
THE SENATE DEBATES

(OFFICIAL REPORT)

FIRST SESSION 1994 -- 99

THE SENATE

Wednesday, November 27, 1996

The Senate met in the Senate Chamber, Parliament Buildings, on Wednesday, November 27, 1996, at 11.25 a.m.

PRESENT

His Honour Senator F. W. GOLLOP (President)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Senator D. T. GILL

Senator N. A. LYNCH

Senator N. P. WELCH

Senator J. A. WORKMAN

Senator Mrs. A. P. THOMPSON

Senator C. K. LAURIE

Prayers were led by Fr. Errington Massiah.

Mr. PRESIDENT: The Senate is in session.

PRESENTATION OF PAPERS

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

1. The Annual Report on the Operations of the Severance Payments Scheme for the year 1995.
2. The Prisons (Amendment) (No. 2) Rules, 1996.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. President, I rise to give notice of the following Resolutions and I beg that they be read the first time.

1. A Resolution to approve the compulsory acquisition of land at Warleigh and Haymans, Saint Peter and Sion Hill, Saint James for the improvement of Highway 2A.
2. A Resolution to approve the compulsory acquisition of land at Canewood, St. Michael for road improvement.

PUBLIC BUSINESS

ORDER NO. 1 – THE CIVIL ESTABLISHMENT (AMENDMENT) ACT, 1996

SENATOR THE HON. G. S. H. MURRAY: Sir, this measure which seeks to amend the Civil Establishment Act, really represents a further action by this Government to consolidate a position which has been initiated as a result of an amendment to the Constitution in 1995.

Sir, you will recall that some years ago, the previous Government had, unceremoniously and very callously, we think, savage, not only the wages and salaries of public servants, but basically their very lives, dreams, hopes and their aspirations while that Government was in the throes of its structural adjustment and other programmes. The financial crisis that had been brought to this country, not through any acts of God but merely through the maladministration, the bad policies and the bad decisions of that Government.

We had said, Sir, while in Opposition in our 1994 Manifesto on page 21, heading "Protection of Wages in the Public Sector," we had pledged that, and I quote:

"For the protection of public sector wages and for the proper definition of relationships between employer and employee, we will enact a new Public Service Act and new General Order."

This is the most significant point, Sir. We had said that and underlined that:

"Never again in this country will it be possible for a Government to reduce the earnings of its employees without their permission."

Having come to office, one of our earlier acts was to formalise and institutionalise this pledge. Bearing in mind, Sir, that we have pledged in our Manifesto and we regard the Manifesto as a binding and sacred document, a commitment to the people directly and an act of moral rectitude. Sir, we, by an amendment to the Constitution, made it possible to protect the salaries and allowances under the civil establishment from being altered to their disadvantage.

Having done that, representation was made to us by the Congress of Trade Unions Association that we should go a bit further and amend the Civil Establishment Act Cap. 21, to provide that the emoluments of public officers shall not be altered or disadvantaged. It is the view that we need to make it abundantly clear, and do not leave any area of doubt as to the classification and definition of public office. This amendment would therefore cover everyone. It having been set out and fortified in the Constitution, we did not want to leave any loopholes for any subsequent Government, not this Government, which does not have the same historical commitment to its Manifesto pledges, to make sure that it could not be done willy-nilly in the future.

Sir, that really represents the sum total of this amendment, like I say a further step, in crystallizing an action which we thought was richly deserving of the

sufferings on the civil servants who were made to suffer through no fault of their own.

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

The question was put and agreed to.

On the motion of SENATOR THE HON. G. S. H. MURRAY the Senate resolved itself into Committee on the Bill, HIS HONOUR SENATOR C. L. BOLDEN in the Chair.

COMMITTEE

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Senate is now in Committee.

Clause 1 was called and passed.
11.35 a.m.

Clause 2 was called and passed.

On the motion of SENATOR THE HON. G. S. H. MURRAY, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported the passing of one Bill in Committee to Mr. PRESIDENT, and Mr. PRESIDENT resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

On the separate motions of SENATOR THE HON. G. S. H. MURRAY the Bill was read a third time and passed and cited as the Civil Establishment (Amendment) Act, 1996.

ORDER NO. 2 – THE PENSIONS (MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS) BILL, 1996

SENATOR THE HON. G. S. H. MURRAY: Mr. President, the Pensions (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill has three essential elements and three major objectives and they must be seen in the context, Sir, of the attempt by this Government to continue wherever possible to enhance the social status and the financial security and longevity of public servants, Sir.

If I may deal with 3 objectives. Firstly the Bill seeks to

- (1) Preserve the pension rights of a public officer or public employee employed by a statutory board who is subsequently appointed to another board,
- (2) it would enable officers who are acting in a higher or temporary post, prior to retirement, to have retiring benefits computed by the emoluments of the higher post, and

- (3) it would provide pensionable status to employees of various statutory boards who do not now enjoy such status.

If I might begin with the first objective, Sir, namely to preserve the pension rights of a public officer or public employee employed by a statutory board who is subsequently appointed to another board.

The current situation, Sir, is that public officers who become employees of boards have their pension benefits computed in accordance with the provisions of the Statutory Boards Pensions Act, Cap. 384 and these retiring benefits, Sir, are computed much differently under this Act from the Pensions Act, Cap. 25 which is applicable to public officers. As a result, public officers who have become employed by statutory boards might very well find themselves disadvantaged financially upon retirement. For example, an officer who was employed at a statutory board and whose retiring benefits were computed on a salary of \$55 315 per annum, in accordance with Cap. 25, would receive a pension of \$2 304.79 per month and a gratuity of \$115 239.50. On the other hand if the benefits were computed taking into account the hybrid and mixed nature of the service under Cap. 25 and Cap. 384 that officer would receive a monthly pension of \$1 421.17 and a gratuity of \$71 058.74 thus representing a significant difference of \$44 180.75 in gratuity and \$883.62 in pension. Sir, this therefore has been a serious bone of contention and aggravation and disappointment with officers who are so affected and this legislation will now allow public officers to have their service built up and aggregated and their pensions calculated in accordance with the Pensions Act, Cap. 25. This, Sir, will therefore facilitate the easy movement of public officers to Boards while keeping their pensions right and not being disadvantaged later in their lives when they are probably most vulnerable.

The second objective of the Bill, Sir, is the one which will enable officers who are acting in a higher or temporary post prior to retirement to have retiring benefits computed on the emoluments of the higher post. The present situation as it stands in the law is that Government employees are allowed to have their pensions and gratuity computed on the last three years of service preceding retirement. But this means, Sir, under the current situation, that officers who are sometimes required to act in higher posts or even hold a temporary post for a long period, on retirement do not benefit from the higher post and the higher salary whether it be as temporary holder of that post or acting holder and therefore that does not now take into account that service. This Bill seeks to remove that area of concern with employees who obviously suffered for this.

The background to this, Sir, is that when this was brought to the Government's attention the Ministry of the

Civil Service convened a meeting with interested parties and discussed the possibility of reducing the qualifying period from 3 years to 18 months by officers in temporary posts and officers acting in higher posts for 3 years before retirement to be included in the computation of pensionable emoluments. After much discussions with the various parties it was decided and agreed upon that it would be best done if the pensions regulations Cap. 25 were to be amended by adding a new section which would provide for pensionable emoluments when considered for computation for retiring benefits to include the emoluments earned while acting in the higher post as well as the emoluments earned in the temporary post for a period of 36 months during the last 5 years of service.

What is also significant is that these 36 months of benefits can be accumulated and do not have to be continuous. They do not have to be a single stretch of 3 straight years for which officers could be eligible but if officers were moved or transferred from point to point to meet the exigencies of the service, as long as it amounts to 36 months over that period, that would be taken into consideration. What it means then, Sir, is that public officers who are so affected stand to benefit through this legislation by allowing persons in higher posts or temporary posts for 3 years prior to retirement to receive their retiring benefits based on the emoluments of the higher posts whether that post be temporary, as I said, or whether they are acting in that higher post.

In addition, Sir, the third objective to the Bill states that it will provide pensionable status to employees of various statutory boards. The Government has received a number of requests from employees who have pensionable status on various statutory boards to consider additional posts for pensionable status.

This Bill would amend the Statutory Boards Pensions Act, Cap. 384 to include additional posts as listed and which I could read out for you but basically those boards that would be covered would be the Student Revolving Loan Fund, the National Sports Council, the National Conservation Commission and the Child Care Board.

The Bill also provides for the National Sports Council and the National Assistance Board to be entered in the Schedule under the Statutory Boards Casual Employees (Pensions) Act, Cap. 383. Both of these Boards as would probably be known employ persons on a casual basis. But the situation is that those persons who join the service of statutory boards after November 1, 1975 are not eligible for pensions under that Act. However they can qualify for a gratuity provided that they completed 5 years of service or more, so that in order for these casual employees of these boards to receive benefits under the Act, provision is now made in this legislation to make that possible. And if I might, for the record, Sir, state not only the board

but posts. So this, Sir, is not a measure to accord any privileges to any particular category of workers at these boards but it runs the gamut of the establishment at these institutions.

For example, Sir, at the National Sports Council those who would be roped in and now be included would be the caretaker/groundsman, the carpenter, a cleaner, senior groundsman, supervisor, tractor operator, truck driver and watchman. At the National Conservation Commission it would range from the level of the executive officer, technical officer, accountant, supervisor of rangers, wardens, senior lifeguard, security guard, assistant maintenance supervisor at Harrison's Cave, the tram driver at Harrison's Cave, the electrical assistant at Harrison's Cave.

11.45 a.m.

If we might turn to the Student Revolving Loan Fund, those who are covered by this measure would be the Administrative Officer, Accountant, Assistant Accountant, Clerical Officer, Clerk Typist, Driver Messenger, Guidance Placement Officers, Loan Officers, Senior Loan Officers, and Stenographer/Typist. At the Child Care Board, there is the Secretary to the Director.

Sir, that therefore gives you a comprehensive picture of what is involved in this measure. Like I said as in the first measure, we are seeking at every possible step of the way to enhance the status and the rewards and benefits that accrue to public officers. There are a number of areas where public officers have had a legitimate grouse about these pension measures and in addition the whole question of acting in a post for a long period of time. That continues also to be a bone of contention but not as acute as it has been in the past since we established a special unit in the Personnel Administration Division to take care of that measure.

Over the last 2 years the record will show that up to about October some 1,267 unestablished and established vacant posts were filled as a result of this concerted effort to make life as easy as possible for public employees and to give them security of tenure and the psychological benefit of knowing that they are appointed. While it might seem as a trivial matter to some persons and only a technicality, but in truth and in fact some of these persons are entitled to gratuity and pension. But they also suffer a disadvantage by not being appointed when they conduct business in trying to get a loan to buy a car, mortgage or what not. For a hire purchase agreement, once they announce that they are temporary even though they might have been temporary for 30 years, it therefore hampers their ability to conduct business.

As a matter of fact and just to show how chronic this situation is, we have just given approval for the

appointment of some 29 maids. If I may read some of the dates of some of these maids and general workers, *etcetera* who have been in the Public Service for some time but have not been appointed, there has been one worker who has been in the Public Service since April 2, 1956. That is 40 years and the worker was not appointed. They run from 1971, 1973, 1980, 1983, 1989 with continuous service.

So it ranges from 1956 to 1989 that these people would have rendered invaluable service to the country but have not had the satisfaction of being appointed. Some 29 now are being appointed and I am sure that this will make a great deal of comfort to them particularly those who may be near retirement age. We are not stopping there. We are examining the whole question of non-appointed persons in the Public Service whether it be at MTW, workmen who have to build roads, or Ministry of Health and throughout the Service.

The Ministry of the Civil Service has pulled together a team to look at how we can best rectify this situation across the board to bring a greater sense of ease and abatement to these workers. These 29 vacant posts for maids, general workers and cleaners are but only part of an overall effort to improve this situation and to ensure that these categories of workers like the other workers in the Civil Service who are regarded as having a higher social and financial status, that they too are no worse off through no fault of their own because of the system that has prevailed so far. As we go ahead appointing people, we are not only looking at the maids but, for example, we have just appointed some 20 stenographers. What is interesting about this case is that there were a number of these posts that were vacant for some time largely because the people did not have the right qualifications. We decided that rather than just have them languish in a status of non-appointment or refuse to appoint them for lack of qualification, Sir, we gave them a deadline in which to get the qualifications. We arranged programmes that will help them to acquire the qualifications. I am very pleased to say that many of them have rallied to that incentive. Many of them have taken up our challenge and these 20 stenographers include a large number of such persons. There are others who are also seeking to finalize their qualifications. I am sure that they too in the very near future will also be appointed.

Sir, it is in that context that I wish to ask the support of Members for this measure and I beg to move that it be read a second time.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Thompson.

SENATOR Mrs. A. P. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. President. The matter before this Senate this morning, Sir, I believe should be of significant importance to all Barbadians. Although it deals specifically with individuals employed by Government, I believe the matter of

pensions and pension planning ought to be one of the most important topics on the lips of not only the planners in Government but all members of this small state of Barbados. Indeed, this has been one of the most topical areas of concern in developed countries over the past 15 or 20 years. Unfortunately, we have not yet reached that point and I believe on every occasion that we have come to an area that specifically deals with aging, health care or matters of that nature, I have felt in some way to touch on it. It concerns me a lot, Sir, because I do not think that we have as yet come to grips with the serious challenge which we have as a small island state in dealing with our aging population.

Let me say that I would not object in any way to the measures in this Bill which seek to make portability of pensions a possibility. That is something we need to look at even in private pension plans in Barbados. I believe that the pension reform legislation which is being worked on at present deals with this matter. It is good that Government has managed at this stage in a way to take the lead on it. I sat in on the meeting with the drafters of the Pensions legislation for Barbados. I know that this is an area which will be addressed, so I have no difficulty at all in supporting any measure which seeks to enhance the retirement benefits of working Barbadians.

My major concern is that we have not as yet had a major national debate on retirement planning in Barbados. The legislation which we are presently looking at and planning to copy – all we are doing is changing Ontario and placing Barbados and changing Superintendent of Insurance and saying Supervisor of Insurance – that legislation did not take effect in Canada for several years. In Canada there were 10 straight years of debating on the challenges of aging to the whole state. How will the state find the necessary resources to fund the retirement benefits of these individuals who are living so much longer? The challenge in Barbados is that we have placed a lot of emphasis on our health care. As a result we have managed successfully to prolong the lives of many Barbadians and some with serious chronic illness but who live for a very long time.
11.55 a.m.

What that means for us is that in addition to making sure that they have access to medication, as we are doing through the National Health Service Scheme sometimes, in addition to making sure that those benefits are available for health care, we have to think in terms of these individuals who would now live to 90 years and beyond. How are we going to manage these individuals?

The reason why I would like them to hold this national debate is because the young people in our society are going to feel the pressure. Already I have heard it mentioned that Health has now taken over the largest

chunk of the national budget, and I know it used to be Education, and this matter must be debated because we are going to have this tugging between the young and the aged. Already there is hostility in Germany and there is some in Canada where the young people believe that too much emphasis is now being placed on the aged, and for some time the aged felt that too much emphasis was placed on the young. We therefore need to make sure that Barbadians understand the importance of a balanced approach in the management of our national resources, therefore the need and the importance of this national debate.

The challenge of aging for Barbados will affect us very heavily in our social security system, as we have said in here from time to time. I have not heard what measures have been taken by Government since the amendment to the National Insurance Act to make sure that self-employed persons are offered some sort of inducement to make sure they become involved in the National Insurance and Social Security Scheme. That is of major concern to me, because I did not like the threat of bumping them off because they have not contributed and I made an appeal for Government to find some way of making sure that they come on board and contribute to the Scheme in order that they would not be a burden to the State down the road. For me it is better to use moral suasion or whatever other forms of inducement Government can come up with in order to make sure that these individuals come on board. The same way we can find incentives for investors, creative incentives to get people to invest money in Barbados, we can find incentives to get self-employed people to become a part of the National Insurance and Social Security Scheme. I am not here to tell the Government what form of incentives to implement, but I think it is something we need to look at carefully.

It is important, because almost all private pension plans introduced in Barbados over the last ten years have been integrated with the National Insurance and Social Security Scheme. What that means is that a very large percentage of the pension benefit coming to individuals under private plans is expected to come out of the National Insurance Scheme. If we cannot guarantee that that Scheme is going to be viable in the future, then we are going to have a number of paupers on our hands. People who have worked over the years and who have attempted to plan for retirement by way of an employer/employee scheme, and because the State has failed in its responsibility to be proper watchdogs of the National Insurance and Social Security Scheme, such individuals will suffer. It is therefore very, very important that we pay very much greater attention to the Scheme than we are paying right now, and I mean getting in the self-employed people. There are too many of them out there not contributing to the Scheme and we have accepted that.

Of course, by 2010 – I think I am one of the baby boomers – all those people born after the Second

World War, all those individuals who came on board at that time and who are contributing to these schemes will be looking forward to a pension. I am already qualified for a full National Insurance pension and I am looking forward to the maximum benefit for which I have already qualified, so I am throwing this out to the Government that I would not be pleased and I am also looking after the interest of many others.

We know that in other countries in the world a number of measures have been put in place in order to try to cope with the aging population. In some countries Governments have increased the contributions to the State sponsored plans and reduced the benefits. In some States there is the combination of increase and reduction at the same time. In other States Government has extended the age of retirement. There is a good argument for that. If you are living longer, maybe you can afford to remain in the workplace longer. The problem is, what are we going to do with those young people who are coming on stream, if you are going to be having people who are working much longer in the workplace. That is a challenge which this Government and future Governments of Barbados must look at. Some countries have looked at immigration, bringing younger people in so that they can have these contributions coming into these schemes to guarantee that those individuals who are living longer can get a reasonable pension. I don't think we can afford that. We do not have the resources to do so and our unemployment is already a major challenge for us anyhow.

Of course, some Governments have offered tax incentives. I know in the recent Budget incentives have been offered. The thing about tax incentives is that they are very attractive, they are good in that they encourage those individuals who are in a certain income bracket to contribute towards their own retirement benefit and get a tax deductible. But how about those individuals who either pay no tax, pay very little and for whom a tax incentive is not attractive? What is it that we are going to do to make sure that they too can have a decent retirement benefit? Are we going to consider, in addition to our National Insurance and Social Security Scheme, what some developed countries have looked at recently, a form of long term care insurance where employees and employers contribute 1% of income to a fund to guarantee, not a pension benefit, but that certain benefits could come to them during old age, be it institutional care or home help care where individuals visit their homes and look after them? That is something we need to look at very carefully and I think that as we debate this legislation I would not want us to restrict it to the statutory corporations and Government Departments, but I would like us to focus carefully on what will happen to Barbados down the road in the next 15 to 20 years as our population continues to age. What are we going to do?

I have some concerns. There is a lot of misinformation out there about pensions in Barbados and

I believe I have a responsibility to clear the air on a lot of talk I have heard in recent times about pension plans and all of that.

12.05 p.m.

There is no pension legislation, except what the Minister referred to, to deal with Government pensions in Barbados. Private companies and the life insurance companies in particular – and the only private firm in Barbados which has its own pension plan, managed by itself, is the Barbados Shipping and Trading – all other pension plans in Barbados are managed through life insurance companies.

There is no pension legislation in Barbados which determines how these companies should deal with such pension plans. All that these companies have done over the years is to copy the legislation and the rules and regulations governing pensions which have been used in Canada and other major countries with which Barbados deals from time to time. Pension funds are held in trust and it is not a pool that any and everybody can dip into. That I think must be made clear. In addition, because all pension funds in Barbados are managed by life insurance companies they fall under the same legislation as life insurance policies.

The investment of pension funds, those investment portfolios, fall under the same regulation as the investment portfolios of life insurance companies. The prescribed investments for life insurance policies therefore applies to pension funds. So to question how pension funds are invested in Barbados, I don't see anything wrong in questioning it, but I think people should make sure that they have the information before they comment on such.

Life insurance companies in Barbados in order for their investments to be considered for their solvency tests can invest only in investments prescribed under the regulations of the Insurance Act and those regulations determine the types of companies in which life insurance companies can invest. A life insurance company cannot invest in a company in Barbados which has not paid a dividend for 5 consecutive years. As a result, therefore, one would discover that the reason why life insurance companies have not been able to invest directly in small companies in Barbados is because small companies now have to build that reputation of paying a dividend for 5 consecutive years in order to qualify for direct investments out of life insurance companies. Likewise pension funds are treated in the same way.

I know that insurance companies have a lot of money. Pension funds are a substantial portion of the investment dollars of life insurance companies. I am sure we will all recall that between 1991 and 1994 were it not for

those funds invested in the field by the two major life insurance companies and the Barbados Shipping and Trading that our foreign exchange position would not have ameliorated and it is with a repatriation of such funds that our foreign exchange situation was ameliorated.

