
THE SENATE DEBATES

(OFFICIAL REPORT)

FIRST SESSION 1994 – 99

THE SENATE

Monday, May 20, 1996

The Senate met in the Senate Chamber, Parliament Buildings, on Monday, May 20, 1996, at 11.15 a.m.

PRESENT

His Honour Senator F. W. GOLLOP (President)

His Honour Senator C. L. BOLDEN (Deputy President)

Senator the Honourable R. R. FARLEY (Minister of Industry, Commerce and Business Development) (Leader of the Senate)

Senator the Honourable P. C. GODDARD (Minister of Foreign Trade and International Business)

Senator the Honourable G. S. H. MURRAY (Minister of State, Prime Minister's Office)

Senator Miss C. Y. FORDE (Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Education, Youth Affairs and Culture)

Senator T. E. BARKER (Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs)

Senator Miss O. P. SYMMONDS, G.C.M.

Senator D. T. GILL

Senator Miss J. C. ODLE

Senator N. A. LYNCH

Senator N. P. WELCH

Senator Mrs. P. E. RICKINSON

Senator S. P. BERNSTEIN

Senator C. K. LAURIE

Senator Mrs. V. J. DAVIS

Senator C. A. MASCOLL

Prayers were led by Rev. Errington Massiah.

Mr. PRESIDENT: The Senate is in session.

PRESENTATION OF PAPERS

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. President, I am commanded to lay the following before the Honourable the Senate:

The Barbados Economic Report, 1995.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. President, I rise to give notice of the following Resolutions:

1. A Resolution to approve the vesting in the National Housing Corporation of land at Dodds Plantation, St. Philip to be developed for housing purposes.
2. A Resolution for the compulsory acquisition of land for the Bridgetown By-Pass Road Project.

PUBLIC BUSINESS

Mr. PRESIDENT: Public Business is the instant order of the day.

ORDER NO. 1 – THE ENVIRONMENTAL LEVY BILL, 1996

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. President, I rise to move the Second Reading of this Bill, the Environmental Levy Bill.

This Bill is designed to provide for the imposition and collection of an environmental levy. The purpose of

this levy is to defray the cost of the disposal of refuse generated by the use of imported goods, as well as to defray the cost of operating and maintaining refuse disposal sites and to generally assist in the preservation and enhancement of the environment of this country, and for other related matters.

This environmental levy is based on a number of premises, one being that we need to ensure that the situation should never again arise in which a reason advanced for problems with respect to solid waste disposal can be the lack of resources. Basically, disposal of the solid waste of this country is one of the fundamental imperatives in order for us to maintain the standard of health, as well as the aesthetic quality of the environment to which we have become accustomed.

It is therefore in this vein that this levy is proposed, but also, Sir, there is a recognition worldwide of the need to ensure that consumers, that is, persons in general recognise their own responsibility as far as the generation of waste is concerned. In fact, the general principle which is accepted worldwide and which is one of the principles that formed the basis of this levy is the principle of having the polluter pay for the cost of any such pollution, and that can be extended throughout the whole area of waste management.

Also, that fundamental principle was fully engrained and enshrined in the general policy directions of most nations within the world, that is, the nations making up the United Nations system. In 1992 at the Earth Summit in Rio, Brazil one of the declarations that was adopted by the 160-plus members of the United Nations system was that Governments would adopt the principle of having the polluters pay for the cost of the cleaning-up of pollution in general, ranging from solid waste disposal to pollution at sea and otherwise; and also that Governments would take steps to ensure that resources are provided for the cost of such matters; and that wherever possible the cost of environmental clean-ups and the like would be internalised, that is, would be taken into account as part of the regular expenditure of the particular country involved.

This environmental levy, amongst other similar taxes known in the Press and other places as green taxes, is regularly used by countries all over the world. I think particularly leading the way are countries within the European Union who have sought to use taxes for dual purposes, one being for the defraying of the cost involved in maintaining a proper environment, as well as a means of allowing those persons who generate waste to feel the full weight of the generation and thereby exercise some control on their own level of contribution to the waste disposal problem.

11.25 a.m.

So Sir, within that context this Environmental Levy has been imposed in a number of areas. It imposes $\frac{3}{4}$ of 1%, 0.75% levy on the cost of the c.i.f. value of imported items. However, Sir, it then proceeds to identify a number of special categories, which constitute particular difficulties within the context of solid waste disposal in Barbados.

It identifies, for example, in the Schedule to the Bill, that an *ad valorem* rate of 1% would be imposed on imported items of plastic, glass, metal, items imported in paperboard containers and empty containers of plastic, glass, metal or paper board. Those are some of the items which you know are generally speaking either not biodegradable or give tremendous problems in that area and constitute a special difficulty in the context of solid waste disposal in Barbados.

Other categories of items, Sir, for which a special levy regime has been identified include those other items which constitute the bulky waste problem and which generally speaking tend in significant quantities and amounts to reduce the longevity of any landfill which are used within the solid waste management system. Items identified include motor vehicles, motor vehicle tyres, freezers, refrigerators, dishwashing machines and the like.

I want to stress, Sir, that this levy is imposed on imports and that the items identified in the Second Schedule, particularly the individual items listed, the fees instituted thereon are not fees on disposal. With respect to disposal, there is proposed at the time of this levy but it is not part of the Environmental Levy Bill that we are debating, but also to be imposed is a tipping fee to be charged at the landfill on commercial waste.

That tipping fee is to be implemented by way of order, Sir, the appropriate order to the Act, and the rate of \$25 per tonne, as I said, will be levied on commercial waste. Again, Sir, it goes back to the basic principle of having some of the direct burden of the management of solid waste attributed to the causers of the burden.

We also recognise that one of the issues that has to be faced is not just the cost of disposal of whatever solid waste is generated and ensuring that you provide the resources to cover that cost; but we also recognise that we must provide appropriate inducements to those individuals or corporate entities who can assist in reducing the waste stream, removing some items from the waste stream which would otherwise go to landfills and similar places for disposal.

We are talking, Sir, about those persons who are engaged in various aspects of recycling. The point made as we discuss recycling that it is quite clear Barbados will not be in a position, due to its one hand, as well as some of the ch-

in the more detailed aspect of recycling. For example, Barbados' recycling programmes will be unlikely to get into heavy, chemical breakdown of plastics and the like, because the by-products of some of these processes would not be compatible with the source of our water. However, to the extent that recycling programmes result in a reduction of the flow of waste to landfills and thereby extending the life of the landfills, even though those recycling operations may be limited to a collection, a sorting, a grouping for other exports of particular categories of waste, particularly metals, plastic, glass and papers then there is considerable economic benefit to be derived by Barbados from having those recycling operations here.

The Government has decided that recycling operations will be granted incentives and these approved operations will be granted incentives quite similar to what manufacturers are able to obtain. That is, they will have relief on the taxes payable on the imports of machinery and equipment as well as those approved recycling activities will also be eligible for a tax holiday of no more than 10 years which is similar to what manufacturers would be entitled to under the Fiscal Incentives Act.

Sir, with the contribution of these recyclers in terms of the reduction of the quantities of waste going to the landfill, it will mean that landfills will be able to enjoy a much longer life and in the context of a place like Barbados with limited land area this is obviously extremely important. In addition, there is a considerable potential for the generation of foreign exchange earnings from the export of glass, plastics and metal particularly, but also from the perspective of composting used from the organic components of solid waste there is the potential again not just for the reduction of waste to the landfill but also for there to be linkages within the agricultural sector to use more environmentally friendly means of fertilising the soil and thereby improving the overall agricultural output.

We are satisfied, Sir, that this Environmental Levy will go quite a long way in helping us to address what must be one of the most pressing problems that a small, developing country will face, that is, the challenge of managing the level of waste generation which profiles that of a developed country while at the same time not having the large area and having an environment which is generally robust in order to withstand the threats and challenges which are produced on the basis of this waste.

As far as the particular components of the legislation is concerned, this Act and the levy to be charged thereunder, will be administered by the Comptroller of Customs and the provisions of the Customs Act with respect to the charging of levies, the payment and collection of duties and contravention of the Act would apply to this levy. It is also important to re-emphasise the point that this is a levy on the imports of all items into

Barbados as indicated under the Schedule and that these, especially the items that are listed specifically, will not be charged a second time at the point of disposal.

In fact, Sir, care has also been taken within the Act to ensure that the cost of managing Barbados' solid waste difficulties are not transferred into the cost of exports of items so that exporters will be able to claim back the levy which they would have paid on the import component of their production. This is an extremely important provision

So I commend this Environmental Levy Bill to this Honourable Senate, and I beg to move that this Bill be now read a second time.

11.35 a.m.

SENATOR C. A. MASCOLL: Mr. President, the truth is that there is really no need for an environmental levy at this stage in the fiscal management of the Barbados Government. To pretend that you are introducing such a levy under the guise of an agreement at Rio is really to deny that the whole question of the collection of revenue has to do with the capacity of the country to pay and the existing levels of revenue or taxation which the economy presently faces. Indeed, this administration got into power criticising the level of taxation in Barbados, and what we have seen since 1994 is a continuous increase in the tax takeout of every dollar in Barbados. In fact, this levy is going to contribute to increasing the tax burden on Barbadians.

It is a levy which is imposed on all imported goods into Barbados which is a significant thing in terms of the base. Indeed, apart from a Value Added Tax system, this particular levy is going to cover many more imported goods than any other tax which is presently in place in Barbados. There is no doubt about it that from the point of view of revenue collection, there is no way in which it can be demonstrated that this particular levy is required at this stage.

Just let me indicate during my recent history with numbers that indeed, given the import bill of Barbados which stands at \$1.3 billion, this is going to mean that Government's take from this environmental levy is going to be in the order of \$10 million to \$11 million, unlike what has been stated, in fact. This constitutes a fairly significant take. That is supposed to be 75 per cent of 1 per cent of the import bill which translates, as I said, using 1995 information, into a take of \$10.2 million for Government. That, certainly, is nothing to be scoffed at.

What is more important is that in the last recent Economic Report, I am yet to get a copy of that particular one, but the Central Bank's Report states clearly that Government in 1995 was able to run a fiscal surplus

of the order of \$25 million or \$28 million? Now, if Government is saying that the fiscal position is so sound and that it is in a position where it is running a surplus, again contrary to the view expressed by the then Opposition Leader, Mr. Owen Arthur, that small deficits should not be pursued because they do not allow any social engineering to take place, and in fact they do not allow any elbow room, we have seen this administration reversed itself on that issue where we have gone so far as to run fiscal surplus in the calendar year 1995 which is a complete revision of the intended policy of this administration.

To compound that, to have a surplus on your fiscal accounts and then to suggest that you need to raise additional revenue in order to address issues pertaining to the environment, is to hide under the cloak of a so-called agreement at Rio. That, to my mind, is really not the appropriate action to take at this stage, that is, to impose an additional tax burden on the Barbadian people.

Not only that, Sir, but the impact of this levy is going to be felt on all prices, as innocent as it may look at this stage, since that levy is imposed at the import stage, it means that all the markups on the business sector would be placed on top of the levy so therefore the impact on price is going to be compounded as a result of this imposition. Again, that is at variance with some of the objectives which have been stated for the economy, that is, we are proposing to increase our competitiveness by way of productivity. We are proposing that competitiveness ought to be the yardstick by which we are going to judge the medium to long-term economic performance in Barbados and therefore this particular measure seems to be at variance with the objective of making Barbadian goods and services more competitive.

Again, I am at a loss to understand what is the policy environment within which this particular levy would have been introduced. That again is a very serious bone of contention because we are saying that we are trying our best to contain prices within the Incomes and Prices Protocol and that we are trying to contain at the same time the rate at which wages grow within the economy, and therefore, any measure which proposes to increase prices in Barbados will be at variance with the Incomes Protocol and, certainly, the overall objective and desire of the Government to improve competitiveness.

Again, while there is no one who can deny the importance of having a sustainable environment, and there is no one who can deny that we need to do whatever we can to manage the environment effectively, I think this particular exercise is one which shows that this fad of managing the environment is now catching on here and that what needs to be done...

Aside.

SENATOR C. A. MASCOLL: It is really a fad because you need to do a lot more investigation of what really the environment is about. You need to understand what the environment is. You need just not to go to a conference and pretend that you are all of a sudden respecting and admiring what the environment has to give and then use that as a reason for imposing a levy, or additional taxes on the people of Barbados. That cannot be justified. In fact, what we would need to have is a detailed assessment of what really the environment is about in Barbados and the magnitude to which it is a problem in the Barbadian context.

Certainly, we cannot speak of environmental degradation in the form that we would have, say, in Latin America or across Europe. We cannot speak in terms of those levels. We can speak maybe on the fact that our greatest damage to the environment is along the coast where the development of tourism is a threat but certainly within the internal landscape there is no evidence in terms of the scientific research to show that there has been severe and long lasting damage to the environment to the extent that we can warrant even without, as I said, any such research the introduction of an environmental levy, not at this stage. It cannot be done just willy-nilly.

In any case, since we are saying that we are protecting the environment, I would think that some of the materials which are imported into Barbados can be placed in particular categories, that is, certainly not all imported material is going to be to the disadvantage of the environment. Therefore, why would we have a broad sweep in terms of imposing the levy on all imported goods? In fact, this strikes me that the very popular line by Red Plastic Bag "Where we can't eliminate, wouldn't disintegrate, not biodegradable," should really be invoked as a principle for determining where this particular levy goes. That is, how can you justify putting a tax on cardboard, or paper in the same way in which you justify putting a tax on plastics?

Therefore, it strikes me that there has not been sufficient research done here to determine which particular importing materials are going to be of damage to the environment. As a consequence, I am saying that this seems to me to be another scapegoat for imposing additional taxation and maybe providing the Government with the desired level of elbow room to do other things within the tax system.

11.45 a.m.

But certainly on the basis of the environment and the environment alone and protection thereof, there can be no justification imposing this environmental levy on all goods across the board regardless of the use to which

that particular imported good is going to be put. So I have difficulty really in understanding its purpose.

I have difficulty in understanding what it is we are trying to achieve as it relates to this particular environmental levy. Are we trying to prevent certain imported goods or are we trying to suggest that we need to find systems and ways and means of handling those imported goods or materials when they reach the garbage or disposal level. I am saying that on the basis of the impact that a particular material will have on the environment that there should have been further consideration to do a lot more discrimination in this particular levy in terms of the application of the levy to imported goods. On that basis and that basis alone it suggests to me that Government has not given a lot of thought to the real purpose of this environmental levy and as I said before has used it, to my mind, really to raise revenue and not necessarily to achieve the objective of managing effectively the environment. We cannot in any way justify this imposition.

