
THE SENATE DEBATES

(OFFICIAL REPORT)

FIRST SESSION 1994 – 99

THE SENATE

Wednesday, November 13, 1996

The Senate met in the Senate Chamber, Parliament Buildings, on Wednesday, November 13, 1996, at 11.15 a.m.

PRESENT

His Honour Senator F. W. GOLLOP, (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 J. A. WORKMAN

Senator Mrs. P. E. RICKINSON

Senator S. P. BERNSTEIN

Senator the Venerable Archdeacon J. L. SPRINGER, G.C.M.

Senator C. K. LAURIE

Senator Mrs. V. J. DAVIS

Senator Mrs. A. P. THOMPSON

Senator C. A. MASCOLL.

Prayers were led by Fr. Errington Massiah.

Mr. PRESIDENT: The Senate is in session.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. President, I rise to introduce the following Bill and ask that it be read a first time:

A Bill to amend the Shops Act, Cap. 356(a).

The question that the Bill be read a first time was put to the Senate and agreed to.

PUBLIC BUSINESS

ORDER NO. 1 – TO MOVE THE PASSING OF A RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE GUARANTEE BY THE MINISTER RESPONSIBLE FOR FINANCE OF THE PAYMENT OF THE PRINCIPAL AND INTEREST FOR REDEMPTION OF A BOND OF \$41 300 000 BY THE BARBADOS AGRICULTURAL MANAGEMENT COMPANY LIMITED

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. President, I rise to move the Resolution which seeks Senate's approval for the Government to guarantee a bond to be issued by the Barbados Agricultural Management Company Limited. This bond issue in the amount of \$41.3 million is needed for the financing of the sugar industry up to the period of 1999.

This matter has to be considered within the context of the overall restructuring of the sugar industry as this is just one of several other similar actions that have been taken in the past and will be taken in the future. This present financing arrangement is designed to cover a number of things. First of all, it is due to cover the repayment on a bridging loan facility that was required to cover financing during the latter part of this year and that amount will be \$11.3 million to meet expenses associated

with the preparation for and the harvesting of the 1997 crop and an amount of some \$15 million will be required up to the period June 1, 1997, and then to cover the necessary cultivation, preparation and other associated work for the 1998 crop and for the period ending June 1, 1998 a further \$15 million.

Some of the areas to be paid out of these funds will include things such as the replanting incentive scheme where the BAMC is seeking to provide incentives to encourage independent farmers, particularly small farmers, who over the years as you know had gone out of sugar cultivation. The amount required for that is some \$2 million. In terms of the cultivation of abandoned sugar land which you would have seen all around the country and which over the last few years has been turned back into cultivation to meet our increased target which I will discuss later, that amount for the period up to June 30, 1997 is \$1.8 million. In terms of the cultivation of BADMC lands up to June 1997, the amount to be spent is \$2 million for a very important programme of suck well cleaning which had not been properly carried out over a number of years. In fact, if you were to drive through the countryside, you will see a number of suck wells out of which have grown some very wonderful looking hog plum trees, mahogany trees, breadfruit trees and all types of trees. From both of the trunks, you will recognize the length of time that tree would have been in the suck well.

Sir, suck well cleaning will cost \$400 000 and be spent on that up to June next year. There is also a rebate system for land cultivation by some of the smaller independent growers of \$100 000 as well as provision made for a productivity bonus of just over \$1 million as well as amounts for interest on earlier series of BAMC issues.

Sir, this financing proposal, like I said, is part of the longer term financing arrangements which are being worked out for the BAMC and not BADMC. The details of the bond issue do not need to be spelled out in great detail. It is a typical standard issue. The issue is to be handled by Citi-Corp. Merchant Bank Ltd. The rate is to be the local bank rate plus three-quarters of a per cent which, if you were to go on current prime, would bring us somewhere in the region of 10.5 per cent annum. One of the reasons why this issue is meant to be floated locally, Sir, is to avoid the issue of foreign exchange fluctuations and other such areas, as well as to provide opportunities for local institutional investors to participate.

11.25 a.m.

As I said, I want to set this debate and this Resolution for financing of the BAMC within the context of the wider restructuring of the sugar industry in Barbados. You will recall, Sir, that that had its origins back in the early 1990s.

In fact, you will recall that as a result of the level of indebtedness of a number of sugar plantations, several of whom were indebted beyond their net worth, the Government of the day decided it would restructure the sugar industry and that it would also relieve the Barbados National Bank of the burden of bearing the debt of that industry.

The burden of that debt is in the region of \$250 million and was transferred on June 10, 1992 to the Barbados Agricultural Credit Trust, which is in effect a financial institution established for the sole purpose of working out the debt of the sugar industry and trying to maximise the overall return on the assets. Like I said, that debt is in the region of \$250 million. In addition, a company – the Barbados Agricultural Management Company – was established to manage the operations of the sugar industry. At present, in terms of where that company is located within the overall scheme of sugar industry management in Barbados, BADMC, currently manages in the region of 40% of the lands under sugar agriculture, so although it is a major player it is not a monopoly player in the sugar industry and the overall future structure and viability of the industry will depend on the extent to which Government is able to involve the local independent producers in the industry.

Now, Sir, how did that restructuring of the sugar industry play itself out? Like I said, the BACT was formed and was responsible for handling the physical assets of BSIL, which was one of the arms of the Barbados Sugar Industry Limited, which at that time was some \$138.3 million out of the \$250 million approximately, and the plantation debt from the National Bank was worth some \$112 million or thereabouts.

The BACT is supposed to derive its income from the lease payments by these heavily indebted plantations, as they were called, under some 12-year lease arrangements, under which the Government of the day, for all its generosity, agreed to take over these indebted plantations – as I said, some of them indebted to a level greater than their net worth – to lease them from the owners who would put them back in good husbandry and then return them in good form to the owners. That, as I say, Sir, was extremely generous by the last Government and it was not even their favourite clientele, the small black businessman they were dealing with, but that is just by the way. The lease payments from these indebted plantations form part of the revenue which goes to the Barbados Agricultural Credit Trust under that 12-year lease arrangement.

Also, Sir, under that arrangement the sale of the non-arable portions of the plantations was proposed to be part of the revenue which would accrue to the BACT and which would assist in reducing the level of debt in respect to the plantations. However, as part of that restructuring and

part of the fantastic lease agreement that was worked out, the owners whose plantations had been indebted sometimes to a level more than their net worth, still had a say concerning whether or not and to whom to sell or to whom not to sell this non-arable portion of the plantations. As you know, Sir, if you look at the plantations, and plantations have benefited from this type of thing for ages, if you look at all the most fantastic developments, housing developments, in the rural areas of Barbados – you look at The Mount, Frere Pilgrim, many of them I could call, the good ones at least, I am not dealing with the one at Cottage which were built squarely on arable land, where when the houses were being built the canes were still growing. I myself broke one of the canes and sucked it one crop and before the next crop...

Aside.

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY: ... I begged for it. Before the next crop rather than canes growing houses were growing. The point I am making is that in the good developments a number of plantations had sold off some of the hillside grass piece lands, as we used to call them in the country, where the only thing that ever used to grow on these outcroppings of limestone was some sour grass that was used for everything from feeding animals to making beds and cushions years ago. With the decline in the sour grass bed and cushion market, it was perfectly reasonable for those areas to be converted to housing developments.

There still remain some opportunities of the non-arable portions of plantations to reduce the level of debt by these heavily indebted estates. But like I said, Sir, nothing much has materialised from that particular activity because, for one reason, there is still a hiccough in terms of the nature of the agreement that was drawn up at that time back in 1992 between the Government and the heavily indebted plantation owners, which gave them some scope for blocking the process, or in a worse case scenario having some capacity to influence either the price that was accepted or the person to whom the land was sold. I do not have to tell you, Sir, that that provides tremendous opportunities for things which are not characterised by propriety to occur.

The other area of revenue which the BACT was supposed to obtain would relate to the profits which would have been generated by the BAMC and which would go again towards reducing the debt, but that level of profit has not been attained as yet and certainly we would hope that sooner rather than later that would be the result. So we have a financial institution that was created, which gave the owners some level of control over lands in which they had no net contribution. We had a deal which, like I said, allowed for the plantation owners to regain their land after

a 12-year period and we also had an operations company, the Barbados Agricultural Management Company. That company, as I said, has become one of the major players in agriculture in Barbados because of the nature of the holdings which it possesses in agriculture in Barbados. For example, Sir, as you know there are some 106 000 acres in total of land available in Barbados and of that there is around 30 000 which is considered to be arable land. Out of that, Sir, an average one can expect is that there will be some 25 000 acres of land available annually for sugar production.

11.35 a.m.

The BAMC is in control of some 40% of that and that makes them a major player. In addition, Sir, they also at this point in time control the assets of the BSIL which was the sugar factory component of the industry. Therefore, they are really the sugar manufacturers in Barbados. How did this arrangement for the formation of BADMC go? Now, Sir, by way of background that, too, was formed in 1992 and in fact back in 1992 Booker Tate first gained entry into Barbados as a consultant to the Government with respect to the future of the sugar industry. They prepared a 5-year plan on the basis of that consultancy which offered 2 options, option A and option B.

Option A was a 75 000-tonne of sugar per year output and Option B was a 65 000-tonne of sugar per year output. On the basis of that reduced output, the proposal also included a proposal for the operation of 2 factories only and they were named Portvale and Andrews. Bulkeley was to be closed.

