be in a position to do its own testing through our sanitary and phytosanitary protocols. A lot of the work really has already been done. There are standards, manuals and everything that are in place but it is for us to continue that work and we therefore need to present an entire budget for all of this to Cabinet and then take this forward. It would mean legislative changes taking place as well and we are pretty much on course to having this done.

The Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central made some very important points and I am particularly pleased to note her interest in the development of agriculture and the transformational work that we are doing at the Ministry. The Honourable Member mentioned food labelling and testing and truth be told once we have the SPS (Sanitary and Phytosanitary) measures and protocols in place all of these things would form naturally into what will take place under those protocols.

Mr. Speaker, the agricultural land use policy as well is a work-in-progress. I am acutely aware of a meeting that was held between the two ministries and we will make sure that we are in a position to determine certainly the amount of land that should be retained for agriculture and what can be used otherwise for development and investment.

Mr. Speaker, with that being said, I believe that we have captured pretty much all that was needed and I now beg to move that this Bill be read a second time.

???...I beg to second that, Sir.

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

On the motion of Hon. I. A. WEIR, seconded by Hon. K. D. M. HUMPHREY, the House resolved itself into Committee on the Bill. Dr. Sonia Browne, Chairman of Committees, in the Chair.

COMMITTEE

Madam CHAIR: This Honourable House is now in Committee.

Clauses 1 -- 4, inclusive, were called and passed.

On the separate motion of Hon. I. A. WEIR, seconded by Hon. K. D. M. HUMPHREY, Madam Chair reported to his Honour the passing of one Bill in Committee and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

On the separate motion of Hon. I. A. WEIR, seconded by Hon. K. D. M. HUMPHREY, the Bill was read a third time and passed and cited as the Pesticide Control (Amendment) Act, 2020.

ORDER NO. 5

RESOLVE THAT PARLIAMENT IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 5 OF THE CROWN LANDS (VESTING AND DISPOSAL) ACT, CAP. 225 APPROVE THE VESTING IN THE BARBADOS TOURISM INVESTMENT INC., (A COMPANY INCORPORATED UNDER THE COMPANIES ACT, CAP. 308) OF THE PARCEL OF LAND, THE PROPERTY OF THE CROWN, SITUATE AT BAY STREET IN THE PARISH OF SAINT MICHAEL IN THIS ISLAND MORE PARTICULARLY DESCRIBED IN THE SCHEDULE TO THIS RESOLUTION FOR THE PUBLIC PURPOSE OF TOURISM DEVELOPMENT.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Christ Church West, you have the Floor.

Dr. the Hon. W. F. DUGUID: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I do not intend to delay this Honourable House very long on this matter. This is a very small parcel of land, 24.5 square meters, approximately 240 square feet, the equivalent of less than two car park spaces. Essentially, when this land was first vested in the Barbados Tourism Investment Incorporation subsequent to that when a further survey was done, it was found that a little bit more of beach land had, in fact, accreted and that accretion of land is what we are now requiring to be vested into the Barbados Tourism Investment Incorporation so that we can complete this legal matter of this vesting and then the sale of the land to the interested party so that we can get on with the construction of the tourism investment that is being done there.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, when this was first done on May 28 when the Honourable House approved the Resolution it was 69 square metres of land at Browne's Beach, Bay Street, St. Michael, but what has happened is that subsequent to that, when a further survey was done, it was found to have increased to now 93.5 square meters because of the amount of the accretion that we are seeing there on that land, which is the area that is between two parcels of land, which was a drain. When you think of that drain, you know, Mr. Speaker, Sir, many years ago that sea actually used to come up almost to the back of the building. I remember as a boy going just behind those buildings and the sea used to come up all the way, almost to almost hitting the walls. Now to see how so much sand and beach has accreted there now and made it almost one of the best beaches in Barbados, very popular amongst locals and visitors alike. It forms part of what I call "the platinum horse shoe" as it moves around Carlisle Bay. Sir, this is a small vesting of 240-odd square feet, so that we can tidy up this transfer over to the Barbados Tourism Investment Incorporation and get going with the development in the areas. Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

Hon. S. J. O. BRADSHAW: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to second that, Sir.

The question was put to the Honourable House and agreed to in the affirmative without division.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of Government Business.

SUSPENSION

Hon. S. J. O. BRADSHAW: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that this Sitting be suspended, to be resumed at 3.45 p.m. this afternoon.

Hon. K. HUMPHREY: I beg to second that, Sir.

The question that the Sitting be now suspended, to be resumed at 3.45 p.m. this afternoon, was put and agreed to in the affirmative, without division, and Mr. SPEAKER suspended the Sitting accordingly. On resumption, the Sitting was adjourned until Tuesday, December 15.

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FORDE, Hon. A.R.
GRIFFITH, Hon. C. McD.
HUMPHREY, Hon. K. D. M.