As regards the whole question of fees that have been imposed or will be imposed on people dumping at the particular site, that issue needs certainly to be ventilated in many other quarters and there is serious need for consideration of putting the dump in the area that is proposed. Maybe there is definite need to revisit that particular issue because what we are seeing is a refusal to accept that the area is not the most appropriate area for the proposed site of the dump and whether they revisit the idea. That is certainly something that has happened within recent months, we have had the revisiting of the duty which was supposed to be imposed on the duty free sector which has not yet come to this Chamber or even to the lower Chamber and one really does not understand the reason for that. Having stated that there would have been a tax on the duty free sector we have seen that particular interest group lobby so effectively that there has not been any consideration at all of a tax on the duty free sector.

We have seen reversals in many other areas. We have seen apologies for statements and I am saying that there is need at this stage to look more critically at this whole question of the environmental levy to see to what extent it will indeed serve its purpose.

I am of the view, as I said, that it is merely a levy designed to raise revenue and not in any way to protect the environment. I am waiting eagerly for someone to demonstrate to me how in fact we are going to be sure that these funds which will be put in the consolidated fund will be targetted to the environment over the next couple of years. I look forward eagerly to the programmes that will be put in place by this administration to in fact manage the environment effectively.

I do not only look forward to the revenue that will be derived from this levy but I look forward to the more critical factor and that is what will be the policy position of the Government as it relates to the environment and what specific measures will be put in place to ensure that the environment is effectively managed over the medium to long term. I thought indeed that such legislation would have been accompanied by a policy document stating clearly where the Government stands in relation to the environment. Merely to tell me that you are going to be searching to raise financial resources in fact to look after the environment without understanding what the environment is truly about is to my mind to put the cart before the horse.

There is a whole lot of work to be done in the area of the environment. There is a great need to understand its impact on the overall economic development, not only in Barbados and the Caribbean and throughout the world, in fact the environment has become so critical that the international organisations use the protection of the environment as maybe one of the major emerging conditions for the determination of loans. This is well recognised now so that we have had renewed interest at all levels, theoretical and practical, in terms of what the environment is in terms of what we can do to ensure that there is a continued link between what is happening in the developed world and the developing world. This is in fact one area in which the developed world seems to be sympathetic towards the needs of the developing world and it has become a major concern in the negotiation of loans.

Now, I am therefore not satisfied that sufficient work has in fact gone into the preparation of the environmental levy. Though its intention in the long term may be good I am saying that there is no need in the prevailing fiscal environment to raise such revenue because we have clearly demonstrated by way of the economic reports of the Central Bank and the economic reports of the Ministry and we have seen by way of our boast about the management in the economy that the fiscal affairs are so good that we do not see the need for the additional taxation to be imposed on Barbadians. This will make, although it looks very innocent, a major contribution to the overall prices in the economy. We cannot in any way justify its imposition at this stage.

I cannot see the need for it. I cannot see the need for this imposition at a time when we are seeking to make the tourism sector more competitive. I cannot see this imposition at a time when we say we need to make the manufacturing sector more competitive. I cannot see its imposition at this time when the services sector is supposed to be made more competitive. What is critical at this stage of the game is, will this environmental levy constitute part of the base upon which the VAT will be implemented when it is so implemented? That is, as it stands

now, the C.I.F. value, plus the import duty supposed to constitute the base of the VAT. I am asking a simple question. Will the environmental levy, since it is being imposed on all imports, will it constitute part of the base upon which the VAT will be imposed and if that is so should there not be a discussion surrounding whether it should be in the base or outside of the base? I am seeking clarification on this issue since we are hearing about the pending implementation of the VAT though its implementation may be delayed once more. It may be discussed tomorrow in tomorrow's Budget but its implementation date apparently has once again been pushed back.

I am having difficulty understanding why at this stage we need to impose this levy. Furthermore as far as we know there is a very limited range of products which are presently charged import duties and the like. Stamp duty is not imposed on intermediary goods, that is goods which are brought in and used to produce a final good. This environmental levy is saying, even though I am going to be using this particular good and transforming its character to produce some final product I still see the need to impose a penalty on that importer who is going to take that good and transform it into a final good.

Again I do not understand the justification for it. I would have thought, as I said at the beginning, that there would have been greater discrimination in terms of the application of the levy. I would have thought that we would have considered more importantly issues as to whether materials are going to be damaging to the environment and that should constitute the major basis upon which an environmental levy ought to be imposed, not the question of simply raising revenue. Again I cannot see the justification for reposing this particular good on top of an intermediate good.

11.55 a.m

Then the manufacturer or whoever is going to take that intermediate good, transform it into a final good and then that manufacturer who may have to carry particular garbage to the dump site would have then to turn round and pay an additional fee on top of the wasted part of the input. That is what it can be called if you want an example which can be made into a shirt. Are we saying then that the strippings will then be charged an additional fee at the point of delivery to the dump site? We can see all other examples of that. So again there are definite difficulties in understanding the nature of this environmental levy. I think it is in fact imposed mainly for the purposes of raising revenue. I cannot see that it is going to translate into a means of protecting the environment. That requires a rather more expensive policy framework to be outlined which clearly states the objectives of managing the environment and clearly states the needs that are required in fact to manage the environment. But to come at this point and put further taxation on Barbadians cannot be the desired path

to travel in 1996 when there is going to be a whole host of confusion surrounding the implementation of the Value Added Tax, and there is no doubt about that. No matter how well you decide to put together a programme in order to introduce that tax it is going to cause trouble, because there will be trouble stirring up as long as a consumer recognizes that a tax is going to be on some service that he did not previously pay tax on. So it will not be easy. I wish you well though. As you well know I am a supporter and, contrary to all the public pronouncements which might have been orchestrated in order for me to come out of the wood-work to support the Value Added Tax, I am from the very inception one of the first proponents of the Value Added Tax and it would be unwise of me to retreat from that position. I am not in the business anyhow of retreating unlike Prime Minister Owen Arthur who has retreated on several occasions in relation...

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator, I think that we can leave out the personal reference.

SENATOR C. A. MASCOLL: Well, the Prime Minister then. I withdraw, Sir, since there has been unprecedented expunging. Anyhow, I withdraw.

So that my position as it relates to the Value Added Tax system in Barbados is quite clear. All I am seeking is further clarification as to what is going to be the purpose of the Environmental Levy in this case. But my position is quite clear. I invited 60 something businessmen in March of 1992 and they turned up at the Central Bank.

Aside.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Order, please.

SENATOR C. A. MASCOLL: In fact, I am telling you that at that time it was one of the greatest moments. So I am saying that my position is quite clear as it relates to that particular system of taxation. To come to be orchestrating behind the scenes or writing under L. C. Norman and the like and Aubrey Linton and Yvonne Wood will not in any way encourage me to become public on the issue. I do not have to because my position was made clear a long time ago.

Sir, just let me wind up by saying that I do not need an hour to discuss this issue. Let me wind up by saying that I do not regard the Environmental Levy to be a necessary thing at this stage. It is not necessary because there is no need for further taxation in Barbados. It is not necessary because it is against the stated objective of this administration which took office with the view that there would be a reduction in taxation under this new administration. What we have seen in fact, Sir, since 1994 is a continuous growth in the tax take in Barbados and this is going to contribute to that. It is not

necessarily so because I think that it will not achieve the objectives which are stated. It is too broad based in its application. There should have been more discrimination used by the Government in determining which imported goods ought to come under the Environmental Levy and that, as I said earlier, some determination of whether or not the particular good is biodegradable or can disintegrate or its overall impact on the environment should have been considered before the Environmental Levy was imposed. On that basis and on that basis alone, I call for a reduction in the base of the Environmental Levy since as I demonstrated in my speech that there is no way in which you can justify the imposition of this levy on all goods across the board since all materials imported are not in fact going to be detrimental to the environment. Furthermore, there is a recent imposition of the implementation of the automated customs data system at the Port or the Customs Department which in fact is so comprehensive in its coverage that it can tell you what the imported material is and I am saying that everything which is imported is so well documented under the acicular system that the material which has been gathered so far since 1993 ought to have been used in allowing Government to determine which goods should in fact come under the Environmental Levy. But to have this broad brush approach suggests to me that the sinister motive here seems to be the raising of tax revenue more so than any protection of the environment. So again I call...

Mr. PRESIDENT: The word "sinister" – I would wish you to rephrase that and I would strike the word "sinister".

SENATOR C. A. MASCOLL: The arterial motive seems to me is not the protection of the environment but to tax revenue raising criteria which is being invoked at this stage more so than any environmental protection. So I can safely say that on the basis of the existing environment in Barbados as it relates to Government boasting of fiscal surpluses, as it relates to Government seeing the need to retain or contain prices within a certain growth rate as desirable that this measure goes against that particular expressed policy of Government. This measure will raise prices. This measure will be inflationary and therefore it ought not to have been imposed at this stage in the fiscal affairs of Barbados and cannot be justified because there is no shortage of funds available for Government in terms of the Environmental Levy. So on many scores, I have demonstrated that this Environmental Levy is certainly not the most desired levy to be imposed. We have shown in fact by way of example that it is going to be more of a burden to the community than it is going to be an aid in terms of managing the environment and on that basis and that basis alone maybe we should revisit the whole question of an Environmental Levy.

I have decided this morning to be brief but there seems to be an impatience within the Chambers on the part

of some Senators who wish to make their contribution. I now say that I have made my short remarks but I hope that they have been important enough to cause some consideration of this Environmental Levy.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Davis.

SENATOR Mrs. V. J. DAVIS: Mr. President, I rise to support this Bill 100 per cent which should provide the imposition and collection of the Environmental Levy. I rise to support this Bill for many reasons but most of all because I feel that we must consider very seriously and I feel it very seriously the fragility of this eco-system in which we live in this Barbados and I am genuinely not concerned or worried about the fact that this imposition of the levy is going to affect all members of the society. Eventually, it is going to ripple down to them. But why I am not worried about that is that I think people should be actually happy to have to pay a little extra for the environment. We must remember that, if we talk about sustainable development, we are talking about this generation and we are talking about this generation which must leave the other generation something that is called Barbados. I am really afraid that at the rate at which we are going we probably would not have a Barbados. 12.05 p.m.

Let me first say that laws are all well and good but, as some cynic said, laws are for the lawless. I also know that what we need to do is to concentrate a lot more on what I like to call sensitising, because education seems to be cold, hard facts. I like the notion of sensitising, of appealing to people's emotions when it comes to something like the environment. Why I am saying that I support this Bill, it is because I am concentrating on the preservation and enhancement of the environment. I think unless we decide very definitely on the philosophy which we must use to approach the question of the environment, we will not have the right *modus operandi* to deal with this project which I consider in the process of sensitising.

There are two notions about our eco-system. There is the anthropocentric notion as opposed to the ecocentric, and that is what I am talking about. We normally would talk about the biblical notion of God made the world and then man came to dominate it. We have to begin to think in terms of our oneness with nature and this is why I feel that if we develop this philosophy about the environment we probably will be able to transmit this to our children so that they must feel the agony of the grass when that plastic bag sits on it and prevents the light from coming in. They must feel the agony of the coral reef that is dying because of the fertilisers, of all those chemicals, of the effluent. I feel that if we do not sensitise our coming generation or the generation here to the sense in which it is fragile. . . Look at our system, look at the wet lands, look at Graeme Hall, look at the ocean, look at the beaches, look at

our water sources. If we do not begin to think and tell our young people that we must protect this. . . Do you know the alarming fact is that about 15 years ago they observed that 50% of our coral reefs were dying? I am sure that some of you remember, I think it was last year, where fish were dying on the beaches. I remember the experience of going in the Atlantis and seeing the coral reefs. They were dying. Why were they dying? We do not need anyone to spell out to us the whole question about the bio-diversity of things like coral reefs, or wet lands. We do not need to sit back and continue the destruction. We could let our children know right away that we used to have something very popular in the Barbados diet called sea eggs. We have to show them in very real terms what we have done to destroy this little system in which we live. I know for sure when the flying fish started deserting to go to Tobago it had to do with the way we were destroying this fragile system, so I do not see anyone could say that enough work has not been done in terms of the environment to justify a levy. As a matter of fact, I think we have to catch up very quickly by letting people understand what is happening.

I would like to see, on the preservation of the environment, money going towards monitoring certain situations in Barbados. We in what is so called the developing world have had the misfortune of having toxic chemicals in the form of fertilisers and the herbicides, all sorts of things, come into these countries. We have to monitor that. We need money to do these things, we need money to educate and sensitise. We also have to think in terms of what are those factors that interfere with our ozone system. We need money to monitor that. We also need to think more seriously of the coastal zone management.

I was amazed, and I don't know how many of you saw the programme, and I wonder how much attention we are paying to this. I know for sure it is a great problem right now in Tobago where what we call boat people, people coming with their yachts, and the garbage, the effluent and the pollution of some of the best beaches. I pray God that does not happen in Barbados, that we have monitoring systems to watch this.

When we look at our water sources, gullies and so on, I know that Barbadians went through a whole process whereby they cleaned up gullies and I think the gullies are in the same state again, so our money and our resources must go in an urgent way towards what I consider – and I don't want to use the word "education" because you say "education" and people think we put out some cold facts there and that people would somehow learn. I do not think it is working, I think we have to let our children understand what happens when we pollute the water sources. Let them see in real terms what happens to that water that goes down into the sea, that it is destroying the coral. Explain

the whole notion of covering over these things, they cannot get light, they cannot even breathe anymore, that we are killing out what is supposed to be tourist attractions, what is supposed to be the diversity of life in those systems like the coral beaches and Graeme Hall. Even things for medicine and for fisheries. What do we do in terms of our resources from the sea, whether for tourists or for food? We have to bring it in a way that makes the young realise that we have gone very far already in destroying this island in which we live, and it is a matter of serious urgency. I don't see, after we have had a Conference on Sustainable Development, that we can say we do not have the kind of information now that would make us a lot more concerned about the environment to begin to demand that money must go into this sensitising, money must go into monitoring the system.

I do not know what the process is for checking on the fertilisers or the chemicals which come into this country, but we must spend money on looking at that, because that goes into the sea and it is going to destroy us. Even the food that we eat. I am sure that people like Senator Laurie would tell us about the vegetation. Even the chemicals we are putting on our food, eventually we are killing ourselves out, not to mention of course the aesthetics.

I hope that money from this levy would also go towards what I consider street sweepers. Every time I drive around Barbados and I see bits of plastic bags at the sides of the streets and in the gutters, I know there is the National Conservation Commission, but I do not seem to feel that is doing what I want to see done. There must be people actually sweeping and collecting. There is too much garbage around this country. Every time we see that plastic bag that is not biodegradable, we cannot say we cannot afford to deal with that whole plastic industry, but every time we see it, if it is not there it is going to fly towards the beach, the sea or to the gullies and it is going to destroy slowly but surely.

12.15 p.m.

If you see the plastic bags! It is shameful! Plastic bags are on the coral reefs we have in Barbados and they are being destroyed. We have to make it a very live, sensitive and emotional situation in terms of what we are to do about this little rock we call Barbados, fragile as it is, so that any environmental levy for me, the fact that every single Barbadian is going to have to pay something towards it does not bother me at all because if they don't eventually as I said we probably won't even have a Barbados in the next few hundred years.