The Government then in January 1994 appointed Booker Tate as the managers of the sugar industry in Barbados. So the relationship deepened and the Government also on the appointment of Booker Tate as managers gave them a policy mandate within which to manage the operation of the sugar industry in Barbados. The most salient features of that policy mandate included the implementation of the 65 000 tonnes of sugar per year output and the operation of 2 factories, namely Andrews and Portvale. The decision was made in January 1994 at the appointment of Booker Tate as managers that Bulkeley would be closed immediately after the 1995 sugar crop.

In terms of financing the 5-year plan as agreed between Booker Tate and the Government of Barbados, the Caribbean Development Bank was brought in to provide finance and in that agreement for finance it was again spelt out that the restructuring of the sugar industry for which the financing from the CDB was being sought was predicated on the 65 000 tonnes per year output and the operation of 2 factories and financing therefore would have been related to the necessary severance of persons at the factory to be closed, Bulkeley. It would have related to the renovations to be made at Andrews and Portvale. It

would have been made in relation to additional transportation facilities by way of the huge transport vehicles to move cane from the various staging posts, for example, Carringtons in St. Philip to Andrews and Portvale.

Sir, what this Barbados Labour Party did on assuming office in September 1994 was to review that particular arrangement and in looking at it, Sir, we asked ourselves a few questions. We asked what was the market for sugar which we are trying to serve? What was the possible market? We identified, as did Booker Tate, that the potential market of all sorts totalled some 86 000 tonnes. Two of those markets were ruled out, the world market and the U.S. sugar market, because the price that was offered on those markets were so low relative to the production cost in Barbados that even though you were to invest in infrastructure to improve your efficiency you would not be able to make measurable returns. Obviously, Sir, that would bring one down to 75 000 tonnes in terms of markets that are there and for which the price would justify the level of investment required.

If you look at how that 75 000 tonnes is made up, those 54 000 tonnes to the European Economic Union market, for its tolerance or reserve as they call that, it is 2 000 tonnes per year. For the special preferential sugar market which is a special adjunct to the European Economic Union arrangement which has a 6-year window starting in 1995 in the first instance and a possible extension of another 6...

Asides.

Of course, there is the local market which for raw sugar or as we know it brown sugar is some 9 000 tonnes per year.

Sir, that brings us to the 75 000 tonnes. If we compare that to the option of a 65 000 tonnes arrangement what I was really saying is that the Barbados market was not to be satisfied by production of Barbadian sugar. We believed that that was wrong for two reasons.

One is that in the context of international trade it is extremely difficult to argue that one has a national industry for which one deserves and demands preferential pricing and other arrangements when one exports all of the product and imports the same product from somebody else. That is extremely shaky ground on which to stand in international trade arrangements, especially under the WTO. Also Sir, when we look at the numbers, the price that Barbadians pay per tonne for sugar is higher than any of the alternative markets to which we sell, so that from the strict point of view of industry profitability selling sugar on the Barbados market really in strict dollar terms, not dealing with the foreign currency earnings, makes the highest contribution to the profit in the industry. That is a fact.

Now, Sir, in addition to that, we also held the view that if one were to devise an industry which depends for its survival on the export of a commodity, in this case sugar, one could not build the industry with no margins for shortfalls of production one way or the other.
11.45 a.m.

If you are seeking to maintain your preferential markets, you have to satisfy the quotas which you are given and a 65 000-tonne option which left no margin for error, we were of the view that in the shortfall years and you had difficulties in meeting your quotas, you could stand the danger of having pressure put on you at the point of renegotiation for a reduction in those quotas.

We remember, Sir, that Barbados benefitted a few years ago from a situation in which some other countries within the ACP grouping were not able to meet their quotas and when that unused portion was redistributed, Barbados was able to sell some extra sugar into Europe. Of course, you can only sell what you have, unless you are selling false hopes or dreams or swamp land in Florida.

The reality, Sir, is that with this arrangement our option for 65 000 tonnes, if there were to be a shortfall we in Barbados could in that year forego our 9 000 tonnes consumption of sugar and use that to satisfy our preferential markets overseas which we need to meet the quota if we are to continue having those markets.

But, Sir, there was another side to the 65 000 tonnes option and that is that at that level of production there were only going to be two factories, but it was not going to be just a case of two factories alone. That proposal also suggested that in order to reap the acreage of canes out there the crop season was to be extended by a number of weeks. You know, Sir, as well as all of us in here do, that in Barbados the crop season start or finish often has to be adjusted because of the rainfall. If the fields in Barbados are wet, the equipment for cutting and transporting canes cannot operate, in addition to the problems of mud being taken into the system and having an impact on the quality of the sugar and so on. In addition, if the season is prolonged too much there is an impact on the regrowth of the canes for the following year and you could end up reducing the yield because of that factor.

The other point is that with a two-factory option predicated on the expanded time of operation where is the safety factor with respect to breakdowns or other difficulties? In the present scenario, if there are breakdowns, for example, the slack can be taken up by the other facilities without necessarily requiring an extension of the length of the crop but, in any case, if the harvesting season needed to be extended, there was sufficient time left still that one would not impact on the next year's crop.

We were satisfied, Sir, that there was good reason for the decision made by this Government in 1995 to change the policy mandate within which Booker Tate was managing the industry. Like I said, in 1993/94 when Booker Tate submitted the report they had provided two options, 75 000 or 65 000 tonnes so this is nothing that has been dreamed up. This is one that was presented to the last side and they chose the other option. We have chosen 75 000 tonnes recognising the factors which I outlined earlier, and also that the three factories would continue in operation.

When I get into discussion of the year's performance, Sir, I will make mention of the fact that the decision to keep Bulkeley open has been more than justified because in terms of the performance of the factories, Andrews was the leading performer, Bulkeley came in second and Portvale limped along bringing up the rear. The records before this year also indicated that in terms of the various measures of efficiency which are used to measure operations in the industry that Bulkeley has always been a very efficient operator.

Sir, that is basically the framework within which the Barbados Agricultural Management Company was formed and operated and which has taken us to this point where we are today and which, within the new policy mandate which has been given by this Government will lead us safely home.

In terms of the operations of the BAMC during last year, the company made a small loss, just over \$400 000, and this included a provision made for non-payment on cotton sold. There was some difficulty associated with the sale of cotton and that seems to be a difficulty that will not go away right away. I think the ghost of CARSICOT still continues to haunt us and we probably have to get the ghostbusters to remove that ghost.

Sir, the 1996 crop as well would have seen a total of 534 886 metric tonnes of cane being milled with the resulting production of some 59 114 tonnes of sugar so we had really just over half a million tonnes of cane producing just under 60 000 tonnes of sugar and that was a great improvement over the previous year. Of that, the BAMC would have still harvested just under 200 000 tonnes of cane and over 300 000 tonnes would have come from the various independent growers, including some 1 000 small farmers who together would have grown just under 25 000 tonnes of cane. That improved performance in that particular area has been due in large part to the incentives which we have agreed to pay to encourage small farmers to get back into production.

Also, Sir, a notable statistic has been the yield. The cane yields have been on average some 24 tonnes to the acre compared to 17 tonnes to the acre in 1995. Those are

average yields on BAMC lands so that they have been able to improve their husbandry to the extent where they are improving yields. This is on the upper limit really of the current spread of cane yields. Cane yields across the island range in some areas from 19.7 tonnes per acre to 24.7 tonnes per acre in 1996.

11.55 a.m.

Now, Sir, cane fires last year have been a major source of concern. On BAMC's lands, for example, some 949 acres were burnt and this is obviously a cause for concern. Especially, Sir, by my own observation a number of these fires occurred before the start of operations at the factories. Which means, of course, that those are acres of cane which are lost.

In addition, Sir, some 1 200 trash fires were experienced as well, and this obviously will have an impact on the regrowth of cane for the following year. I know this, for example, occurred one Saturday morning across the St. George Valley in no fewer than 6 or 7 locations at the same time, going along the highway that takes you from Bussa up to Six Roads. I would be surprised, Sir, if that were really a random occurrence. Trash fires, Saturday morning, 6 or 7 locations at the same time, and destroying acres of cane. That would have an impact on the 1997 prospects.

Sir, there is another area of concern I want to raise, Sir. This really relates to my observations. This would be primarily in relation to the activities of a number of the independent farmers, Sir. Those that are under BAMC's control.

I have notice, Sir, on those plantations of which I have observed, and I know that there are not BAMC's plantations, that some poor cultivation techniques seem to have become the norm. You may wonder about my qualifications for speaking on this matter of cultivation techniques. Sir, I would have to let you know so that you can really assess the quality of the expert advice that I am offering in this matter.

I would have to let you know that I grew up in rural St. George, not urban St. George, Sir, rural St. George. I know many farmers, Sir, more than 2, which another Honourable Member would refer to as being the extent of her consultation on matters relating to St. George. In all seriousness, Sir, when I grew up in St. George not only was I surrounded by sugar cane lands, but my father and both grandfathers would have been small cane farmers, peasant and pleasant farmers. I obviously, not being a man in the house, not being a bread winner, I had to put in my fair share of work, Sir. So I would have had to plant the cane, along with the yams and potatoes and what not. I would also have to join in cutting the canes, Sir. I

must confess that for all my achievements, Sir, I have never quite been able to get the canes cut properly. My father would always have to take up one of the tradition 3 rows of canes that the average cane cutter would cut at a time, I would take 2 and he would take 4, and he would still be ahead of me. Nevertheless, Sir, that experience taught me a bit about agricultural production and so on, Sir – little techniques for example, Sir, on how one is able to enhance regrowth for the following year by cutting your canes low to the ground and making sure that there is good supply of soil to the roots to improve the yield. I notice that has fallen away.