HUSBANDS, Hon. Ms. C. S. V.
SYMMONDS, Hon. K. D.
WEIR, Hon. I. A.

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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. End of the record. The record ends with the suspension of the Sitting until 3.45 p.m. and the note ‘On resumption, the Sitting was adjourned until Tuesday, December 15.’ No record of the resumed Sitting or of the adjournment motion is included. Printed as in the source.

Q3. Opening. The note of prayers runs on into the Speaker’s opening words: ‘Prayers were taken by Canon Father Ivan Harewood Mr. SPEAKER: The House is now in session.’ Printed as in the source.

Q4. Papers. A stray line ‘LS-5’ appears between the two Annual Reports of the Barbados Port Inc. laid by Hon. K. D. M. Humphrey. Printed as in the source.

Q5. Order No. 1, second reading. The seconder of the second reading is not named; the line reads ‘???...I beg to second that, Sir.’ The seconder of the lunch suspension also appears as a text line, ‘Hon: J. A. KING: I beg to second that.’ Printed as in the source.

Q6. Order No. 1, title. The Order is headed ‘PESTICIDES CONTROL (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2020’, but the Bill is recorded as cited as ‘the Pesticide Control (Amendment) Act, 2020’, and the Minister opened by referring to ‘an amendment to the Pesticides Control Bill, 2020’. Printed as in the source.

DEBATE SUMMARY

(Editorial summary — not part of the record.)

The House of Assembly met at the Worthing Corporate Centre, Christ Church, at 10.00 a.m. on Tuesday, 8th December, 2020, with His Honour A. E. Holder, Speaker, in the Chair; prayers were taken by Canon Father Ivan Harewood. The Minutes of 1st December, 2020 were deferred. Hon. K. D. M. Humphrey laid the Annual Reports and Audited Financial Statements of the Barbados Port Inc. for the financial years ending 31st March, 2018 and 2019. The Leader of Government Business, Hon. Miss S. J. O. Bradshaw, had the Barbados Humanitarian Service Award Bill, 2020 and the Anti-Corruption and Anti-Terrorism Agency Bill, 2020 read a first time, and Standing Orders were suspended.

Hon. I. A. Weir, Member for St. Philip South and Minister of Agriculture and Food Security, moved the second reading of the Pesticides Control (Amendment) Bill, 2020. He set it within the Ministry’s transformation programme and its work on matters outstanding for more than two decades, spoke of biodiversity and of the Rotterdam Convention on shared responsibility for chemicals, and read the new section 3A setting out the functions of the Registrar of Pesticides.

The Leader of the Opposition, Bishop J. J. S. Atherley, Member for St. Michael West, said he was interested in what the Minister had not said. He asked about the use of pesticides in business places and around homes, prescriptions for their use, effects on water reserves and the marine environment, and the protection of farm workers. Hon. A. R. Forde, Member for Christ Church West Central, spoke of teamwork and climate change, saying that agricultural fumigants were 300 times more potent than carbon dioxide. The Sitting was then suspended for lunch until 1.45 p.m.

After lunch Hon. K. D. M. Humphrey, Member for St. Michael South, supported the Bill, speaking on its bearing on his own work and on adaptation. Hon. M. K-A. Caddle, Member for St. Michael South Central, linked it to the roofs to reefs programme and the national cancer control plan being developed by the Ministry of Health and Wellness, and raised food labelling and testing. Hon. Ms. C. S. V. Husbands spoke on the Bill’s importance for trade in agro-products and international compliance. In reply Hon. I. A. Weir said the Barbados Agricultural Management Company Limited had a Health and Safety Committee and gave field workers protective gear, and he made its General Safety and Health Policy Statement a document of the House. He also said that testing would follow once sanitary and phytosanitary protocols were in place, and that an agricultural land use policy was being worked on. The Bill passed Committee (Clauses 1 to 4), Dr. Sonia Browne in the Chair, and was read a third time.

On Order No. 5, Dr. the Hon. W. F. Duguid, Member for Christ Church West, moved a Resolution under section 5 of the Crown Lands (Vesting and Disposal) Act, Cap. 225 to vest in the Barbados Tourism Investment Inc. a parcel of Crown land at Bay Street, St. Michael, for tourism development. He explained that the land approved on 28th May had been 69 square metres at Browne’s Beach, but a further survey had found that it had grown to 93.5 square metres through accretion of beach. The additional 24.5 square metres, less than two car park spaces, had to be vested to complete the sale and allow construction to proceed. The Resolution was agreed to.

On the motion of Hon. S. J. O. Bradshaw, seconded
by Hon. K. Humphrey, the Sitting was suspended until 3.45

p.m.; the record notes only that on resumption the Sitting
was adjourned until Tuesday, 15th December.

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