We look at the erosion of the beach and there are so many things which we know and I think a lot of our young people would benefit from that kind of education that makes them more conscious and aware of their participation in creating an environment in Barbados

that is going to be not only healthy for us but is going to be there for the generations to come, that is going to be more aesthetic in terms of its attraction to us who live here and to those who come after.

Again there is one other point I want to make. I don't know how much research and money is going to grow from this, but I would like to think that we look at our working environment. We talk a lot now about technology and all that but obviously there are going to be problems, and there are problems arising right now about our workers in terms of computers. Yes, collect money for an environmental levy but what that money must be used towards is not only the constant monitoring of some of the chemicals, but monitoring those people who use our seas, beaches, yachts, monitoring, of course, what we ourselves do in terms of the destruction of our environment, but I also want us to think in terms of the philosophy that we are one with nature, we are one with all that is around us and that when we throw garbage, when we throw plastic bags, when we do anything to destroy that we must recognise that we are destroying ourselves. We are not separate from nature. We are one with it.

Thank you.

SENATOR Miss O. P. SYMMONDS: Mr. President, I rise with approbation and alacrity to support this Bill. One of the conclusions of the World Commission on Environment and Development is that the future is conditional on decisive, political action now to begin managing environmental resources, to ensure both sustainable human progress and human survival. It goes on to say that they are not forecasting a future, that they are serving an urgent notice that the time has come to take decisions needed to secure resources to sustain this and coming generations.

This is characteristically what the Barbados Labour Party Government is doing, taking decisive, political action. This thinking is not new. It goes back to the 1970s when there was a European Conservation Year in 1970 and it was displayed in studies about man in his ecological environment. If man is too selfish and continues to exploit his environment he will only rob himself of those resources which are necessary for his survival.

In its wider sense, the environment is a very complex issue because it affects everything. It has to do with poverty, landfills, everything. For instance, it takes 150 acres of forest land to make the paper for one edition of one Sunday newspaper in some countries. The world population is increasing. There is the question of ocean resources, as Senator Davis pointed out, and that poses a problem for the region generally and for Barbados in particular. Barbados has about 167 000 kilometers of ocean

space. 400 times the amount of land space. And therefore it is important that there be a developmental programme and more research done to control shipping and lower the risk incurred by oil spills and dangerous substances or the dumping of waste.

Garbage, Mr. President, is a serious problem worldwide, but I think it is worse in small islands. We haven't the space that we can be selfish and indiscriminate without offending large numbers of people, and I think we are reaching saturation point. That is one of the reasons why this environmental levy is important for every individual. It is even more serious when we remember that tourism depends on a proper, healthy environment, and it has a great deal to do with attitudes.

Unfortunately, some people in Barbados feel that they have no responsibility for any area outside of their own homes. When I was a teacher I met this attitude all too often with students. Hence, you will find people keeping their own homes clean and beautiful but they think nothing of throwing litter on the streets through a car window and even worse throwing litter on people's property. Even dead dogs have been known to be thrown on people's property. This is anti-social. It is unpatriotic. It is anti-environmental.

Our standard of living has improved. There is infinitesimal growth every day. More metal objects, more food and clothes and so on and, therefore, as the population grows, there must automatically be more garbage. I remember as a child when newspapers were kept, even for household use, put out to dry. Nowadays all these things have been discarded. Car tyres are a problem. If burnt, they pose problems not only for asthmatics but for people with whom I can sympathise who are allergic to smoke. Then there is the problem of garbage collection. When the new Administration took over, there were only 12 out of 52 sanitation trucks completely road worthy and over 20% of the fleet was 20 years old. \$3 million had to be spent on maintenance. All these things pose problems and challenges and the garbage creates habitats for rats and vermin. Some people buy lots and then they do not keep them clean and debushed.

12.25 p.m.

I understand that the majority of the people who had Dengue Fever last year when it was checked it was found that they themselves were responsible because of containers with water, for instance, in the homes and so last year, there was an increase in the incidence of leptospirosis.

Sleeping on the streets is another challenge. I smiled in agreement when Senator Davis mentioned that. There should be removal of garbage immediately after the streets and gutters are swept. This is something which needs urgent attention. It would also lighten the workload because when it is left there and it blows all about they

have to remove it next day. It also creates problems for pedestrians and cyclists. Pedestrians have to step over it and I have seen cyclists time and again swerving to avoid the garbage that is left there. Of course, this is potentially dangerous. What is more, it is unsightly. I am sure that all my colleagues here will agree that there needs to be an education programme. I would like to stress that it must be a massive programme in the schools and among the population generally. As well there needs to be a coordination of departments.

Taking care of the environment should be a daily part of training in the school. Let the children know, let Barbadians know that there are no imperatives to choose Barbados over another island. I know that we have wonderful beaches. I know that our infrastructure is good but still we must be made aware of the need to keep Barbados clean. What is more, there should be programmes at prime time on television. These must be the centre of it. It is not enough to have spasmodic programmes at times when people are not really paying attention. It is too serious a problem.

Mr. President, a chasm awaits Barbados if we do not wake up and find solutions and if individuals do not cooperate. I think that if every individual has to contribute to the levy, it will make everyone feel more responsible. It will make Barbadians realize the seriousness of keeping their environment clean, protecting the environment and so making Barbados a place that is not only safe for the present generation but for generations to come.

I thank you, Mr. President.

SENATOR Miss J. C. ODLE: Mr. President, I too rise to support this Bill. I would want to share a few thoughts about some concerns I have with regard to the environment although, as usual, once Senators Davis and Symmonds get off the wicket first, you are guaranteed that most of the material will be well used but, nevertheless, I shall press on.

I would like to take this opportunity to compliment the Government on bringing such a Bill at this time because I too feel that we must all play our part and be responsible at the end of the day for a situation that we have some part in creating. I am not surprised that it has been brought at this time because the party that forms this Administration always seeks to bring policies to bear that will help the health, lifestyle and, of course, the environment of Barbadians over time, and this is no exception.

For example, way back, and I like a little history because I believe you have to look back to the past sometimes to see from whence you came, so you know

where you want to go. But a simple thing like water, back in the 1981-1986 period was the time when the Barbados Labour Party ensured that 92 per cent of the households in this country had water. That might sound slight but it is a very important thing because we know that water is a vital source for a healthy Barbados and, therefore, a healthy environment.

It gives me some concern, however, Mr. President, looking back historically as well to a situation that somehow was created and which today still brings major problems as far as our environment goes. This is quite a number of years ago too when the now Opposition who has a way of speaking about assisting the small man when they are in Opposition, did what I think was not such a good thing for the small man by putting them in a very difficult position, those who were looking for housing, by placing them in the Zone 1 water area. To this day that is still a problem. But what are these individuals to do now? We have to look at alternatives for them.

They were placed there – and I am speaking specifically of the Belle area and the Licorish Village area which are directly located on the Zone 1 water table, which fills the needs of the water supply for the Bridgetown area and where they are the beneficiaries of any hazard that might take place in that area. They were positioned there without any septic tanks, roadways and to this day still many do not have the ability to have running water to the individual homes because there has been, for many years now, a preventive measure to stop that, obviously, because we have to ensure that that water zone is no longer contaminated because if not, we as Barbadians will suffer, and suffer harshly.

Mr. President, in the Manifesto of the Barbados Labour Party we talked about quality of life for our environment. This is a document of the House. I do not even have to read it at page 32, because we all have copies of it and it is a document of the House. I would urge those who have not read it yet to do so at their leisure so they can really understand where we are going, where we are talking about the environment and waste matters. We need to be really vigilant where that is concerned.

Again, just a little bit more history before I move on. The Democratic Labour Party likes to talk about sewage but the Barbados Labour Party is the party that implemented the Bridgetown Sewerage Project. The South Coast Sewerage Project has been started, again under us. At this time consultants are actually looking at a plan for the implementation of a West Coast Sewerage Project. So this administration is doing more than just talking. We are getting about the business of ensuring that the environment, which I am sure we have lost at least eight years by the lack of any strong thrust or any real environmental plan to service this country, is taken care of.

It is up to this administration to make sure that we can try and salvage some of the confusion and mess that was left to fester, if I could use that word. The task we know will not be easy, neither will it be cheap because quite often like a sore foot, the longer you leave it the worse it becomes and the more stringent measures have to be taken to ensure that we can clear up some of the confusion.

Senator Davis has already spoken about the marine environment so I will not touch on that again, but simply to say that we must move speedily to ensure that we on land do things in such a way that will cause less strife and stress on our marine environment because that too has far reaching consequences in terms of our economy and in terms of bringing tourists to this country who would want to enjoy the waters around the island and the sites and services we have here.

Mr. President, I really have to touch on an area that is of some concern to me. The air when it becomes polluted is not only ugly but has far reaching possibilities of health in this country and in the world as a whole. There is an increased possibility of respiratory problems.
12.35 p.m.

Polluted air also has the great ability of weakening the immune system and causing more and more of us to become more susceptible to cancer. Increasing numbers of Barbadians and as I look around I notice one or two people in this very Chamber suffer with, I cannot say asthma, but conditions of a respiratory nature. Senators opposite me and Senators on the same side over here with me, sinus problems. I think every single individual in this room, over the past 6 months to a year, has at some time or other been plagued with post nasal drip and so on from the very dust in the atmosphere. Asthma and death from cancer have continued to rise, I am not saying it is because of the atmosphere but believe me, garbage in, garbage out.

Many people are seeking and finding alternative preventative methods of treatment. Mr. President, I really believe that we are already in a melee as far as the environment goes and a lot of us have to look at trying to save ourselves and we are looking at preventative methods to alleviate the onset of certain diseases. This of course can be quite costly because preventative methods must be ongoing. It is not okay just to take an antibiotic or strong tablet to nip it in the bud once and for all. Senator Gill would be able to speak more eloquently on that, but preventative in my humble opinion is far better than the curative. The cost associated with this can be a little bit costly because most of the things that individuals use for preventative methods come under the heading of health supplements or dietary supplements. These incur quite substantial duties and taxes which often times we cannot claim on insurances. I say, we because I myself believe in

alternative methods and I am seeking where ever possible to use products as close to nature as possible both in the consumption of foods and supplements to ensure that I am not plagued by more of the problems that are out there. So I would want to take the opportunity to urge the Government perhaps to look at the duties and taxes imposed on alternative medicines specifically as part of its thrust. It must be a thrust from all of us towards a healthy lifestyle and by a healthy lifestyle a more healthy environment.

We cannot expect the Government to do everything on its own or to solve this very large problem of the terrible conditions in the environment. Now, I am well aware that it is not only Barbados that is suffering but we, if we do our small part, would make a difference towards the world as a whole. As individuals we need to look at our own practices for disposal because it starts with the first small step and if each and every one of us took the opportunity to begin sorting and separating at home, composting what is degradable out in the garden. Whether you have a garden or not, in some small area put a drum and you can put vegetable peelings and so on. That would make it far less difficult for the collection of waste and in the long run make it easier at the final point at the landfill.

We want to ensure that we start sorting and separation. It is vital. Communities need to get in the act. If you live in an area where there are 3 or 4 houses or even 100 houses come together. We come together for neighbourhood watches as far as security goes, why not come together for sorting of our bottles and our plastics and our newspapers. There are some private companies that will receive certain materials such as papers, plastics, glass, copper etc. I myself transport it in the trunk of the car. I suppose I am fortunate to have a car. I suppose the argument may be that everybody does not have a car but I do not believe that in Barbados there is not within a community an individual who would make himself available if we are looking at generally cleaning up the environment in which we live. That is where we have to start and then by extension it goes out to communities and into greater Barbados as a whole and then into the world and the atmosphere itself would certainly be the beneficiary.

Mr. President, the protection of the environment is critical, not only for health reasons but also in order to maintain the standard of living to which we have become accustomed here in Barbados and also for sustainable development as a whole. It also speaks to whether tourists would want to even continue to come to this country if it is no longer environmentally friendly. More and more, tourists who travel look first and foremost at the quality of life wherever they may go. Is clean running water available? Is a lot of garbage on the side of the

road? I am ashamed to say that indeed there is in some cases, because we as Barbadians have to be more proud of that aspect of Barbados and Senator Symmonds spoke about that. This is why I feel this Bill is particularly important but I want to touch on that a little further down. Our tourism product is dependent then on making sure that we maintain a good healthy environment. There are too many places in this world which are unspoilt. They may not have the infrastructure that we have but we need the tourist dollar to continue coming here and it will not do so if we fail to be really vigilant in the maintenance of the environment and our disposal of our waste matter.

It also leads to, and Senator Symmonds touched on this, if we do not do those things we are looking at the possibility of diseases which will affect us and therefore by extension our visitors. Dengue Fever when you have large receptacles just left lying by the side of the road or in people's backyards and some of our own backyards, and that is a wonderful breeding ground for vermin, rats and mosquitoes etc. and we all know and I would not dwell on that, what the end results would be for that. It also speaks about Tuberculosis. Now that is something that was once something of the past but is again beginning to rear its ugly head as the environment becomes more and more polluted.

Mr. President, there is a saying that cheap things no good and good things no cheap and so if we really want to have an environment that is safe and comfortable for all of us and a future for us living now and for generations of Barbadians unborn it is not going to be without cost. This is why we are here to debate this Bill here today because I strongly feel that if we are serious about the safe environment there should and must be harsh penalties for those who would seek to abuse the system and by this Bill we are seeking to ensure that we who are the creators of the garbage and of the things that would lead to an unstable environment, we will all have to play our part. It has to come from dollars and cents and it cannot happen overnight cannot be expected to do it because money does not drop out of the sky. We all often wish that it would but we all know that it does not. If we really want to be beneficiaries it is going to cost us now but in the long run there will be a significant saving such as the quality of life that we would want to enjoy as we reach our evening years. So while some measures may seem harsh if we look within ourselves we must clean up our own backyard. That is an expression we use sometimes, you have to look in your own backyard. We really want to do it literally and metaphorically. If we fail to legislate and to do all of the things we ought to do to save our environment now we will suffer the consequences.

Mr. President, in closing I would want to share some information that I came across and other Members may have copies too but I would want to share it, to really

enforce the seriousness of the environmental problem. I am taking this information from 'Earth Action, it is a global network for the environment, peace and social justice, November 1995 issue. It touches on global warming which of course we know is happening, scientists are warning that the planet is heating up now and that human activities, conditions in the environment, the cutting down of trees etc. are likely to cause this problem. If Governments do not take firm action soon the effects could be devastating. It goes on to say that global warming will have the potentially irreversible effects including loss of habitat, increases in human diseases and loss of life. We could see devastating weather effects and we are beginning to see it already over the past number of years which could lead to worldwide disaster and we have to think globally. We cannot just sit down and think that we are safe. You know, we in Barbados tend to think that everything will happen to somebody else and that we will get away scot free but I think more and more we realise that it could happen to us too. It goes on to say that droughts and floods all over the world, damaging food producing regions and bringing the prospect of increases in hunger and famine. Deserts are likely to become more extreme and the melting of ice caps and glaciers could raise sea levels, flooding low lying countries and I believe that is exactly what we are. Entire nations could disappear.