I think that Barbadians should feel proud about that. What it means is that the contributions they have been making over the years towards their retirement planning... Many of them never even wondered about what has happened to the money. All they know is that they were guaranteed a pension and I don't think enough attention was paid to that to say, "do you realise that you contributed significantly towards assisting your country in coming out of a national crisis?" The point must be made but we tend so much to trivialise these important matters that we pay very little attention to these things.

When we do not educate our people on money and how it works within the system, these things backfire down the road. That is why they question politicians and the integrity of politicians because we fail in our responsibility to make sure that people understand how funds collected on their behalf and have in trust in their behalf contribute towards national development.

How many individuals in Barbados holding a \$100 000 life insurance policy today realise that that small premium along with the small premium of a number of other Barbadians constitutes a very large slice of government bonds and debentures. Nobody discusses those things in Barbados. When you invest in government bonds and debentures, what do you do? You assist your country to build roads, to build schools, to maintain hospitals. The point I am making here, Mr. President, is that we fail in our responsibility when we do not make sure that our citizens understand how monies are being expended in this country and how they in turn benefit indirectly from these monies which are spent on their behalf.

As I did with pension funds I think I need to look a bit at the role of the trade unions movement as employers introduce employer/employee pension plans in Barbados. I have a lot of difficulty. I think one of the reasons there is so much misinformation out there is because a lot of people do not know what their entitlements are under these plans.

Each company gives a booklet but few people take the time to sit and go through these booklets and I want to caution the representatives of the workers that it is a part of their responsibility to make sure that these individuals understand what is embodied in this document. One of the reasons people talk so much about pulling out of a pension plan and why they cannot get their money is because nobody discussed with them something called vesting.

They do not understand that the employer entered into an agreement with the insurance company that should this individual leave his employ before a certain number of years have elapsed that this individual is entitled to his refund of contributions only and that such individual needs to remain with the employer because it is a benefit the employer is using to keep that individual tied to his employ. It is a fringe benefit. The employer wants you to be there as long as possible therefore he is no stupid person who is going to set up a pension plan and allow you to be entitled to his contribution unless you have put in a certain number of years. It is up to the employee to leave when he or she wants but the philosophy behind the introduction of employer/employee plans is to make sure that good employees – Senator Goddard can correct me on this – that high quality employees remain.

Because the plan cannot discriminate, sometimes you get people in on a plan who do not necessarily want to be in it, but the whole idea behind it is to make sure that you can hold in your organisation employees who can make a valuable contribution over a number of working years to your business. That is what the plan is there for. It is not because you are any special person who wants to give something out. It is because you want to contribute positively to the morale of the workplace and you want to make sure that the employee feels a part of the organisation because you believe that once the employee feels a part of the organisation the employee will go the extra mile. These are the reasons why an employer will set up a pension plan.

In addition to the income tax benefit which the Government offers the idea is that you are to remain until retirement. The employer wants you to remain there. So those people who believe that when they come out of their pension plan that they are entitled in addition to their contributions to the contributions of the employer need to realise that that is spelt out in the document up front and they need to find out how long it takes before their benefit vests, meaning before they are entitled to the employer's contribution which was made on their behalf and I think the onus is on the trade union movements in those companies which the workers' union and other unions represent, and of course, the employers themselves, to make sure that the insurance companies do this.

We need to watch it carefully at this stage because very soon there will be many other players than the insurance companies in the pension business in Barbados. 12.15 p.m.

In addition to insurance companies, banks, trust companies and credit unions will be involved in pension planning in Barbados. Pension legislation has some of the most sophisticated and stringent legislation throughout

the world because they are taking large sums of money away from people and are holding these large sums of money for many years. Therefore, the State has to, by way of legislation, make sure that these people can get their benefits back down the road.

I would like us, as we discuss the little areas that we deal with from time to time with pensions, to look at pensions on a national scale. I know we are about to introduce registered retirement plans in Barbados which are instruments used for retirement planning. I am still looking for the trust legislation which is going to deal with it because amending the Pensions Act will deal with one area but I think we need to get modern trustee legislation in Barbados which would take such funds into account. I do not believe our trust legislation is adequate to deal with registered retirement savings plans, registered home ownership plans which I heard mentioned made of in the Budget, and such sophisticated instruments which we want to introduce in Barbados in order to bring savings in. At the same time, I do not think we should downplay the fact that these are sums of money which will be held in trust for many years and it is important that we get the necessary legislation to protect the rights of individuals who have become a part of such instruments.

Mr. President, I have no difficulty with the Bill which seeks to address the benefits of persons who work in the public service and who are transferred to statutory corporations. I have a concern about those individuals who are not members of the Widows and Orphans Pension Fund when they die prior to retirement and the interests of their survivors. That is an area which I would like the Government to look at closely because sometimes we discover that some individuals have worked a number of years in Government and because they are not members of the Widows and Orphans Pension Fund and they die, there is no guarantee of a continuation of a benefit to the survivors.

I understand there are many instances referred from time to time to the legal arm of Government in order to make sure that something can be given. I think we need to look at it and address it because I do not believe these are matters which should be dealt with on a case by case basis. I think we need to have some kind of legislation.

In private pension plans there is provision for that benefit, whatever it has accrued to date, to be paid to the survivors of such individuals. Even in the National Insurance Scheme whatever the paid-up pension of that individual would have been at the time of death, that is a benefit that is paid over to the surviving spouse and children. I think it is an area we need to look at in the public service.

With those few remarks, Sir, that is my contribution to the Bill.

SENATOR Miss O. P. SYMMONDS: Mr. President, I am very much in favour of this Bill. I am pleased to see that it applies to a wide category of workers and to every stratum. If a man or woman has been functioning in a post for three years, I think one owes it to that person to determine his pensionable emoluments at that level.

I might also mention that, of course, I am happy to see that it will affect teachers. I have heard of cases where people have been disadvantaged after acting for four years. I think that efforts should be made to avoid such occurrences. I have every confidence that this Government, with its vision and the dynamic Minister responsible for the Public Service, will look carefully at this. It demands vigilance too on the part of the Public Service Commission to identify people with potential. Moreover, top officials like Permanent Secretaries and Chief Technical Officers should always be looking for officers with talent and sending them for training whenever possible.

In this area of appointments, the Public Service Commission Regulations clearly state that for promotion to a post of a routine nature more weight should be given to experience, but when the work involves a higher degree of responsibility and initiative, merit and ability shall be given more weight progressively.

Mr. President, I believe strongly in meritocracy and to more credit being given to initiative, drive and managerial skills than seniority when it comes to high level positions and if someone with those qualities and qualifications cannot be found immediately, or within the departments, then steps should be taken to advertise those posts as widely as possible, not only within the departments, but overseas. I do not think it is fair to people to have them acting in posts for such long periods with the risk of their not being appointed eventually. Therefore, one must be fair to people who have acted for a reasonable length of time. It is for this reason that I compliment the Government on this Bill with its usual humane approach. I am pleased to support it, Mr. President.

Thank you.

SENATOR T. E. BARKER: Mr. President, I just want to add my voice of support to this important measure taken by this Government who seems to be well on the way to making wrong things right in this country of ours and in two years' time, I am sure that even our worst detractors who seem to have an endless flow of ink to write endless nonsensical letters, would recognize the important measures this Government is taking on behalf of the people of this country of ours.

Sir, if you may recall, elections in other countries have been won and lost on the question of pensions, social security and such measures. This Government has taken some very important measures in this regard noting that our population, as was stated before, is fast becoming like that of a developed country in terms of its age structure.

Sir, the offshoot of all that is we must be pro-active in dealing with the whole question of pensions. Do not wait until a crisis occurs before we take the necessary measures to avert such a crisis in the first place.
12.25 p.m.

Sir, the question then of pensions must be tackled, and this Government must take kudos for the Budgetary measures it put in place this year that tax concessions were given on payments to approved pension funds.

Sir, we must move towards the situation where when a person is working they take some responsibility for what happens to them at the end of their working life. That must be the philosophy which underpins our pension policy. That when you are working, you must take some responsibility to provide for the time when you are not working.

Sir, politicians take a lot of stick for a lot of things, but there is a certain relief, in that, the pension that the politician gets, he contributes towards it. We are sending an important signal to the community that the decision is that we are providing for our pensions, because whenever we work as a Minister, Parliamentary Secretary or an assembly man, immediately money is taken out of our salary, up front, to pay for our pensions when we retire.

So, this is not a well-known fact. The people believe the pension politicians get, that it is a free something. The point must be known that every cent that a Minister works for, 5% of that goes towards provision of his pension if he spends the required time in that particular position or as an assembly man.

The signal, as I said, Sir, should be clear to the rest of the community that they similarly have to take into account the fact that the time is going to come when they are unable to work. Given the fact that on average they may live about 10 years after they can meaningfully work, that they have to think of those 10 years when they will be getting no income, and when the demand in terms of health care and other care will be rising.

So, this is something that we as a society have to be serious about. As I said before, Sir, the underlining philosophy is that when we are working, we should be thinking of the time when we will no longer be able to work and hence would require some sort of pension.

Sir, it is now well-known that out of the Government's budget that \$66 million goes towards payment of pensions and other retirement benefits to former civil servants. Sixty-six million dollars is quite a large sum. The theory is that the civil servants' salaries are less to compare to the private sector, and the overall view is that it is made up in later years by the fact that they have reasonably generous pensions which are non-contributory and which are paid for by the society, at large, through taxation. That is the theory which allows them not to have non-contributory pensions. The other 75% or more of the population must be serious in their approach to providing income when they are unable to work.

Sir, Government started in the Budgetary Proposals of this year, and obviously, Sir, we want the insurance companies to be more proactive and provide more diversified instruments so that the average man can go and find one that is tailor-made for him, so to speak, so that he can make the necessary provision.

It is ironic that the private sector talk so much about Government, and always wait on Government to set the lead in everything. This is one area where they can be more proactive because there is an urgent need out there for better types of instruments to provide for financial planning in the later years.

So, I hope that the industry wake up to its responsibility and follow Government's lead, because Government has taken the lead in this regard, and take up the mantle.

I want to commend the Government in this regard. Especially, Sir, as this Bill that we are debating gives greater flexibility in that it allows public servants to move from civil service, *per se*, to statutory bodies and back and so on without losing out on pensions. This is very necessary, because at times a statutory corporation might need a certain skilled person for a couple of years and the civil servant can then move backward and forward, so to speak, without affecting his benefits under the scheme. So this is a good and necessary move.

With those few comments I want to commend once again, and this country must be glad that the 8 years in the intellectual desert or wilderness of 1986 to 1994 is now over, and we have a Government which is not only talk but action and vision.

Thank you.

SENATOR N. P. WELCH: Mr. President, I welcome this opportunity to congratulate Government on another one of their innovative programmes they have brought on stream in the last 2 years to the benefit of the workers of this country. I sat and listened to Senator Thompson,

and could not help but ask myself if Senator Thompson was really in touch with the reality of what is going on in the private pension systems in corporate Barbados.

I have a number of concerns, which in the past, I have spoken about in this Senate and I have just reason today why I might want to repeat some of these concerns. Successive Governments in Barbados have made provision through NIS to provide social security and pension benefits, not only for those who contribute, but also for those who have not contributed by means of non-contributory pensions. Governments in its wisdom also recognise that it would not be able to be as effective in providing pensions for all Barbadians as it would be, if it had given incentives to the private sector to provide private pension funds to look after the interest of those people employed in the private sector.

Therefore, one of the big advantages is that a company might have in investing in a pension fund, is the fact that it can write off the cost of that pension plan against its profits. So right up front that person has a tax advantage. If you look at it from the perspective of the employee, the employee is also able to claim a tax deductible from his contribution to a joint employer/employee pension fund.

What has happened recently, in my opinion at least and contrary to the view of Senator Thompson, I am startled to think if provision of private pension were really made to tie an employee to a company. What I think it does is that it puts a man in a position that if he can move on to a second company where he can make, perhaps, a more worthwhile contribution or where he, perhaps, can work for a better salary, he feels committed to the company he is presently working because if he leaves before the qualifying time for the funds which his employer has invested in the pension fund for him, if he leaves before that time then he loses the employer's contribution to his pension fund.

We have had, recently, in a private sector company, that I should know very well, a series of immoral and, to me, unethical practices in which we have pension funds which, in my opinion, are vested in too long a period of 15 years. I am not speaking about myself because I have worked at the company long enough that I qualify for the company's part of the pension fund to be vested in me. So it is not a matter of me.
12.35 p.m.

We have had situations where people have spent 12 and 14 years in a company. The company has paid their part of the contributions to a private pensions fund and after 12 years some people have lost their jobs and have obviously lost the company's contribution to them in the

pension pool. This is a very important point. It is a very important point because the company has, up front, gained a tax advantage. It pays the money and it can say to Inland Revenue I have paid x thousand dollars towards a private pension fund and therefore I am going to write off this against my profit.

The point must be made that even if it goes to the remaining employees the excess cannot benefit a person who at the age of retirement cannot pull from a pension pool but the Government is making a contribution by allowing a company to write off their contribution against their profits.

On the second hand the Government must then go back and provide supplementals through the National Insurance Scheme for those unfortunate people who obviously would not have enough money to contribute in a meaningful way to their retirement day. So what we are getting here is that Government is making provision up front, through tax incentives. When these people are made redundant or lose their jobs before they qualify then Government has to come back and make provision through the NIS. So Government is losing in two ways and it is immoral. That is the point I am trying to make.

The other point is that the excess that remains in the pool would not be shown on the balance sheet of any company because it is not part of the company's assets. However, I find it quite strange that the reserves in a pension fund for those people who unfortunately lost their jobs, could be used as a saleable asset when a company passes hands. That too is immoral because it is not shown on the balance sheet and therefore ought not be sold as an asset. So you have three disadvantages. You have a situation where,

- (1) the Government is making provision through tax incentives to encourage people to invest in pension plans
- (2) when those people who do not qualify reach retirement age the NIS, the Government's pocket, must supplement the pensions and
- (3) a company can speculate on the reserve on which no withholding tax is paid, and make money a third time.

These are the sorts of immoral things within the system that I think we need seriously to look at in the pension schemes and bring legislation to bear in much the same way. And I want to make this point. Senator Thompson had made a point earlier about the contribution that people with private pension funds have made to the economy. You would recognise that a pension fund is provided for workers and a lot of private pension funds

are structured in Barbados where you have 3 trustees, two from the company and one from the worker's organisation. Now I would like to ask the question. What perhaps would be the situation if the balance had been shifted in favour of the workers in 1991, if the workers would have agreed that their money in a pension fund could have been taken up and sent overseas to prop up a Government that obviously was spending wild and breaking all Central Bank regulations and things like that? These are the points I want to make and these points must be made in here today.

The situation is extremely critical. I know there are a number of people who are very concerned that 15 years is too long a period to vest a pension fund in an individual. It is too long because gone are the days when individuals would spend 50 and 60 years working in one company. The projections are that a person would probably go through 5 or 6 jobs in a lifetime and if that is the case an employee must be placed in a position that if he puts 6 years into a company and he has to move on to another company that he can bring the entire contribution that he had made to the pension plan and in addition to this the contribution that the employers have made so that he can move away from a situation where, at his retirement, he can get a cumulative effect of the pension.

In circumstances where people are disadvantaged like this they have a couple options. You can take your contribution to the pension fund and pay a 25% withholding tax on it. I know this is part of Government's way of encouraging people to keep their funds in a pension fund as you go on to work in another job and that is the reason why the whole concept of a pension was built so you would not take the money out of the fund and spend it now when you will probably need it a bit later.

But there are a number of people who might be in their mid-fifties who might lose their jobs and might not be able at that age to find employment elsewhere. Let us take a hypothetical situation. A pension fund is vested in a guy after 15 years. He works for 12 years, is made redundant. He finds a new job. He passes on. He loses those 12 years of contributions and he starts all over again to spend another 12 years in another company to lose. And you will find a situation where a man can work for 26 years, contribute to a pension fund and at the end of the day Government has to pull its pocket to put a pension in that man's hands and it is therefore a serious situation which must be addressed.

I would not be distracted by asides because the records of this Senate show that this is the third occasion on which I have spoken on this issue since I was in here so I would not be distracted by those sorts of non points.

Mr. President, I am hopeful that Government would put in place a framework that would allow these obviously

immoral and unethical situations which work not only to the disadvantage of the employee but also to the disadvantage of government where Government, in the long run, has to go back after giving a company a tax advantage. They cannot have it both ways. A company cannot benefit up front from tax advantage and then come back and benefit in circumstances where assets are sold from the sale of an excess which technically they have no control over because it is vested in a pension fund and they technically do not have any control. But they sell the reserves of it, the reserves that are built on the sweat and tears of people who through no fault of their own have not made the 15-year mark and their funds have been built up and these funds will be used for other people in the fund, but funds to which the individuals will have no benefit, and funds which the company which is selling its assets should not be in a position to benefit from a second time.

12.45 p.m.

With these few words, I want to lend my wholehearted support to the Act and I look forward to the time when the private sector pension funds will come under more scrutiny and a fairer mechanism will be brought that these immoral acts would not be perpetuated any longer. I thank you.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Lynch.

SENATOR N. A. LYNCH: Mr. President, I really want to take this opportunity to speak on the Pensions (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill, 1996 which I consider to be a very important piece of legislation. I believe, Sir, that pensions and the whole concept of retirement and the whole concept of how we deal with those who have actually made Barbados work for us is very, very important. In an age where people are living a lot longer than before, it falls upon us now to look after those who have looked after us.

For many, many years developed societies have used the whole concept of pensions and retirement income to be able to generate planks of development for their own country. Anyone who has lived in North America would know that at tax time everyone is scrambling to see what provision is made when you can actually have a portion of your taxes written off if you invest them in an IRA (Individual Retirement Account). When I lived in North America, that is one of the things that I hastily did.

It is also very important to any society, especially a developing society, to have means of secondary financing within its make-up and the whole concept of the importance of pension funds and pension income towards making provisions for the same is very important. It also constitutes another form of an inducement of savings in a society. Because in a society like Barbados, as the

Prime Minister has well pointed out, the concept is that when in times of plenty we tend to forget the times of lean and we are encouraged to spend wildly when we are in times of plenty. Therefore, it is very important that we recognize the significance of this Act towards the development of our country.

In introducing this Bill, Senator Murray talked about the 3 essential elements of the Bill but I want to take them maybe one by one. First of all, the concept of bringing a public officer's pension in line with what is happening at the statutory corporations is a very visionary thing. Once again, this Government shows the kind of insight that it has in terms of taking hold of a Government and running it properly. What really bothers me however is why we have taken so long to understand in past administrations that we needed to streamline the concept of those working in the statutory corporations along side those working within the public service. This Bill I believe, Sir, should never have had to come to this Parliament. I believe that long ago we should have seen the importance of streamlining those who work in the public sector along with those who work in statutory corporations. For one thing that it has done is to stilt the job market in terms of those people who have been looking to move up maybe for a higher salary in a statutory corporation but who is tied to the public service because the Act never made a provision for the same. It has kept a lot of the talent and skills out of the statutory corporations of Barbados when they could have been utilized and kept a lot of people in the public service where they may have not wanted to be.

The statutory corporations however, Sir, a long time ago within the laws of Barbados there was provision made for statutory corporations to have pension funds and pension plans. When I worked at a statutory corporation, my own personal experience was that even though there was a provision made, there was never, until very recently around 1995 a pension plan introduced. Therefore, what had happened over the years is that many of these persons had worked in statutory corporations even though provision was made and I think a lot of the managers and directors of statutory corporations were more than negligent in looking after and making this provision and ensuring that the same was put in place. I understand that one particular statutory corporation was not even mentioned in the Schedule of the laws of Barbados regarding this because that particular statutory corporation seems to be a money making or profit making organization and therefore was never considered but at the same time these officers were putting in the same level of time, working within the service in this statutory corporation and were not given the same benefits as in others.

There is the need however, Sir, in the future to bring all statutory corporations in line and I want to see the day when legislation is brought that all of these statutory

corporations have got to be in sync in terms of how they deal with the whole concept of pension funding. Because what is happening in some of these statutory corporations even where pensions are going to be introduced is that some people have gone to different companies for example and have worked on different pension plans across-the-board which do not bear any relation to what is happening at other statutory corporations or what is happening in the Government. It is about time we harmonize this. Some of these statutory corporations have started the concept of going into pension plans where an officer has been working for the past 10 or 15 years and his/her pension benefits are not paid up. This officer has got to start from scratch now and not in terms of the service that he or she has provided so far. But he starts out now from 1996 or 1995 and therefore all of those years of service have not been looked after. It is about time that we harmonize within the statutory corporations of Barbados and make it law that all of them must follow the same guidelines and harmonize pension plans when it comes to looking after people's lives. People's lives are certainly the most important thing in all of this.