The problem I have, Sir, is that when I grew up, Sir, I observed good husbandry in action, where every effort was made to retain the top soil where it is supposed to be, in the field. That was done by ensuring that when fields were ploughed, that if the drains in the fields were being ploughed 90 degrees to the roadway, then at least 2 rows would be made parallel with the roadway. That would ensure that any water coming out of the field would tend not to take the soil with it.

In addition to that, Sir, in those days a healthy supply of khus khus grass was planted by the very edge of the field, again as a means of retaining the soil. Today, Sir, if you drive through St. George, you go through by Drax Hall plantation, you go through Christ Church by Hannays plantation, you go through by Boarded Hall and all of these other places, the Valley, Dayrells, right around, Sir. I will tell you which road to take so that you can see for yourself. You take the road if you leave Newton roundabout, you travel going towards the other highway, whatever that one is, which will take you past Skeene's Hill, Lower Greys towards Boarded Hall. You can either go down the hill from Lower Greys to Windsor, or you can turn by Boarded Hall and make a right turn to go towards Bulkeley road. All along those areas, Sir. You go through St. George, through Mount Hill, up through Byer Road to take you to Greens. All of those roads, Sir, when the rain falls your life is in danger because of the several inches of top soil that finds its way in the road, which I believe is a contravention of the Highway Act to start with.

In addition, if those farmers would look on the front page of their telephone directory if they had not heard or seen it anyway else, they would discover that according to the Future Centre Trust, that we do not inherit the earth from our parents, we borrow from our children.

My question is, Sir, if so much top soil is transferred in one year, from average rainfall, from the fields into the highways, how much will be transferred in 25 years? Will there be top soil left when the children, from whom we have borrowed the earth, finally become the adults? This is a concern to me, Sir, as far as its impact as far as the sugar industry is concerned, but as well, Sir, on the environment in general, and specifically on life safety as a motorist. I

am forced to travel on those roads, and you cannot travel safely when you have to drive in 4 inches of mud. All of which is washed into the road with the full help of the sugar farmers in Barbados who have abandoned the practices of old, where the emphasis was on retaining top soil. The emphasis now seems to be making sure that the fields are properly drained, and as they are properly drained out towards the roads they take the top soil with them, Sir. So that is a concern that I have, Sir. I have been able to get that bee out of my bonnet as far as sugar management is concerned. I hope that you, Sir, accept my credentials and will concur that I am qualified to speak on this matter.

Another area that I would like to make mention of in relation to last year's sugar crop is labour in the industry. It is interesting to note that on BAMC's lands around 60% of the cane was harvested mechanically. Yet there was still lots of trouble in finding labour to hand-cut the remaining canes, Sir, particularly in the north of the island. This is one of the areas which has to be examined. The sugar industry needs to look carefully at enhancing the attractiveness of work in the industry, both at the level of the field and the level of the factory.

The other area of concern, which would have to be expressed with respect to the sugar industry, is the manner of the availability of engineering personnel to carry on from the older persons in the factories. If you look at the age profile of persons in the engineering side of the sugar industry operations, Sir, it is not one that necessarily will suggest continuity. In addition to which if we are to increase our productively, efficiency and therefore competitiveness, we also need to be in position to attract your top level certified mechanical and other types of engineers, Sir, who will be able to keep abreast of all the latest changes and technology within the industry and be able to do the level of modernisation in Barbados which has been done, for example, in several countries in the African region and countries such as Mauritius. I should add that the BAMC has at least started in that direction by arranging for a number of work experience attachments for Barbadian BAMC staff to be attached to more advanced operations in Jamaica, Guyana and in various parts of Africa to see what they do.

12.05 p.m.

Now, Sir, for next year the BAMC expects to have additional acreage under its control. This additional acreage, Sir, is required to ensure that Government's commitment to a 75 000 tonnes option moves smoothly along. We have, for example, additional lands being made available to the BAMC from the UNDMC which amongst producers of sugar in the island had been perhaps amongst the least productive. Their yield per acre has been amongst the lowest. In addition to this the unprofitability of

those establishments was a constant drain to the BADMC. Added to this was the fact that Government decided that it would undertake to manage unprofitable sugar estates in the private sector but yet continue with a separate arm of Government managing unprofitable sugar enterprises in the public sector which was really somewhat incongruous. Therefore to rationalise that particular situation it was decided to transfer the Government's own holdings of sugar lands into a single governmental entity, hence the transfer of plantations Spring Hall, Bath, Fairy Valley and Spencers to the BAMC. It is also anticipated that for next year we will be able to have other lands owned by independent farmers brought back into cultivation by way of the incentives which are being offered.

It terms of the factories, I alluded to the fact earlier that the Government had made a clear decision to keep Bulkeley open and in terms of the results I also made mention of the fact that Bulkeley and Andrews had been the leading producers for the year and had operated in a virtually problem free environment compared to Portvale which was plagued with tremendous problems. It is interesting to note that under the 2-sugar options, Portvale would have been the flag ship of sugar production in Barbados. So one could understand that with the level of difficulties which Portvale experienced, including failure of the mill drive and one of the alternators, including problems with one of their over heaters, including problems associated with centrifugal operations, with pan boilers and so on, all those issues, if they had occurred to the flag ship of sugar production in the two-factory options it would certainly have left a lot of canes standing in 1996. We are satisfied that the right thing has been done, in addition to which the terms of the operations of the factories and the decision of the Government to make local sugar available on the market during the 1996 crop season also saw the reintroduction of bagging operations at Portvale factory and to a limited extent at Bulkeley.

You will recall, Sir, that when the projections were fine tuned and it was discovered that the level of output would have been in the region of 60 000 tonnes that a decision was made that having satisfied the European market and having set aside the surplus for the European market that we would provide some sugar on the local market and only import the shortfall. Therefore Barbadians have been able, during this crop season, to eat Barbadian sugar. But this point on sugar importation is an important one because here we have, Sir, the last administration making the decision that forevermore Barbados would have to import raw sugar for local consumption and I should make the point for the benefit of Honourable Senators that I am not speaking of the import of what we call refined sugar, the white granulated sugars and the icing sugars and so on which Barbados does not make and which they have always imported. The sugars that are used, for example, by

the soft drink industries have really regularly been the imported sugar, particularly for the clear beverages. For example, the franchise owners of Sprite and 7-Up, for example, would not allow the use of brown sugar in their beverages. The point is, Sir, that a decision was made this year that given that we have an extra 4 000 tonnes of raw sugar produced that we would make that available to Barbadians. But, Sir, the policy framework of the last Administration which decided that only the overseas obligations would be satisfied also decided that sugar importation would be handled by the BADMC and that sugar importation has been riddled with problems, with scandal and controversy from beginning to end.

There was a situation in which, Sir, the price paid by Barbadians for sugar is higher than the other markets which we serve. That higher price, Sir, in our opinion, should accrue to the benefit of the industry so that any profits would benefit the industry and therefore, Sir, the profits from that sugar sale, Sir, less the amount to be set aside in the sinking fund for the redemption of the sugar bonds which was not done, Sir.

A sinking fund will always be established for the redemption of the bonds. You do not just issue bonds without having a sinking fund. Instead, Sir, the profits were going to the BADMC. But, Sir, what would also have impacted on the profits to be derived from the imports of that sugar would have been the particular and peculiar arrangements that would have been made with respect to the handling of the sugar. You had all of the information in the public domain about the arrangements that were made for the international shipping, international procurement of the sugar including its sourcing from Guatemala, for example, including its handlers by whomever they might have been. But also, Sir, you had other concerns raised concerning the arrangements for the transportation from the Bridgetown Port to the other end of the island in St. Philip and the sourcing of the various equipment that was used in that process. The handling of the sugar in general was not a matter that smelled too sweet. It did not smell as sweet as the sugar, Sir. Rather than getting into that, Sir, we are putting forward a situation in which the BAMC was being able to produce and sell sugar locally and will derive the benefit of the fact that the highest price is paid in Barbados. We will also be ensuring that the portion of those proceeds of the local sale which are meant to go into the sinking fund for the redemption of those bonds, and that is what the cess on the local sugar is all about, continues as is required.

12.15 p.m.

Sir, the other matter for which the BAMC will have some responsibility would be the cultivation of lands not in sugar cane. So the matter of crop diversification comes into play and you cannot conceive of the development of the

sugar industry without dealing with the matter of non-sugar agriculture. As you will know I am sure, Sir, that in terms of good husbandry and best practice in the sugar industry that one needs to take the fields out of sugar after a number of years and use other crops which draw on different nutrients from that of the sugar cane. In that way, Sir, one is able to maintain a better yield ratio than if one were to attempt to simply grow sugar year after year.