Mr. President, I would not want this to happen in my life-time and not in the lifetime of any generations of which I would be the nucleus, the seed, and so Mr. President, I would want to urge us here in this Chamber today to make that giant step to ensure that future generations of Barbadians and we too as we approach our evening years could reap sweet rewards. With those few comments, I give this Bill my support.

SENATOR S. P. BERNSTEIN: Mr. President, I am concerned about this levy being imposed. As a businessman and one who hears the cries of the small and medium sized businesses on a daily basis, I really have to ask the question, do you need to have this levy? Take care of the environment by all means, whilst .75% or one percent may seem very small, when you look at almost \$1.4 billion of imported goods and I do not even know if the freight is included in that, but with the C.I.F. value, it is enormous and would have an impact on the cost of goods to consumers, also the manufacturers would be uncompetitive and again with all these levies and impositions you are taking more money out of the system, less is circulating among the small people in this country. Money is circulating among the big companies and among the big corporations but it is not getting down to the small and medium-sized businesses.

I have said in this Honourable Chamber before and I am going to say it again and Senator Gill remembers me as saying there was a time when we stuck a 4 cents

stamp duty on a warrant, it went to a 10 cents stamp and then they imposed a 1%, 2%, 5%, 10%, and today we pay 20% stamp duty. I would hate to think that this levy is now an imposition and then down the road we are going to hear in a budget maybe a year from now, maybe 2 years it would be raised to 2.5% and then 5% and then lo and behold all of these levies and impositions are killing businesses. There are no free rides. It is killing business but at the end of the day it is these small and medium-sized businesses that are employing a lot of people. Never forget that. If that money does not permeate down to the bottom people will not get it.

Only last week I said in the amendments of the National Insurance that the employers contributed 9.75% of the gross wages. That was another imposition. That is another heavy tax that businessmen have to look at as a tax because they have to pay it. So with everything when you add up all these things it is hurting businesses. All these levies and impositions they really hurt businesses and help create unemployment.

Sir, Barbados is an importing country and as I said just now \$1.4 billion is imported into this country and when you take 1% you are taking a hefty sum to look after the environment and whilst I support the environment I have to question whether or not we need the levy and I will cite a critical example but before I cite that example I would like to know who did the calculations and on what grounds and so on and so forth. Are they as competent and I cite the example of this very document before us today which says, February 1996, prepared by the Accountant General Heading 29 section 9 – Rural Development, it says \$3 million was allocated for the rural development and after 11 months only \$383 895 was spent which according to calculations is approximately 13%, therefore 87% or \$2.6 million which was allocated for the rural development was not even used. The point is you have over budgeted and you have not spent ...

Mr. PRESIDENT: I do not spend.

SENATOR S. P. BERNSTEIN: The Government, Sir, has not spent that 87% so I just wonder if the calculation was done similarly and we are not taking too much money out, that 1%.

I am very concerned about that, Sir, and the impact of all of these I will repeat is putting pressure on the small and medium-sized businesses when the money does not permeate to the small man, again it is going to create loss of jobs.

Now, Sir, take the environment as it stands and take the alleys in Swan Street and there are some of us in Swan

Street who pay a truck to transport our cardboard boxes to the dump but there are a lot of people who just throw all kinds of garbage in the alley way and I happen to own a property on the alley so I know.

12.45 p.m.

Apart from that, Sir, they use the alleys to throw every single possible thing in it and the alleys are in a mess. I would only hope that when the Sanitation people look at the environmental areas in Bridgetown they will put garbage skips in some of these alleys so that they can dispose of the garbage in a proper place and move with. Not only in Lower Swan Street and Upper Swan Street but throughout Bridgetown in general.

Sir, that is all I have to say briefly but I am just very, very concerned as to whether or not we need this levy at this particular time. Since the economy is supposed to be doing good and everything is supposed to be flourishing, why are you imposing the levy? That is my concern. Thank you, Sir.

SENATOR T. E. BARKER: Mr. President, this Environmental Levy Bill should be supported by all right thinking Barbadians. Sir, it is only a year or so ago we had the horrible mess at Mangrove, St. Thomas, the former Mount Stinkeroo which has now been transformed into Mount Pleasant. The transformation did not come about just like that. It cost a lot of money and a lot of effort. Millions of dollars were spent in transforming that rotten, stinking mess at Mangrove and, Sir, that is what it was because I live near Mangrove. Sir, it took money to transform that into what today to a large extent is acceptable for a landfill. The money had to come out of the Treasury and the people of Barbados must be made aware of the fact that to keep the environment clean the Treasury has got to foot the bill and money must come from somewhere. We can talk as much as we like, Sir, but the disposal of solid waste is a problem not only in Barbados but in almost every country of the world. It is a major problem in developed countries as well as developing countries especially, Sir, in Barbados where we all know there are not many areas which are far from population centres. Sir, that is even more reason why the Government must make sure that it has money in order to properly manage and maintain any site for the disposal of solid waste.

Sir, some Senators have said that this is a revenue measure and in effect it is a revenue raising measure because the Government is seeking to raise revenue in order, and I am quoting from the Objects and Reasons of the Bill. I am sure that the Leader of the Senate quoted them before, but for emphasis I want to quote them again:

"The Bill would provide for the imposition and collection of an environmental levy,

- (a) to defray the cost of the disposal of refuse generated by the use of imported goods;
- (b) to defray the cost of operating and maintaining refuse disposal sites;
- (c) for the preservation and enhancement of the environment;

and for related matters."

Sir, this Bill seeks to raise revenue especially from imported goods in order to ensure that the Government has the means with which it can keep the environment in a proper state. So all of this talk about whether the economy is doing good or doing bad is beside the point. Sir, the Government must have at its disposal funds with which to carry out this important function.

Sir, I do not understand how the small businessman is going to suffer from the imposition of a 1 per cent levy which is not going to deal with him but which will be paid by the consumer. So how is it going to be a cost on the small businessman when the consumer will pay? Because we all know the way how they operate is on a cost plus basis. They know what their costs are and they will add on a mark-up sometimes two mark-ups. Anyhow, we will not get into that but they add on a mark-up. So in the whole analysis, Sir, the cost is being borne by the consumer. I do not understand the last Senator's dismay about the plight of the small businessman because all of a sudden everybody will want to jump on the bandwagon for the small businessman. But the point is that the consumer is being called upon to pay towards the management of the environment and I see nothing wrong with that.

Sir, many figures have been advocated for the true value of the revenue that is going to be collected. Senator Mascoll, true to form, has problems with figures and he is quoting \$10 or \$11 million. Sir, those are not my words. He said that he has problems with figures. He said that himself and he has admitted in this Chamber that he has problems. So I would more go with the figure of \$7 million that has been put forward by the people who should know and I would say, Sir, that it is a total expenditure of something like \$3 billion. Sir, that is the total expenditure.

12.55 p.m.

In Barbados we spend about \$3 billion in goods and services. You are adding on \$7 million to \$3 000 million.

Aside.

SENATOR T. E. BARKER: What inflation are you talking about? Do not let us overstate the case, because we are getting into a lot of histrionics. The effect on inflation is absolutely minimal but the benefit is that Government will have for its use \$7 million by which it can help to enhance the environment. If we are going to be castigated for doing that, I am one willing to take the blows because never again must we have a Mount Stinkeroo happening in this country of ours. If it is going to cost me \$10 more for my television set and \$15 more for my fridge, which I buy every 10 or 12 years, I am quite satisfied to pay that for the preservation of the environment. That is not too much, as far as I am concerned. It says here \$150 for a vehicle and when a Senator buys a Mercedes for \$400 000, when you add on \$150 on \$400 000 I do not see what they are quarrelling about. You buy a car for \$400 000 and we are asking you to pay \$150 more and some Members are complaining. I don't see the big thing, Sir, in asking me to pay \$10 more for my tyre.

Sir, some people are overstating the case. I am sure that the average person out there with no political axe to grind will say that we have a Government which is proactive. They recognise that down the line it is going to cost more and more to maintain the environment in good condition, so they are coming to us and saying help us in this venture. We are also aware that the fact we are imposing an environmental levy means that we in Government have to be even more certain that we keep the environment in proper condition, because we cannot say now that there is an excuse. We have to be better managers then because of this imposition and we are glad to accept the challenge, because we know that we cannot say we are proper managers of this country when something as important as the environment is left out of the scheme of things. This must be first and foremost in our way of thinking and we must be commended for doing our bit to ensure that our grandchildren have a better Barbados in which they can live.

Sir, managing the environment is not a fad, because we all know that our water supply is heavily dependent on how well we put in systems to ensure that various chemicals do not reach our underground aquifers. That cannot be a fad, that is plain self-preservation, so for a Senator to talk about the environment being a fad shows total ignorance of the effects of bad practices on our future development. It must be seen as the action of a proactive Government who knows down the line that what we do today can have effects, either positive or negative, 10 or 20 years down the line.

I want to make one last point. The point was made that this Government is taking in more and more in tax take. That is true primarily because of the good management that we have put on the country of Barbados

which is causing the economy to grow. Everybody knows that as the economy grows the tax take is going to grow commensurate with the increase in growth. I want the Honourable Senator to tell this Honourable Chamber in what areas we have increased taxation. I want him to deny the fact that we have taken off tax on goods to the manufacturing sector, to the agricultural sector. I want him to deny in this Chamber that we have put in place a home allowance for people. If he can deny those, then we will all agree with him that this Government is a tax increasing Government.

All we are saying with this environmental levy is that we must sensitise the people of Barbados, we must bring them into the whole environmental process by asking them to pay up front for the cost of disposal of the item they are purchasing. As I said before, this is a standard measure which more and more countries are adopting, because they understand that the management of the environment is becoming more and more costly.

1.05 p.m.

We in Barbados have a problem of solid waste disposal and we have to undertake a massive capital venture in Greenland, and this is part of the method we are going to use to pay for the investment that we have to take because, sooner or later, we have to close Mangrove, because that is quickly running out of space and we will have no option but to go somewhere else. Wherever we go, it is an increased strain on the public purse.

Government is saying that this is one way we are going to pay for it and I see absolutely nothing wrong with it. I am sure the people of Barbados, in spite of what the DLP and the NDP are saying, are quite satisfied to pay \$10 more for their television set because they know that it will go towards the maintenance of a safer and cleaner environment. So I want to commend this Government. Notice, Sir, that this Government when it came into power made sure that those who were engaged in the incipient effort benefitted from Government's tax measures. We are ensuring that those who are engaged in the practice of recycling will reap tax concessions.

Wherever you turn, Sir, we are doing our bit to make sure that emphasis is placed on the environment and its preservation, and this is but another measure, and I commend it very strongly to this Chamber and ask that they support it in its fullest. Thank you.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY: I beg to move that this sitting be suspended until 2:10 p.m. today. *The question was put and agreed to and Mr. PRESIDENT suspended the Senate accordingly.*

1.10 p.m.

RESUMPTION

Mr. PRESIDENT: This sitting is now resumed.

SENATOR N. P. WELCH: Mr. President, I rise to make my contribution to this debate by stating what the last speaker who spoke before we broke for lunch said, that he would have believed that a Bill which is dealing with matters of environmental concerns would have received the support of all Barbadians. I share that view.

I share that view because matters of the environment have taken an importance in recent times worldwide. It has taken on this importance because within the last 15 years we have seen what neglect of matters relating to the environment can cause on a world scale. We only have to reflect on what happened in 1984, in India at Bhopal, with the Union Carbide issue, in which a pesticide plant spewed a heap of toxic chemicals into the air that went as far as half way around the world and we also know that dimethyl isocyanide which was the active ingredient in this pesticide had severe impact on life in that part of India. It is estimated that 3 400 people lost their lives and about 20 000 were maimed or disabled.

We have had other instances of environmental disasters in recent times. If you look at Chernobyl in Russia which only occurred in 1986, we had a nuclear reactor which exploded and we had the fall out of radioactive material. Initially 31 people died in this disaster and about 250 workers at this plant have subsequently died. The other major environmental concern that I believe most people around the world would have heard about was what happened with the Exxon Valdez in Prince William Sound when \$11 million of crude oil was spilled there. It covered a vast area of beach land, some 1100 miles.

It is for this purpose, Sir, that we have concern on this side about the care of the environment. The care of the environment is even more important to Barbados for a few simple reasons. One reason is that we have 260 000 people living in an island 166 square miles. Rough calculations will determine that that is about 1500 people per square mile. If we add to these people the 500 000 or so tourists that visit here yearly short-stay and about 500 000 long stay visitors we must understand that the impact of pollution from the number of people that live in so small an area makes these matters important to a country like Barbados. We have to dispose of all the solid waste that we generate plus that which is generated by the tourism activity. We are not like North America which has lots of space to keep pushing back frontiers to provide additional landfill space. We have limited space and this is why we have to address this issue of the environment with a seriousness that I think this Government is giving it.

I want to state that I support the Environmental Levy. I have heard some concerns about the cost and I want to state from the outset that Government's intention is not revenue generation but we must recognise that one way of dealing with the issue of waste generation is to make those people who generate the waste pay for it. I think this concept has been captured in the Environmental Levy.

I have heard an Opposition Senator in here today make light work of this debate with a statement that environmental affairs is a fad and it is all sensationalism and made reference to the fact that it is only increasing the cost of the tourist product and agriculture and manufacturing. I see it as a different matter. If we neglect the environment, and if we allow a situation to develop in Barbados where garbage is strewn on the streets, where our water table becomes contaminated because of lack of care, if the effluent, medical waste from the Hospital just goes into the oceans, the major contributor to our productive sector, tourism, could collapse overnight because nobody wants to take a holiday in an environment that is not healthy and is not to some extent free from hazards of pollution.

I want also to state that I have some concerns as it relates to management of the environment. I know there are a lot of people in marketing and people whom some might refer to as being environmental evangelists who would preach things like the need for biodegradable plastics and photodegradable plastics.
2.25 p.m.

I want to throw an air of caution to Government that it should not get caught up in this hype about biodegradable and photodegradable. I want to make this point for the simple reason that we know as a fact that in any well-managed landfill plastic will not photo degrade. Plastic would not photodegrade because in a landfill you are going to cover it with top soil obviously to prevent plastic and paper from being blown off the site. In spite of the fact that a resin is added to the plastic to cause it to break down in sunlight, within about 24 to 48 hours in a landfill it is covered, so you do not have the effect of the sunlight breaking down the plastic. For this reason you are really just wasting money. You are probably going to feel good about it as a Barbadian who is concerned that you have invested some money in buying what you consider a photodegradable plastic but in the end it is really the wrong answer to the right question.