I believe that the statutory corporations in Barbados have gone array in terms of the ways in which they have done other things. This concept of the statutory corporations that started out being able to be autonomous more or less in making decisions, Sir, most of them have only become extensions of Ministries. Therefore, simply what has happened is that the decision power has been removed. We need to get them back to the original concept of what they were meant to be and let them all follow the same guidelines regarding the concept of things like pension plans and medical benefits. We need to bring them back in line so that they all understand.

I believe, Sir, that there are some officers however within these statutory corporations that a provision should be made for them not to follow along the lines of things like pensions, but they need to be brought in line in terms of contracts and gratuities rather than pensions. I believe that some of these officers need to be judged in terms of their production and not any long service to any statutory corporation. Therefore, I am not advocating any pensions for them. I am advocating that some of these officers depending upon their status should be provided with the same Schedule and be given certain concrete targets to meet. Those are the ones who should be on contract and gratuities given to them so that at the end of the time and we know that they are not producing we can do what we have to do with them.

Sir, the second part of this is the whole concept of pensioning off people at the lower level after having acted in a position for a long period of time. This one comes home to me and hits home at the bread-basket

very personally because this is one in which a very close relative of mine seriously suffered after having acted in a position in the Government Service for over 10 years and was pensioned off at the lower level when she was about to retire. I think, Sir, that is one of the most horrendous acts that one can commit against a human being after someone has spent such a long time in Government. I have no qualms in saying, Sir, that that person was my mother who, after having worked in the Government Service for over 30 years and acted in a position for over 10 years, was pensioned off at the lower level after having acted and provided all of the service. She was actually sent home at the lower level. I believe, Sir, that is why people like me need to be a member of the Barbados Labour Party and a progressive Government. This saying about people who do not look after poor black people and all of this nonsense – I am a poor black person who grew up in a chattel house too. We have been looking after people. I believe, Sir, that it is a very forward move and I commend the Government on this particular piece of legislation because it was long needed. People have wielded this concept of “how far we are going to take you up and how low we are going to bring you down” as weapons in the Public Service. Everyone sitting in this Chamber knows that, when you can have someone acting for years in a position and then threaten them with the concept of pensioning off at the lower level. That has been used as a weapon in this Barbados and it is about time the Barbados Labour Party Government puts it to an end.
12.55 p.m.

Sir, the future of retirement legislation in Barbados is something that is very important and dear to me, because I believe if we are to continue down this growth path we have embarked on it is going to be very important. I look forward to the day when every job in Barbados, no matter what it is, comes along with some form of attached pension benefit. I believe we have to come to the day in Barbados when every job comes with pension and medical plans attached and that it is made by law, that it is not a whim or fancy of any director or manager in any place, but that we make a provision in law that every job in this country comes along with the same. Yes, incentives are good in terms of prompting companies in the private sector to move along, but I believe it is time it is made law so that every employer knows and makes the provision available that when you employ someone and you are looking after their lives, that we need to get the scourge of poverty off the land of Barbados.

Sir, the Barbados Labour Party and this administration, under the stewardship of this Prime Minister, have certainly been looking after the needs of the people who really need to be looked after. This is another forward piece of legislation that is going to change the whole landscape of Barbados for years and years to come.

I want to commend this Government and to ask that it continues in the way it has been acting. We come here to change people's lives, we do not come to lock horns.

I thank you very much.

HIS HONOUR SENATOR C. L. BOLDEN: Mr. President, I want to join the debate to deal specifically with the statutory authorities. I believe that we should have taken a further look at the statutory authorities, although I am not criticising anything which appears in the Bill.

If I can remember my history and my legal training, statutory authorities were brought into existence by one of the Governments in Great Britain after they found that because of the rules and regulations of Central Government they needed a vehicle whereby things could be expedited and they were not responsible to Parliament for the day-to-day operation of any new bodies, and therefore statutory authorities were created because they report to the particular Ministry under which they fall periodically, which was basically annually, and they produced reports for the Ministry which were then laid in Parliament. It gave Government a breathing space to have things done expeditiously.

We have followed in that footstep but, as Senator Lynch has said, I think we have moved away from the true concept of statutory authorities and I would like to see that we take steps to put statutory authorities back in the position they were intended to be. I would have liked to have seen a rationalisation in this retirement age between statutory authorities and Central Government. That has been a bugbear and in my practice as an attorney-at-law I have had several matters brought to my attention.

In the public service an officer retires at 60, in statutory authorities he retires at 65. There are numerous problems and discontent, particularly in the very thing you are trying to cure in this particular piece of legislation, because you send people from the public service into statutory authorities and at 60 that man who is doing a decent and worthwhile job in the statutory authority has to retire. Sometimes he is brought back on contract for a number of years, other times he is just kicked out.

We talk about people growing older. I was a member of the Cabinet under the late Tom Adams, and this is another point we have to look at, when that Prime Minister tried to extend the age of retirement in the public service to 65. He sent the three options around to civil servants, retirement at 50, 60 or 65. I know that certain persons at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital were disadvantaged because those option papers never went to the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. At the time we were planning to make the Queen Elizabeth Hospital a statutory authority and by that

those persons would have been able to retire at 65, but unfortunately when those persons realised they had to retire under the public service rules, they had to go at 60. You have a public service area that never takes into consideration these things and I would have thought this would have been a beautiful time for Government to rationalise the retirement age between statutory authorities and the public service, or certain sectors of the statutory authorities and the public service.

Another point is this. In the public service you can employ a person within a month on certain terms and conditions. We should at this stage be having movement the other way as well, not movement from the public service into the statutory authority only, because I am sure in many statutory authorities there are competent and well qualified officers who can move into Government and move back out and enhance Government. We talk about reform of the civil service and if we want to do something, I believe if you move people from the statutory authorities, or people who come into statutory authorities with a little more experience of what happens in private business and move them into the public service, you would move faster in the reform of the public service. You would be enhancing the whole system. One of the things in the Civil Service is that once you are appointed, like the late Errol Barrow said, you become part of the army of occupation, nobody can move you and you do what you feel like, when you feel like and how you feel like, and you are in a position without redress to the public. If anybody doubts me, get on the telephone and call several Government offices. There is one particular office I will not name now, but if I have to I will, where the telephone rings 45 times before anybody answers, in the middle of the day. There is another Government office where I can take you now and you will see the Receptionist sitting and knitting while the telephone is ringing. All she is doing is knitting. When she catches herself she looks up and asks: "You want something here?" And goes back to her knitting.

Aside.

HIS HONOUR SENATOR C. L. BOLDEN: I am very happy to hear of that case. But come half past three and you call 90% of the Government offices you do not get a telephone being answered, because they lay down tools at half past three getting ready to leave at half past four.

I am saying you can use the statutory authority as a vehicle to improve the Central Government instead of the reverse, because you give flexibility of movement between officers on both sides and it becomes a learning process between the two.

Another point is this. I believe Central Government primarily has to look at its employment policies. How many times do you hear of a person in Central Government

as a temporary employee working for 30 years? I was a Minister of Government and I must admit I left Government and up to now I do not understand what it means. You are a temporary employee. That is something I would have thought we would try to remove as quickly as possible, because when that person retires, and similarly in the statutory authorities, you are faced all the time with an *ex gratia* payment. As Senator Lynch has said, I think we should move with the times. Whether statutory authority or public service you are employees of Government because your payment comes from the same final pot. The Ministry has to vote money for the statutory authorities to pay its employees and the money comes from the same place. Why is it that at the end of the working day certain people have to wait for Government to decide on *ex gratia* payments to pay them when other people get a substantial sum and a pension.

1.05 p.m.

Then there is this question of an acting appointment. There are persons who have acted for years and years. I remember a few years ago there was an enquiry into the Courts and one of the statements made was that down there they call it Hollywood because people have been acting for numerous years. They are in Hollywood. I mean any Government should begin to look at this employment policy and let us start with a straight policy so that everybody knows exactly what is happening. If we did that, we can influence private enterprise as to how it treats its own employees.

When we come to pension funds, I beg to differ with Senator Thompson about pension funds being created to tie employees to the companies for their whole working lives. If that is so, that is a form of slavery which I thought went out of Barbados a long time ago. I know from my own practical experience, and I am dealing with at least two businesses or two organisations which are locked in battle over pension funds.

You see, we must be a little more fair to people and let them know the truth. Insurance companies never tell you 100% of the rules that govern anything to do with insurance companies. Salesmen sell you policies and you know about the bad part of it when you have to make a claim.

There is a man in Trinidad who canvassed for years and years against an insurance company and the Trinidad Government is now looking at all insurance policies sold in Trinidad because of the injustice being worked. I have just had to deal with a fire claim and the insurance company told the man to get rid of Bolden that they are going to agree to pay him. I have been able to extract out of the insurance company 37% more than they offered the man because they looked and told him to look at the fine print – "you didn't know about these"... I have another claim

to send to a fire insurance company for a building. They do not tell you that if the property is not insured with them for 3 months that the policy is no longer valid but they have taken premiums for the whole year. When a fire occurs then they say they are not liable.

So don't come in here and tell people about insurance companies. They have the worst record in history. There is nobody who can tell you of any insurance company that can stand up and say it is clean. Not one of them. So when the insurance company invests in pension funds it is not because the employer wants to tie an employee to that employment for life. Oh, no.

This is what it is. There is an agreement between the employer and the insurance or investment company for how long they are going to hold the funds before they start paying out on them. I have a client of mine now who tells me he is in a fund and his funds have accumulated to \$172 000. He wanted it but they told him straight and plain: "This fund is invested for a particular period. If you want out, we will pay you back what you have contributed, but you are not getting all. You have to wait for a certain period."

Aside.

HIS HONOUR SENATOR C. L. BOLDEN: You didn't say so when you got up just now.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Order, please!

HIS HONOUR SENATOR C. L. BOLDEN: The Honourable Member does not seem to remember her own statements. She said and I wrote it down quite clearly that employers want to tie employees to their business for their possible life. That is what she said about pension funds. I am a lawyer. I write down every word that comes out of people's mouths. So don't say that. I have been trained to write down every word that flows from a witness' mouth because they forget. They talk fast and they forget. I know that. I write down everything and I said you were misleading this Chamber at that time.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Who was misleading?

HIS HONOUR SENATOR C. L. BOLDEN: Senator Thompson. Not you, Mr. President. Senator Thompson is an insurance agent so she has to support the business to which she belongs but we must let people who get involved in these schemes understand what they are all about. It is an investment and it must be so because when you invest in a pension fund the investor must have fixed terms to get a particular interest over a given period so that the money accumulates to be a sizeable sum to pay out at a given period. That is what it is. But don't talk foolishness about tying an employee to an employer. That is not the case.

Otherwise, there would be no longer mobility between employees from job to job. You know as well as the world that the World Bank came to Barbados and told your political party that workers in Barbados have too much security and you must be able to fire them overnight. So how do you rationalise that with what you have just said about pension schemes?

Mr. President, what I want to say is this. We should have proper pension schemes in Barbados and I believe the Government should look at rationalisation between statutory authorities and public service. They are both providing the same type of service to Government and to the public and there should be no difference at the end of their working day in the way their pensions or gratuities are computed. That is what I am saying.

We should also look to see if we can move specialist organisations, from statutory authorities into Government as we now move them from Government into statutory authorities. We should look at the rationalisation of the age of retirement, if we are going to keep it at 65 or if we are going to come to a mid-way section so that both parties know they are retiring at about the same time. If every person knows that there is a pension scheme everybody will know that when they retire they will get a gratuity and a pension rather than in a place like the Transport Board where you have people who have worked at the Transport Board for years and then you say we have to give them an *ex gratia* payment. *Ex gratia* means you are not bound to pay. It is only out of goodwill you are giving.

We have the situation here of somebody who worked with the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association for years, has gone home and now we have to come back and ask for funds to give this lady an *ex gratia* payment. As Senator Lynch just said, and I agree, people should know from the time they take up a job what is their entitlement at the end of the day. If private firms, and I do believe that private companies should have a pension scheme because it secures the well-being of employees at the end of the day. Barbados is not a cheap society. A lot of people think that but it is not a cheap society.

That is one of the basic reasons when the Barbados Labour Party came to power in 1976 and history will show that people were getting pensions of \$2.40 a week and if a husband and wife lived in the same house only one could draw and when they applied for national assistance the inspector came – people used to run and hide the television set, push the fridge in another back room and lock the door because if the inspector saw a television set and a refrigerator or what not he would tell you you failed the means test so you could not get.

The Barbados Labour Party changed all of that. Each person who worked in the society was entitled to a

pension. We created the contributory and the non-contributory pension. We raised it every two years in the Budget so that it is nothing new for the Barbados Labour Party to take a step further and look at a rationalisation of pensions so that everybody in Barbados would feel a little bit satisfied.

1.15 p.m.

I support the measure, Mr. President, but I do hope those responsible will have a further look at the pension and employment policies, take it under the reform of the civil service and see if we can improve the workers in the public service a little bit better.

Thank you.

SENATOR THE HON. G. S. H. MURRAY: Mr. President, I just want to make a couple of quick comments before we wind up. Generally speaking, I think there was a high level of contributions to the debate but there were a couple of areas I thought I should respond to. I will start with one of the last points Senator Bolden made which was the question of public sector reform. Many of the queries and concerns that Members raised will be, and are being tackled under the broad ambit of the public sector reform, things like the rationalisation of posts, pensions, *et cetera*.

Senator Bolden also made a critical comment regarding telephone matters and methods of answering in the public service. I would like to remind him, and I am not making excuses for such occurrences in the public service, as it is not unique to the public service, that the very same thing happens also in the private sector. Where the public service is concerned, we have already instituted a system of telephone training of operators. It was begun earlier this year and another batch will be trained very shortly.

In addition, we have just produced a booklet which will go into distribution very shortly for use of not only telephone operators but all users of the telephone within the public service. This is a booklet that outlines what would be considered proper manners in answering the telephone, the language used, the number of times the telephone should be allowed to ring, how to transfer people, the communication between the public calling and the person answering the telephone. It really tackles in a very meaningful manner the whole question of telephone manners which we consider to be a major part of our public sector reform effort and ties in admirably with what we are working at, the whole system of customer charters whereby standards will be announced and published for the public service, for example, detailing how often a phone should ring before it is answered, when mail should be answered, when decisions should be taken, *et cetera*.

This customer-chartered programme is well underway and in a few months' time a number of departments which have been identified like Immigration, the Post Office, Customs, *et cetera*, will be tackled out-front so that people would be able to hold the workers responsible and demand a higher level of service from those whom they pay through the taxpayers' money.

All in all, I would just like to assure Members that we have taken careful note of all their concerns and that we are not unmindful of them. Some of them are being tackled as we speak, and others would be put in train at the earliest opportunity.

There is one other point before I sit down, Sir. Senator Bolden also raised the question and some Members alluded to the question of acting for long periods of time. While this Government is seeking to eliminate those cases wherever possible, there are sometimes real problems and reasons why people cannot always be appointed to these positions. This is for the enlightenment of Members. Sometimes the acting officer is not fully qualified for that position so no matter how long he might be acting he is not really fully qualified. In addition, the post might not be vacant because the substantive holder is on secondment elsewhere in or outside the public service, or that officer might be on training, or study leave, or on continuous extended leave, so you cannot fill that position until the substantive holder of that position is finally determined.

On the other hand, some of the faults of the system have it where Ministries, Departments, Divisions or Heads of Departments do not always make recommendations for the filling of the vacancies and sometimes the posts advertised do not always attract suitable candidates for appointment, and this obtains mainly in the highly technical areas. There are some reasons other than indifference why some of these posts are not always filled. As I said, we are tackling it in a way not previously seen in Barbados.

With those words, Sir, I beg to move that this Bill be read a second time.

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

On the motion of SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY, the Senate resolved itself into Committee on the Bill, HIS HONOUR SENATOR C. L. BOLDEN in the Chair.

COMMITTEE

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Senate is in Committee.

Clauses 1 – 3 inclusive were called and passed.

The Schedule was called and passed.

On the motion of SENATOR THE HON. G. S. H. MURRAY, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported to Mr. PRESIDENT the passing of one Bill in Committee and Mr. PRESIDENT resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

On the separate motions of SENATOR THE HON. G. S. H. MURRAY, the Bill was read a third time and passed.

**ORDER NO. 3 – RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE
COMPULSORY ACQUISITION OF LAND AT
WARLEIGH AND HAYMAN'S, ST. PETER
AND SION HILL, ST. JAMES FOR THE
IMPROVEMENT OF HIGHWAY 2A**

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. President, the approval of the Senate is being sought under Cap. 225 for the acquisition of some parcels of land at Warleigh, Hayman's and Sion Hill for improvements to Highway 2A.

This matter, Sir, is really a technical adjustment to a process which was put in train starting back in 1985. It was agreed back then that some 229 parcels of land stretching from Mile & A Quarter in St. Peter to Warrens in St. Michael would be acquired to facilitate construction of Highway 2A. That process having been executed in some part, it was found that recently when the survey map was being updated that some 54 of the intended properties were not included in the list of properties which were properly acquired. As you would appreciate, Sir, compensation cannot be paid to the owners of these properties until the acquisition process is concluded.
1.25 p.m.

The approval of the Senate is therefore being sought for this process to be completed in respect of 54 of those parcels of land as included in the Schedule which would have been circulated. This, like I said, Sir, is not for additional work on Highway 2A, but part of the process of the acquisition of properties which would have been related to the construction of Highway 2A as it presently stands.

I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

SENATOR Miss O. P. SYMMONDS: Mr. President, I have observed with great pleasure, the naming of highways and roundabouts after eminent Barbadians, those who have made outstanding contributions over the years, and only this morning such an exercise was taking place.

I would hope that this Government would remember that there are also women who have made great contributions in public life. I know, very well, that Dame Edna has been remembered, but I think of people like Florence Daysh, Evelyn Thelma Ward, Nellie Weekes, William Hanschell and I can go on and on. Men have, of course, been in public life much longer and therefore we would expect their contribution overall to be greater, but I hope that in these days of gender equality, especially when the Barbados Labour Party has recognised the work of women and their outstanding contribution in so many ways, that they would think of more women when they are naming highways and roundabouts in the future.

Thank you, Mr. President.

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.

**RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE COMPULSORY
ACQUISITION OF LAND AT CANEWOOD,
ST. MICHAEL**

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. President, Senate approval is being sought for the acquisition of land at Canewood in Saint Michael for road improvement. This is a road project which is very much underway, Sir, and it was agreed by Parliament that back in the early part of 1994 that 64 parcels of land would be acquired for road improvement at Canewood Road. This road, as you know, Sir, is a road that connects Jackson with Lears, has been under going widening and improvement for some time.

The 12 parcels of land in question, however, Sir, relate to the area which has been the source of tremendous delay in the project, and that would be at the junction of Canewood Road with Jackson. It is necessary, if that project is to be completed in a proper manner, particularly as far as the ability to properly widen the junction between Jackson and Canewood, an additional 12 parcels of land be acquired in addition to the 64 that have already been acquired along that stretch which connects Lears to Jackson.

So, I beg to move, Sir, that this Resolution for the acquisition of those additional parcels of land to facilitate the completion of this road project do now pass.

The question was put to the Senate and agreed to.

ADJOURNMENT

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. President, in rising to move the adjournment, I want to inform all Honourable Members that we cleared our agenda coming up from the House of Assembly. The House of Assembly has been adjourned until December 10. We will therefore meet sometime subsequent of which due notice shall be given.

Mr. President, I beg to move, Sir, that this Honourable Senate do now adjourn *sine die*.

The question that the Senate do now adjourn sine die was put to the Senate and agreed to. Mr. PRESIDENT adjourned the Senate accordingly.

1.32 p.m.

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FARLEY, Senator the Hon. R. R.
LYNCH, Senator N. A.
MURRAY, Senator the Hon. G. S. H.
SYMONDS, Senator Miss O. P.
THOMPSON, Senator Mrs. A. P.
WELCH, Senator N. P.

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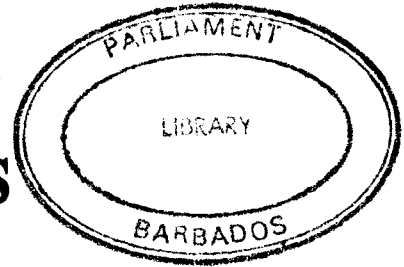
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THE SENATE DEBATES



(OFFICIAL REPORT)

FIRST SESSION 1994 - 99

THE SENATE

Wednesday, December 18, 1996

The Senate met in the Senate Chamber, Parliament Buildings, on Wednesday, December 18, 1996, at 11.25 a.m.

PRESENT

His Honour Senator Sir Fred GOLLOP (President)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Senator D. T. GILL

Senator N. P. WELCH

Senator J. A. WORKMAN

Senator Mrs. P. E. RICKINSON

Senator S. P. BERNSTEIN

Senator C. LeR. TROTMAN

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

Senator C. K. LAURIE

Senator Mrs. V. J. DAVIS

Senator Mrs. A. P. THOMPSON

Prayers were led by Fr. Errington Massiah.