So that the BAMC therefore plays a very vital part in the non-sugar component of Barbados' agricultural development and they are involved in some cotton, sheep farming where there is a project at Edgecumbe and so on. But the BAMC like other farmers faces the problem of stealing. The stealing affects both the sugar agriculture and the non-sugar agriculture. You have a situation in which cane juice has become a local delight. I enjoy it myself. There are a number of small farmers who plant canes specifically to be reaped for cane juice and, in fact, there are a number of them who have been able to experiment and adjust their planting times and, therefore, are able to give you cane juice out of season. The taste is not quite what it is in the traditional crop harvesting season, but they have been able to adjust. Sir, there are also a number of persons who are not themselves farmers and who do not propose to allow the farmers to benefit from the purchase of the canes for making cane juice but who are able to sell cane juice on the market. The fault here does not lie with persons who sell cane juice at the retail level because, if a man comes to me who seems to be a reasonable man and he is a supplier of cane juice, I am not going to ask him where it is from and how many farmers you are going to buy it from. I will buy the juice. Now the responsibility however is in seeking to ensure that adequate provision is made for the prevention and detection of these crimes. We are saying then that the stealing of canes has impacted negatively on the output for sugar farmers along with the long establishment – and it appears to be becoming sophisticated – and organized theft of non-sugar crops such as potatoes, onions, carrots and animals as well. Some animals are being stolen in whole and others are being stolen in part. There are some cases especially in the very rural area where persons have been known to simply remove the leg of a sheep and leave it standing with the other three. This happens. It is not widespread but it happens. These are matters for which we have to be concerned.

Sir, this Resolution seeks to provide the level of financing which is required to ensure that the BAMC as a major player in the agricultural sector mainly in terms of sugar agriculture, but they also play a part in non-sugar agriculture to ensure that the BAMC has the necessary resources for the pursuance of its programmes. We are satisfied that the industry can be made to be viable. We are satisfied, Sir, that our new policy remit in terms of the 75 000 tonnes per year, a 3-factory option is a better option

and places the industry in a stronger position with respect to viability than the 2-factory 65 000 tonnes option of the last administration. We are prepared to continue to ensure that resources of an adequate nature are provided in a timely manner to the BAMC and the Barbados Agricultural Credit Trust as well as to independent farmers to ensure that the sugar industry is revitalized.

Sir, with that, I beg to move that this Resolution to approve the Government guarantee of a bond issue of some \$41.3 million to be issued by the Barbados Agricultural Management Company do now pass.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Laurie.

SENATOR C. K. LAURIE: Mr. President, I think that I tried to put down the amounts of money being spent in this budget. Unfortunately, when I added it up, it came to \$48.6 million. Obviously, I did not get everything correct because it appears to me to be more than the \$41.3 million that we are asked to guarantee.

Now what I would like to make very clear to people in Barbados is that the Government is not giving the sugar industry \$41.3 million. They are standing as the guarantors. They are only encouraging the sugar industry or the BAMC to get further into debt because they will have to repay the interest and repay the loan or put the money into the sinking fund as is done. This will now become another cost of operation on the industry which already is very close to being non-competitive at our cost of inputs into the industry. So it is a little worrying to me that over the years that this is what has got the industry into problems from way back. It bothers me if we really are fitting into a plan. Are we sure that the Sinking Fund is there and that it is not going to be that extra little straw on the cost of production, that may well be a serious problem.

12.25 p.m.

I was very, very happy with the incentive scheme for replanting and I think it has had a very significant effect at both the independent farmer level and the small farmer, as Senator Farley has said. However, what bothers me is the competitiveness of the small farmer versus the large farmer. Government has in place other incentives that are supposed to be available to all farmers, but unfortunately the large farmers can access these incentives whereas the small farmers have found it extremely difficult to do so, or it has taken a horrendous amount of time.

We have hundreds of complaints coming to us on a regular basis that people have applied for something, that the Prime Minister said: "Yes, I am going to give you this," the Budget said: "Yes, we will give it to you," and when you try to get it, it takes anything like a year.

We have cases where even plantations, even BAMC, a totally owned Government corporation, has agricultural equipment, like tractors, sitting in Customs and they cannot get them cleared because some bureaucrat has some form that has to be filled out and he cannot clear it. A farmer came to me the other day about a carrot washer. What else can you do with a carrot washer but wash carrots? Do you wash tourists in it? This is nonsense! And this carrot washer stood six months in Customs until some bureaucrat could say yes, this thing can be got in duty free. These are things that are destroying the small farmer in this country, the very farmer that we all – and I think the Government and the Prime Minister in his Budget – really want to help, and yet it is being defeated by bureaucracy gone crazy.

I am a little confused about this amount of land we have. The 106 000 acres, I agree; the 30 000 arable, unfortunately it used to be 60 000 but the arable acreage is dwindling and I have said in this Chamber many times that I am concerned about that, but if we have 25 000 acres under sugar cane, as Senator Farley said, you have to rotate the crops. The normal rotation is that 80% of the land in cane is harvested, that is, a 20% for every five years you change over and put in a non-sugar crop. That means if you have 25 000 acres, only 20 000 acres of cane are going to be harvested.

He said we have gone from 17 tonnes to the acre to 24 tonnes to the acre. The range, by the way, is something like 17:55, because on first crop canes you will get a very much larger yield, but if you take 24 as the average – and we certainly never go below 8 tonnes of cane to make a tonne of sugar – that gives you 3 tonnes of sugar to the acre, and we have not achieved this in the last 10 years. We have been running between 2.7 and 3, but 3 times 20 only gives us 60 000 tonnes of sugar, so 25 000 acres in sugar is not enough. It certainly will not produce 75 000 tonnes of sugar, so we have to look at a minimum of perhaps 35 or 36 thousand acres under sugar cane on a rotational basis if we are to produce 75 000 tonnes of sugar. Therefore, it is more and more important that we stop taking land out of sugar. We have this incentive and it is working. We are seeing people take land that has not been in sugar full time and putting it back into cane, but then also taking land out of agriculture and putting it into housing. That same land we acquired at Cottage the other day used to produce over 25 000 tonnes of cane to the acre. In fact, when I checked the record it averaged over 30 000 tonnes of cane to the acre, because that is one of the higher rainfall areas.

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY: On a point of order, Mr. President. The Honourable Member is misleading the House. I believe he was referring to the land which was given Town Planning approval to be taken out of sugar and put into housing back in about 1992-93. That is the land that used to yield 30 tonnes to the acre.

SENATOR C. K. LAURIE: I was not talking about that land, I was talking about the land that Government recently acquired at Cottage.

I also was very interested to hear this reference to the sale of rab land. I am not privy to the actual agreement between the Government and the owners of the heavily indebted plantations, but I find it absolutely crazy that this Government has been in power for two years and has not been able to solve this problem. It is crazy to tell me that you have lease of land and have no authority to sell that rab land. I am fully in favour of that, because that would mean you would take the pressure off agricultural land if this rab land was to come up on the market. If BAMC could put all the rab land on those estates on the market, then small people would be able to buy land because the price of land would come down. All these problems have been going on and over the years the price of land has kept going up and up. Land has gone up over the last few years nearly 20% per year, and this is crazy. If BAMC were to put all that rab land onto the market, then the bottom should fall out of that market and small people would be able to buy land at a reasonable price.

When we talk about the rural areas and plantations selling off rab land and making excess profits, who has made more profit off taking land and putting it into housing than Government? Government has bought plantations in the urban areas, like Oxnards, Husbands, Wildey, Upton, Kent and all around Bridgetown. Government has bought this land, put it into housing and made horrendous amounts of profit. Millions of dollars have been made by many Governments in the last 20 years, so do not let us talk about plantations selling rab land when Government is the major, leading proponent of that.

Now, this question of the sale of sugar and the importation of sugar. The idea originated when we dropped down and were not producing any sugar for the local market and we were going to import all. The imported sugar will average at about \$600 per tonne and the local sugar sells at \$1 600 per tonne, therefore it is a simple thing that \$1 000 a tonne profit was made. Who made that profit? In the initial years there were some very strange deals and Guatemala, for instance, was blamed. From my research I do not believe Guatemala ever exported any sugar to Barbados at all. Some funny things went on with PS International. However, if one looks at the concept that \$1 000 a tonne can be made, it may be a little problem with the World Trade Organisation, but Jamaica and Trinidad has been doing this for about 20 years and they have managed to get away with it. How come we cannot do something like that? Before that, when the granulated sugar came in here, it was imported by the sugar industry, by BSIL, and BSIL used that money they made on the profits of the granulated sugar to subsidise exports of

products containing sugar. For instance, sweet biscuits got a subsidy through BSIL for every pound of sugar that went out in their exports, which helped to make them more competitive. This has been happening in Trinidad, we only copied what was going on in Trinidad and Jamaica. That had been happening in Trinidad for 25 years before and they have been able to send stuff up here to compete with us because our manufacturers were buying sugar at one time at the local price when Trinidad manufacturers were actually buying it at world market prices, which is like 30% of the total cost. So if that money of \$16 million a year had been put into the sugar industry instead of distributed between the BADMC, or the BMC prior to that, and to various other people's pockets, the sugar industry would have been able to survive and would not have had to get in this huge debt. So one has to look at that question whether that potential profit... What is going to happen if it no longer goes to BADMC? I presume and I hope that it is given to BAMC to go into a sinking fund. That would be the obvious place for it to go.

12.35 p.m.