The same thing goes for biodegradable plastics. Biodegradable plastics need oxygen, in order to biodegrade. You put it in a landfill, you cover it with top soil, you compact it, all the oxygen is extruded and you get the same effect. It persists in the environment. The other serious thing about it is that even if the plastic breaks down due to

the fact that it is biodegradable, or photodegradable, what it breaks down into is not something that, in my opinion, is any less harmful to the environment than the original plastic. I just wanted to state those few points on that matter.

Part of the problem that has led to the need to have serious management of solid waste stems from the whole matter of convenience. The development of plastics, pep bottles and packaging material has been largely the result of the fact that people want convenience and we who tend to mimic what occurs in the developed world, in my opinion, we have been developing what I call a use and dispose mentality. You have the pep drink you drink it, you throw the bottle away and we never really set out to look at the consequences of this action. That is why I think Government has every right to put in place measures that would seek to address the issue of creating a safe environment for all of us to live in, and not only us but I think we have a responsibility, as was mentioned in here earlier, to future generations that the environment that we pass on to them should be in no less a good condition for them than we had inherited it.

I also have concerns that as a small country which has practised agriculture for a number of years if we are going to be in a position to do anything about the huge food import bill that we have, we will need to use fertilizers to an increasing extent and pesticides. We know that if they are not properly used that the limited water resources that we have could one day become contaminated. That is why I do not see matters of the environment to be a fad or a simple matter because we may have a situation where a person is not prepared to pay \$150 as a levy for the disposal of a car regardless of if it is a Lada, a Skoda or a quarter million-dollar Benz. That really does not matter, but the point is you are going to find these same people pulling their pockets to find U.S. \$500 to buy a water purification system for their home. So if you do not put it out up-front, you are going to put it out later because there is not a person in here who would say that they do not want to live to a ripe old age, and if they want to live long they do not want to live a long unhealthy life. Therefore a safe water supply is one of the concerns that we have.

We also need to look at the issue of the run off of such pesticides into the marine environment. It is for this reason that this Bill is important at this junction in the history of Barbados. We also have the opportunity that we can do something also about other areas of solid waste disposal. We have quite a few processing plants here. We have offal from the fish markets. We know there has been a lot of concern recently about the mad cow disease but even if we recover such offal and do not use it in areas like animal feed, we still have ample opportunity to convert it to fertilizer and use it in sensitive areas, like in

the Belle, where agriculture would be able to go on without the use of the traditional chemical fertilisers. This is another area where business opportunities can be generated through proper management of the environment.

We also should benefit from a lot of research that is going on worldwide in an area of biotechnology and genetic engineering. There is now a field of science that looks at microorganisms, particularly of the plasmodus species and strain, which can be engineered and genes implanted into certain food crops to give them protection from pests as a natural pesticide this would not persist in the environment.

We also have research which is pretty encouraging in the use of other micro organisms which can concentrate toxic heavy metals like lead, and mercury to themselves and therefore can be used effectively to purify areas like landfills and get them back into use for agricultural purposes. However, in a lot of instances, there is the other side of the picture and we need to look at the other side of the picture in which we are not really sure what the consequences would be if such organisms are allowed to be used indiscriminately.

More than that, we have natural organisms which have been used with telling effect to break down certain organic waste. These organisms can metabolize specific toxic wastes. These organisms are also capable of breaking down the PCBs, polychlorinated biphenols and polybromated biphenols, things like dioxin, and also oil spills. I think we need to have a look at these areas particularly when we consider that we are a tourist-oriented country. The beaches are very important to tourism and the fact that we have just signed an agreement which looks at offshore oil exploration means we must take this issue seriously.

We have new and innovative processes that can lead to the degradation of oil through the use of micro-organisms. In this particular area it does not call for any genetic engineering. They are natural substances as they occur in nature. That process is called bio-remediation. It is for these reasons I think there is some hope that in the future agriculture might be practised in which we can use natural pesticides. We can make more use of natural fertilizers and we can reduce or eliminate completely the risk of exposure to certain chemicals.

I therefore want to compliment the Government in bringing this particular piece of legislation to the House at this time. I know it is only the first step in an agenda for action that would seek to make Barbados a safer environment for all of us to live in.

There is the area of noise pollution. There is also the issue of what are we going to do to protect our ground water resources. There are a lot of other areas that need to

be addressed. I am sure that before the life of this Parliament is over that we would see a more comprehensive package of legislation which seeks to address the serious issue of environmental degradation, and disposal of solid waste, and if I may make a statement to emphasize the Government's seriousness on this matter it is the fact that after eight years of waiting for a South Coast Sewerage System the lack of which has limited development in the southern part of the island to a significant extent. We are now to see its construction. Anybody only has to pass Oistins at particular times and realize that you can smell the effects of a fishing complex that was built with the supposition that a sewerage project would have been there to support it. However this has not been the case.

Mr. President, it is with these observations that I would like to compliment the Government and look forward in the coming months to further legislation which would seek to enhance the environment.
2.35 p.m.

SENATOR THE HON. P. C. GODDARD: Mr. President, I rise to support this Bill and to compliment those who have supported it so eloquently through a real feeling for the environment in which we live. Criticism was focussed around narrow myopic financial concerns and concerns that really have no validity because of the one area of increased cost and comment that would damage small businesses.

People have to recognise that businesses, small or large, thrive in the environment they operate in. We have talked about the importance of the tourism sector in relation to the environment but I maintain, Sir, that every facet of economic activity that we undertake here in Barbados is heavily dependent on the quality of the environment and the quality of life that we sustain within that environment. That is as true for tourism as it is for the everyday business that is conducted within these shores and as it is for the offshore business environment that we are currently developing for global business activities to take place in Barbados.

If it is one thing that enchants people about Barbados it is the quality of our environment. If it is the one thing that turned people away from Barbados it was when we had what was a miniature volcano in the centre of our island which was the most prominent feature from offshore, spewing noxious fumes and heavy dense clouds of smoke through spontaneous combustion from a poorly managed landfill. No wonder Senator Mascoll made no comment on it. The management of our environment is critical to our total economic success as well as our social well-being.

I come now to the matter of taxation, yes this is to raise funds for the management of our environment but it is equally to make each and every Barbadian conscious of the fact that the management of the environment and the development of environmental projects impacts upon each and everyone of us and each and everyone of us is responsible for the garbage that we produce. Everyone produces garbage but everyone does not handle it the same way. Those of us who are thoughtful have our own compost heaps.

2.40 p.m.

We do not put as much for the garbage men to pick up as others and we are mindful of where we place products and the re-use of products. I myself, Sir, when I have jars of jam and I am finished with it, I know that there are people who live nearby me who make jam themselves. I make sure that they get the jars properly washed and cleaned and they can re-use them for their own product. I make sure the bottles that are not going to be used again go down to the operation at the Belle which crushes glass and recycles it. There are countless of us in this community who are doing this today. But this is nothing new for Barbados. I remember as a small boy when I was going to the Lodge School that the house-master had a programme of crushing every can that was being used before it went to the landfill or to the garbage dump to make sure that it was compacted before he sent it off. Barbadians for generations have been thrifty, economical in use and mindful of the environment. It just seems that in recent years we have lost this trait. We now have to re-learn it, Mr. President, and I think that it is important that each and every Barbadian understands that a sustainable environment is critical to the continuance of an improved quality of life in this small island and critical to every economic activity that we undertake. No one can take the narrow view that just by adding a few cents cost to one business or the other or one individual to the other that it is going to bring ruin and damnation to those particular enterprises. I think that we all have a social responsibility, each one to the other. Business is not just about making money. It is about involvement in the community and this is the one critical aspect that touches the lives of each and everyone of us.

I really do feel, Mr. President, that this Bill should be commended to this Senate Chamber for many reasons, the greatest of which is to bring about greater impact on the consciousness of each and every Barbadian about the need for not only maintaining our environment but improving it. Because we cannot be satisfied with the way it is today and, if we are satisfied with the way it is today, can we expect our children or our grandchildren to accept it from us in the way that we have it now? So there is a cost for improvement and I must add, Mr. President, that that cost of improvement has been magnified by the lack of care that

has been exemplified over the past 8 years of the previous administration, a lack of care that clearly puts more emphasis on the economic value than on the social cost that we were going to incur.

Mr. President, the people of Barbados should be thankful that they have an administration today that puts the interest of Barbados first, that puts the interest of future generations as well as ourselves first and in bringing about legislation that will improve the quality of life for all of the citizens in Barbados. I thank you, Mr. President.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Rickinson.

SENATOR Mrs. P. E. RICKINSON: Thank you, Mr. President. I rise to lend my support to this Bill. I am glad that it is going to collect a lot of money because some of the proposals that I am suggesting under "for related matters", which are not specified from the Objects of the Bill, will take quite a bit of money.

Mr. President, permit me to read a paragraph from a paper which I will make a document of the House and this was written in 1976 and I would like to use it as part of my background to preservation and enhancement of the environment and also to defray the cost of operating and maintaining refuse disposal sites and for related matters. The paper is on "Public Education and Changing Attitudes With Reference to Refuse Disposal" and it was delivered at a seminar hosted by the Barbados Board of Tourism and the Sanitation Service Authority. Part of this paper had a quote and I will quote this again which was written in 1976 by myself:

"Today the storage collection and disposal of refuse is a 300-year old problem and remains unsolved. It is expected to continue to remain unsolved unless a combination of inputs are used simultaneously. It cannot be too strongly stressed that these inputs include well-trained officers in modern sanitation and administrative and occupational techniques, a well organized and adequate system for the collection of refuse, the distribution of days and times of collection for householder's refuse, the time given should be before the first vehicle enters the area, the elimination of stray dogs that scatter refuse, the supply of covered garbage bins for low income groups, the elimination of open communal bins and the provision of continuous and sustained as opposed to *ad hoc* education for individuals, families, groups, schools and other institutions of learning."

Mr. President, today most of the Senators have touched on these views that were put forward in 1976 which is an indication that, even though some improvement has been made, there is a lot left to be

achieved in Barbados today regarding the preservation and enhancement of our environment and to achieve this we do need quite a lot of funds which, as I said up front, I support wholeheartedly.

Now how are we going to use some of these funds? Well, Mr. President, we have enough regulations. There have been increased regulations for littering but people still litter. We have increased the fines on more than one occasion but you can still see litter thrown all around the streets. People are still throwing the snow cone cups out of cars not so much out of the bus, Mr. President, because it seems as though we have come to terms with that. I do not think very much eating and drinking is allowed on our buses and I think one of the reasons for this was that with the advent of the minibuses they were not going to allow the passengers to dirty up the buses for them to clean. So they were very strict and consequently the Government tended to follow suit. But what else is needed? I submit that we need a more personalized form of education and more face to face education as opposed to education via the mass media and the electronic media.

Mr. President, I am not just going to leave it at that by saying we need personalized and face to face education, but I am going to put forward under "related matters" of the Objects of this Bill how some of this money which apparently millions are going to be collected will be used. So I will just ask for about \$1 million or \$2 million out of all those millions to be set aside to expand the Health Education Unit in the Ministry of Health. There is already a Health Education Officer and some of those millions could be used to employ about 3 more Health Education Officers so that they will be given an area in the country in order to coordinate the massive education that we need to change the deep rooted and ingrained habits that have persisted over the years.

Mr. President, these people are needed because with all due respect to groups in the society who are willing to help, many of them in all haste have sponsored Clean-Up Campaigns and, Mr. President, we know that they only last for about two weeks because the people just go and dirty the place up again. So really and truly that should tell us something that we need more than Clean-Up Campaigns. We need to involve the community regarding keeping the environment clean and tidy and Clean-Up Campaigns are not really the way to go. Because even though they clean up the area today, next month it will be back to square one. Again, I am submitting that we need this personalized education with these Education Officers working within the community and working with every church group, PTA, Government and non-Government groups, youth groups, management groups, stores, the Rural Development Division that is coming on stream. All of these groups need to work with them in order to educate the public regarding

the prevention and contamination of the environment of water, air, sea and land pollution.

Mr. President, I would also like to advance that some of this money could be used to develop educational materials. We need very simple posters with pictures and simple booklets that could be used to send the same message so that everybody will be giving the same message to everyone else. We need people to pre-test these booklets because one will find that sometimes the users of the booklets do not understand the booklets or would ask for more pictures to show exactly what is meant by this or that. In addition, some of these forms can be used for half-day seminars for various groups. They could be used additionally by Public Health Nurses and Inspectors to disseminate the information to the community and also to assist with the educating of individuals in this more personalized fashion about how not to contaminate the environment.

Mr. President, I note that the money for the cost of generating the refuse and the disposal is being paid up front and that the levy that is to be collected is listed in the Schedule. This is good. I accept it and I congratulate the Government for coming up with such a levy. However, Mr. President, we need to make this work. We need to develop mechanisms for the collection of these same vehicles so that they can adequately be disposed of and that they would not pollute our environment. At present there are limited collection services for some of these but it takes so long to get an old washing machine. People would be willing to pay to have it disposed of, but it takes so long to get someone to collect it and sometimes one does not know who to call to collect the old mattress or the old machine or the old fridge.

2.55 p.m.

I am sure that the public will respond favourably once they know who to contact and how much they have to pay to allow them to dispose of some of these objects. In other words, I am here calling for more education regarding the mechanisms for the collection and disposal of household objects that are not normally collected by the day-to-day Sanitation Service Authority trucks.

Mr. President, I note in (b) of the Objects and Reasons that this levy is also to defray the cost of operating and maintaining refuse disposal sites. That means that one is anticipating more than one refuse disposal site. I am not sure how this is going to be introduced, but our track record of maintaining one site is not very good at the moment, so I do not know what is going to happen if we have to maintain two sites.

Mr. President, if you permit me I should like to read from this Paper again a paragraph indicating that

our track record is not too good, and this is Page 3 of this document, which was written in 1994:

"Just over four decades ago the Royal Commission appointed to investigate social and economic conditions in the West Indies 1939 reported that open lorries or carts collected refuse which the wind blew about. The refuse was then dumped often in the centre of villages or close to residential districts. This resulted in a real nuisance to people."

Mr. President, Mount Stinkeroo is one to call to mind, although that was a Government dump, and if there is going to be another site, mechanisms need to be put in place regarding the servicing of those sites. I have heard the site of Greenland mentioned and I have read that it is cheaper than other sites, but there are questions I would like to ask regarding such a site. The short-term costs are probably cheaper. What about the long-term costs? Are the long term costs going to be cheaper as well? What about the trucks? Senator Symmonds said that 12 trucks out of 52 were road worthy when this Government took up office and we know that people are still complaining that they cannot get their refuse collected because there are not enough trucks to go around. How will one manage a site at Greenland which not only involves trucks travelling long distances, but also negotiating the hills? Are these trucks going to be maintained in a better way? These are questions that need to be answered. Are we going to have more trucks? Is our track record going to be better? Because Greenland is very far away. I have no views for or against Greenland, because I am not an expert in this area, but these are questions that come to mind. I would like to have some answers regarding the preservation and enhancement of the environment.