Mr. PRESIDENT: The Senate is in session.

PRESENTATION OF PAPERS

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

1. The Road Traffic (Road Tax Registration Fee and Permits) (Amendment) Order, 1996.
2. Annual Report and Audited Financial Statements of the Insurance Corporation of Barbados for the year 1995.
3. Report on the Audit of the Accounts of the Severance Payments Scheme for the years ended 31st December, 1992, 1993 and 1994.
4. The Road Traffic (Amendment) Regulations, 1996.
5. The Duties, Taxes and Other Payments (Exemption) (No. 25) Order, 1996.

REPORTS FROM SELECT COMMITTEES

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. President, I am commanded to lay the Report of the Select Committee on the Insurance Bill, 1996.

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. President, I beg to move that Standing Order 45(2) be suspended for the remainder of today's sitting.

The question was put to the Senate and agreed to.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

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

1. Resolution to approve the guarantee of the payment of the principal and interest thereon in respect of a loan of \$22.6 million by Citicorp Merchant Bank Limited to the Barbados Agricultural Development and Marketing Corporation.
2. The Insurance Bill, 1996.

BILLS READ A FIRST TIME

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY: I also beg to move, Mr. President, that the following be read a first time:

1. The Bail Bill, 1996.
2. The Magistrates Courts Bill, 1996.
3. The Insurance Bill, 1996.

The question was put to the Senate and agreed to.

CONGRATULATORY SPEECHES

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. President, I rise at this time to acknowledge the fact that in the Independence Honours 1996, Your Honour has now become Sir Fred Winlyn Gollop. I want to congratulate you on that award and to say that it is my humble opinion that it is an award that fits you most perfectly, Sir. It is definitely not the misfit which turned out between O. J. Simpson and his glove. If this were evidence to be entered in that case, if you will pardon the levity, it is because I am in a celebratory mood and I think some levity is permitted, but in all seriousness I believe you are most deserving of that honour and it basically recognises your tremendous contribution to the community of Barbados over very many years.

All of us well know and are very appreciative of the excellent way you have presided over the affairs of this Honourable Chamber since ascending to the office of President in 1994, but I think perhaps, lest we forget, I want to remind Honourable Members of the other contributions which you have made through your long and illustrious public service to Barbados.

You have been a Solicitor and Attorney-at-law in Barbados and in England over the past 26 years. You have served with distinction particularly in the areas of commercial law. You have also been very active in your

professional body, the Barbados Bar Association, as well as in a number of corporate endeavours both in relation to the public sector and the private sector. I think perhaps the one private endeavour for which you will always be remembered, Sir, has been your involvement with the Nation Corporation where you served as the Executive Chairman from 1984. It is no small matter that that corporation, in spite of its relative recency in terms of age has been able to become a very powerful force within the private sector of Barbados, and it has also through its involvement in the media served an important function in terms of ensuring that Barbadians continue to be fully aware of all that is happening locally and internationally. But you have also, Sir, in spite of your heavy commitments in that particular firm, been Chairman of Barbados Rediffusion Services Limited, Deputy Chairman of the Barbados Development Bank, Chairman of the Barbados Industrial Development Corporation, as it was then and a Member of the Council of the Bar Association. You have also been Chairman of the Barbados Institute of Management and Productivity. You have been a Trustee of the National Development Foundation of Barbados. You are also a Fellow of the British Institute of Management, a Member of the Council of the Barbados Museum and Historical Society, Director of the Caribbean News Agency, Chairman of Consumers Guarantee Insurance, Director of another interesting company, Caribbean Communications Network.

I believe that this record of service which spans, particularly in terms of these public positions, the period 1972-73 right through to the present, typifies your willingness to work hard. It typifies your commitment to building a strong, dynamic and sophisticated Barbados. It shows that you are able to make contributions in many areas. Your contributions have covered the areas, not only of business, but also of the arts and history, as in the case of the Barbados Museum and Historical Society, of development of the underprivileged in Barbados, particularly through the National Development Foundation which has been singular in its capacity to provide assistance, financial and technical, to small, self-employed individuals who might not otherwise have been able to attract financing through traditional institutions. I am sure that in your role as a trustee you would have meaningfully touched the lives of a number of small, self-employed persons who were struggling to make it in the world of business.

11.35 a.m.

Sir, I would want, once again, to congratulate you on being elevated to the order of Knight of St. Andrew and we, in this Chamber, are particularly pleased that we should be associated with you at this time when you are called to such high office and the work which you have done over the years has been so appropriately recognised.

Once again, Mr. President, it is my pleasure to congratulate you and wish you all the best, Sir Fred Winlyn Gollop.

SENATOR Mrs. A. P. THOMPSON: Mr. President, I rise on behalf of the Opposition Democratic Labour Party, to offer congratulations to you, Sir, on the recent honour bestowed on you. It is no mean feat. As I sat and listened to the Leader of Government Business give a list of your record of service, some of it is new to me, I believe we can all feel proud that you are deserving of this special honour at this time. Of particular interest, of course, is that you have contributed in the field of business and commerce. Not only at the level of big business but your association with the National Development Foundation has also shown that you are interested in business at the micro level and that you have been contributing in a rather quiet and dignified manner to the development of our nation.

I wish at this time also to make comment on my admiration for the way in which you hold the office of the President of this Senate. You are rather charming and dignified at all times, I must say. Even at times when you have to rule on areas which are sometimes controversial you never lose that calm and quiet characteristic which is necessary in order to keep conflict out of situations of conflict. That, for me, is a very fine quality and one which I hope that I can emulate at some time. I don't do very well in that area at all.

Mr. President, on behalf of the Opposition Democratic Labour Party, I say to you special congratulations and I hope that you will continue in your field of business and commerce. We recognise your serving for such a long time on the Board of the *Nation* Newspaper and I also note the growth of that newspaper in a very short period of time and the challenge and competition which it would have presented to another newspaper which is almost 4 times its age. I believe that your contribution would have contributed significantly to that growth.

So, on behalf of members of my Party and other parliamentary colleagues I wish you the best in the future.

SENATOR J. A. WORKMAN: Mr. President, news of the high honour conferred upon you was received by me with exceedingly great joy because our relationship goes back many years. We have moved together in our school days. We have moved together socially. We have worked and moved together professionally as partners of Yearwood and Boyce and we both moved out in the same year to pursue other callings which we believed were superior to the calling of law by itself.

As I rise to pay tribute to you today, it is with a bit of nostalgia because I feel and I receive the honour as if it were conferred on me, myself. I believe, Mr. President,

that in another place where we exchanged congratulations the sentiments were expressed more in the embrace we had for each other and that in that very short moment of embrace we would have reflected over many years.

Our relationship here in the Senate has continued in the same vein in which it has been for all of our lives and it is very seldom that we can find an individual, not even prime ministers, who can carry the "Nation" on their shoulders over 20 years.

Senator Farley has already given us a long list of your personal achievements in the field of commerce and particularly in your endeavours and capacities in the Nation Corporation and its subsidiaries. You have continued to show sterling qualities of leadership, dedication and commitment. It is these qualities which we need to highlight today more so than the number of places you have served because particularly in our post-independence era we need to have men and women of vision, of dedication and commitment to the pursuits of life in whatever field of endeavour and I think that it is this record that we need to recognise today as an outstanding example of what individuals in our country can do and, particularly, in these days, when we talk so much about black and white, we need to recognise that regardless of the colour of skin what is important is the colour of the person's personality. When we use the colour of that personality with purity of thought we can go far and wide and achieve very much in a short period of time.

So, Sir, your example must be pursued by many of us in our community who believe still that we achieve by sitting down and watching others with envy and forget that while they were sleeping those others who have succeeded were toiling upwards through the night.

So, Mr. President, we of the independents on this side do wish you well and congratulate you on the high honour bestowed upon you. I know that you are not the type of person who would take it for yourself because you know, and we know, that there are others who have supported you along the way, and this also is one of the things we need to understand in our community, that we do not do it alone. We need the cooperation of one another in our fields of endeavour and that the fruits and successes are not just for ourselves but for all who have shared with us along our journey of toil.
11.45 a.m.

We wish you continued success. We wish you continued health. We congratulate you and particularly, Sir, we congratulate your wife and family for the support they have given to you, for in those hours of dedication to commerce and other fields of endeavour they must have suffered from your absence from home. We thank

them for the support they have given to you so that we of Barbados could produce a son of the soil as outstanding as you are.

Every congratulations to you, Sir.

SENATOR THE ARCHDEACON VENERABLE J. L. SPRINGER: Mr. President, let me apologise first to my brother Senator here for erring to speak after he spoke for all of us, but I could not miss this moment. With due respect, I think what that signals is that my speech should be short, but not that I should not speak.

I join with all Honourable Members in expressing my deepest joy and sincere congratulations to Your Honour and your family in being elevated to the Knighthood of St. Andrew in the Order of Barbados. I know that it is not always that one can speak for one's constituency but I am sure this is one occasion on which the entire church-going community would join with me in showing words of appreciation for the contribution which you, Sir, have made to this our beloved nation.

This honour means three things to me, Sir. First of all I see it as a just reward for the services that you have rendered to Barbados over many years and consistently offered. This is a reward that is well deserved and I hope there would be those among us who will keep an eye on your track record and see what it takes in terms of discipline and commitment to make it to the highest level. I am sure, Sir, that your lifestyle, character and deportment, have been educational to all those who have observed you as you live your life in Barbados. As the citation says, it is justly deserved in recognition of your contribution, particularly to commerce.

Secondly, Sir, it means for me that Your Honour is being identified as a current role model. When I was a school boy, and I am sure that is the experience of many here, we learnt of role models through reading autobiographies or biographies and there was always the element of social distance between ourselves and those we sought to emulate. Those who have sought to honour you, Sir, must have had in mind that this was a golden opportunity to elevate someone such as yourself so that your lifestyle could be observed from day-to-day and that you would be, what I am sure you are, and will continue to be, an appropriate role model for the young generation who will be able to live alongside of you as your lifestyle has not been complicated, or aloof, and you will, I am sure, continue to live as a role model within range of vision of those who are looking for such in today's world.

Thirdly, Sir, this honour means to me that considering the relatively early age at which Your Honour has achieved this important landmark in your life, it says that you are being targeted for further greatness in the future. So we

look forward to those times when one day, I sit on the floor with my grandchildren telling them about these exciting times of which I have been proud to be a part. I would tell them that I was there when that great man, Sir Fred, was elevated.

I wish to finally congratulate you, Sir, and wish you and your family all the very best in the years ahead.

Thank you.

SENATOR Mrs. P. E. RICKINSON: Mr. President, I do recognise that Senator Workman has spoken on behalf of the Independent Senators, but I must say I have to get up and say a few words, not only on behalf of myself but on behalf of some members of my family whom you know extremely well like Grace Shorey, Lob and Clebert.

Mr. President, I would like to tell you that secretly I have admired your very quiet and unassuming manner of conducting the business of this Honourable House but yet you are very firm. I have often said to myself, I really wish I could be like Mr. President because I get very heated and you say the things I would like to say in a very quiet manner and they carry much more weight than the heated arguments sometimes that we use. I feel that these types of qualities we need to hold up to our young people and other people so they can try and copy them.

I sincerely hope that the media will promote you and expose some of your qualities so that Barbadians can realise what it takes to be given the highest honour of "Sir".

I have the honour to congratulate both you and your family and I will continue to admire the way you conduct business.

I thank you.

SENATOR C. LeR. TROTMAN: Mr. President, the great philosopher and social commentator, William Shakespeare commented some 400 years ago that the evil men do lives after them, that the good is oft interred with their bones.

It used to appear for many years to those of us of our age, Mr. President, that that was particularly so in the Barbadian community. One got the distinct impression that while one lived the public at large was able to note only errors of judgment or perception of errors of judgment which were committed and one was able very easily to recognise that long after – well, you yourself cannot do it, you would be dead already – one's relatives were able to recognise that long after the individual had passed to

the great beyond, people still remembered only what they thought were unfortunate incidents in the lives of people.
11.55 a.m.

It is good that we are beginning in this country, and indeed as other people in other parts of the world are doing, to recognise that giving flowers to people while they are alive is a much better approach to building a community than to wait until persons are dead to heap their chest with those flowers when they are not able to smell the fragrance or to recognise the beauty.

So that even though we accept ourselves as cynics, that Shakespeare was right 400 years ago, as cynics who want to be optimists, we realise that those words need not always apply. We are particularly glad on this occasion, Mr. President, that the Government of Barbados recognise that the people of Barbados would want to honour you on this occasion.

Your public work has been already spoken to, very fully, by the leader of the Senate, and I would not want to tread on that, particularly so since I see the volume of the Order Paper. I will wish you to note, Sir, that by regard for your elevations has not sprung from the decision of the Government declared at Independence, and I make this observation, not to suggest to the opponents of the Prime Minister that I advised this, but rather to let you know, Sir, that I held you up in very high regard long before this decision was publicly declared, that as much as a year ago I was indicating to that revered person, that it was time that you, Sir, were elevated to this position, as much as 12 months ago.

I am pleased that my judgement coincided with the judgement of the authority with this decision. I believe, Sir, that the work you have done in this regard could not have been done if you did not have some very strong and valiant support. It is often said that behind a man there is a woman. I do not like to use the expression because it is still sexist, and it is still suggestive of second class citizenship for the woman. It is not the right position. She is not behind a successful man. I do not believe that there are successful men who have women behind them, and if they do then something is wrong with those men, Mr. President.

Asides.

SENATOR C. LeR. TROTMAN: I would think, Sir, that we would prefer to speak about at the side of, working along with, and helping to structure the work of the individual in such a way that that individual's success should be the reflected work of the partner that is being brought to the public's attention, and that your family, your wife and your children should be honoured at this time alongside yourself.

I would wish to be in a position to say that, Sir, though I do not claim to know them that well, I would wish them to know that I sincerely congratulate them for the honour which had to be given to you, but which is equally due to them, Sir.

I would wish to suggest, Sir, that on occasions such as this, we do not always agree with who is honoured, this is one that the total public of Barbados would have to respect and agree with, occasions such as this are occasions, as Archdeacon Springer has said, occasions when we ought to reflect on what the Government is trying to do, and what we, ourselves, should seek to do from the exercise. We are hoping by this demonstration of our respect for the work of an individual, to make the public of Barbados aware that what we do is not something which is only going to wait until only when "The roll is called up yonder" to be answered, but that even while we are here continuing to live our lives as simply or as grandly as we choose to live them, that there are people who are watching those lives and taking examples from them. We must constantly bear in mind that we can cause people to rise, to take hope, grow and to get strong, or we can by our lives cause people to despair, to give up hope and to lose respect for humanity.

I am pleased, Sir, that our people regard you in the former category, the category of such a person who through your life can cause others, faint in heart, to take spirit, to take hope, and to work towards greater things because success will attend their efforts as well.

In the regard, Sir, I am proud to be associated, at this time of congratulations to you, and I hope that you will have many years to reflect on this. As the Archdeacon has said, if it be the will of the Master and of any other power that other tributes will come, well I hope to be around, Sir, to have you share a glass with a simple, humble trade union leader like myself.

SENATOR THE HON. G. S. H. MURRAY: I can scarcely add to the very fulsome and quite deserving encomiums that have been heaped upon you so far this morning, Sir, but I felt that I should try to fill a number of the blanks which had not been touched upon by others. Not deliberately, but because I have had a relationship with you, Sir, that has been somewhat different from most of the others.

First of all, I got to know of you when I first entered the profession of journalism. I might say, Sir, that at that very early stage you were regarded as somewhat of a legend — one of the benchmarks by which journalists should be judged. Indeed, they sought to exemplify the standards which you had established, quite early, in your very early days as a journalist. Therefore, Sir, there is no surprise that you have gone to be, if not a journalist

per se, the head of one of the outstanding journalistic institutions in Barbados in subsequent years.

I want to speak more specifically, Sir, from my former experience – and I can be considered a former employee of yours – with the *Nation* for 8 years and you had the very elevated position as Chairman of the Board, *et cetera*, to say that you are one of those individuals, rare breed of individuals, about whom what is said publicly also is the truth when you come up to them close and up front.

I can attest to the characteristics of fairness, firmness and calmness, unruffledness, being very rational and being very logical, respectful of everyone. Sir, such has been exemplified time and time again in your dealings with me, personally, and the other employees at the *Nation* who, I am sure, will be glad to be able to join me today in putting on the record the great admiration in which you have been held by them for some considerable time.

I should also like to point out, Sir, that the public long ago, not only Senator Trotman, had been calling you by the title of "Sir Fred," and in fact in newspapers and on radio call-in programmes... One cannot call it a verbal slip, they were seeing events cast their shadow and they have been predicting, and they were, if necessary, sending certain signals which would not have existed then, to let the people know that this was an elevation which floated out of the public, and cannot really be regarded as being imposed by any authorities on high, but came out of the grounds well out of the admiration and support for your tenure in your various capacities in public and private life, Sir.

Therefore, in closing I would just like to say that your elevation to the Knighthood – and now when I call you, Sir, it will have a double meaning – is also a tribute and a testimony to the openness of the Barbadian society. Even when people are very critical of our country and say all kinds of things about its capacity to deal with its citizens, your elevation, Sir, is a further testimony that in Barbados society is such that if people work hard, do well, being honest and just to themselves and their fellowman, sooner or later they will get their just reward on this earth.

I congratulate you most heartily, Sir, and I look forward to being able to, hopefully, say that about some of my colleagues around this table some coming time.

I thank you.
12.05 p.m.

SENATOR THE HON. P. C. GODDARD: Mr. President, I rise to associate myself with the remarks made previously and to really pay tribute to you as an outstanding businessman of your time and a formidable competitor.

I think that the award of a Knighthood is most appropriate at this time. Your contribution to our society has been varied and substantial as has been recounted by many of the previous speakers.

I would like to especially pay tribute to you in your role as Chairman of the Advisory Committee on the Offshore Business Sector and to pay tribute to the continuing work that you are doing to improve our economy, to improve our society and to build a better and stronger Barbados. I think the award of Knighthood is justly conferred upon you, Sir, and I congratulate you and your family for the great contributions that you have made to this country and that you continue to make to this country. You are truly a role model. I think back to the days of Lodge School and the many years that we have known each other and once again I think that you, Sir, are the type of role model that this society needs to put forward to the children and the youth of today. You worked hard, were honest, forthright and dedicated, a true patriot, Sir, and I congratulate you, Sir.

Mr. PRESIDENT: I have great difficulty in finding an appropriate response to what I have heard this morning. I wish nonetheless to thank all Honourable Senators from the bottom of my heart for the kind and generous remarks in respect of the honour which has been conferred on me. Usually at the start of business in this Honourable Chamber we pay tribute to those who have departed. I count myself privileged to be the beneficiary of your felicitations when I can hear them and also make an intelligible response.

I confess that some of your sentiments have evoked in me emotions almost too deep for tears. It is my hope that this award will in some way suggest, particularly to younger Barbadians, that recognition can come even when it is not actively sought after, that real satisfaction comes from hard work and doing one's best. If such efforts are in fact recognised then one should be grateful and humble.

From a personal point of view I owe a great debt to my parents, to my family, to all those who wished me well, to all those from whom I have learnt lessons both formally and informally and to all those influences on my life which have been good and positive. In the time that I have had the honour to preside in this Chamber, I have enjoyed the utmost cooperation and support from Honourable Members on all sides and from the excellent staff of Parliament.

In thanking you once again, most sincerely, I pledge to continue to work with you in the only way I know how in doing the public's business in accordance with the time honoured traditions of this Honourable Chamber. Thank you.

OBITUARY SPEECHES

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. President, I rise to take care of the other side of the equation of life, Sir. It is said, Sir, that without life there can be no death and without death there can be no life so that allows one perhaps to deal with the two as two sides of the same coin and today, Sir, it is my duty to note the passing, with regret, of a past Member of this Honourable Chamber, on this occasion, Sir, the Honourable Maurice Ward who served briefly in this Chamber in 1981. He is perhaps more remembered for his period in the Other Place. He served for one term between 1976 and 1981 in the Other Place and spent just a few months of 1981 as a Member here.

Mr. Ward, Sir, was a businessman, particularly active in the hotel sector. He represented one of the constituencies in Christ Church. The names have changed over the years and I would not want to call the wrong name. But even outside of that he has always been very active in wider political matters for the Barbados Labour Party but also he was a very active member of the Christ Church community.

I believe that he was one that was very much caught up in the social and political changes that would have been occurring in his era as we moved from representatives and a representative system of changing from one into the other. He basically would have seen many of the changes which have brought us safely thus far, and which I believe, with some consolidation, will take us safely home. I would want to extend to the relatives and friends of the late Maurice Ward, our sincerest condolences on his passing.