This talk of sugar for soft drinks. We, for many years made soft drinks with brown sugar here. It was washed sugar. It was semi-refined, but it was not a refined sugar and then it went to each of those plants which had refineries. Coca Cola and the Pepsi Cola people all had refineries which took the sugar. They melted it. They passed it through carbon and they filtered it and they produced water – white sugar solutions which were used for making sweet drinks. It is a lot simpler to buy granulated sugar and just put some water in it and put it in a drink.

Now the question arises, why are we taking sugar and putting into soft drinks? Why don't we put cane juice into soft drinks? You can take cane juice, pass it through the same process and produce a water – white liquid which will go into it. Think about it, we take cane juice at the present moment. We spend a lot of energy taking the water out and 90% of the energy in the sugar factory is used for evaporating water and we get it down to a dry powder. What we do is that we take it down to Coca Cola, mix it back up at 12% sugar and 88% water and put it back in a bottle. Is that crazy or what? Why aren't the soft drink industries situated in the sugar factories where they can take juice directly from the factory and just pass it through. In fact, the juice coming out of sugar cane is of a higher sugar content than Coca Cola. It is about 18% coming from the cane and Coca Cola and others would run about 12%.

So we would take cane juice. We would add water to it, refine the cane juice and produce a first-class thing. We would produce no molasses because all of the glucose and fructose that is in the cane juice would end up in the drink rather than going into molasses and being fed to animals

and for making rum. These are the kinds of approaches that the sugar industry has to look at and the potential to do things.

I would like now to look at something about the factory efficiency and I quite agree that if you are making 75 000 tonnes of sugar there is no way we can run it on two factories because I am totally in agreement with Senator Farley that an extended crop season is not a good thing. I myself had experience working in St. Kitts where the crop was extended because of labour problems, lack of labour and other problems between the industry and Government before the Government took it over. We had extended crops and they go on and on and in fact I remember one year in St. Kitts the crop ran down to September.

The major problem there is not just the fact of the damage that is done in the fields. St. Kitts is a volcanic island and therefore the damage is minimal in comparison with what would happen here. Damage in the fields here when it is wet is horrendous and we saw this in 1980 when we had rain that came before the end of crop. The yields the following year in those fields that had been reaped after the rain were down to half of what they were. So an extended crop is not an option for us here. We must remain with this very short crop.

One of the big problems in sugar factories is the lack of capital. Now the division of the proceeds in the sugar factories in Barbados is unique in the world. There is no other sugar industry that I have come across, and I have been all over the world working in sugar, that has 72% of the cake given to the farmer and only 28% to the sugar factory. In St. Kitts which had the most efficient sugar factory in the Caribbean it used to be 50-50. Now that was a crazy system. I mean I worked in a sugar factory in St. Kitts and that thing had money coming out of its ears because of an unfair thing. It was owned by a British company which took advantage of the farmers.

However, 60-40 is the normal set-up where the factory would get 40% of the proceeds. But the factories here have always got 28%. The factories were owned by the field and it was a very crazy kind of situation and I have never been able to understand how it came about and how it was allowed to go on and still goes on because it has deprived those sugar factories of the necessary finance to keep them efficient. They are in a shocking state. We have to spend a lot of money. Instrumentation in these factories is worse today than what I found in St. Kitts in 1961. The instrumentation in these factories is dreadful. I think it doesn't exist or it has been abandoned virtually.

In order to know whether a thing is working efficiently you have to have a thermometer on it or a pressure gauge or something. I am talking about

sophisticated computer technology which is what we should have. That existed in St. Kitts. There was a computer control flow system in St. Kitts in 1961. We don't have anything like that here at all. We have some automation on one or two plants but we really need to get into the 21st century very quickly. That is why our efficiency here is not good enough.

A point that Senator Farley made, and I agree with him, is this serious concern about the age of the staff in the sugar factories here. We have to do a massive training programme. I have seen in the last year or two people with Barbados Scholarships enter the sugar industry. I have never seen that before and that is fantastic sight. I had the privilege to work with two of these girls in the sugar factories working and helping them with hands-on training and they are very impressive. These are bright girls.

We sent one to Mauritius for a training course and she came out with a gold medal. She topped the class of all of the people from all over the world who went to that Mauritius Sugar Industry Institute which is a very prestigious place. They have an excellent course and this girl got a gold medal as being top of her class. Recently, we sent some off this year to Louisiana and they came out with flying colours.

So we have young people coming on but we have also a lot of people who are over 65 years of age working in the sugar factories because we cannot find a replacement and these people are still working 12 hours a day. That is another thing that is very unusual in the sugar industry but it is here.

I see that we are going to put some money aside for a productivity bonus. You know the sugar industry has always worked on the basis of productivity. The people are paid by the tonne of cane or sugar so I could never understand how you are going to bring a productivity bonus over and above what originally was for productivity. People are paid on productivity. If it is just a matter of giving the people more money, that is a different thing. But I don't see how you are going to get more productivity than when you are working per tonne.

Now, something that I have been asking for a long time. The Sugar Industry Act calls for the creation of a sugar industry research and development fund and we are supposed to take 1.2% of the total proceeds and put it into this fund. This was done for several years after it was passed and the amount varied between \$500 000 and \$1 million a year which was used by the various research institutes in the island for the continual upgrading of particularly the field side of the industry.

When the industry went into receivership, during the years of the receiver – the law says it has to be done – the receiver did not deposit any money into the sugar industry. Nobody prosecuted him. Nobody seemed to do anything about it. It just stayed there.

When Booker Tate came they realised what the Act said and presumably they are a little bit more responsible and they have put money into the Fund. They had put money into the fund but the fund is run by a committee. The committee has to be appointed by the Minister of Finance according to the Act. The committee has not been appointed. It has not been appointed for nearly five years. There is money there now and it cannot be disbursed because the law says it has to be disbursed by the committee. The committee does not exist. I have asked time and time again can we please have this committee appointed so we can do something with this.
12.45 p.m.

There is about nearly half a million dollars sitting in a Training and Scholarship Fund administered by the committee. We cannot do anything. Who is the committee? The committee has lapsed and it needs to be reappointed. I am hoping the Government will do something urgently about this because the money is there and we cannot do anything with it.

I would like to talk a little bit about soil erosion, suck wells and so on. The suck well system was a very good system and worked in conjunction with dams in the gullies. Now, the dams in the gullies have washed away, the suck wells have choked up and they are very expensive to maintain. When the sugar industry was affluent it was part of the normal cost of operating a plantation that just before the crop when it got a little dry and at the end of crop when it was still dry that suck well cleaning was done to make sure when the rains came the suck well was clean and the water would be absorbed.

Suck wells must be cleaned for two reasons. You want to get that water and prevent it from running into the sea because this is a terrible thing. When these suck wells do not work, particularly all along the escarpment on the West Coast, the water goes down through the gullies and enters the sea. It carries agricultural fertilizer, agricultural chemicals and soil. All these things have a terrible effect on the coral reefs. What we want to do is to make sure that is corrected.

What have we learnt about technology in the last few years? If one looks at the major gully system that drains most of the upper lands of St. Joseph, St. Thomas, St. George, it is the Jack-in-the-Box system that takes water from Castle Grant down through Russia gully, Jack-in-the-Box gully, that whole system comes on to the highway

and goes into what is now the largest soak-away in this island, the Green Hill quarry. In my opinion, I think that can hold something like 5 or 6 million gallons of water that comes down that gully system and goes into the quarry. The quarry has been dug down below the level of the gully floor, way below, like 80 feet or so.

The result of this is there is no dam to wash away because if there was, Bridgetown would be in real serious trouble. Why has Bridgetown not flooded? Because all the water that goes into the Green Hill quarry just stays there for two or three days and it completely goes into the aquifer where we want it so it replenishes the aquifer rather than going down and ending up through the Constitution River and River Road and cause all the flooding we used to get in the past. Why do we not duplicate this? Instead of worrying so much about the suck wells, why do we not go into the gullies that go through the West Coast and, dig out huge quarries? The fact is that most of the materials you remove would probably pay for the whole excavation. You would be able to go in at the end of the wet season and any soil that came down and stayed in that place would be picked up by a front-end loader and trucked out and put back in the fields where it belongs. This system has been demonstrated well by Green Hill, not that I think anybody set out to do it that way, but we must learn from that technology. I think that is something we should really adopt.

Praedial larceny: I am very pleased to see that the Senator referred to that because it is something that, of course, we feel in the farming community has been a real constraint. People have gone out of farming on the basis that they just cannot take praedial larceny. We passed an Act in Parliament four or five years ago, the Praedial Larceny Act. It was one of the more modern types of legislation. The farming community had been pushing for this Act because it gives the police more power than they ever had before. In fact, it is the only Act, I think, on the statute book which says you are guilty until you prove yourself innocent.

The police can stop anybody without any need for a warrant or anything if you are transporting agricultural produce or livestock. The police can ask you for your certificate to prove that this produce belongs to you. You have to prove that it belongs to you. The police do not have to prove that it was stolen. That gives the police authority, but is it being used? For some reason we do not see it being used. The police are not going to the supermarkets and saying to them where did you get this stuff from or standing outside the supermarket and somebody comes in to sell to the supermarket or to the markets in town and say to them produce a certificate which, by law, you have to do.