Much has been said about other areas of pollution regarding water, air, the sea and land, but a word or two about the environment and noise pollution. There are certain areas that are designated as silent zones, but people still complain, for example, around the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, the patients still complain about the noise and the horns. Even though they are designated as silent zones, apparently this is not being adhered to and this is one area one should look at.

We also need to start teaching our children regarding the use of the headphones and also listening to loud music on the minibuses and other areas because it tends to damage the delicate structures within the ear, which means that years down the road the same Government is going to be having to spend extra money trying to correct hearing problems that could have been corrected by prevention of noise pollution contaminating our environment.

Mr. President, it was mentioned that there is going to be a tipping fee at the landfill in addition to the levy, \$25 per tonne on commercial waste. I support this wholeheartedly. They have been getting away far too long without paying their way regarding the disposal of their refuse. They have also been getting away with not having people to inspect the commercial areas and make them keep them tidy.
3.05 p.m.

Mr. President, it was mentioned about recycling operations. I do not know what plans Government has in mind. They have not been highlighted. Obviously one is thinking about recycling in some form or the other. I don't know if these disposal sites mean that the refuse is going to be placed in one area and then they are going to take the refuse and separate it so that different types of refuse could be disposed at different types of landfills. I would like some more enlightenment about this approach regarding the recycling, because, in my opinion, I feel that the Barbadian community is ripe for a separation of garbage. People are just willing for a sense of direction in order to tell them that they take all their newspapers and put them in a pink bag or certain refuse in a yellow bag. These are areas that the country is willing. We have reached the stage where the community is willing and ready to cooperate and get involved with various types of separation of refuse.

I hope that some of this money could be used either for the Government to do it itself or to subsidise private individuals in the form of recycling. I hope, Mr. President, that we will not leave it too long because we know that we have a society that when it gets interested in something it is ready to go but if it loses interest it is very difficult to get it interested in it, unless there is some form of crisis and then the same thing has to go around. We can do without any form of crisis at this point in time.

From what I have said, Mr. President, it will indicate that I feel very strongly about education and sound, public understanding. What I did not say, but what I need to stress, is that each resident and each household should be given a booklet with the day and times of collection of refuse within their community, even if it is more frequent. At least one can give them 2 days or 1 day so that they would know exactly to put out their refuse before 6 o'clock in the morning so that they don't put it out and then the dogs come and scatter it in front of the house and it blows around the place and dirties up the environment.

Mr. President, I think I have said enough and I would like to give this Bill my full support and wish you luck with it.

SENATOR C. K. LAURIE: Mr. President, just a few comments. One thing that has come out here very clearly today is that the majority of Senators who have spoken have looked upon this as being a rather poor start, a start that we are going to collect money without a policy clearly enunciated. Virtually even the Government Senators have called for what is happening in the future. Where is the environmental policy that should be laid down before you start collecting the money?

I think we have just gone a little back to front here. I would have preferred that we would have had the environmental policy enunciated, some campaign operating, because I think the people of Barbados are ready as was said by Senator Rickinson a few minutes ago, are ready to recycle and reduce and all the other things that we know we should do; but there needs to be some leadership from Government.

In the publishing of this Bill, it says we are going to collect this money and then later on in the Bill it says we are going to put it into that black hole called the Consolidated Fund. I find that is a very strange way of going about doing something as positive as this. I would much rather have seen that we had created an environmental fund and take the money collected and put it in the environmental fund so that we can see what happens to it.

When it goes into the Consolidated Fund, then it is up to Government to withdraw money from that fund through all sorts of Supplementary Estimates in order to spend it. Whereas if it came in an environmental fund, we would be able, the whole country, to see the money that is being collected and to see how it is being spent. I think also I would like to touch quickly on the environmental impact assessments. It is part of the manifesto of the famous contract with the people of Barbados that we are going to do environmental impact assessments on the major projects and I would like to know if they are being done. Not only are they being done, but why are they not made public?

I think that as a member of the public I would like to know that an environmental impact assessment has been done on the construction of a distillery or a rendering plant or things of this nature that are going on in this country and we are not told what is going to be the effect on our environment. If these people could be not only made to do the environmental impact assessments, which I am sure are being done, but that these assessments be publicised. At least a summary of them so that people can understand somebody is looking at what is going to happen with the effluent of these plants and how it is going to be treated and am I happy in my mind that this is going to be environmentally sound? I think that is very important.

On the question of compost, I think Senator Odle referred to it and Senator Goddard referred to personal composting, but it is very clear that if we were to compost all the organic matter in this island we would not have to import a single tonne of fertiliser, not one. The trouble is that this organic matter is being treated not as a resource but as a nuisance. People burn it, which causes even further nuisance with air pollution increasing the CO₂ greenhouse gases and so on.

Therefore, we need some leadership down the line to say to people that composting is the way to go and create markets and show how it can be done. The sugar industry has for years been just dumping their muds and bagasse surpluses. Now they are producing compost and this has had a significant effect not only on cane cultivation but on vegetable cultivation.

The other thing that was referred to by Senator Davis was the run-off from agricultural land going into the sea and causing problems with coral pollution. It is clear that the major gully system in Barbados which used to bring all the water into Bridgetown which used to cause seasonal floods in Bridgetown, no longer happens because they have dug a quarry in the middle of the gully system and the quarry now acts as a vast soak-away which holds 4 to 5 million gallons of flood water and allows it to go into the aquifer where it belongs and not into the sea and into Bridgetown where it used to flood all River Road.

It is a simple thing. The cost of excavating quarries in the gullies would be more than paid for by the material that came out. It is up to Government to start to acquire land in gullies. The problem with gullies is that they belong to all sorts of people, little bits and pieces. So what has to happen is that Government has to acquire an area, quarry it out, the private sector can quarry it and you don't have a dam, you don't have something that will give way and wash away Weston. You are just going to have a large soak away below the level of the ground. So there is nothing to give way. This has been proved to be working clearly in the Green Hill quarry site.

Finally, I would like to touch on something I know is going to be very sensitive and I know Senator Lynch is probably going to leap to his feet, but who is causing a major part of the problem we have in this island? It is the tourists. Tourism has a major effect on the environment and we don't mention them in this Bill. We are going to levy people, all of us. Are you going to levy tourists? If they are going to be an environmental problem why are they not included in these levies? Thank you.
3.15 p.m.

SENATOR THE HON. G. S. H. MURRAY: Sir, when the debate first started, it was concentrating heavily on the economics of this motion, rather somewhat

like the economics of the environment. Then we had Senator Davis who brought new life and new meaning with a very stirring and meaningful speech which I thought would have set the tone for the rest of the afternoon. Unfortunately, that tone has been somewhat diminished by the last contribution.

I take great exception, Sir, to the fact that the Honourable Senator could refer to the Consolidated Fund as a "black hole", in a rather sneering, offhanded manner, a fund which I think is established in the Constitution. It has been an integral part of Barbados' governance for some time because it has never suffered the ills, slings and arrows of outrageous fortune, as had happened with the very well run, clear and capital formation projects like BCCI, Carib Express or the Agro Processing Plant. I am just making sure that the private sector is not in any way above reproach or above reproof and that they have no right, either the private sector or its representative, or spokesman, to refer to the Consolidated Fund as some kind of "black hole".

In addition, the Senator also made great store of the phrase "Environmental Impact Assessment Study." It is a phrase which has come into recent usage and is bandied about when people are talking about the environment. It is a kind of catch phrase. I am talking about the usage of it. I am not talking about its existence. It is mentioned in the Manifesto. I am talking about "we are going to be working towards the 21st Century" as though at the 21st Century some magical wand is going to be waved and, abracadabra, we will be a different world. So people throw around this Environmental Impact Assessment Studies as a phrase to let you feel that they are *au fait* with what is going on.

Sir, long before the phrase became current in Barbados, we have had a Town and Country Planning Department which evaluates the impact of construction or whatever project on the environment. It did not have such a fancy phrase, but if you study and look at how it works, if you read the findings and the submissions . . .

SENATOR C. K. LAURIE: I would just like to explain something very quickly. I spoke to the Chief Town Planner the other day about environmental impact assessment and he told me it was none of his business that that was carried out by the Ministry of Health, so it is not the Town Planning. It is the Ministry of Health.

SENATOR THE HON. G. S. H. MURRAY: I did not say they were done by the Town Planning. I quoted the Town and Country Planning Department as one of several institutions whose responsibilities include what could now be constituted as an environmental impact study without it having been called so. The Town and Country Planning does one thing. The Ministry of the Environment does

another thing. There is the Coastal Zone Unit that does another thing. So while everything is not labelled as having had an environmental impact assessment study, it is done in various segments.

Sir, that was somewhat by the way because I think in human affairs, sometimes in the most seemingly innocuous moments, some very revealing statements are made, statements that tell a great deal about a country, about a person, or even about a political party. We had such an experience this morning when Senator Mascoll in his contribution referred to the environment as being a fad. It was a shocking admission. It was a virtual confession because through the term "fad" we have now begun to understand why Mount Stinkeroo came into being. How could you neglect and allow such a monumental heap of garbage to accumulate in the centre of the country to the distaste of both its natives and the visitors, and at the same time plunge millions of dollars into Sherbourne? Then we understand why, because they, the Dems consider that the environment is only a fad.

Then too, Sir, that helps us to understand why on coming into office in 1986 they hastily dismantled the Ministry of the Environment which the previous Barbados Labour Party Government had established, because the environment was a fad and there was no place for a fad in that Government. One wonders if the environment is a fad, what was the Leader doing in Rio when he enunciated that well known, or much derided "Ode to the Environment" at a conference on the environment. We understand the Ode then was only a fad.

Sir, above it all, why then did his Government, having felt that the environment was a fad, hastily put together, fought tooth and nail to make Barbados the venue for the Conference on Sustainable Development for Small Island States when all of it was only a fad. So, Sir, we now understand why they behaved the way they did, especially with Mount Stinkeroo.

Sir, the environment has not been a fad for the Barbados Labour Party. Some reference was made to our Manifesto on page 32 where we talked about the quality of life. Among other things, Sir, we said: -

"We recognise that economic development must take place in harmony with the physical and social environment and must take into account both present and future needs.

We are entitled to breathe clean air, be assured of the regular supply of pure drinking water and enjoy a physical environment that is not stripped of its greenery. Our visitors deserve no less."

We went on then to give details of some of the things we do to protect the environment to enhance and protect our quality of life including: –

- "Enact comprehensive legislation for the protection of the environment.
- Re-establish the Ministry of the Environment to formulate and implement the Government's environmental policies.
- Regulate the disposal of industrial waste effluents and protect the marine environment."

There are things of that nature all on page 32, Sir, of the Barbados Labour Party's Manifesto. Against that background then stands the great contrast between the Democratic Labour Party and the Barbados Labour Party. One has gone in for fads and the other has established quite clearly a philosophy and policy by which its programmes would be governed. Then, Sir, one should not be surprised by that because we have always regarded our Manifesto as a social contract, as a sacred document in which we place a great set of social responsibilities and which we try to live up to the best we can.

Against that background then, Sir, one must view the formulation of this environmental levy where we have said that another Mount Stinkeroo, as some of my colleagues have said, must never recur. They the DLP have said that about Mount Stinkeroo because they had no money to do it. We now know otherwise. They had money but they chose to spend it in other ways. They had no ideas or motivation to bring about that. We feel that the environment is not a fad but it is here to stay and if we are going to protect and enhance the equality of life of all Barbadians we have to ask Barbadians to pay a small contribution to achieve those laudable objectives.

Senator Mascoll spent a great deal of time, I suspect he was rehearsing how he would advise other people what to say on Wednesday about the Budget. He tried to make this great linkage between VAT and the Environmental Levy. I am still trying to work out how he did that but then, so are we all trying to work out what he meant by his 5-4-3 plan of the past. I do understand how he could then make this strong linkage between the environmental levy except when I put it in the context of his phrase about the environment being only a fad.

Sir, I do not intend to be very much longer because my colleagues and some other colleagues from the Other Side have put the case very well and very clearly for the environmental levy.

In closing, I would like to make reference to a document which only minutes ago was laid in this

Chamber, Barbados' Economic Report, 1995. On page 74 of that document is a piece written by Professor Havelock Ross-Brewster on the "Social Capital and Development Reflections on Barbados and Jamaica." On page 74, Professor Brewster says, and I think this sums up very well the case for Barbados, whether it be about the environment or other.

I quote:

"The picture one has of Barbados is of a rather cohesive, orderly and pragmatic society of a people conscious of the fragility of the economy, pulling together for the most part to ensure their continued prosperity, of a community of rash and extreme views and policies and one in which each individual feels he or she has a stake. Sir, I submit through the implementation of this environmental levy the Government is ensuring that Barbados will pay for and continue to have a stake in the country and its future longevity". I thank you.

3.25 p.m.

SENATOR D. T. GILL: I rise to support the Bill, but before getting into the meat of the contribution, I would first like to dismiss some of the points which Senator Mascoll and others put over.

Sir, if you look at the schedule here you will see \$15 per freezer. That is not even, Sir, one dollar per cubic foot of the freezer. Sir, we are addressing these huge freezers which can be found in the megamarts. Sir, when you look at the electric accumulators under Tariff Head No. 8507, \$10 per battery. Sir, that ten dollars cannot even begin, if you really look at the damage of the lead accumulators and the acid nature of them and the heavy metal which is present in the same accumulators, that amount cannot even begin to scratch the surface to stage a clean-up. Yet, Sir, we talk about sustainable development. Sir, we talk about sustainable development for tourism, sustainable development in agriculture. If we do not see that the environment is sustainable, as Senator Goddard quite rightly said, then none of the other industries upon which our country depends would themselves be sustainable.

Sir, even if there was a charge of one cent per tonne, metric or imperial, we would have expected the same response from Senator Mascoll. I think it was Senator Laurie who said that if all the organic matter is composted then there would be no need to import a single cent. I think he went a little overboard, not a single cent, because Senator Laurie knows that there are different types of fertilisers for different crops. So I would not really like Honourable Members to leave here with the wrong impression.

Senator Mascoll, Sir, seemed a little confused, to put it mildly, when he spoke about the levy on things like paper *et cetera*. What he does not realise or understand or has not been taught is that about 20.45% of what goes into the garbage is of paper content whether we look at it as cardboard or newspaper. The other percentage which causes some concern, Sir, is 32.69% organic and another 8.63 plastic.

I do agree with Senator Rickinson when she says that the time has come for, and the people are ready for sorting their garbage. Why I know the people are ready, Sir, is I have a mother who is swiftly approaching the status of octogenarian and she sorts her garbage out, so it is not our fault that people do not approach the handling of their own garbage in a sensible and realistic manner.