SENATOR Mrs. A. P. THOMPSON: Mr. President I never had any contact with Mr. Ward. I note with interest that he served in both Houses of Parliament and for that I owe him very great respect. I have very great respect for all individuals who sacrificed personal freedom and privacy to enter public life but I respect him particularly for his decision to subject himself to the electorate of Barbados, a very humbling experience which many Barbadians need to encounter in order to truly appreciate what the life of a politician is like.
12.15 p.m.

I also note his social status and recognize that there are many Barbadians who are of similar background and who prefer to remain on the fringes and boast about their ability to manipulate politicians and get the results they want. So for him to have come forward, Sir, and to serve the constituents of Christ Church and fellow Barbadians, I believe it is a very special honour and I want to thank him in his absence even at his departure for doing so. I also recognize his contribution to the tourist industry. I think that is noteworthy since tourism has been identified as the locomotive of this economy and all Barbadians who have

thrown their lot in, in seeking to develop and sustain the tourism industry ought to be recognized and receive special thanks from fellow Barbadians.

Therefore, Sir, to his family and all those who mourn their loss, and on behalf of myself and members of the Democratic Labour Party, I extend condolences. Thank you.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Trotman.

SENATOR C. LeR. TROTMAN: Mr. President, I do not intend to detain you but I think that it would be highly improper if the workers of Barbados in the tourism industry did not have a voice at this time to indicate their regrets at the passing of Senator Maurice Ward. The two speakers before me have taken some time out to refer to his public life and I would wish to remind that he was an employer engaging people in the hotel industry at a time when we were trying to develop the industry from the pastime which it was of the fifties and sixties into the kind of competitive industry which it is today which more than any other activity economically helps to provide livelihood and sustenance to the people of this country.

Pioneers like him and hard workers, such as he was – I have not done anything yet, Sir – are persons whose contribution must be respected. It is true that sometimes we run the risk, in our anxiety to move towards the future, to forget that the past to a very great extent charted where the future will be and, in that regard, I think that Maurice Ward is to be remembered. He and those others who made the tourism industry what it is today should be complimented. I wish on behalf of the Barbados Workers' Union, and generally the workers of Barbados, to pay tribute to him for the work he did during his lifetime.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Murray.

SENATOR THE HON. G. S. H. MURRAY: Thank you, Mr. President. I would like to speak in my tribute to Maurice Ward of my acquaintance with him in relation to when I worked at the Barbados Board of Tourism when he was Chairman. He was a hotelier of some distinction. While he did not manage any of the major hotels in Barbados, he was the voice and soul of what can be considered as a small hotelier in Barbados. For those who do not know, he managed a hotel at one time close to what was Paradise Beach Hotel, and which might be Sandals at some time, called the Tower Hotel. While it was a small hotel, he always insisted on a very high standard and for that he was much admired by his colleagues in his profession.

He was also, as Senator Thompson alluded to in a different manner, one of those rarities in public life in Barbados, a white Barbadian in public life in politics.

For those who knew him, and I had been associated with him politically in Christ Church at some time during campaigns, he was not seen by the constituents as a white man. Very often if there was any term of "white" accorded to him, it was a white black man or black white man or whatever. But they saw him as Maurice Ward the man, the Barbadian. Indeed, this was further fortified when I had the good fortune to travel abroad with him when I worked for the Tourist Board. I got to see on those occasions my fellow Barbadians who just happened to be white in their true element. What brought out to me through Maurice Ward and others is that when the chips are down and you see them in that environment abroad out of Barbados they are as Barbadian as anybody can be. I wish that more Barbadians, particularly black Barbadians who are taught by some misguided ones in our society to look on these persons as scums would put such persons in proper perspective. If you see them, you have no doubt that in their heart of hearts they have Barbados at heart and they mean very well for their country, and they love Barbados as much as any black man can. I have no doubt that Maurice Ward has gone to the great beyond in the very same vein. I thank you, Mr. President.

Mr. PRESIDENT: I wish to associate the Chair in the remarks made in respect of the late Mr. Ward who was a member of this Honourable Chamber. I knew him as a man of courage who made a solid contribution to the development of tourism in Barbados and I now ask Honourable Members to stand for one minute in silent tribute to the memory of the late Mr. Maurice Ward.

One minute of silence was taken.

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. President, I also rise to pay tribute in respect of the passing of another former Member of this Chamber, Carmeta Fraser. She served in this Chamber during the period 1986 to 1994. She will be remembered most of all as Food Promotion Officer with the slogan "Food Comes First". Those words she used to remind us of the need to eat more local food. But she was not just putting forward empty slogans, she sought ways and means of having persons to enhance their presentations and to vary the taste and variety of the food that was prepared. She published a number of books and papers on wine making and food presentation, recipes and the like. But the late Senator was also an active politician who contested election in the Christ Church area – I believe it was Christ Church West in 1976. She was a very active member of the Democratic Labour Party and she will also be remembered by her colleagues on all sides in that particular regard. But certainly her contribution in this Chamber has been noted and, in fact, there are some Members who would have served with her in the last session who are still Members of this Chamber. They would be able to reflect in a more personal way on her contribution in this particular Chamber. I want, Mr. President, to express the sincere condolences of the

Members of this Chamber to her family, friends and colleagues on her passing.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Thompson.

SENATOR Mrs. A. P. THOMPSON: Thank you, Sir. It gives me no pleasure to stand at this time to pay tribute to one of the women who can be considered to be an outstanding daughter of the soil. Carmeta and I share the same alma mater in the St. Michael School and I believe that it is our school's motto, Nothing without help from God, which fueled her dedication, commitment, fortitude, resistance and positive mental attitude. No one can deny that she endured great difficulties throughout her lifetime but remained committed to the task. She was from a very humble background with no family name to go on nor friends in high office to hang on to, but she pursued a vision she had for the development of the people of Barbados and she chose the area of food and agriculture, and we all know that we need food to live, so for me she chose a pertinent, a very important area of life in which to make her contribution.

12.25 p.m.

In her politics I am sure all colleagues, all members of the Democratic Labour Party, would agree with me when I say she feared no man. She put her point of view clearly and when she knew she was right she stood by it and she dared even the founder of the Democratic Labour Party, Errol Walton Barrow, to obstruct her as she attempted to have her point accepted by all members of the party. She served on both Councils of the Democratic Labour Party, even to her death she was a member of the General Council of my party. I know that for the women in that particular organisation she has been an inspiration, and even in the dying days of her life as she experienced ill-health she saw it possible still to participate in the activities of that organisation. One could see that at times she was encountering very great pain and discomfort, yet she made sure that she was present to make her contribution to the development of that party and the general development of our fellow Barbadians.

I know many of us would remember her for her work on the Instant Yam project. Carmeta had a dream that Barbados could make it on the world stage in the production of instant yam. Unfortunately, a change of Government in 1976 saw the demise of that project, and today I believe as we reflect we must agree that had we pursued that vision we could have been the producers of instant yam on the world market. Even today, as we grapple with our food production problems at home, and as we diversify and wonder how we can penetrate world markets, surely we must recognise that here is an area in which we could have made some dent on the world market.

Of course, we cannot ignore her contribution as President of the National Organisation of Women for many years. Even when at times I attended those meetings with Carmeta and only two or three other women were present, she did not allow that to daunt her spirit. She continued to do her work at the national level for the promotion of the rights of women and I know there were times when she came into very great conflict with the Press and their publication of articles and photographs of women which she considered to be belittling and quite insulting to the members of the so-called fairer sex. Not that she expected any special treatment for them, but she demanded respect for the women of Barbados.

Her term of service at the National Development Foundation, of that we should also take great note, recognising that the NDF is a provider of funds for individuals who are involved in business at the microlevel. She gave very good advice throughout communities, to groups, men and women, on the importance of growing our food and, when we have excess, in preserving that food, something that we have not placed enough emphasis on in Barbados.

From time to time, since I have been in the Senate, it has pained me when some of my colleagues on the Other Side have hurled insulting remarks at the fact that, as a part of her contract of service, she had a car and a chauffeur. I believe that as Barbadians we need to focus a lot more on the contributions which individuals make to national life, a total development of our country, and focus less on the fact that they are associated with a particular political party or that they are not from the established and recognised and accepted classes in this country. For, Mr. President, I believe that had she been from other stock such remarks would never have been made, and I hope we have learnt a lesson, because there are some of us who must feel very sad at this time that we have made some of the comments we made in the past, and I hope we would recognise the importance of the contributions of individuals and that we will not seek to drag them and their good work down in order to score cheap political points.

Even though I am saddened by her passing, I wanted the opportunity to make that point. I never got the Resolution or the Bill on which to make it and unfortunately it has to be made on the day we are paying tribute to that great Barbadian woman. I believe that individuals who have made such contributions at great personal loss, who have subjected themselves to the insults of others but who have persisted because they have a dream for the country, ought to be recognised and I hope the Government of Barbados would make sure that the Home Economics Block of the St. Michael School is named The Carmeta Fraser Memorial Block. Carmeta has made too significant a contribution to food promotion and food preservation in Barbados for such contribution to go

unnoticed. As I say, she is a daughter of the St. Michael School, I consider her a prominent past student of that school and I would like to have that block renamed The Carmeta Fraser Memorial Block. I also believe that in our attempts to get our young people involved in food preservation and food preparation, we should offer a scholarship at the Hospitality Division, The Carmeta Fraser Memorial Scholarship. Regardless of which political party she represented, nobody in Barbados can deny that she has been one of the greatest advocates in this country for food production, food preservation, and food preparation.

Mr. President, for me her life has been an inspiration, and if there is one great lesson I have learnt from the life she has lived, it is that whatever you choose in life and you believe it is right, pursue it in spite of the difficulties placed in your path from time to time.

On behalf of the family of the Democratic Labour Party, I extend sympathy to George, her very quiet but supportive husband, and Mumsie, her dedicated and committed mother to the end. May her soul rest in peace.

SENATOR Miss O. P. SYMONDS: Mr. President, I realise that other people wanted to speak but I think they would all give way to me as one who taught Carmeta at school and knew her as a little girl. She was a past student of St. Michael's, as Senator Thompson has said, and she never failed to let people know that I had taught her, and I say in all humility she also never tired of letting people know that I had developed in her a love for English and a facility with the English Language.

Carmeta was not only outspoken, she was articulate and, as Senator Thompson has said, and what is universally acknowledged, a tireless defender of women's rights. When the National Council on Women was set up by the Barbados Labour Party, I was its first Chairman and Carmeta sat on that Council. She was very co-operative and she displayed a great concern for women in agriculture particularly and she made a very good contribution indeed to that Council.

Carmeta had also taught at the Girls' Industrial Union, of which my mother was Registrar for over 50 years, and they were very fond of each other. She often taught classes in cookery for my mother, and when my mother's health began to fail and she still insisted on going out to the Union, Carmeta was very kind, very attentive to her, always remained with her until someone came. In that, she was showing not only an inborn compassion but also respect and concern for women generally.
12.35 p.m.

She had strong loyalties and one of them was to her old school. When I was principal of St. Michael, I

knew that Carmeta could always be depended on to give generously to any fund raising activity, not only to the school itself but also to the Alumnae Association and indeed the PTA.

I also admired her devotion to her mother, Mumsie, especially in these days when people are not always as sympathetic to the elderly or as caring as they might be. I think that Carmeta showed a great example to young people and to people generally as to how they should treat their parents in their old age. Not that Mumsie was that old.

Carmeta has achieved a great deal in what I would call a relatively short time because as things go today she died relatively young. She still had a great deal more to contribute and I think that she was the sort who would ask no one to sing sad songs for her but to continue especially to fight for the causes of women's rights.

I, too, cannot resist quoting from Shakespeare and from a play which I recall Carmeta mentioned to me that she had studied at "A" Level:

"Men must endure their going hence even as their coming hither. Brightness is our all..."

It was in her maturity and contribution that we could say that brightness was all. *Requiescat in pace*. May she rest in peace.

SENATOR Mrs. V. J. DAVIS: Mr. President, it would be extremely remiss of me not to say something to honour a woman who I did not know intimately or very well. Sometimes it occurs to me that there is a difference between being born in a country and not being born in one because sometimes I think that of the people I would have known intimately, were I born here, Carmeta would have been one.

The little I saw of her and from the work that she has done I saw her as a symbol of what I like to think about as the existentialist struggle of the black woman, and it is a terrifying struggle, especially if you know the Caribbean and you understand the social structure of the Caribbean and you understand all about the aristocracy of the skin and how people view other people and you understand the struggle of the black woman in terms of her self-image where images which we see all of our lives are not images of ourselves.

So, whenever I saw Carmeta Fraser, I empathised with what must have been the enormous struggle of a young, black girl to live in this Barbadian society. Yet she accomplished so much despite that. This is what I learn from her life. One of the things I learn from her life is yes, we have to struggle but the struggle is such an expensive thing. The struggle tells so much on the physical frame that

if there is one person, I think, like you Sir Fred – I didn't give any public speeches about your recent elevation but I did speak to you privately – if you are a role model Carmeta also has to be a role model for all those thousands of young, black women around this Barbados and the Caribbean. I do hope for their sakes that they do not have to give their lives to say, "Here I am a human being acceptable to God and man and woman."

The story for me of Carmeta Fraser's life is the triumph of the human spirit, despite all the negatives, all the limitations, despite all the things that try to keep us back that there is one woman who triumphed in her own way. I think that she is a superb role model for us in Barbados.

To her memory, I hope that we, women, because she fought so much for women, will continue to give the kind of service that she has given and I know her soul is resting in peace because she did the best she could do within the circumstances of her life. To Carmeta Fraser, to her relatives and friends and to all of us who cherish service, who cherish struggle... I am beginning to think that struggle for struggle's sake is a way for some of us revolutionary types to say the struggle continues. Sometimes I get up and am tired of the struggle myself and I must say that she is now resting in peace. Thank you.

SENATOR THE VENERABLE ARCHDEACON J. L. SPRINGER: Mr. President, apart from my knowledge of Carmeta in public life I had the opportunity of serving here in the Senate with her from 1991 until 1994. I have always been impressed with her approach to matters of food and agriculture. There are many other facets of her life but that will always be the one that will stand out in my memory, particularly because I could not help thinking that any Government would have done well with Carmeta Fraser as a Minister of Agriculture. There was never a time when she had to speak that she did not get to the conversation to food or the importance of agriculture.

Indeed, I always thought of her as a local answer to Thomas Malthus who was the pre-industrial revolution expert on food production and population control, who had declared – and some of us in earlier times had swallowed his theories...

12.45 p.m.

He declared the rate at which the population was increasing, and he said it would increase in geometrical progression, and the rate at which food production would increase, and that increased at the rate of arithmetical progression, that eventually the population would outrun food production and that except there was some act of God such as a national disaster, a catastrophe of some kind or another, then the world was heading for a premature end.

Now, he did not bank on two things, Sir, one was the coming of the Industrial Revolution that would bring new technologies and the second was a person like Carmeta Fraser arriving on the scene and one who would advocate that everything possible would be done to see that in spite of the increase of the population that food production would not suffer and would seek, indeed, to keep up with the population increase. That was the life and soul of Carmeta Fraser. She believed that this nation would be healthier and much better off in the long run for focussing on its food production.

Those of you who have heard her speak at length would remember the passion of which she spoke of the Scotland District area and its potential to be the bread basket of this country, a view that I myself share indeed.

So, Sir, in spite of the fact that her life has been cut short, I think this occasion ought not to be seen as an occasion for mere sympathy but rather for thanksgiving of the life of a lady whose life was useful to the extreme and who, as someone said before me, will continue for a long time, in spite of her absence, to be the role model for not only women but for the citizens of this country.

I hope, Sir, it will not be long before someone chronicles the life of this lady. She herself wrote. She brought recipes and little booklets to the Senate and sold them around the Table. I do not know if that is constitutional, but I do not think anybody else but Carmeta Fraser would dare to try it. She even brought samples around in those lovely big bags she had. Anything could be in those bags. Invariably she would be selling tickets around the Table for functions related to food production or youth in agriculture, or something of that nature. We give thanks to her family for giving her to Barbados and to God for the determination and commitment which she showed in her life.

I would like on my own behalf, Sir, and, of course, on behalf of all those who knew her and who cannot have a voice at this time to offer our thanks for her life and our sympathy to her relatives at this time.

Thank you, Sir.

SENATOR S. P. BERNSTEIN: Mr. President, I rise to pay tribute to the life of Carmeta Fraser whom I have known for the past 25 years. I want to associate myself with all the kind remarks that were made here today. Carmeta made her presence felt wherever she went even by way of the manner in which she dressed and carried herself. She was always outstanding. You would go to a cocktail party or any function and sooner or later you would run into Carmeta Fraser.

She believed very strongly in what she believed in, women, of course, taking priority and the underprivileged. She was a very active, strong and courageous woman and never gave up no matter what. I recall in the swing of 1976 when there was a big wind of change in the country at the time Carmeta ran against Henry Forde. Henry Forde by that time had established himself as a very strong candidate and Carmeta never gave up. We even had a private conversation and I said: "Carmeta you are kind of wasting your time." She said: "I am not wasting my time. I am going to fight for what I believe in" and she just fought and fought and fought.

So, Sir, today we pay tribute to you, and you have the honour and privilege to be alive here today and, as Senator Trotman said, many tributes are paid when we are not around. Perhaps we can take a little lesson out of all these glowing tributes that are paid to people when they pass on and that is, let us learn to love and respect one another as we are fortunate to be alive today. Life is very short, Sir. I can talk about Carmeta Fraser here but I know we have a long session today.

With that, Sir, I just pray that Carmeta Fraser will rest in peace and hope God will give strength to her husband George and to her mother "Mumsie," that they will get over the grief they are suffering at this moment and may she rest in peace.

Thank you.

SENATOR Mrs. P. E. RICKINSON: Mr. President, I feel that I must say a few words on behalf of women and nurses for the life and the work of Carmeta Fraser. Carmeta was a very dynamic woman, as we all know, with a very striking personality. She was one of the very few advocates for women in Barbados and she was also an advocate for nurses. If I wanted a matter raised, I would only call Carmeta and say when you go to the Senate or when you get some time on the media, please raise this issue on behalf of nurses and Carmeta would do it.

Carmeta attended all the functions held by the Barbados Registered Nurses' Association, whether she was invited or not, and she would always promote nurses and nursing and women wherever she went. Her record for the promotion of women is there for us to see. I am not so sure if we are going to find a replacement. It would be very hard to replace her.

I myself worked with Carmeta Fraser when she was Food Promotion Officer attached to the National Nutrition Centre and when she was trying to develop her recipes in that area. I also worked with her in the Ministry of Agriculture under the Honourable Johnny Cheltenham where Carmeta and myself developed, planned and

implemented the first World Food Day Celebration activities for Barbados. I must say it is a credit to Carmeta that Barbados has never been able to develop celebrations and educational programmes to mark the celebration of World Food Day as the ones that Carmeta did.

Carmeta also did a lot of work with needy children. She was able to involve my late husband, not only to give generously but also to use his home to hold parties for needy children. She also involved the Barbados Registered Nurses' Association which she used as her headquarters for many, many years.

I am very grateful that during her very relatively short illness the nurses at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital were able to give her the loving tender care that we nurses know how to give. I sincerely hope that it eased some of the pain that she felt in the last few days of her sojourn here with us earthlings.

12.55 p.m.

Mr. President, very few women here in Barbados have been able to develop the skill and advocacy that had been exhibited by Carmeta at both a national, regional and international level and as we pay tribute to her, whether we agree with what she said or not, she did have her skills and they are very rare skills and she used them to the fullest. Wherever she went, be it Barbados, Geneva or wherever, in order to speak on behalf of women, Barbadian women in particular, Mr. President, and all Barbadians in general, we owe a debt of gratitude to Carmeta for the work she has done here and I hope that we will be able to find a fitting tribute to Carmeta. I myself, to my mind, do not have a building to name or a roundabout, but I feel that, when considering honouring our citizens, Carmeta Fraser's name will be up front and will be given the honour that she deserves.

On behalf of all nurses in Barbados and other women, but especially the nurses, we wish her sorrowing relatives comfort and all we can say, nurses, is that as we go along we would try to reminisce about the work she has done and say that God knows why He called her to the great beyond at such an early age. Mr. President, I am glad that I can say a few words on behalf the late Carmeta.

SENATOR. C. LeR. TROTMAN: Mr. President, I thank you for giving me the opportunity to pay tribute to the late Senator Carmeta Fraser. Carmeta, for those who may not have known, was a member of the Barbados Workers' Union and functioned as a shop steward in the 1970s when she was engaged by the Barbados Marketing Corporation. In that regard therefore I need to make sure

that it is clearly recognised that the executive council, staff and membership would wish to extend their condolences to George and Mumsie and to her other relatives on this occasion of their loss. I myself would wish to join in it, Mr. President, for many reasons.