When the farmer sells the produce by law, he must give the person a certificate. We have the books. We have

had them printed. We have them at BAS. We have said to all farmers to come and collect the books and issue these certificates. It is not being done, neither the farming community is doing it nor the police is doing it. We need to get this implemented and working because it would make the thieves a little bit more nervous of being caught. Right now people can just go and steal and get a ready market. Because the person selling, as the Senator was saying with the cane juice, he is not going to ask the guy where the cane juice came from, but one should. If somebody comes to sell you some agricultural stuff, you really should ask them where they got it from. Are you a *bona fide* farmer? If we do not do that praedial larceny will continue to grow.

The non-sugar aspect of the BAMC: I am very pleased and impressed with the efforts being made at diversification that they have introduced. They have introduced things like cover crops. They use something very similar to cow itch which does not have the itching but it is a related variety, a mountainous species. That has been very successful. They can plant it into fields that are fallow. It grows more rapidly. It will even kill off corn grass. It would mean you would not get weeds, then you plough it into the ground. You get the nitrogen being established which is fixed from the atmosphere so that you are getting a green manure. That has been very effective.

They have done some other work. They did trials with a crop called Keneff. We got the seeds in from the States and we got quite some high yields. That has a possibility of being developed for a high quality fibre. They have been planting sweet potatoes for export which are lower in sugar than the normal ones here. They are more like a faintly sweet potato but that is the one used for the export market. I think they must be the biggest producer.

I understand they had great difficulty being paid by the BADMC who exported it for them, nevertheless they are the major producer and the by-products from that are being fed to the sheep. In the older days when people harvested sweet potatoes everything was taken. Whenever you got your potatoes you got your vines. You were entitled to that. Nowadays you see them just left abandoned in the field and they are an excellent food for sheep and cattle.

The work BAMC is doing in diversification is to be lauded without a doubt. They are also into carrots, beans and tomatoes. These are things they have been doing on a mechanical basis so they are able to demonstrate to the farmers the cost of production of these crops. I see they have now gone into peanuts. I think, generally speaking, that we should not only laud them but encourage them to continue this drive into diversification.

Thank you.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. President, I beg to move that this sitting be suspended until 2.00 p.m. today.

The question that the sitting be suspended until 2.00 p.m. today was put to the Senate and agreed to. Mr. PRESIDENT suspended the sitting accordingly. 12.55 p.m.

RESUMPTION

Mr. PRESIDENT: This sitting is resumed.

SENATOR Miss O. P. SYMMONDS: During the 1640s, because of sugar, Barbados was called "The Richest Jewel in the Crown of Charles II". Before that, Barbados grew and exported cotton, indigo and tobacco. Although tourism has replaced sugar as the major earner of foreign currency, sugar is still important as a source of foreign currency.

Mr. President, we have in Barbados a premium quality, special raw sugar. In London, shops up to the present age packages labelled "Barbados sugar" can be seen. In England when you met people, they were quick to identify us with cricket and Barbados sugar.

Asides.

SENATOR Miss O. P. SYMMONDS: One of the things we were best at was making sugar. It was a judicious decision by the Minister of Finance and the Government to keep Bulkeley factory open. Every time a factory is shut cane production goes down, around that as I am sure those versed in agriculture and from rural areas know. The location of Bulkeley, I have been told, is superb because it is central, and the canes from St. George, St. Joseph, Christ Church and St. Phillip can come in without difficulty because the terrain is easy as it is downhill. Moreover, it would not have been practical to have just 1 or 2 factories; the congestion would have been too great. It was also sensible to keep Bulkeley working because the number of small farmers and because it gets a good quality cane. The soil and climatic conditions are excellent.

What is more, because of the reported state of unreadiness of other factories last year and this year, it would not have been possible to get the crop harvested if Bulkeley had not been brought in, that is, to get it harvested in a reasonable time. I am sure that people in Barbados, generally, are glad to be able to get our good brown sugar again.

Therefore, I have much pleasure in supporting the Resolution.

Thank you, Mr. President.

SENATOR Mrs. A. P. THOMPSON: Mr. President, this debate for me today is not about the technical bits and pieces about the sugar industry. To me it is not about whether we produce 65 or 75 000 tonnes, or whether we operate 2 or 3 sugar factories. For me today this debate is of great significance to stand in this Senate and be a part of a decision which gives to the descendants of the workers of the sugar industry the right and the power to determine the future of that industry.

We are all well aware that in the past all such decisions were made at the level of the private sector and by the planters. Whenever a descendant of the workers of the sugar industry gets the opportunity to make any major contribution on behalf of the present workers of that sugar industry, we should do so with great pride, and I do so today.

As a daughter and a member of the former Democratic Labour Party administration which empowered such Barbadians, the sons and daughters of the workers in the sugar industry, I feel proud to debate this matter today for the guarantee by Government to the sugar industry, even though this is not the first time. Although we make a lot of hullabaloo about it, major decisions have been made in the past in the Parliament of Barbados about the future of the sugar industry. The reasons for that are many, but there are 4 major points, which I believe, contribute to this type of debate.

The sugar industry in Barbados stands on 4 planks, which are almost totally beyond the control of the managers of the industry, be they state or private sector managers. Those planks are labour, market, credit and nature. Those are the four planks which determine the successes or failures of our sugar industry. As I examine them, I recognise that whether there is a DLP or BLP administration in office in Barbados, the sugar industry, if it is to continue to make that significant contribution to our economic development, will always pose a challenge to the State.

As we examine labour, there is only one period in the history of Barbados when we could say that we could guarantee that we had workers for the sugar industry in numbers and at the cheapest rate, and that is during slavery. Of course, as we have moved beyond that through emancipation, industrialisation and state-sponsored education, labour has produced a serious challenge, labour and its costs, to the success of the sugar industry in Barbados.

Therefore we would note that in the 1960s, even then when we could get labour relatively cheap and in large numbers Barbados has had a serious problem in that area. No longer can we rely on our sisters and brothers from St. Lucia and St. Vincent to come in their large numbers. I believe that in the last sugar crop we appealed, almost up to the last moment, to get labourers from beyond our shores to work in our sugar industry. Even labour presents a serious challenge to us.

Markets... As we are aware, we do not determine the prices on the international market, and no longer do we have the "sweetheart agreement" under the Commonwealth Sugar Agreement. Barbados, therefore, we do not have the protection...

SENATOR C. K. LAURIE: On a point of elucidation. That is not quite right. You do not mind if I correct that?

Mr. PRESIDENT: Is it on a point of clarification?

SENATOR C. K. LAURIE: Yes. What the Senator is saying is incorrect and I would just like to correct the point. We do have a commonwealth sugar agreement. It was taken over by the LOME Convention and that has no end. That is an indefinite agreement. So this feeling that the sugar industry is supported only for a short time is incorrect. The LOME Convention has no end.

SENATOR Mrs. A. P. THOMPSON: I thank you, Senator. We cannot deny the challenge which beet sugar and all other sweeteners on the international market present to Barbados, we have no control whatsoever over that. Therefore, our markets will continue to present a serious challenge to us in the sugar industry.

Credit... How do we find the capital necessary to keep what we have accepted is a very capital intensive area of our national development bank? As I look into the sugar industry I realise that exactly 100 years ago, as a matter of fact in 1896 when the industry was in crisis, a commission was set up in Barbados to investigate the reasons for the crisis in the sugar industry. In 1897 that commission under Sir Henry Norman recommended that significant sums of money should be injected into the sugar industry in Barbados. In 1902, records show that a significant sum, I think £80 000 was injected to modernise the sugar industry in Barbados. That was an Act of Parliament. Neither the DLP nor the BLP was in power at the time, and significant sums of monies were pumped into the sugar industry then. Regardless of the Government in power at the time, decisions will have to be taken. I think it was the late Errol Barrow who said that the only efficient Minister of Agriculture we can have in Barbados is the Almighty because he controls the weather. I agree with that. So, today, Mr. President, as we debate this matter I believe those of us who are direct descendants of the workers on the sugar plantations should feel pleased that we can make this contribution.

2.20 p.m.

I really do not intend to debate whether one political party or the other has made a right decision or not. That I am a part of this debate today gives me great pleasure and pride. I listened to Senator Laurie's contribution and I am

pleased that he had the opportunity to speak before I did, because I think what he brought out is that the decision made between 1991 and 1992 in the interest of the sugar industry was the right one.

Today as we boast of our diversification in agriculture, as we boast of our plans to improve our sugar production, we must always remember that a foundation had to be made. Something was put in place as a springboard for all these other things to happen and therefore we must accept that the decisions made were the best decisions and in the interest of not only the sugar industry and not only the future of the economy of Barbados because I see Barbados beyond its economy. I see the people first, all the people of Barbados, and therefore I do not see this as a controversial issue. Therefore my decision to make a contribution today was to put it in its historical perspective and to let us see that what we seek to do here today is almost a continuation of things done in the past but by others, for with the exception of maybe Senator Goddard and Senator Laurie, those individuals who made those decisions did not look like us. Therefore, Mr. President, I have no difficulty whatsoever in supporting a decision to contribute towards the continuity of the restructuring of the sugar industry.

SENATOR THE HON. G. S. H. MURRAY: Mr. President, when I signalled my intention to speak I was going to say that the way things were going up to a few seconds ago... I was going to say that one thing that would have struck me most forcibly about this debate so far was that it had not, as is the customary manner, declined and descended into any areas of either explicit or implicit talk about colour and race and slavery and whatever but I saw that towards the end. The goodly Senator could not help but let go

Asides.