Sir, we must begin at some point and I compliment the last administration for bringing down the Returnable Containers Act. You would know that initially when this was enforced there was a little talk here and there, people saying do not bring back bottles to me I am not responsible (although I can hear in an *aside* that there is an outlet which refuses them). But, Sir, you must begin at some point and if you see the vagrants, they go through the garbage. That is a way for them to earn a living. They go through the garbage. They take out the plastic bottles and then they pack the garbage back quite neatly. At first they used to leave it in a rather disheveled state but now they take time, they unpack, they repack and they trade. So if you are now at the stage, Sir, where you are asking people to pay a levy, and in other places this is euphemistically referred to as the polluter pays, as opposed to the society pays. Sir, if you are responsible for a voluminous object and there comes a point in time when you have to dispose of it, well then by all means you should pay for it.

Last week we spent some time in here talking about paying towards your retirement. If you buy a household appliance that has a lifespan of 10 to 15 years and then at the end of it, Sir, I see the tax as a burial fee for the item.

Sir, it is true, and I will get on to waste where you have burial versus cremation. Just as how we debate our own bodies whether they should be cremated or buried the same thing, Sir, is fairly topical throughout the world when it comes to disposal of garbage.

I think it was Senator Barker who spoke about the progress of a country and the increasing taxation commensurate with that progress. If there are more vehicles on the road you would expect they would be more solvents and if there are more solvents there would have to be more containers for the solvents, oils and greases. Sir, if architecture and building are being upgraded you would expect paints and composite materials to be on the increase.

That is a natural law of science and learning. Likewise pesticides. In speaking about pesticides, Sir, I would like just to congratulate Dr. Small. I think he is the Chairman of the pesticides board who has been calling in recent times very vigorously for a close policing in terms of registration *et cetera* of people who are involved in the importation and the treatment of pesticides and fertilisers.

Sir, I do not think we should wait until what has happened in Guyana recently, then to bring down an Act to correct what has gone wrong. As I have said before, the time has come and is swiftly upon us for us to get together an Environmental Protection Act which would ensure and which, I am sure, would do justice to a national waste management programme.

Sir, if small developing islands or countries, whatever you care to call them, like Barbados were to live within the walls of certain international conventions, like the London Convention, the Montreal Convention, the Basle Convention, conventions which address dumping at sea, conventions which address cross border shipment of toxic waste, Sir, conventions which look at substances which put your ozone levels in a perilous state, then I think if we keep these as the parameters within which we operate then this will go hand in glove with the piece of legislation which is before us today.

Quite often, and I was really surprised at Senator Mascoll who referred to the World Trade Organisation, the Uruguay round of talks and I am surprised to see that Senator Mascoll could not see or did not seem to give any time to countries that are extremely cautious about what they import and what they export – Germany and Canada. I would not like to see Barbados right now become as obsessed as the Germans are when it comes to waste, although it would not do us any damage. I do not think, Sir, that we are that sophisticated to follow neither are we that much caught up, Sir, in manufacturing that we would have to take such a lean and narrow approach. Regarding the Canadian system, Sir, a system to which we look ever so often when it comes to Insurance and Business Acts and so on, I think a small look at the Canadian Environmental Protection Act would do us a lot of good. Sir, they have taken more of a preventative approach and, whereas it was previously thought that regulations and pollution control after the fact as well as remedial action was the right way, it has proven itself not to be the right way. So they now come down in the order of prevention, followed closely by reuse and recycle and we have heard in here quite a bit about reuse and recycling, and finally energy recovery. Sir, if we follow the tenets of these Conventions to which I refer and, if we follow more of a realistic approach of preventing it before the act actually occurs, then it will redound to the success of our environmental care.

3.35 p.m.

Sir, sometime ago in speaking about Canada, they made it quite clear by setting out a timetable that within "X" years of the Montreal Agreement to the Convention that they would have phased out all what Senator Welch referred to as the PCB's and the PVZ's. Today the Canadians, and I am speaking about virtually each and every Canadian, seems really more than concerned about their environment and what types of substances should be imported and which types should not be imported. When you are talking about regulation, that too has a cost and to be able to police and to be constantly implementing and updating that carries a very high cost.

Sir, I am not sure if Barbados has a formal domestic substances list. That by the way, Sir, is a list which gives an inventory of substances which is actually manufactured from within. Neither am I sure, Sir, if there is one which tells you exactly what is brought in. But the Canadian Government along with the use of the United States Environmental Protection Act are able to draw up a list of some 41 000 substances which are used around the world but are not allowed into Canada. I shuddered to think, Sir, what percentage of that actually comes into Barbados. I am not saying that 100 per cent of it, Sir, would be toxic. But I shuddered to think, Sir, what percentage of that 41 000 actually gets into a country like Barbados.

As some of the other Senators have said, Sir, we need an enforcement agency to set up and again, Sir, whether it is National Insurance or an Environmental Levy or what have you, Sir, we need some degree of compliance. You need to educate the people as has been said quite openly here and again this would go fairly far in strengthening our protection of the environment.

Sir, what concerns me is what do we consider to be toxic? Again, Sir, the Act to which I refer, the Canadian Act, they go very neat in describing what constitutes toxicity. Sir, they use the parameters where they look at the present and the future ability of the substance to enter the environment now and if it has the ability to enter it 5 or 10 years down the road. They look at it, Sir, both qualitatively and quantitatively. They look at it in terms of the actual constitution of the substance, Sir, whether it is chlorinated. They look at it in terms of if it enters the system in terms of parts per million and parts per billion. They look at it in terms of the length of time in which it can actually remain within the environment. They look at it in terms of the damage to the health and the damage to your life. In other words, when they have finished defining what is toxic, there is little or no room left to consider what is not toxic.

Sir, we looked at the disposal and degradation. We heard quite a bit about Mount Stinkeroo and the millions of dollars and let it be said, Sir, that the Government is not

prepared to carry that cost again through a sleazy administration, Sir...

Mr. PRESIDENT: I would wish you to withdraw that.

SENATOR D. T. GILL: Sir, I do withdraw... Sir, an administration which is not as caring, to allow the build up of this mountain which people were able to see from hundreds of miles off the coast of Barbados. Sir, we have got to get not only our students in the system educated but we have got to look at some of our research fellows and get them into the habit of actually coming up with ideas and techniques of what are referred to as the gentler techniques. I heard Senator Welch used the word "micro-degradation". These are the sorts of things that we have to get our post graduate students into thinking that, if you shred the rubber, can we then use that in terms of building? Can you use it in our road maintenance? Because the rubber is the first cousin to the same asphalt which we use. You can actually extrude the rubber to assimilate the aggregate. Then I am sure that, where the sides of the road which go fairly early either by way of erosion from passing traffic or from grass which grows into it and destroys it, maybe we can look at it from that point of view for reuse.

Earlier on, Sir, I spoke about cremation against burial. In my opinion and this is only my opinion, I pass at least 2 large supermarkets and they are by no means mega but every morning there is a stack of cardboard just waiting to be dumped. Sir, they can be burnt and if not, Sir, they can be re-exported to the country of origin and I am not sure although I think that in the Act here of Section 7 and I quote:

"A person who imports goods referred to in the Schedule shall be granted a refund of the levy paid by him if he satisfies the Comptroller that the imported goods have been re-exported."

I think that refers, Sir, if you are using it as a warehouse and you re-export it. It is an in and out book entry. But in terms of actually sending the cardboard back to the country of origin and if you trade with countries like Germany *etcetera*, they do not use that much card because it is very bulky and it constitutes a waste of volume. But if we can get the bigger supermarkets to actually go the way of incinerating a lot of the paper stuff which is a by-product of their trade and give them some sort of a rebate or concession for actually setting up an incinerator, some of the smaller supermarkets should be able to make use of the facility of the large supermarkets. This will go a far way in reducing that bulkiness which goes to the landfills.
3.45 p.m.

Someone in an *aside* mentioned the cremation. I know I would have heard that, but there is a difference

between burning, incinerating, and pyrolysis. They are three different words and they are three different mechanisms. If you burn certain plastics and organic materials above a certain temperature, that is where the actual culprits begin to arrive, the well-known dioxins. They are the ones that give trouble, Sir, after you have reached a certain temperature. In many developed countries they lay down firm stipulations that it should be a certain temperature, a certain amount of oxygen and ever so often you do an inspection of the ash which remains behind in the incinerator. If you keep within those guidelines, you would not be breaking the laws of the environmentalists, so to speak. Then there are others, Sir, who think that these same culprits, the dioxins, are not produced in landfills. That is a fallacy. If you get the correct conditions, you get the same dioxins which people jump, rant and rave about in terms of if you incinerate.

Mr. President, if this is a start, and if we want Barbados to be the Barbados which we would all like it to be, if we want to be able to pass it on to those who come after us, I cannot see anything iniquitous, anything shady, anything untoward as far as this Bill is concerned.

With these few suggestions, Sir, I wholeheartedly support the Bill which is before us.

I thank you.

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. President, I beg to move that this Bill be now read a second time.

The question was put to the Senate and agreed to.

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. President, I certify that this is a money Bill and move that it be read a third time.

The question was put to the Senate and agreed to.

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. President, I beg to move that this Bill do now pass and be cited as the Environmental Levy Act, 1996.

The question was put to the Senate and agreed to.

ORDER NO. 2 – THE BETTING AND GAMING DUTIES (AMENDMENT) BILL, 1996

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. President, the amendments proposed to the Betting and Gaming Duties Act are designed to provide for the registration of approved national organisations, to make further provision for the collection of stamp duties and other related matters, and also the opportunity is taken at

this time to amend both the Regulations under the Act as well as the First Schedule to the Act. By amending the First Schedule to the Act, the fee structure as proposed by the Minister of Finance with respect to operations falling under the purview of this Betting and Gaming Duties Act would be thereby implemented.

Now, Sir, this Betting and Gaming Duties Act provides the legal framework for the number and range of operations in Barbados including lotteries, pool betting, the various activities of the racing services, sweepstakes, gaming machines such as one-armed bandits, other amusement machines and the like.

The main amendments to the Act seek to clarify an issue that had arisen with respect to registration. The first amendment proposed is an amendment to Section 2 of the principal Act with respect to the certificate of registration. A new definition of a certificate of registration is proposed for pool betting business, racing services and other approved national organisations.

Another amendment proposed seeks to improve the ability of the Accountant General to properly supervise and audit the distribution and sale of various tickets, principally tickets for use in the racing business. There have been one or two technical difficulties which have limited the capacity of the Accountant General to properly supervise these activities and the amendment proposed requires that the racing service submits all of the tickets so printed to the Accountant General before distribution within the racing service.

The Act is strengthened as well, Sir, by the provision of certain offences. A new offence which is created within the Act is that which is liable on summary conviction to a fine of \$50 000 for contravening the relevant sections of the Act in terms of fraud and the like.

Another new feature which is included in this amendment is the requirement for national organisations so approved to be registered for the purpose of the operation of a lottery in Barbados. This amendment indicates that these organisations need to follow a prescribed procedure in terms of application to the Comptroller of Customs for registration. They need to pay the required fee, which is for a whole year, of \$100 000, and for a half-year certificate \$55 000. That registration procedure would then entitle organisations to conduct lottery type operations as approved national organisations.

The other matter forms part of the principal Act, because much of what is being done with respect to this matter really falls part of the First Schedule in terms of the adjustment of the fees and I will get to those shortly.

A number of other amendments have been made to the Act. It has been proposed that the amendments to the Act and the adjustments to the First Schedule be deemed to have come into effect from July 1, 1995. Now with respect to the First Schedule which outlines the fees to be charged on these various activities which, like I said, range from lottery operations of which there are 2. The pool betting and racing services and the sweepstakes gaming and amusement machines and the entire range. What is being proposed is increases in a number of categories of operation thereby increasing the revenue which is generated and which accrues to Government as a result of the operation of these facilities.

I have already mentioned Sir, the grant of a certificate of registration in respect to lottery type operations, with respect to sweepstakes. The increases as mentioned for sweepstakes tickets costing less than 25 cents with 5 cents per ticket and for those over 25 cents, 11.5 cents in the dollar for each ticket printed. With respect to games of bingo, which is another popular means of gaming in Barbados the First Schedule provides for bingo tickets by whatever means the call is made of 10 cents in every 50 cents or part thereof for each ticket and for pool betting it is under a registration fee of \$300, for racing service business, the annual registration fee will be for an entire year's certificate of \$75 000 and for a half-year certificate \$42 000. Additionally, Sir, 10 cents for every ticket which is issued with respect to bets.

For gaming machines the renewal fees will be for an entire year, a whole-year licence – \$8 800, for a half-year licence – \$5 500, and for a quarterly licence \$3 438. For an amusement machine, other than pool tables, the annual fee will be some \$1 200.

In terms of amusement arcades, the annual licence fees included in the First Schedule are a whole-year licence of \$200 000 and a half-year licence of \$105 000.

Another adjustment, Sir, that is made at the same time as the amendments to this Betting and Gaming Duties Act is that the Minister proposes to amend regulations in respect of the Regulations to the Act and what is being done in those regulations is to make it illegal for persons under 18 years of age to be involved in gaming activities so that with the amendment to the regulation no person under the age of 18 years shall be admitted to premises of arcades and racing services for betting and gaming. Persons should not be allowed to place any bet, purchase a ticket in respect to any lottery or to collect any money payable in connection with a lottery or in any way participate in gaming or games of chance.

Those are the major features associated with this proposed amendment to the Betting and Gaming Duties Act. There are a number of features in the principal Act. In

the First Schedule in the attached to the amendment bill is a replacement for the existing First Schedule and regulations are also to be made to make it illegal for persons under 18 years of age to participate in gaming activities.

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

SENATOR N. A. LYNCH: Mr. President, these amendments come as part of an Act which is near and dear to my heart. So there is no way I would let this opportunity pass without dealing with it.

The Leader of Government Business clearly stated that this really sets out a legal framework for a number of activities which take place within the domain of betting and gaming. These amendments clarify certain aspects of this existing Act in terms of things like registration for certificates, submission of tickets and the whole concept of national organisations and how they go about doing their business.

I would like to look at the Act from a number of standpoints because I, for one, feel a lot of what has been said or stated within the amendments to this Act are not at all in keeping with what is real for many of the organisations that are listed as national organisations as they fall under this Act. I also wanted to say that there is no way we can have any kind of significant debate on the whole concept of betting and gaming unless we look at it in the context of the whole socio-economic development of Barbados. Gaming and betting has certainly taken off. The proliferation of gaming and betting that there is now in this society has certainly changed the landscape, changed the social and economic landscape of this country and it will never be the same again unless we take serious measures to control what actually has gotten out of hand.

Everyone knows that betting and gaming as for national organisations and for governments particularly has been one of the greatest sources of indirect taxation in most jurisdictions. What we have done over the years, I believe, is fail to grasp that fully, how much we can really use betting and gaming to a certain extent, if controlled, as a means of indirect taxation.