We have held her in very high regard and although she did not maintain her formal membership we invited her to become an associate member, this is one of the ways in which we are endeavouring to pay public tribute to a number of public figures who in our view have contributed to the development of the Barbados community. She is one of those persons. Another organisation, Sir, which is currently chaired by Sir Fred Gollop, will no doubt miss her very much with the contribution, however, she began to make to the associate members position within the organisation.

I would also have to recognise that sometime ago when I was a politician...

Asides.

SENATOR C. LeR. TROTMAN: When I was a politician I served in the same party as she did and I would wish to recognise that she was committed to what she saw as the cause. In politics, as Senator Thompson has said, she was so committed, so courageous and had such a tenacity of purpose that no one or nothing could prevent her wishing to put that position as she felt and to fight for its implementation. She could be persuaded otherwise but she had to be persuaded by force of argument and not by force of personality, and for that she had to and has to be complimented.

She was equally committed, Sir, to the Union, The Barbados Workers' Union, and I notice by extension the Barbados Registered Nurses' Association, an associate member. She would seek on every occasion she could to develop the interest of workers generally and as members of the trade union movement in particular and then even more specifically as women within that movement. I recall that as a young trade union officer in the 1970s, I had significant support from Carmeta when we were endeavouring to get the sugar industry, the employers of the sugar industry I mean, to examine proposals that we were submitting to alleviate the conditions under which women in particular worked in the sugar cane fields. Carmeta's voice, at times, was louder than mine. In the presentations which she would make publicly and in the articles she would write to the press about the horrendous conditions, as they were at the time, conditions which I hasten to say are being alleviated only now, but many years too late, because a number of women folk, parents and

of very distinguished persons, worked in the sugar cane field in conditions which were really less than human and we tried to change that and Carmeta was in the vanguard of that struggle.

Her vision for agriculture and her vision for food, Sir, has been very well spoken to here today and perhaps is embodied in what was said by the females who spoke earlier. She was a dedicated public servant in my view and I share the view of Senator Thompson and Senator Rickinson that there should be public recognition posthumously, quite naturally, of the work she has done. A truly very practical suggestion could be made in that regard and though we do not make decisions here, I think that we could state publicly or I could state publicly, that I think that Senator Thompson's was a very practical one. She was an alumna of the St. Michael's Girls' School. The former Head Teacher of that school has spoken in very glowing terms of her work as a student and of the contribution to the life of the school even after she had ceased to be a student and was then a post grad.

The specifics of the suggestion are that the Home Economics wing should be named in that regard. It is something that would do anybody honour to follow up and I go along and support that suggestion. I think that it is one of her areas of contribution that is best recognised but we should not forget the comments made by Senator Davis in indicating that the overall nature of the struggle was not limited to food and home economics. It did not limit her challenge to the rest of the world, her challenge that they would recognise the equality of sexes. Long before the language and the new debate came along, gender parity, Carmeta was an outspoken advocate for equality of the sexes that worked in offices in leadership. As Senator Davis said, I think her life was a trial for that struggle. It is true that we used to claim in Barbados that we did not suffer from problems of discrimination on the basis of sex, but I think that is because we like to fool ourselves significantly, and we did not want to face up to the reality that that is what Barbadians are like. We did not have discrimination in the way that many other parts of the world have had it, but there is no denying the fact that we have discriminated life like most other people against women because there were women.

Carmeta was in the forefront of that struggle to remove that kind of approach and I feel that she has not struggled in vain and that many people are now recognising and have recognised it before now.

One may say that she in her public life, Mr. President, was misunderstood by many. I do not think there was any denying that. One may say she was being disliked by some. There is no denying that she was being disliked

by some – in public life anybody would get loved and anybody would be disliked by others.
1.05 p.m.

As I am hearing *sotto voce*, even Christ himself was in that position. But what we must be able to recognise is that she was respected in her public life by all and one must not ask for more than that. One must only hope that beyond that now we will translate that respect into something positive, something which will let us all realise that people like her have not lived in vain.

In that regard, Mr. President, if you will allow me, I will say only one word, not to Archdeacon Springer but because he made the reference to Malthus and to say that we must reject Malthus and this theory in much the same way as we must reject the Federal Aviation Authority from Washington because they have very distorted and disjointed and discriminating attitudes towards the masses of people, especially from developing countries.

SENATOR T. E. BARKER: Mr. President, I had the privilege of being in this Chamber for the period 1991-94 when Senator Fraser was a Member of the Government side at that time so I knew her in an almost adversarial position. Sir, I wondered if some of the speakers before me ever knew the lady because there was not a bit of rancour or bitterness in the late Senator Fraser. We locked horns, we had words but there was never any bitterness or any rancour in the good lady. After having a heated debate here, on going into the lunch room she would put her hand around me and I put mine around her and it was as though we never had a hard word spoken. Such was the nature of the individual.

She understood her politics and she liked her politics and she might have been saddened at some comments that were made subsequent to her passing because she enjoyed her politics in a tremendous way. She was a strong advocate for her party and for women and for the poor and dispossessed and it is no coincidence that almost all of her speeches, no matter what the subject was she managed to persuade the President to stretch it so wide that food came first. Sir, it is almost like some people bringing in nurses on every occasion. Sir, Senator Fraser made sure that whatever we were discussing the public had to know that food came first. It was the creed by which she lived and it served a very useful purpose, it sensitised the people of Barbados to the truth that food comes first. So I enjoyed my 3 years or so across the Table from Senator Fraser and as I said before she never had time for bitterness or rancour or bad feelings. She was at all times pleasant, courteous and I can only speak, Sir, from my knowledge of her. She was always a lady and always very courteous in spite of what went on in the Chamber because, Sir, those 3 years were marked with terrible debate because that was the time, Sir, when we had what we called structural destruction

otherwise called structural adjustment and so, Sir, the debates were very, very rough. Sir, what happens now is like a Sunday School compared to what transpired in those days, so I knew her in that capacity and I enjoyed the verbal battles we had. I want to stress, Sir, for the benefit of those who did not know her, that when all was said and done she did not hold any malice, any bitterness, any rancour and when she put her hand around you after the debate you did not feel as though she was putting on anything. You could feel the genuine nature of the person coming through. So, Sir, with those few words I felt I had to get up and speak something concerning Senator Fraser. I know, Sir, that her family at this time must be grieving and we want, Sir, through you, to assure them that this Senate of Barbados joins with them in their hour of distress and we want them to know that God's grace is still sufficient to keep us in any hour. Thank you very much.

Mr. PRESIDENT: The late Mrs. Carmeta Fraser was a Member of this Honourable Chamber for 8 years. As has been said, she was an articulate and dynamic public personality who made an important contribution to Barbados and who was well known, not only in Barbados and the rest of the Caribbean, but in many other places as well. We are the poorer for her passing. I now ask Honourable Members of this Senate to stand for one minute in silence in tribute to her memory.

Members of the Honourable Senate stood for one minute in silence.

PUBLIC BUSINESS

ORDER NO. 7 – RESOLUTION TO APPROVE GOVERNMENT'S GUARANTEE OF A LOAN PROCURED BY THE BARBADOS LIGHT AND POWER COMPANY FROM THE EUROPEAN INVESTMENT BANK

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. President, the approval of the Senate is being sought for Government guarantee of a loan to be procured by the Barbados Light and Power Company from the European Investment Bank, under the Fourth ACP/EEC Lome Convention. This is part of a programme worth some \$107.3 million to be undertaken by the Barbados Light and Power Company between now and the year 2000 for the expansion and the reinforcement of its power generating capacity in Barbados. The project is to be financed in addition to the matter under consideration, that is, the 20 million ECU's which is Bds.\$50.6 million. The project is also to be financed by \$37.44 million of the Barbados Light and Power's own resources, loans from commercial and local banks along with suppliers' credit of some \$24.5 million and, like I said, the \$50.6 million from the 20

million ECU. This matter, Sir, is one which requires the guarantee of the Government because of the fact that it forms part of the EEC/ACP LOME Agreement. Basically, Sir, the loan provides for a low cost means of financing. The loan from this source, European Investment Bank, is available at a rate which is lower than would be available elsewhere. There is an interest rate subsidy which is paid by the European Development Fund. It is however normal that the EEC would not want to have this interest rate subsidy being reflected in increased profits by private companies. Therefore, as I will indicate later on in the presentation, part of the difference between what would have been the normal interest rates and the normal rate which will be paid on this loan will go towards the financing of the number of energy related projects by the Government of Barbados.

1.15 p.m.

Sir, as you know, the Barbados Light & Power Company is not a Governmental entity. It is instead a private company registered under the Companies Act and it is really owned by a wide range of investors. At last count the majority of its shares, some 60 per cent, was spread between some 2 800 or so investors who have small share holdings as well as persons who themselves are shareholders in other entities that hold certain blocks. But the company basically is the successor to a number of earlier electricity generating company arrangements. But, Sir, what is important to note is that the company over the years has been regulated as far as its rates are concerned by the Public Utilities Board and the last rate adjustment would have been in 1983 which basically separates the return which the company makes on its operations from the major input cost being that of fuel. So that consumers will see reflected in their bill one billing for the kilowatt hour of generated electricity, and that is fixed by the PUB, and the other cost being a variable component which bears direct relation to the cost of fuel used internationally.

However, on the instance of the Government, the Government and the company have worked together over the years to ensure that its generating capacity is dominated by the use of low cost fuel. So that the majority of electricity generated today is generated by what is known as the low speed residual fuel generators. The peak low demand is met by some other technology, some of it being older stock whose reliability and efficiency is not as good as it used to be and others being of the lower capital cost but higher generating cost such as gas turbines that use higher cost fuel. But basically there is a bit of a mix of equipment whereby ideally one will want to have the bulk of electricity generated by generators that use low cost fuel. But those are more costly in terms of capital cost and there is a longer planning horizon in terms of their installation and so on.

The demand for electricity in Barbados however has increased at such a rate that consumers would have

found over time that there are times when their fuel charge will increase substantially and some of that relates not only to the cost of fuel internationally but the fact of the high level of demand use has had to be made of the generators which use the more expensive fuel which are there to fill in at peak demand. To give an example of the rate of growth for the demand for electricity in Barbados, in 1955, according to the Central Bank's Report for 1995, the amount of electricity generated and consumed was no more than 21 million kilowatt hours or 21 mega watts and it grew over the years. For example, in 1970 it was 149 mega watts and by 1980, 331.5 mega watts, 1990 - 468 mega watts and for 1994 it was 529 mega watts, that is, 529 million kilowatt hours.

The increased demand, of course, has stemmed from Barbados' expansion into the industrial and service related areas, but it has also been fuelled by our increased standard of living, the increased widespread electrification of Barbados in terms of street lights and so on but also the lack of focus, as I see it, on energy reduction devices. For example, the use of fluorescent lighting rather than incandescent lighting and the use of other energy saving devices which would, for example, control the time during which air conditioning units are on and the matter of using alternative energy sources. We are pleased at the fact that the solar water heating industry has made a positive contribution in that regard. But there are other areas in which solar and other alternative energy applications can be used to reduce the demand on electricity generated by the traditional route.

Sir, the fact of the matter is that there is increased demand that has to be satisfied if Barbados is to continue to have the benefit of a continuous and reliable electricity supply. The company during this year has installed additional generating capacity in the area of the Grantley Adams Airport Industrial Park to service not only an increased demand but also to take care of the matter of security and continuity of supply, so that generating capacity is not concentrated all in a single location. This has implications of course for recovery in the event of a disaster.

Sir, the Government sees its guarantee of this loan as one means of ensuring that the consumers, both industrial and domestic, of Barbados are able to benefit from ongoing continuous reliable electricity. It also sees the continuing investment in the low speed diesel generators which use the lowest cost fuel as an ongoing means of ensuring that the cost of electricity to consumers is kept as low as is reasonably possible and the project includes a generation component. It includes as well some additional work on distribution. For example, there is to be a 69-kilo volt major distribution line between the main generating

location at Spring Garden and some sub-stations. There is to be the replacement of distribution lines throughout the island to meet the increased demand. As you know, Sir, even for your basic household, where if a household could have been wired in 1970, for example, would have used 2 small wires because in those days you may have been burning just a few light bulbs or you may or may not have had a refrigerator. But today the average household will, perhaps, be operating at one and the same time a computer, refrigerator, air conditioner, more sophisticated lighting systems and a washing machine. Therefore, the level of demand even in the most basic non-industrial area has increased and put pressure on the company's capacity to use the existing distribution capacity. But I will mention, as well, that part of the project would involve the use of the interest rate subsidy rather than ensuring higher profits to the company which is incompatible with the Europeans' directive on the matter.

1.25 p.m.

The funds will be channelled into a number of projects. The equivalent of what the normal rate would be will be used to fund a number of projects. For example, there is consideration being given to a number of projects in terms of the use of full photovoltaic cells, that is, the solar generation of electricity. One such project, for example, would be an experiment to see what would be the impact of the use of the solar generation of electricity for recharging the batteries on the electric trams in Harrison's Cave. Another would be an experiment to determine the feasibility of using the finish of houses, whether it be on the roof or on the sides of the walls, for generating electricity for some aspects of household operations.

Again the matter of wind energy has to be revisited and some of the fund would be used to continue work on the wind energy project, as well as there is a dire need for a major programme on energy conservation which, like I said, to my mind has not received the level of focus which it requires.

We are satisfied, Sir, that the country's best interest would be protected in terms of giving the guarantee of the Government of Barbados for this loan. This is a pretty standard procedure which has been used on at least two or three other occasions to enable the company to obtain loans from the World Bank, from the European Investment Fund on a previous project, as well as from other international financiers.

I will therefore urge the Honourable Senators' support for this Resolution for the Government to guarantee the principal and interest to be repaid on a loan of 22 million European Currency Units, or Bds. \$50.6 million, by the

Barbados Light and Power Company for the purpose of a project to reinforce and expand its power generating capacity in Barbados.

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

SENATOR C. LeR. TROTMAN: Mr. President, I believe that when public funds have to be committed to any enterprise the practices and the public performance of that enterprise should be openly and publicly reviewed, even if support is eventually given.

I support the concepts raised by the Leader of the Senate to the effect that where we can, as leaders of the country, we should endeavour so to utilise our energies that we can have reduced cost to the consuming public. Where he speaks to the idea of assisting any enterprise to be in a position to have cheaper services, then that has to be a commendable effort. Nonetheless, Mr. President, Bds. \$50 million is a lot of money and we have to be satisfied, when we commit to it, regarding exactly how we perceive the public at large, to be deriving benefit.

I would wish, with your permission, Mr. President, to examine the Light and Power from four different angles with a view to understanding the extent to which the consuming public perceives that level of satisfaction. One of those concerns has to do with the Light and Power Company and its energy charges regime. One has to do with the Light and Power Company and its practice of demanding payments by individuals for poles which then become the property of the company. I wish to speak then to the question of Light and Power ownership, who owns Light and Power and who profits from the loan and therefore who are in a position to benefit or not to benefit. Fourthly, I wish to speak to Light and Power and its respect for the community and for the masses of people in this country.

I am not going to allow myself to be sidetracked, Mr. President, because mine is not a comment regarding who sold Light and Power shares or who did not sell Light and Power shares, I am concerned, when I come to that, with my understanding that there is about 60% ownership outside of Barbados, and particularly out of North America. I am concerned that if Barbados is giving a guarantee – and I will say here now and up front that I am not going to oppose the Resolution before the House – but I think I have to speak and speak clearly to the point that it is time we start saying to the Barbados Light and Power Company that they are going to have to localise that share capital. I think Barbadians are beginning more and more to realise

that there is a capacity for them to utilise their finances in areas other than consumer spending, and many enterprises – insurance, hotels and otherwise – are now making shares available. We want to see a situation – at least I want to see a situation – in which the Barbados Light and Power Company, even if it remains a monopoly, become a monopoly owned by Barbados. Minority shareholding can be outside, but I think that the people of Barbados have to have majority shares, and I am not talking necessarily of having the Government buy up all of those shares and be the shareholder. I am talking in terms of the shares being made available to the consuming public, and I know that you cannot waste any money if you buy those shares, for some of the reasons I will give in a minute or two, bringing me to the second point, the Light and Power and the energy charges.

We are told consistently that we should conserve, and I believe that if the Leader of the Senate had delivered his full presentation he would have dealt with the energy charges. I get the distinct impression, Mr. President – and I believe you do as well, because as family persons we all do – that although we are invited to conserve energy, the more you conserve energy at the level of your utility from the Light and Power Company the higher your fuel adjustment charge goes up. It is about time, notwithstanding what the Leader of the Senate said about the need there is sometimes to recognise that they generate from the higher generators a higher costing one, we need to have a transparent system of charging utility costs which will not any longer give the feelings and the impressions to the consuming public that the energy charge is a secondary charge which will ensure that you continue to have to pay a high light bill. I said it gives that impression. I have, like all the rest of us, tried the best I can not to turn on this light, not to use that utility, so the first charge goes down and then the energy charge goes up, so you end up paying the Light and Power the same profit level. That is the perception.

We understand that there are problems associated with having the excesses of units, but I say that there has to be a more transparent way of dealing with the matter which anybody can understand and relate to and work out for himself or herself, so that we know for ourselves what is correct and we know when we are of the view that we are paying too much.

Then there is the payment for poles. This is not, Mr. President, a reactionary statement, as I heard *sotto voce*, this has to do with a comment I have made long before now and which I have spoken to years and years ago in another place, and even before that.

1.35 p.m.

I have a concern that if a person requests a service and the Light and Power has to put down a couple of poles for that individual it demands that that individual pay for the poles. I think that there is something reprehensible in that. I think it is an unfair exploitation of the consuming public of this country because when once you pay for a pole you lose the pole. Mr. President, you pay for the pole and then you lose the pole that you have just paid for. The Light and Power charges you, and nowadays a pole can cost a few thousand dollars, but you cannot tell the Light and Power what to do with that pole. You cannot climb it, you cannot paint it, you cannot look at it and blow it down. It is not your pole. It is the Light and Power's pole which you have paid the Light and Power to put up. Something has to be wrong with that.

The only way that Light and Power should be able to use your pole, except for your electricity, is if they pay you rent for your pole. I think that there must be something fundamentally wrong with a management structure that continues, into 1996 knowing that that is wrong, to do it to the taxpayers of this country. I am saying that a company that then comes and tells the same taxpayers of Barbados that it wants them to guarantee \$50 million has to have something wrong with it. That is my problem, Mr. President.

The taxpayers are going to help them to get out of problems and I am going to say help them because it is in the interest of Barbados to do so. All the time they grind the poor people of this country. Something has to be wrong. Let us recognise that that system cannot be right because there must be some management structure which allows the Light and Power to build in the cost of poles into its overall management pricing system and that therefore will not become a problem.

In any event, in many instances, the company, if it is forward looking, should be seeing the demographic dimensions of the country, the movement of people, the building up of areas, and should be putting down poles before our people are even asking for poles. That is what I would expect to happen elsewhere. If we are going to do as Senator Goddard would tell us, if we are trying to get a new partnership arrangement bringing consumers and small businesses building up areas and therefore exploding Barbados into new dimensions of commercial activity, should you have utilities waiting until these things develop only then to put in telephone lines and utility lines for electricity or should they be seeing part of what the programme is, looking at the Government's development plan and putting in the utilities against the expectation?

Aside.

SENATOR C. LeR. TROTMAN: ... In this regard, Sir, and in the interest of time I wish to refer to one other matter. I talked about the problem of ownership. I have talked about the perception relating to energy charges and the need for a more transparent policy. I have spoken about the misuse of the consumers and the charging for poles and now I am speaking about the Barbados Light and Power as a corporate citizen. The Light and Power is a corporate citizen in terms of its respect for community norms, standards and practices. I heard a term being used – human relations. I think that progressive management has to be able to recognise that individuals have responsibilities at the place of work and I would like to believe that all of us as workers, in whatever form we work, have responsibilities to our work and to our nation. Individuals also have certain rights and some of those rights are fundamental rights.

The right of association is a fundamental right, Mr. President. Under the United Nations Charter, under the ILO Convention No. 87, under the Constitution of Barbados, and even if it weren't, common sense dictates to us that the freedom of association is fundamental and should always be respected. No employer, no agency, should feel that that association is a privilege which a management can grant to an individual. It should be recognised as a right which that individual has. The feeling, as with the Light and Power, that the right of association is all right for a blue collar worker or a mechanic or for an operator but if the person is a white collar worker and a clerk and a female clerk that that person no longer has a right to associate is a sentiment that we have got to root out. If that agency then comes to the taxpayers of Barbados through the guardians of the taxpayers, that is to say the Government, and wants to use Government funds, then we have to be able to ask that particular company how can you want to be able to use the funds of the taxpayers and deny the taxpayers their fundamental rights of association.