SENATOR THE HON. G. S. H. MURRAY: There is nothing wrong in talking about history. Like all other things it all depends on how the history is used, how it is rewritten, distorted or how it is reviewed. The point is, I think that the last time I can recall speaking in this Chamber about sugar I said I looked forward to the day when we could have a dispassionate and rational debate on sugar and the sugar industry without having recourse to a lot of emotive arguments about slavery etc., not that slavery has not happened, but it has its place and it has its context, so therefore that was the way in which I was approaching the high level of the debate so far.

I have intervened mostly to set a couple of things straight. Senator Laurie in his presentation which was replete with the use of loose figures with no attribution to the source of how he arrived at them.

Aside.

SENATOR THE HON. G. S. H. MURRAY. It is true. You never gave me any source, you never said how you arrived at your millions.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Will you please address the Chair, Senator?

SENATOR THE HON. G. S. H. MURRAY: Yes, Sir. He had some strictures about the way Government operates and he talked about bureaucracy gone crazy and bureaucrats basically delaying certain decisions taken by Parliament, or Cabinet, or the Minister in his various capacities or whatever. While it is true that the bureaucracy in Barbados or anywhere else in the world has its difficulties, has its problems, can be inordinately slow, can be inordinately inefficient, it should not be left to the belief, Sir, that that would be the only reason why it might have taken some length of time for the duty free concession which might have been agreed to be put into effect or to be effective for an applicant.

The point is, Sir, that the files of the Ministry of Finance are full of instances where attempts have been made to abuse the system. One of the reasons why it might seem that some bureaucrat is sitting on his hands or that bureaucracy has gone crazy, is the fact that it takes time to check out certain applicants and certain applications to ensure that the system is not being abused.

I know that Senator Laurie knows of instances where so-called farmers have applied for concessions and then when they are checked out they are not *bona fide* farmers or they got concessions. There are stories making the rounds in Barbados.

Asides.

SENATOR THE HON. G. S. H. MURRAY: Listen, I do not want to go and see the files and come back and quote names and addresses and dates. The point is, one of the most recent stories is that a certain gentleman in Mile-and-a-Quarter, St. Peter, had applied for a duty free concession saying he was farming 15 acres of land in Mile-and-a-Quarter. It just so happened, Sir that the Minister of Finance to whom the application eventually went was born in Mile-and-a-Quarter. He knew that there was no 15-acre plot of land that anybody could be farming in Mile-and-a-Quarter. But if that had not caught his eye here it is that somebody would have abused the system again. We know, Sir, that there are people driving around all kinds of vehicles which they got duty free, twin cab air-conditioned vehicles.

I have heard of an incidence, Sir, of an air-conditioned jeep parked outside an office in lower

Bridgetown for which the man got duty free concession as a farmer and had not even an indirect association with either a farmer or farming. So when applications are made they are investigated by the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Finance before a recommendation can be made. If one takes into consideration the number of applications that are made it takes time but the time is taken to check out the *bona fides* of the application and the *bona fides* of the applicant. I hope, Sir, that would put to rest the idea that it is the bureaucracy gone mad and that people are therefore not performing.

Sir, Senator Laurie also made the rather simplistic argument about how Government would have made millions of dollars out of taking land and converting it to housing. Sir, while that might make sense on the surface, when one digs beneath the surface it shows that he did not take into consideration the social investment and the social development that has taken place because of that very same housing and the fact that land very often has to be taken out of production of sugar or whatever for the greater good. It is the same thing as when Government is undertaking some infrastructural development that it very often has to acquire land from a private citizen and no Government does it because that citizen is disliked or they do not want people to own property as individuals, but the principle is that the individual is being asked to sacrifice his individual possession for the greater common good. That is the principle upon which these decisions are made and not that Government sets out to acquire land and take it out of agriculture or even out of sourgrass to make profits out of housing. It just does not work so as far as Government is concerned.

Also I was wondering why Senator Laurie, having expounded to great length on his thesis about making soft drink using cane juice and since I am not a technical man, nor am I a scientific man, but if that has such merit and he thinks it is worthy to be patented, maybe he can become a millionaire by doing so. I am just amazed at why this is not being promulgated, advocated, advertised, promoted. To me he is sitting on a gold mine of cane juice and therefore he should, I think, take it to the greatest extent.

Sir, I am glad to be part of this measure. I am sorry Senator Thompson is not here because, as a St. George person, I, too, was aghast at the recommendation and the decision that had been made to take Bulkeley out of manufacturing sugar. To me it would have had disastrous consequences for Barbados and, as a recent report has now indicated Bulkeley was the second most efficient of the 3 factories and Portvale came in a poor third, so if you had been left with only Andrews and Portvale God knows what might have happened to us.

2.30 p.m.

As to the argument, this measure which we are seeking to approve seeks to add another plank to the policy whereby the Government plans to make the industry efficient for an indefinite period. We are reinforcing our belief in that proven fact over the centuries. I think that sugar came to Barbados in 1637, Senator Symmonds. I remember that because I always picture against 1937. I think there might be some significance in that somewhere but I have not been able to find it. So sugar has been with us for over 300 years and sugar has proven its worth to Barbados despite its ups and downs. Like any other crop, it suffers from the vicissitudes of nature or market forces. Therefore, because of the role it plays in our economy and society, we have to supplement it from time to time and this is all part of this decision. But doing so in this climate in which it is currently being done is far removed and a great improvement in the fact that other decisions of this nature would have been taken because it would have been forced on the previous Government which is yet to prove to me that it has abandoned the concept of one of its founding fathers to the fact that he was looking forward to the day when there would never be a cane blade seen in Barbados.

Therefore, Sir, it gives me great pleasure to help to support this measure which will help to put the sugar industry back on a more secure and long term footing and I thank you for your consideration.

SENATOR THE HON. P. C. GODDARD: Mr. President, I rise to support this measure and to express the view that the sugar industry is extremely important to Barbados for a variety of reasons, not the least of which is its foreign exchange earning capacity and the employment of the people in that industry, also the fact that it reinforces the wider agricultural sector and has a symbiotic relationship with the inter-cropping and the animal husbandry that takes place in the island. However, I do think that we have come to a point in our history where there is going to be changed. True, we are guaranteed under the LOME Convention a substantial price for the sugar under our quota I think 50 000 tonnes and the LOMÉ Convention comes to an end in the year 2002. We all know that we are faced with renegotiating a new position with our relationship with Europe and those negotiations will start in 1998. While it is true that the sugar protocols are of an indefinite nature, the changing parameters of world trade, the impact of the WTO, the impact of trade liberalization and the fact that we are no longer operating in an environment of preferred trade but in an environment of increasing reciprocity should send a signal to us that nothing is forever and that it would behoove us to be prudent in the development of our industry. I think that it is recognized that we cannot any longer depend upon selling sugar and the sugar by-products of rum as a commodity. We must differentiate our products to

maximize the value that we get for those products. While we are focused here today on the growing of the sugar cane and the production of sugar, I think that it is time that we emphasize that we develop a change in our marketing strategy and a differentiation of our product to ensure that we can compete in a new way in the new century that is before us.

A couple of comments on some of the things that were said before and I specifically come back to the comment about sugar cane juice going into soft drinks. While this might be technically feasible, we grind sugar cane 3 to 4 months a year and as we would all know sugar cane juice is something that spoils very rapidly. It does not keep well. We manufacture soft drinks 12 months a year. So the production process would have to alternate between using sugar cane juice for a few months a year and sugar or sugar by-product for the other 8 months. This would mean added cost for the production and manufacturing process of soft drinks. While on the surface it looks like a good idea, I think that the impracticality of the production would rule that aspect out.

Mr. President, I think that we must recognize that the present Government has done much to halt the rapid decline in sugar production in this country. It has brought a sense of propriety back to the alternative use of land. It has brought a sense of confidence back to the economy. It has given the farmers heart to go back into the production of sugar and growing of sugar cane as well as other crops. I think, Mr. President, that you will have to agree that this Government has turned the tide against the rapid slide away from not only the production of sugar but agriculture in general. The facts speak for themselves, Mr. President, and I am surprised that no one has picked it up. But in 1986, the production of sugar stood at 110 000 or 111 000 tonnes of sugar. It declined to 50 000 tonnes. Now we recognize that the final devastating level of 38 000 tonnes was also a result of very serious drought. It was not only the fact that acreage had declined, but it was also that the quality of husbandry had also declined and the quality of investment had declined. So the whole process of growing sugar cane and the production of sugar was under threat and the strategy objectives of just going to 60 000 or 65 000 tonnes and once again closing down another factory was a strategy of retreat. It was a strategy of failure. This Government changed that strategy. It arrested that decline and by doing so it gave confidence to the farmers. We must clearly understand that, Mr. President. I think that this Government can take good credit for the return to viability of sugar cane in the short to medium term as far as we can see.

2.40 p.m.

Mr. President, I think it must also be recognised that the effects of devastating drought last for three to four years. Just because you get good rainfall the following

year, it does not mean that the sugar crop is going to be automatically better, because, as you know, Mr. President, about 25% of the crop is replanted every year and the crop that has been damaged because of drought has a very poor ratoon. Therefore, it will take us time to replant sugar cane over the next few years while we have good rainfall and while we improve our husbandry, so that the total process of increasing our production of sugar will advance steadily over the next few years. Even if the acreage were to stay constant, I think we can confidently say that by the improvement of husbandry and by the return of rain together will add to the per acreage yield of sugar.