What we also failed to grasp is how we need to control it so that it works and redounds to the benefit of all Barbadians. We know already, and Barbadians are familiar, that there are many people in this society who use betting and gaming every day like a job. There are some people who just short of us, down the street, who actually use betting and gaming on a daily basis as a means of earning income and that in itself has had a significant impact on our whole economic landscape.

We need to be careful about how we decide who we give out licences to in terms of the name of gaming and betting. That is the first thing. We need to be very clear on whom we give them out to. The decision must be made as to whether or not you are going to continue to treat profit organisations and non-profit organisations in the same way with regard to how you give out licences. I see it clearly in the Act and it is stated in these amendments that we are looking to offer a whole-year certificate for \$100 000 to an approved national organisation. This is in the First Schedule under section 3(1).

There are many non-profit organisations in Barbados which engage in gaming activity every year. We are talking here about associations like the Cancer Society of Barbados, for example, which is a national approved organisation under the Act. They go about doing their business to raise funds. Now it is almost impossible for an organisation like that or the Amateur Athletic Association or the BFA to raise \$100 000 in the first place to pay for a licence. That is the first thing. It is very difficult and some of these people carry on legitimate activity which contributes in great measure to the development of this society. Still these people are going to end up paying an amount which is certainly out of their reach. That is the first thing and then they end up paying in respect to these tickets, this 5 cents on each ticket. What is even more significant is to look at this.

How do you compare for example the BTC's lottery and supposedly the Olympic Association's lottery as opposed to the Cancer Society or the Hotel Association or the Amateur Athletic Association or the BCA, even to develop these things.
4.05 p.m.

Sir, I want also to look at this in view of what we have said in Barbados and was condemned for in terms of casino gambling because if you want to tell me, casino gambling could have easily been one of the saving graces for the hotel industry in Barbados but we made it abundantly clear that is not what our society wanted. The people of Barbados said clearly, and anyone would have known this, that it could have attracted more dollars and cents to Barbados, but we made it abundantly clear that was not what our society wanted.

Sir, look at this. We took then the Lotto and the Olympic and we allowed these to go on and the one-armed bandits that we have. We allowed these to go on untapped, not necessarily this Government, but we gave out licences to two agencies which are money-making agencies to continue to make money at the expense of an entire society contributing very little to it and not being able to control it in a national way so that if the guy spends his \$2 and he does not win the Lottery, at the end of the day he knows

it goes toward a school, a hospital, or whatever. We have allowed people who already make money, and continue to make money, to have a lottery and to control these lotteries.

I am saying, Sir, that is contributing to the breakdown of the entire social fabric of this society. This is the society that everybody claims is this big Christian society. We march up and down Bridgetown to stop casino gambling. To stop casino gambling we march the whole length and breadth of Bridgetown but then this same society that preaches it allows it every day to live in the pool halls, to live in the betting shops, to live and control gambling every day and we go down the line.

Sir, in a country right now where there are crises of identity and opportunity, where institutions that have traditionally been the bedrock of building this society have broken down, how can we continue to actually fuel and push people to get involved in gaming activity without some form of control. I say that gambling itself provides and encourages other forms of serious crime in this country. Let me tell you. There are a lot of children in Barbados today who are going to sleep hungry every night because of the Lotto, and the Olympic lotteries. I have no bones about saying it. There are children who are not getting any school uniforms every day because of the Olympic and the Lotto lotteries.

I want to take those two and I am going to deal with them, Sir, firstly one at a time. I say it is near and dear to my heart and I will deal firstly with the Olympic. The Olympic Lottery is a lottery we have allowed individual people in Barbados to set up a lottery, and control a national lottery for themselves to make money in their pockets and then contribute a mere drop in the bucket to the Olympic Association of this country. People in Barbados are spending money in this lottery believing that this lottery is really fuelling athletes in this country but this is a money-making scheme. This is a licence to print money. What we have been doing is that we have been allowing it to happen in this country without even dealing with it.

I will tell you this now. You heard clearly of the Olympic giving out \$100 000 to someone who wins an Olympic medal. I am saying this. Nobody wins \$100 000 after they have won an Olympic medal. The fellow needs it to prepare to get to the Olympics to win the medal in the first place so unless we can do something about getting some dollars and cents ready and waiting before Obadele Thompson or Leah Martindale, or whoever else even jumps in the pool, or steps on the track, we need to be able to control it so that more of it filters down to this society and helps it to develop. We cannot continue to deal with it in that away.

Sir, let me tell you something else. The point is this. If the \$100 000 that you are going to spend, for example, to give out a licence cannot attract people like the Amateur Athletic Association, like the same Olympic Association which is getting a dribbling, how are they going to be able to attract the youth that all of us claim are getting out of hand and they are gone. The things we have to bring them back we are allowing also to slip through our fingers.

Sir, I am saying this. I do not agree with this point. I agree with controlling the Gaming and Betting Act. I agree with the Government getting more money for it. What I do not agree with is that certain organisations cannot afford to even start to pay the licences to be able to get it.

Sir, I also want to say this. The other lottery, the BTC Lotto, this is encouraging gambling to the hilt now because they are already involved in gambling activity. You give them a licence now to be able to carry on more gambling activity because the only thing that goes on at the Garrison on a Saturday or Monday evening sometimes is gambling anyway. You have allowed them now to get another opportunity to make some more money. If they cannot fix their odds to be able to make money off race horses, why are we giving them a licence again to create more gambling?

I can say this clearly. They may create employment. There may be grooms. There may be people to look after horses. There may be jockeys. There may be an industry. I have no problem. They may have enhanced the look of the Garrison Savannah. I have no problem with that either and they may have contributed in some measure, maybe to tourism and development. But, at the same time, what we have been able to do is to allow them to create more gaming activity. They should have been allowed to fix their odds so that they can make money off it and if they cannot do that, they are managing the business of horse racing wrong.

The other thing is this. I am not allowing anyone to put more money in the pockets of those who already have at the expense of the have-nots because you cannot go into horse racing unless you have a horse and I have never heard poor people owning horses yet. That's the other thing. I need to say this. I am calling on the Government, I am making, and this is the second time, a serious plea to look again at this concept of these licences to these two national lotteries. I think these two national lotteries need to be looked upon, look at how it is affecting this nation and how we can do something to control them. I am saying this seriously, and if we have to revoke the licences, I have said this before, let us form a national lottery. If you want them to run it, let them run it.

I am saying there are antitrust laws in every country to stop this kind of thing. If you allow people to go around, people that already have – I have no problem with a man who has money investing his money in something but it cannot be at the expense of all the poor people of a country. It cannot. I am saying this. I have never heard of anybody giving away a national licence in the whole thing.

I am saying this too, Sir. The same way we have had commissions of enquiry and we have looked into all the other forms of things for public consensus, I would like to have a commission of enquiry on the whole concept of betting and gaming and these lotteries in this country. How is the activity really affecting our people? How is this activity really affecting the social fabric? How is it affecting us economically as a country? How can we best use it in a positive way to channel funds so that the Government gets it. It goes into the Consolidated Fund, which is not any black hole, but it helps people every day in this country, and people know that. Therefore, a Betting and Gaming Commission that is a permanent entity needs to be set up, not anything that is controlled by the Comptroller of Customs. We need a permanent Betting and Gaming Commission as a Government agency to be able to look after on an ongoing basis how this thing is affecting Barbados and how we can get the most of it.

Sir, as I told you before, I believe that I was one of the people who was affected gravely by not having a permanent fund set up when I was an athlete at that level and on my way to the Olympic games to have something that I could have drawn on a consistent basis. Sir, I am appealing to the Government that we need to look at it in a serious and structured way, not in a superficial way in which we are skimming the surface with it, but this has serious implications for this country down the road. Sir, I am convinced that if we do not look after it we are heading for trouble.

Sir, I want to say this. I have made it abundantly clear. I understand the whole process of collective responsibility. I am for amending the Act. I am for the Government getting more money from betting and gaming. I am for controlling it better so that the racing pool people do not get away with murder but, at the same time, I am making it clear that we need to look seriously and in-depth at this thing and control it for the good of the have-nots in this country. The haves cannot continue to have and the have-nots not have.

I thank you, Sir.
4.15 p.m.

SENATOR Mrs. P. E. RICKINSON: Mr. President, I wholeheartedly endorse the comments of Senator Lynch and he has said some of the things that I was going to say and I would not repeat them. However on the basis

of page 3 of this Act, this is just a query because I am a bit confused. Unfortunately, as you know, Mr. President, I have been calling for the laws to be issued to us so that we could look at the whole Act and make more sense to the legislation. I really did not have time to come and check out the main Act here. It is saying here that the amendments directed to be made to the principal Act by sections 2 and 5 of this Act shall be deemed to have come into operation on the 1st day of July 1995. That is last year, Mr. President. Does this mean that the money collected by the various national organisations since last year have to be now paid into the Treasury? Does it mean that those persons who sold bingo tickets and played Bingo have to go and look for those tickets and now pay any shortfall of funds into the Treasury?

It seems to me that it would be better that the Act comes into force any time after it has been passed rather than back dating it. But as I have said, I am ignorant, I really do not know about the full Act.

I do support and I need to say this. I feel that we should have a national lottery ourselves so that we can use the proceeds of the national lottery for different types of educational activities and I would not go into that anymore. What I would like to say a few words about is what Senator Farley, the Leader of Government Business did mention, that the regulations will include that it would be illegal for betting and gaming under 18 years of age. I am very grateful for that bit of regulation. I would like that we do a massive, when I say massive I mean a massive education programme and put short notices during "Days of our Lives" and "The Bold and Beautiful" so that people will know that they should not send their children to buy lotto tickets. They should not ask their children on their way from school to go and buy me this lotto ticket or they would not take them to the Garrison and send little children to buy tickets for gambling. I feel this is a worthwhile piece of legislation for the prevention of the addiction of gambling from a very early age.

Also, Mr. President, in order to keep these school children out of the gaming room, because they do leave school and go into gaming rooms in uniform, it appears as though some of the owners close their eyes to the fact that these are children in uniform playing the machines, I feel that this legislation not only needs to be implemented but it needs to be policed. I would ask that someone be assigned to just go and visit the gaming rooms in the evenings when the children are supposed to be en route from the school to their homes and make sure that they are not there. Perhaps we could ask the special constables that are going to be attached to the Royal Barbados Police Force to assist in policing that type of regulation which I feel is very, very important.

Other than that I really do not understand too much as I said about the Bill in general. It seems a lot of money as a down payment but it says for lotteries and sweepstakes. Nonprofit organisations tend not to get into lotteries and sweepstakes. What we tend to do is to sell tickets for raffles and I am not sure if one has to pay down payment or registration in order to sell raffle tickets because the Barbados Registered Nurses Association does get involved in raffles but it is not included in the Schedule. We have not been paying anything and I am sure a lot of people have not been paying anything for tickets so I think you really need to make it very clear to us if we have tickets and we are raffling items if in fact we have to pay some money into the Treasury. Thank you, I do support the Bill.

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. President, I beg to move that this Bill be now read a second time.

The question was put to the Senate and agreed to.

COMMITTEE

On the motion of SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY the Senate went into Committee on the Bill, SENATOR Miss O. P. SYMMONDS in the Chair.

MADAM CHAIRMAN: The Senate is now in Committee.

Clauses 1 to 6 inclusive were called and passed.

4.25 p.m.

Clauses 7 and 8 were called and passed.

On the motion of SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported the passing of one Bill in Committee, and Mr. PRESIDENT resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

On the separate motions of SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY, the Bill was read a third time and passed.

ORDER NO. 3 – RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE VESTING IN THE NATIONAL HOUSING CORPORATION OF LAND AT DODDS PLANTATION, ST. PHILIP

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. President, the Resolution before the Honourable Senate seeks Senate's approval for the vesting of land at Dodds Plantation in the National Housing Corporation for the purpose of housing development. This approval, Sir, is being sought in accordance with Section 5 of the Land Acquisition Act.

Sir, this land is actually already owned by the Crown and forms part of the Dodds Plantation in the parish of St. Philip. What is being proposed, Sir, is that in order to facilitate the use of the land 3.4 hectares for housing development that the land be vested in the National Housing Corporation to give them indefeasible title to the land and thereby facilitate such development.

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

The question that the Resolution do now pass was put to the Senate and agreed to.

ADJOURNMENT

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. President, I beg to move that this Honourable Senate do now adjourn *sine die*.

The question was put to the Senate and agreed to and Mr. PRESIDENT adjourned the Senate accordingly.
4.31 p.m.

CONTENTS

PRESENTATION OF PAPERS

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY 1114

1. The Barbados Economic Report, 1995.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY 1114

1. Resolution to approve the vesting in the National Housing Corporation of land at Dodds Plantation, St. Philip to be developed for housing purposes.
2. Resolution to approve the compulsory acquisition by the Crown of the parcel of land described in the Schedules to the Resolution for the purpose of the Bridgetown By-Pass Road Improvement Project.

PUBLIC BUSINESS

ORDER NO. 1 – THE ENVIRONMENTAL LEVY BILL, 1996 1114

Senator the Hon. R. R. Farley, 1114, 1139; Senator C. A. Mascoll, 1116; Senator Mrs. V. J. Davis, 1120; Senator Miss O. P. Symmonds, 1122; Senator Miss J. C. Odle, 1123; Senator S. P. Bernstein, 1125; Senator T. E. Barker, 1126; Senator N. P. Welch, 1128; Senator the Hon. P. C. Goddard, 1130; Senator Mrs. P. E. Rickinson, 1131; Senator C. K. Laurie, 1134; Senator the Hon. G. S. H. Murray, 1134; Senator D. T. Gill, 1136.

ORDER NO. 2 – THE BETTING AND GAMING DUTIES (AMENDMENT) BILL, 1996 1139

Senator the Hon. R. R. Farley, 1139; Senator N. A. Lynch, 1140; Senator Mrs. P. E. Rickinson, 1142.

ORDER NO. 3 – RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE VESTING IN THE NATIONAL HOUSING CORPORATION OF A PARCEL OF LAND AT DODDS PLANTATION, ST. PHILIP 1143

Senator the Hon. R. R. Farley, 1143.

SUSPENSION 1128

ADJOURNMENT 1144

Senator the Hon. R. R. Farley, 1144.

SPEAKERS IN THIS ISSUE

BARKER, Senator T. E.

BERNSTEIN, Senator S. P.

DAVIS, Senator Mrs. V. J.

FARLEY, Senator the Hon. R. R.

GILL, Senator D. T.

GODDARD, Senator the Hon. P. C.

LAURIE, Senator C. K.

LYNCH, Senator N. A.

MASCOLL, Senator C. A.

MURRAY, Senator the Hon. G. S. H.

ODLE, Senator Miss J. C.

RICKINSON, Senator Mrs. P. E.

SYMONDS, Senator Miss O. P.

WELCH, Senator N. P.