In the current issue, Sir, and I know that I must not speak to it, I am only making an example about examining a company in relation to its public image if we are granting it funds. In this current request that we are making to guarantee that funding, the company involved, that is to say the Light and Power Company, has for 18 months refused a formal request from the Barbados Workers' Union to grant recognition.

For 15 months this matter has been at the level of conciliation. The majority of workers have signed saying they want to be in the union and when they signed they paid their dues. The company has found all kinds of excuses to deny those workers a fundamental right. What bothers me Sir, is that this same company which now

wants the Government of Barbados to guarantee a loan, has earlier this week met with an agent of the Government, a Minister of the Crown, the Minister of Labour, who advised them that they have to respect the laws and the norms of Barbados, they have to recognise the union and therefore set up the system that the Labour Department can check to ascertain that there is a majority and those persons have disrespected the advice of the Ministry of Labour. Then those same people want \$50 million of the taxpayers money. I say something is wrong with that.

I have no problem, Mr. President, with understanding that a government will from time to time want to guarantee funds that are especially being got from overseas at concessionary rates and I am going to be the first to say that Barbados needs to have that kind of facility and that the Light and Power Company needs to have that facility and the Government needs to do what it is doing. I ask myself and I ask you, Sir, does not the Light and Power equally have, when a government shows this respect and its willingness to help, to respect the Government and the Ministers of the Government and officers of the Government? Does the Light and Power Company also not have a need to respect the taxpayers who, after all, are the people who are putting up that \$50 million to support them in this venture?

I just want you to recognise that when we are going to come to the public we have to understand that we have to come with our hands clean. I am of the view, Mr. President, that the Government should proceed to make the loan available but that the Government should make sure that companies like the Light and Power Company particularly are made to understand that such loans would be available but that conditions will be set down, a conditionality being that they will only get this money if they are prepared to respect the Government, respect Ministers of the Government and respect the taxpayers of this country.

SUSPENSION

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. President, I beg to move that this sitting be suspended until 2.45 p.m. today.

The question was put and agreed to and Mr. PRESIDENT, suspended the Senate accordingly.
1.45 p.m.

RESUMPTION

Mr. PRESIDENT: This sitting is resumed.

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. President, I beg to move that we revert to Introduction of Bills.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' NOTICES

HIS HONOUR SENATOR C. L. BOLDEN: Mr. President, I beg to give notice of a Bill to amend the Property Act, Cap. 236.

I also beg to move that this Bill be read the first time.

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY: I beg to second that, Mr. President.

The question was put to the Senate and agreed to.

PUBLIC BUSINESS

Mr. PRESIDENT: We are now on to Public Business.

ORDER NO. 7 (resumed).

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Laurie.

SENATOR C. K. LAURIE: Mr. President, I would just like to touch on a few things on the question of energy. There have been several references here by Senators to the high cost of our energy. We have the highest cost energy in the whole hemisphere. We are not just the highest cost in the Caribbean but in the whole hemisphere and this is a question of tax. Of course, the downside of that is that virtually anything we do in modern life has an energy component to it. This means it makes us highly uncompetitive and if we are to now slap VAT on top of it, it will probably make us even less competitive.

There were some references to the use of alternative energy sources and there have been some attempts here to look at various types. Wind is particularly one that has been looked at. Bagasse, I think, was the first one that was looked at. Do you know that the Light & Power Co. pays for the energy produced by burning bagasse at the handsome rate of either 11¢ or 12¢ per kilowatt hour? They then turn around out of crop and sell power to the sugar factories at 32¢ per kilowatt hour. They sell the power that the sugar factories generate during the crop at the 32¢ per kilowatt hour, having purchased it at 12¢ and their excuse is that they still need to have in place all the generating capacity to supply the demand and that this power is only avoiding the fuel cost.

Now, in most developed countries and in many developing countries the Government has stepped in and

said: "No, you cannot talk about that. You have to pay the people or else do a swap." In other words, if you are in a sugar factory, and I know of a situation like that in Mauritius where the sugar industry pumps a considerable amount of electricity during the crop and then they turn the meter back and whatever comes back in is balanced out and at the end of the day they settle their differences but it comes back in at the same price that it goes out at. I call on Government to look at this because you will not get sources of alternative energy exploited if Light and Power is only going to purchase it at 12¢ per kilowatt.

It is difficult now for voltage and wind energy to compete with Light & Power on a straight basis and if it is to be put into the grid then there would be no competition at all because when they use gas, for instance, in their turbines, their cost of production is like 22¢ per kilowatt hour. That brings me to the fact that the interesting thing is that local fuel in the form of natural gas is higher than the cost of imported fuel per BTU or per calorie of energy.

I did an energy audit for a company a few years ago where they had a boiler that was dual purpose. It could burn gas or diesel. On my recommendation they changed from gas to diesel and saved thousands of dollars a year because they were able to get the diesel at a lower cost.

The price of natural gas in Barbados is totally out of place with its calorific value. It is a cleaner fuel. It has some other advantages but the price that is being charged by the National Petroleum Company to industry makes it not an attractive offer at all. In those days we were blowing off gas from wells at night and were not utilising it. I do not know what the situation is today.

Another aspect of Light & Power's pricing that is strange is that if you happen to be a fairly large consumer of electricity they then put on what is called a demand meter and you then have to start paying according to the highest demand at any one moment in that particular billing period. The most amazing and disgusting thing about it is that you continue to pay at that rate for the next 11 months. I have asked how they can get away with this but it has been so for years and they do not intend to change it.

I remember once I was doing some work in laboratory circumstances and I had to bring in some equipment that required a heavier load of electricity. They came in and put a demand meter on it. I ran it for two months and then we finished the experiment. It went and for 11 months I was paying this demand bill when the equipment was not even there far less using anything. That is something I would like to see looked at.

Energy conservation: In 1976 soon after the fuel crisis, and I think the Barbados Labour Party Government came into being, they had a big energy conservation programme. They set up an Energy Unit at the Ministry of Finance which is still there. They did training in energy conservation. They had a World Bank team here. They trained many people in doing energy audits and so on. They brought in regulations. For instance, if you wanted to borrow money from the Barbados Development Bank for hotel renovations you had to have an energy audit done. Commercial companies in town, I know the banks and so on all had to have energy audits done so they could look at them.

I was involved in that business and we looked at some places with savings of up to \$30 000 a year which could be made particularly in airconditioning. Some banks were running the airconditioning all night long because they had one night auditor in, or something like that. We persuaded them, not to tell the night auditor anything, just switch it off. Of course, the place was so big and so cold during the day that it ran right through to 11 o'clock at night when the auditor went home and they were able to save considerable amounts of money. I think Government must push on energy conservation again. It must give incentives to people to do energy audits to look at what they can do.

I did not quite understand what Senator Trotman was referring to when he said that if you drop your use of electricity that they would increase the fuel charge on a personal level. I cannot see how Light & Power could possibly do this. It just would be mind boggling that they could check for every single consumer and give each a different energy charge. I think the energy charge is set depending on the cost of energy at that particular time. I would hope that Government monitors that energy cost very carefully and no person could be charged differently.

The reference to street lights: I once heard a figure of \$11 million a year and I think that was some years ago. That is the cost to Government of street lights. If that is so, that is really horrendous. I remember coming in on a plane one night and this young couple was sitting on the left hand side of the plane looking out through the window and she turned to him and said: "I thought we were going to an undeveloped country. This place has more lights than New York." From the air Barbados looks like a fairy land of light. I think in a lot of cases that lights have been just placed in places without any scientific need for them at all, in some cases in the country where there are no lights in the village but there are lights on the main road where nobody is walking anyhow. There are no sidewalks or anything. The question as to where lights are placed and how many lights will burn all day, do we pay for that?

Are we being asked to pay for lights that burn all day because the photo electric cells are not working?

These are all the areas I hope Government would look into but I would like to support this Resolution.

HIS HONOUR SENATOR C. L. BOLDEN: Mr. President, I want to join in this debate, not to be critical of the Government but to ask the Government to pay careful attention particularly to information given to them by the Barbados Light and Power. I was a member of Cabinet from 1976 to 1981 and I do recall that there was one of these very Resolutions before the House in which Government guaranteed the loan of money to the Barbados Light & Power.
3.05 p.m.

One of the conditions that we argued for then was that Barbados Light and Power should do more for the society than it was doing. Even at that time Government own about 34% of the shares in the company and, if I do recall correctly, Barbados Light and Power promised that they would have gone into a rural development programme where they would have extended electricity lines in the country districts and put in more street lamps. I do not believe that they have ever kept that promise.

We also queried at the time, specifically, whereby people who were applying for electrical services were made to pay for poles and then after the poles were installed they had no control over them whatsoever. That system still exists up to today, whereby if you want electricity they give you an assessment of what you must pay – you have a pole – and the new thing now is that they tell you, you must be responsible for strengthening the lines. Now this is a private company and I have always been very worried – there are 3 or 4 companies in Barbados that do this and I think that it is about time that Government look at it – that you are asked to put up money in advance for services you intend or may use and you get, I think, 6% return that light and Power pays you. I have queried it over and over and they told me that the Public Utilities Board allows it and it is in the law.

Now it might have been in the law and if anybody looks at the Electricity Act of Barbados, it was in the law when electricity first came to Barbados back in 1930s and then you had to put up a contribution. I would like to know how much money Barbados Light and Power and 2 other companies have in that fund and when you are going to get it back. That is what I would like to find out. If you want bottled gas now there is a system where you have to deposit so much on the bottle – they say you will only get it back when you are finished using the service – but

when will you ever finish using these services? When will you ever finish using these services? This is the question I ask. It means that what is happening is citizens of Barbados are financing private enterprise and do not get the benefit private enterprise is drawing, and it is time the Government look at this. I would like to beg to suggest that we have a Parliamentary Energy Committee like they have in the Congress in the United States, where elected members form certain committees to investigate injustices which are being done to the population and amend the necessary laws to suit. It has to come to an end somewhere.

I sought service from another entity and the manager said to me “you know we have over \$44 million in a fund where you will have to put up money to get services, I have money there too, and I wonder how I am going to get it back out”. Well he is going to die and he will be using the services and he is not going to get back that money. I know there is another company that tells you that they make charitable contributions out of that fund because they would not know who to pay it back to now even if they were told to pay it back. This is something that we have to ask ourselves. In 1996 is it appropriate for these companies to ask its citizens to finance part of their development in case of a necessary and a case of a monopoly. That is the question we should ask ourselves.

We have, Sir, back in the 1970s spoken about street lamps. I have also heard that Dr. Cheltenham in the Other Place said that it is invidious that an elected member should go and tell Barbados Light and Power where you want street lamps. We found it just as invidious in the 1970s because you had to write to Barbados Light and Power and say you live in the parish of St. Joseph and you would like street lamps put in a particular area. Then they would write back to you and tell you that you have to get the Ministry of Transport and Works to approve the lights going into that area.

Now, I do not know, I cannot say I know now what is the system, but what I would like to draw to the attention of everybody is that we have a number of junctions – and I am going to tell you one – the junction which takes you into Wotton on the ABC Highway, you cannot see that junction at night. I think that it is time that some system be brought into play – I remember there was a time when Government asked to take over the street lights and Barbados Light and Power said no. There must be some way that we can deal with these kinds of anomaly in this society. I remember also the late Tom Adams in the energy conservation period, when we wanted to look at wind power – if you would look back in the Ministry of Agriculture there was a trial project where we wanted to cool by solar energy.

We also talked about wind power because we had a wind turbine down in Lamberts and we thought that we could have expanded the wind turbine system and we were told by Barbados Light and Power that we could not feed that energy into their grids. So we ask ourselves the question: Is Barbados Light and Power a party to the development of Barbados or is Barbados Light and Power an entity looking after the shareholders interests irrespective of what the community wants or what the Government wants? Here we see a difference – when they want money it is Government that is bringing a Resolution to Parliament to guarantee that money, but you must remember that the Government is really the people of the country. So you must have a hand in hand arrangement between Government who represents the people and these entities. This is why I would call for a Parliamentary Energy Committee.

We have the same thing in telecommunications. We sold our shares in the telephone company and BFT and only last week we saw where a company said they are laying off people because our communications charges are the highest anywhere in this area. Now, we boast about having the best communications system in the western hemisphere, but there is no good having a good communications system where the charges are such that they rule people out of utilising the system. I think Government would have to find money from somewhere – the same way we are going to guarantee this money to Barbados Light and Power – I believe we should try and find the money and buy back the shares in these entities where Government would then have a voice to look after the interest of the people. I mean if we go this way what we are really doing is the people of Barbados are financing private enterprise to their detriment. I think we should look at this carefully.

Now we all agree that we must pay taxes in one form or the other. Senator Laurie said that our energy cost went uphill because of taxes, but I cannot see how our energy cost – because one of the things the last one was for was to buy the low speed diesel engine which they say would use the oil as it comes straight from the ground to burn the electricity – how the cost of that can be the same as if you import it from abroad. You are talking about storing it – putting up bunkers *et cetera*. How could you drill it out of the ground, put it in a tank, send it straight to Barbados Light and Power and it costs the same thing as when you import it from somewhere and bring it by a ship? Now something has to be wrong somewhere.

So we have to ask ourselves if Barbados Light and Power are giving us true figures or is it that our Government is selling this fuel to Barbados Light and Power at a high cost. Something has to be wrong and I

would hope that the Ministry responsible takes the comments from the Senate back to Cabinet and let Cabinet know the feeling of the Members, because certainly Barbados Light and Power does appear as it stands today to be a good corporate citizen. The current thinking, Sir, is that we like to see these companies being good corporate citizens working hand in hand with the community.

I say that in the next 4 or 5 years when the Free Trade Area in full operation and these companies continue to behave in the way they are behaving we will be left far behind. We will not be able to compete anyway at all as it stands now. Trinidad is out there making laughing sport at us. I have been dealing with business recently and a Trinidadian businessman said "It is only the next 18 months before we are going to flood Barbados with everything. You all will just be a receiving country." He did not hide his mouth. He said "You all will just be a receiving country." Our duty is cheaper than yours, our labour cost is cheaper than yours, our telephone charges are at one time people used to leave Trinidad and come to Barbados to make overseas telephone calls but they do not do that now. The man was openly bragging that they are setting to take over all the production and everything in Barbados and within another 18 months. It should be a signal to us that all is not right in our society. All is not right in our society and we should begin at this point and take time to look at adjustments to various factors, that will certainly put us outside of the competitive stage, if we are to survive when Free Trade comes into operations.

Thank you, Mr. President.

3.15 p.m.

SENATOR S. P. BERNSTEIN: Mr. President, when we talk of guarantees in Barbados, the normal tendency of any one individual is just the signing of a note. You will hear people from time to time say, I would like you to sign a guarantee for me. In actual fact, Sir, a guarantee is an instrument or you are putting your signature to the actual loan. In fact, if the loan is defaulted in any way the Government or the person who has signed the guarantee, the guarantor as it were, is totally responsible for repaying that loan and in this case with the Barbados Light and Power, it is the people of Barbados who are signing the guarantee and it is the Government of Barbados who will have to pay should the Light and Power ever default in payment. However, the Light and Power is a fairly strong company in terms of their balance sheet and we do not anticipate their having that type of situation but I thought I would mention it so that we have a clear understanding of what is meant by guaranteeing and guaranteeing by the Government and guaranteeing by the people of Barbados.

The other thing that strikes me with loans like this, is that even though there are loans with lower interest

and subsidized loans and so on, is that we have learnt a lesson in the past and it is not always that we can negotiate but it is something that we should always look at to see if when we negotiate loans we can arrange payment back in U.S. dollars. And I say that because the Barbados currency is tied to the U.S. dollar and we have had in the past where we had taken down a Japanese loan in Yen and when it was converted into Barbados dollars it was X, but when it was time for payback the Yen was so high that at the end of the day it was not feasible and Barbados was in a lot of jeopardy. We learn from our experiences and it is a warning to all that it is not always possible but it certainly is important that from here on in, when we are making these foreign loans to try to negotiate that sort of thing.

Sir, I support this Resolution for the guarantee of the payment. What strikes me most, Sir, with the Light and Power are a few areas which I want to discuss today, Sir, and I know I might be repeating myself here but there is this thing about poles and transformers. I know of a case, it was just told to me, of a situation where someone paid \$16 000 to get a pole and transformer in and then what is hurtful after that to the person who pays that money, not that they want to deprive the people around, but what is hurtful is that the Light and Power then turned around and used those same poles to give other people electricity. The Light and Power, in my view, is taking advantage of that situation and should not charge people for those poles and transformers.

The other thing is the deposit. We are at a time when we look at the small businesses and we try to encourage young people who are unemployed to get into their own businesses. We are trying to encourage it in every aspect. Unemployment is high and we would like of course to see small businesses. However, when they are renting a place for the first time they are asked to pay at least one thousand dollars as deposit to the Barbados Light and Power. Sometimes it is even more. As Senator Bolden said, there is an interest to it. They get the interest added to it, but when do they ever get back that money? Either they go out of business or they sell the place or they relocate and that is the only time they will get it back and when they go to get a new meter again they have to pay a deposit. I am saying, Sir, that they should take a deposit; that is part of the expenditure, but after 36 months and you see that customer is not delinquent anymore and you are playing then with the profits of the customer the Light and Power should repay that lump sum or that deposit back to the customer along with the interest. That is what I am calling for, Sir.

Then we have another situation where, if Mr. John Public already has a meter with the Barbados Light and Power and he purchases another house or apartment or

even wants to transfer another meter, let us say, his mother's meter on to his name, as long as his name appears twice at the Barbados Light and Power that second meter is charged at the commercial rate and that is totally unfair. I think that is ridiculous. I never liked it. That is what people do, Sir. At the end of the day they put it in their wife's name, their children's name, to get around it. That is nonsense in this day and age. In this day and age you have a meter number and that particular number should be classified by a name and that same name could have many more numbers. In other words an individual should be able to have as many Light and Power accounts as possible without being charged the commercial rate. I make no apologies for that.

I would like, Sir, to ask the Barbados Light and Power and I am asking it today because they will only be able to guess today, but I would like in a year from now, maybe Senator Barker in the Ministry of Energy, perhaps could come back and tell us since we have introduced the 5-day working week in 7 days how much money is the Barbados Light and Power saving by not paying overtime on Saturdays and Sundays. That is what I would like to know. There is a 5-day working week in this country, Sir, and I want to know if the utilities are under the same 5-day week how much money they would be saving? It applies also to BARTEL and all the rest. Then it could be argued that they may not pay overtime and it could be argued that they will hire more people in which case we would all welcome that. Then you must come back in a year and say how many more people, because of this, you are employing. These are questions I am asking and these are things I would like to know, Sir. How many more jobs will there be?

So, Sir, with those small problems that I see arising within the Light and Power, I am one that will support this Resolution. I would like the Light and Power to continue its expansion, especially in the poor rural development areas. There are many areas where there are a lot of street lights but to get into the villages it is very dark and they need lights there and I support that. What I would like to see even though Barbados is small, is a little competition. I do not like a monopoly situation. I like when you go to North America and you pick up the phone you can call AT&T, MCI, Sprint, and if we had the competition in Barbados, if the Light and Power had that competition, all of the things that were said by Senator Trotman and Senator Bolden and myself would not take place today because competition would be so fierce that all of this nonsense would not happen within the Barbados Light and Power. As was said earlier, the Light and Power should be a good corporate company and should work hand in hand with the citizens of Barbados. With that, Sir, I thank you and I am much obliged.

3.25 p.m.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Thompson.

SENATOR Mrs. A. P. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. President. The Opposition has supported the Bill and I am sure that is known. But as a political party which represents the interest of a very large percentage of Barbadians, I am sure we would want to have our voice heard on areas of great concern to us. I have to agree with Senator Bernstein that as signatory to any guarantee we are partners in a liability. We have agreed that should the corporation or individual responsible for first payment not meet that commitment that we would accept that responsibility. So we are saying to the Barbados Light and Power, hey you have our shoulder to lean on, go ahead. As a result, I think that we also have to say to the Barbados Light & Power that you owe something to the people of Barbados. The Government does not exist in itself. The Government is really the people of Barbados. It is true that those individuals every 5 years or whenever an election is called go to the polls and determine the Party they want to represent their interest and represent them in the House of Assembly. But at the end of the day we have to say this because the people cannot all come here in mass and look after their own business and the politicians are chosen to do so. I think that the Barbados Light and Power must get this message clearly. There is no private agreement between the Light and Power and the Government of Barbados. This is an agreement between the Light and Power and the people of Barbados and the Barbados Light and Power owes it to the people of Barbados to put their interest very much in focus.