At this point, Mr. President, I should also like to call on renewed research for new varieties of sugar cane, using the latest techniques of genetic research to ensure that we maximise the yield per acre. It is critical that we produce higher and higher yields per acre of this crop.

With that, Mr. President, I wholeheartedly support this measure and commend it to this Chamber.

Thank you.

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. President, I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

The question was put to the Senate and agreed to.

ORDER NO. 2 – RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE SALE BY THE CROWN OF LAND AND THE BUILDINGS THEREON AT SPEIGHTSTOWN, ST. PETER TO THE BARBADOS NATIONAL BANK

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. President, approval of the Honourable Senate is being sought for the sale, under section 5 of the Crown Lands (Vesting and Disposal) Act, Cap. 225, to the Barbados National Bank of a parcel of land, together with the buildings thereon, situate at Speightstown in the parish of St. Peter. The details of this, for the benefit of Members, are described in the Schedule attached to the Resolution and the attached Addendum.

This matter relates to a property which is known as Arlington in Speightstown and which used to house the former health care facility. This property is of some historic significance. The proposal is for the Barbados National Bank, which is in need of a permanent location in Speightstown – they are currently operating out of rented accommodation – to be able to facilitate the acquiring of that permanent accommodation by the Bank, as well as satisfy Government's requirement that Arlington be not only preserved but restored and put into a fit and proper condition.

The Bank's interest in this particular property for its banking business will be by way of the use of the portion

of the 22 000 or so square feet of the property which is not currently covered by the building. Arlington is on one corner of the lot and the other available part of the lot is to be used for the construction of a new building to house the operations of the Barbados National Bank. The drawings for that building have already been prepared and the architectural styling is very much in keeping with not only the styling of Arlington but also of the general historic nature of Speightstown.

As part of the agreement for sale of this property, including the buildings thereon, to the Barbados National Bank, the Bank will in turn lease the building called Arlington back to Central Government and the Central Government will in turn restore the facility and incorporate it in the facility made up by the new National Bank building and Arlington will be offices to accommodate the Post Office, a Branch Library of the Barbados Library Services and the Barbados National Bank's commercial banking operations. So generally speaking, Arlington as it stands now, the house, will be used as a sort of civil centre, because there will be some other activities adjacent to the Post Office and the Library, but Arlington will be a civic centre when restored and the Barbados National Bank will be able to construct purpose-built facilities on the remaining portion of the land to accommodate its banking needs.

The cost of the refurbishment of Arlington will fall to the Government and the cost of the construction of the purpose-built facility for banking will fall to the Barbados National Bank.

We believe that this is a good model by which the twin objectives can be achieved, that is, the preservation of historic buildings in an area such as Speightstown, as well as facilitating the requirements of commercial activities, whether by governmental entities or by others, and we will certainly commend this model to the Honourable Senate.

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

SENATOR Mrs. A. P. THOMPSON: Mr. President, my contribution is a question really. I believe Senator Farley said that the BNB will be using part of that land to build a building from which they will operate, but at some point he also said that the commercial section of the Bank will be housed in Arlington, so I am not sure what is happening here. I will need a clarification on that, please. So I am not sure what is happening here.
2.50 p.m.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Farley will have an opportunity to respond.

SENATOR Mrs. A. P. THOMPSON: I will need a clarification on that.

SENATOR Mrs. P. E. RICKINSON: Mr. President, I have a vested interest in this building because it is one of the prominent land marks where nurses started a polyclinic in Speightstown and I would like not only to see this building preserved – I support the Resolution – but I would like to take this opportunity to have this building not named Arlington but named after one of the public health nurses, after the Government has restored it.

Mr. President, I will say why. When I was a student going to Alexandra School, the nurses who were housed in Arlington, without any sophistication or without any praise or publicity whatsoever, used to have us walk down in those early days and give us all the health care that we needed, vaccinations, etc. I think that they did an excellent job maintaining the health of those school children not only at the primary school but also at Alexandra School. They had an excellent school health service going without any form of praise.

I am urging that a plaque be put up to honour those nurses who laid the foundation for public health in Barbados and with this, I support this Resolution.

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. President, I rise on the conclusion of this debate which has seen the introduction of excellent ideas by which the historic significance of the property, that is, Arlington, Speightstown can be kept for posterity. Certainly, I would urge the Honourable Senator through the other channels as well to convey that wonderful suggestion to the Ministry of Housing which would be as always the Government's landlord. That kind of historic commemoration is very much in keeping with the proposals of the Government for use of Arlington as a civic centre.

As I did indicate in my introduction of the Resolution the proposal is for Arlington to be used as a civic centre and as part of the facilities of that centre there will be a public library and a post office. There will be scope, I am sure, within the framework of Arlington, given its historic significance, to have information of the building, of the character which is suggested by Senator Rickinson, given its significance in terms of being one of the early means by which a previous Barbados Labour Party Government would have started the polyclinic system in Barbados.

I am sure that is a matter worthy of collaboration and ...

Mr. PRESIDENT: There is one Senator on his feet. Senator Farley please continue.

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY: Thank you, Sir. That is a matter as I was saying which is both worthy of commemoration and commendation. Just to clarify a matter that was queried in respect of the use of the property. The existing building, Arlington will be used as a civic

centre. The activities of the Barbados National Bank will be carried out in a new purpose built facility. Arlington, the civic centre, the existing buildings will house the branch library of the Barbados National Library Service and the post office and the commemorative type of information which one would associate with a civic centre in an historic city such as Speightstown.

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

The question was put and agreed to.

Mr. President, I beg to move that we recommit the item on our Order Paper – Presentation of Papers.

Mr. PRESIDENT: If the Senate is agreed I would order that order of business be altered for this day's Sitting to enable the matter to be recommitted.

PRESENTATION OF PAPERS

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

1. The Duties, Taxes and Other Payments (Exemption) (No. 16) Order, 1996.
2. The Duties, Taxes and Other Payments (Exemption) (No. 17) Order, 1996.
3. The Duties, Taxes and Other Payments (Exemption) (No. 18) Order, 1996.
4. The Duties, Taxes and Other Payments (Exemption) (No. 19) Order, 1996.
5. The Duties, Taxes and Other Payments (Exemption) (No. 20) Order, 1996.
6. The Duties, Taxes and Other Payments (Exemption) (No. 21) Order, 1996.
7. The Duties, Taxes and Other Payments (Exemption) (No. 22) Order, 1996.
8. The Customs Duties (Dumping and Subsidies) Order, 1996.
9. Annual Report of the National Insurance Board for the year, 1995.

ADJOURNMENT

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. President, I beg to move that this Honourable Senate do now adjourn until Wednesday, November 20, 1996 at 11.00 a.m.

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

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY 1422

1. The Shops (Amendment) Bill, 1996.

PUBLIC BUSINESS

ORDER NO. 1 – RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE GUARANTEE BY THE MINISTER RESPONSIBLE FOR FINANCE OF THE PAYMENT OF THE PRINCIPAL AND INTEREST FOR REDEMPTION OF A BOND OF \$41 300 000 BY THE BARBADOS AGRICULTURAL MANAGEMENT COMPANY LIMITED 1422

Senator the Hon. R. R. Farley, 1422; Senator C. K. Laurie, 1429, 1435; Senator Miss O. P. Symmonds, 1434; Senator Mrs. A. P. Thompson, 1435; Senator the Hon. G. S. H. Murray, 1435; Senator the Hon. P. C. Goddard, 1437.

ORDER NO. 2 – RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE SALE OF LAND AND BUILDINGS THEREON AT SPEIGHTSTOWN, ST. PETER TO THE BARBADOS NATIONAL BANK 1438

Senator the Hon. R. R. Farley, 1438, 1439; Senator Mrs. A. P. Thompson, 1438; Senator Mrs. P. E. Rickinson, 1439.

PRESENTATION OF PAPERS

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY 1439

1. The Duties, Taxes and Other Payments (Exemption) (No. 16) Order, 1996.

2. The Duties, Taxes and Other Payments (Exemption) (No. 17) Order, 1996.

3. The Duties, Taxes and Other Payments (Exemption) (No. 18) Order, 1996.

4. The Duties, Taxes and Other Payments (Exemption) (No. 19) Order, 1996.

5. The Duties, Taxes and Other Payments (Exemption) (No. 20) Order, 1996.

6. The Duties, Taxes and Other Payments (Exemption) (No. 21) Order, 1996.

7. The Duties, Taxes and Other Payments (Exemption) (No. 22) Order, 1996.

8. The Customs Duties (Dumping and Subsidies) Order, 1996.

9. The Annual Report of the National Insurance Board for the year, 1995.

SUSPENSION 1434

ADJOURNMENT 1439

Senator the Hon. R. R. Farley, 1439.

SPEAKERS IN THIS ISSUE

FARLEY, Senator the Hon. R. R.
GODDARD, Senator the Hon. P. C.
LAURIE, Senator C. K.
MURRAY, Senator the Hon. G. S. H.
RICKINSON, Senator Mrs. P. E.
SYMMONDS, Senator Miss O. P.
THOMPSON, Senator Mrs. A. P.