The concern about the poles I want to raise first because it is something a number of people have complained about. They have to pay to get a pole to get electricity connected to their homes and then surrender their right to ownership. It is a very strange thing. At the end of the day it is not their pole and I join the call that the Barbados Light and Power should pay rent to those people because they then hook other people's electricity up to these poles. You pay for the pole but it is Light and Power's. I cannot think of another arrangement as such in Barbados or maybe in any other part of the world.

Now as a monopoly and this is a concern for me, I do not support monopolies but we have to recognize that Barbados is small and we want the competition, but can we really accommodate several energy generating enterprises in Barbados? Now if the Barbados Light and Power is a monopoly, what the Government and the people of Barbados must ensure is that as many Barbadians as possible participate in ownership in the Light and Power. I am not in favour of such a large percentage of ownership in the Barbados Light and Power being in the hands of foreign entities. I know that in Canada no public owned corporation can have more than 25 per cent foreign

investment in it. The reason for that legislation is to make sure that no foreign company can hold a country up to ransom. I think that the Barbados Light and Power is in a position to do so. If we have 60 per cent ownership of the Barbados Light and Power in the hands of foreigners, what are we doing to the people of Barbados and can we as a responsible Government continue to operate in that way? I know that the life insurance companies in Barbados own significant numbers of shares in the Barbados Light and Power. But I believe it is time for the Light and Power to put new shares on the market. I want to make that appeal but at the same time I think that the appeal must be made to the Government of Barbados.

I am not satisfied that public awareness has been heightened enough that ordinary Barbadians understand the importance of participation in share ownership in a corporation. My belief is still there that ownership in a company is for that private group of people who have money. But I think that it is very important that we explain - yes, it is risk taking and what it means. You may get something back and you may not. But at the end of the day your ownership gives you an opportunity to look at the inside of that operation where you would have access to the prospectus, you can get to understand the operation and the feel for business. You may be able to attend shareholders meetings and this is the kind of information we need to get out there. It is not always that you want to get a profit from the business as much as you want to get the feel or get your feet wet so to speak in what it is like to be owner in a corporation. But I think as we discuss Light and Power as a monopoly, Barbadians should really have no fear about losing their money as they participate in the ownership of Light and Power. I believe that it is high time and the time is right for new share issue in that company. They are raising money by way of debt, but I would like to see them do so by equity and have further participation in the ownership of that company. So my opinion is that Government should get that mass publication going because as we privatize more public corporations there are Barbadians who have large sums of money in commercial banks sitting on bank accounts. That is all they know. They know only how to save. There are Barbadians who have significant sums in the credit union. This is not a call to encourage Barbadians to take up large sums of money or all that they have and put that into shares, because I recognize that at a time when there is an emergency you cannot just call in and they will not necessarily get back what they put in and they could even get less or even nothing. But we really need to get our people to have a feel for this area of business.

I believe also that I would like to see Light and Power participate more in community activities and projects, especially in that area around the Spring Garden site. There is some property in that area around the

Pile Bay and Brandons. I believe a good corporate citizen as Light and Power should be, should take that into account and invest some of this money. It is saving as a result of this low interest loan into the development of the Pile Bay/Brandons area which surrounds the Spring Garden outlet. I would like to see the Light and Power do something like that.

There are some positive sides to the Barbados Light and Power. We have highlighted those areas which are negative but there are some positive sides to the Light and Power. As we focus more on international business, I think we recognize the importance of having a reliable electricity service because all of our other services like computers and fax machines all rely on energy generated by Barbados Light and Power. We have to commend the Light and Power despite our concerns for giving us a very reliable electrical service. I have gone to many other territories in the region and there are so many outages in the hotels in other islands and so on and there is no electricity. There have been blackouts. It is an awful feeling to be in a strange land and to experience a black out not knowing where to run or go. I think that we have to commend the Barbados Light and Power for making sure that we maintain that kind of service. Over the years Barbados Light and Power had been regarded as a model employer. Unfortunately, the down sizing, the re-engineering and restructuring, or whatever you want to call it, has caught up with the Light and Power. As a result in recent times we have seen this company embroiled in friction with the workers representative. Now that is something that I do not like. It is one of the few companies in Barbados carrying a non-contributory pension plan. A non-contributory pension plan is a burden. It is a very expensive venture for any business and, when you consider the size of the staff of the Barbados Light and Power, I think that we have to admit that it is really a significant sum that it is putting into the retirement benefits of its staff. Of course, we also have to note that it is tax deductible but at the same time we have to accept that these monies could have been placed elsewhere. As a result, over the years we have seen people who have started to work there from the age of 18 years who have remained there until retirement. I believe that any business which manages to hold its employees from the first working day until the last must have something within it that has attracted them and kept them.

3.35 p.m.

There is also a very comprehensive medical scheme in Light and Power and I am aware of such. I think although we are concerned about the energy charges and those things which directly affect us we must look also at those things which affect our brothers and sisters positively. I would like to commend the Light and Power for such and to encourage other employers in Barbados to set out to do likewise.

Mr. President, I would not object to the Government and people of Barbados offering a guarantee for this sum of money to be borrowed by the Light and Power but I would like to make this appeal to the Barbados Light and Power to recognise that since the people and their government have been so good to Light and Power that if we scratch your back you must scratch ours. We will expect them to give relief in areas in which they can. I thank you, Sir.

SENATOR T. E. BARKER: Mr. President, I thank Honourable Members for insightful comments on this Resolution. I am happy that we are able to debate such an important issue on this occasion.

The guaranteeing of this loan, according to the Resolution, is for the expansion of the power generating capacity of the Barbados Light and Power. Sir, we all know the importance of safe and reliable energy and electricity forms the major part of the secondary energy produced in this country of ours. So any move by Government or by the company itself to improve either the reliability or the cost effectiveness of this product has to be welcomed by all right thinking Barbadians. All of us know of the horror stories of some neighbouring countries which suffer from daily blackouts or "brown-outs" as might happen. We are glad, Sir, that the same is not so in this country of ours. That is why we are very concerned about the recent industrial action at the Light and Power and we appeal to all sides to let common sense and good industrial practice prevail so that at this important time, when the people of Barbados are trying to brighten up their lives and their country, that they will not be subject to power outages which would negatively impact on the enjoyment of this special time of year.

Sir, not everybody is as fortunate as the Queen Elizabeth Hospital to have a standby generator. There are some aspects of the Light and Power operation which cause serious concern and one is the cost effectiveness of the operation. It is true that Barbados has some of the highest energy rates in the hemisphere. All of it is not due to taxation. Taxation is responsible for a lot of it, especially when it comes to electricity generation. The policy was to keep the tax on fuel oil which is the major source of primary energy used by the Light and Power Company to keep that tax as low as possible. The last Government did not see the wisdom of that and they on many occasions without recognising the implications of their actions just increased the consumption tax on fuel oil especially and hence were responsible for pushing up the cost of electricity. So when I hear people talking about the cost of electricity they ought to know these facts. They are almost like the facts of life.

This debate also highlights something else too. It shows the illogic and the serious lack of wisdom that caused the last administration to sell their shares in the Barbados Light and Power Company. It was one of the most foolish acts that any government ever did. Sir, for lots of reasons power generation is a monopoly in Barbados. There are lots of reasons for it – size and all sorts of things. Government must have a bit of leverage where it can have an impact on the day-to-day operations on policies in the company. Having shares in the company will give us a little bit of leverage to do that but the selling of the shares was obviously a wrong action and we are paying the price for the lack of wisdom by the past administration.

When I hear members of the DLP talking they ought to know these facts and be careful how they talk and for once get a bit of shame.

Sir, the question of the cost of electricity also has to do with the practices employed by the Barbados Light and Power. Under the agreement they are not supposed to use the gas turbines for a large proportion of the generation because it is recognised that while the turbines serve a very good purpose in that they can build up after an outage very rapidly and you get electricity very rapidly yet they suffer from the adverse effect of being expensive to operate.

The whole idea is to have one or two of them there sitting down in case of an outage and in case you have an unusual high demand for whatever reason. The idea is to use it very sparingly. That has governed the agreement between the Public Utilities Board and the Light and Power over the years. Because of their lack of foresight the increase in the level of demand for electricity caught them a little bit by surprise. I wonder at the forecasting ability of the company that they could not have seen down the road and recognised that the time is going to come when we will not be able to meet demand and nearly peak demand from the use of cheaper fuels and cheaper machines in terms of the operating ability.

Over the past few years they have been using the gas turbines a little bit more than they should have and that is also responsible for pushing up the cost of electricity. I would want them to remain within the spirit and the letter of the agreement because the people of Barbados have a right to the cheapest electrical energy that is available. Sir, that is why I was a little bit worried when they recently put down another gas turbine at the Seawell Industrial Park. I am told, Sir, that part of the loan is to put in yet another turbine there. Sir, use of a turbine has another advantage for the company in that they are cheaper. The low speed

diesels and the steam sets are more expensive. They are cheaper to run but the capital investment is higher.

Sir, we have a situation where the company does not have to care primarily because the fuel charge element in the rate structure allows them to pass on all the cost of the fuel that they use to the consumer. They are under no obligation because it is not going to affect their profits if they use a more cost effective operation. Any fuel they use is immediately passed right on to the consumer.

Sir, my feeling is that we need to look again at the Light and Power Company. One would have thought that the company was aware of its social responsibility and should not have to wait on Government to be doing things. They should be the ones out there at the forefront of the issues and ensuring that they use the most cost-effective methods of producing electricity for the people of this country. Government should not have to be using the big stick all the time. The company should know its responsibility and put measures in place in order to meet the mandate of producing cost-effective electricity for the people in Barbados.

3.45 p.m.

Sir, the problem is a little bit deeper than that. There is a limit to how much Government would want to become involved in the running of the company. As I have said before, we have lost the leverage we had in terms of affecting Board policy and nobody really wants to be in a situation where the Government at all times has to be laying down the law telling them do this and do that. So a mechanism has to be found and Government has to use moral suasion and other methods to get the company to live up to its responsibility and then when these fail then...

Aside.

SENATOR T. E. BARKER: Some of those who are talking are the ones who will be the first to complain when Government gets too involved in the running of companies. But you cannot eat your cake and have it at the same time.

Sir, while I am on this point, the Light & Power Co. also has to make sure that they buy their fuel at the most competitive price. It is also very important that they must ensure they buy the fuel at the most competitive price. All these are things that I myself have spoken to the company about. I have spoken to them because we have an ongoing dialogue. I talk to them on a lot of occasions and these issues are raised from time to time.

Sir, to show some of the thinking of the company, and I am sure that Senator Bolden will remember this, when we had to flare natural gas in the early 1980s we had "old hell," pardon me, Sir, for the expression, to get the company to put a mechanism in place where they could use the natural gas. We had a fight with them to adjust their steam units to use natural gas that we would otherwise have to flare. The company has to do better than this. Government should not be having at all times to be out there with a big stick telling them to do this and do that. They must know their responsibility and not have to be pushed, prodded and poked. They should live up to their social responsibilities. We had a big fight with them in the early 1980s to get them to use natural gas.

Sir, the issue about the use of renewable energy was raised. I want to state publicly that there are people who are willing to produce energy from alternative sources in Barbados but at every turn they are frustrated by the Barbados Light & Power Co. We may have to look at changing the legislation but the point is we should not be having to do that. That is the point I want to make, Sir, that we should not at all times be having to come in here and have a law passed to do this and a law passed to do that. The company must live up to its responsibility.

Sir, I know in the early 1980s when the trials were being done at Lamberts, again we had a lot of convincing for the Light & Power to buy the power that was produced as though there was any difference in power. Power is power whether it comes from the wind, the sun, or oil machines. No matter where, it is the same power with the same oscillation or whatever it is. It is the same power. We had problems in the early 1980s to get them to buy the power that was produced at the experimental wind farm in Lamberts.

Sir, the sugar factories which were using bagasse to boost electricity have the same problem. On every hand it seems as though they are in a mind set. It is diesel, fuel oil or nothing else and they are closing their minds to other alternative methods of producing electricity.

Sir, I want to call upon them publicly to re-examine their thinking. There is a mind set. The technology has improved from the early 1980s. The technology is there. It is proven in a lot of other countries. There is no reason why we should not be using some of the resources that we have in terms of wind, solar and whatever. We have to use them but what it means is we will have to introduce legislation in order to get them integrated in the national grid. Again, Sir, the power of the monopoly is always seen, in these cases, as the stumbling block to progress.

We know, Sir, that Barbados will have to look at the production of electricity from municipal solid waste. Whether or not it will be feasible is another matter but we will have to examine it in detail. I am told that a lot of countries, including Bermuda, have put in a facility for transforming municipal solid waste to electricity. I was in Bermuda a couple of months ago and the people in charge there said that it was there for months and nobody even knew that it was there because the plants are so efficient. In a small island like Bermuda, which is even more densely populated than Barbados is, they are not getting any harmful emissions from that.

Again, Sir, we have the problem that the price that the Light & Power Company will buy electricity at from any such plant, if they buy it in the first place, does not make the operation of such a plant feasible. The price they are willing to pay for it is not going to make such an operation feasible because they are working on the concept that they are only going to pay what they call the "avoided fuel cost" which ignores the fact that fuel is not the only thing that goes into a machine to produce electricity. There is the capital cost, maintenance cost and lots of other fixed costs but they totally ignore all the other costs and say the only advantage such a plant would have for us is that we would use less fuel. To me, Sir, that ignores reality.

I believe, Sir, that the Light & Power Co. has to factor in other factors such as the environment, labour and other costs and pay a reasonable rate because, as mentioned before, they buy electricity at about .12¢ and sell it at .32¢. They are not buying fuel. They are buying electricity. That is the difference. They are not buying fuel. They are buying the final product at .12¢ and want to sell it at .32¢ per kilowatt hour. All they have to do is to put it through their transmission lines and they want to get such a high markup. It has to be wrong, Sir, and they should not be waiting for a Government to put in legislation to tell them that they have to do better than that.

3.55 p.m.

They should of their own volition recognise that this country has to use all of its resources, wind, solar, and biomass in the form of bagasse or whatever, and they could make the sugar industry a more profitable if, to the extent that the bagasse could be used to produce electricity, that would add to the profitability of the sugar industry. All these, Sir, are things that we have to look at. Sir, some of us might have heard me talk about the White Paper on Energy. These matters are addressed in the White Paper and, hopefully, Sir, within the next few months we should have a chance to see Government's thinking in this important area.

There are a few things I would like to say because it was said by a former speaker that the VAT is going on

top of the taxes on energy. That is not true. Anyone who listened to the Prime Minister in his statement would know that the VAT is replacing, it is not on top of. The VAT is replacing the consumption tax on things like diesel, fuel oil and so on. It is expected the fuel charge component of electricity should show a decline because the VAT that is paid on the fuel oil and the diesel is removed. So hence there could be some reduction in the fuel charge portion of the electricity bill, not the energy cost but the fuel cost. This is going to help businesses who will find not only that their electricity bills will come down a bit but also the cost of diesel in the manufacturing process, the cost of natural gas, the cost of LPG because part of the tax, the VAT charge, is refundable if the manufacturer is producing a good on which VAT is charged. That is at least good news as far as energy cost for the manufacturers. The consumer might well benefit from electricity charges. The full 15% would not really be on the electricity but will have a mitigating effect.

Sir, somebody said that the price of natural gas is out of line. That is not true. The price of natural gas is not out of line because natural gas is cheaper than LPG. If the price of LPG is not out of line then natural gas is not out of line. The point is we do not think that the price of natural gas, especially to the householder, is out of line because the average householder pays less than those people that are using LPG. That is why, Sir, there is such a great demand in this country for natural gas. The reason why kerosene might be cheaper, for example, is because kerosene is not considered as an industrial fuel and the tax on kerosene is lower primarily because it was envisaged that the kerosene will be used by the very poor in the community, and hence you did not want to have too high a charge on it. What has happened is because there is the low tax on kerosene, other manufacturers have switched into kerosene in place of diesel or fuel oil and to some extent gasoline.

Sir, the Resolution will attract our support but, Sir, this does not mean that we are totally happy with everything that is going on at the Barbados Light and Power. We feel that it is time for them to put their house in order. They are making good profits. They are making guaranteed profits but I still believe that with a little bit more care they can be offering a more competitive product to the people of Barbados.

Sir, one aspect of the Resolution which people ask me about is the interest subsidy. That will not go to the Barbados Light and Power Company but it will be used for projects, especially research and development into things like renewable energy. Sir, some of the projects that we are looking at in the Ministry, as I mentioned before, include things like a study on things like photo-voltaic

equipment for Harrison's Cave. That is a project we are excited about, then the wind energy study is another one that is going to excite us, and most importantly the demand side management. That, again, is something that Barbados has to get very concerned about. How do we get people to get the same service, the same light in any room by using more cost efficient methods, in other words using fluorescent instead of incandescent and all of these things. In this regard the energy conservation part then is very important. A mention was made of a study that was done in 1980 but I want the House to remember a few things. In the early 1980s a lot of studies were done but by 1986, from May 1986, inertia stepped in and we left, Sir; a lot of important studies were done in the 1980s and the Government, of which Senator Thompson was part, took all of the good things that we had initiated and nothing was heard of them for the 8 years that Barbados was in the wilderness due to the inactivity of that Government.

Sir, what I want to say, Sir, is that we are now reactivating this energy conservation study that was done in the early 1980s because it has some very important areas. We started this year by having the Barbados Water Authority distribute energy saving devices. That is part of the conservation programme and we have to go further and we will go further, but it is difficult to do in 2 years what it took 8 years to mash up. Sir, we are going to try. We are very excited about the fact that we are now going to have money through the facility to be used for expanding the work of the energy conservation programme.

We are concerned about things like the Barbados Water Authority because they are, Sir, I think ...

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Barker you have two minutes to wind up.

SENATOR T. E. BARKER: Sir, I have a lot to say. Anyhow, Sir, the Barbados Water Authority, Sir, is the biggest single user of electricity in this island and I am not sure that they are doing everything they could in order to be as efficient as possible in the use of electricity. So in this programme on energy conservation, we want to focus on their operation to see if we can find a way of getting them to be more efficient in the use of electricity.

Sir, we also want to look at things like the public service vehicles – both public and private – to make sure that the drivers operate in such a way that they save some fuel in their operations, all of these are things that we are going to use, the money that we get from the interest subsidy, to do research into the area because we feel, Sir, that it is going to be a benefit to the people of Barbados.

Sir, we support this Resolution noting, Sir, all the things that were said before, not only by myself but

by other speakers. We look forward to obtaining the results of the different studies, that would be carried on as a result of the interest subsidy that is part and parcel of this loan guarantee. Sir, we all look forward to the day when we have a greater chance to discuss the all important topics on energy in Barbados. With those very few words, Sir, I want to support this Resolution.

4.05 p.m.

SENATOR Mrs. P. E. RICKINSON: Mr. President, although I will vote for this Resolution there are a few observations that I would like to make since I have listened to the last speaker. What concerns me is that there are all these problems and there seems to be no conditions attached to the guarantee of this loan. In a layman's term, I would feel that if you are going to guarantee a loan for somebody you will guarantee a loan provided that when they expand and reinforce its power generating capacity, it would be environmentally friendly. By that, Mr. President, I mean it would not be like Spring Garden that emits black smoke that makes our people sick and give us asthma attacks and puts additional strain on the nurses.

Mr. President, I am not against the loan but what really concerns me is, the loan is being provided under the Fourth ACP/EEC Lome Convention. If they were doing this in Europe, Mr. President, they would have to adhere to all sorts of environmental concerns. It would have to be environmentally friendly. It would have to be cost effective and just because it is a developing country none of these conditionalities seem to be attached to this. I am supporting it, Mr. President, but I must voice my concern about how it is being done because as everyone has been saying, Mr. President...

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY: On a point of order, Mr. President, I would not like the Honourable Senator to continue to mislead the House. The matter for debate concerning the Government guarantee of the loan and the conditions which would be imposed, either by the Town Planners or other regulatory agencies for installation of specific pieces of equipment, are two separate issues which you would not find detailed in a guarantee of a loan to finance a package programme; where this is only part of the programme, you would not find those details listed here. So, if the Honourable Senator is calling for those things to be done, fine. But to suggest that that should be detailed here is misleading the House that that aspect is not being taken care of separately.

SENATOR Mrs. P. E. RICKINSON: Thank you, Mr. President. I am responding to the last Senator who works in the Ministry of Energy as Parliamentary Secretary, who

has been voicing concerns about the environment, about social consciousness, etc. and this is what we are debating. I am very sorry, Mr. President, if I am going off track but as I said, I am very concerned since the last speaker made his contribution and I am speaking as a lay person. I understand what you are trying to say, the Leader of the House is saying now that for the actual implementation perhaps these conditions would be attached but the debate so far was not going according to that vein.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator you are reflecting on the Chair.

SENATOR Mrs. P. E. RICKINSON: I am sorry, Mr. President. Mr. President, as I said, I would like to support the Resolution but I would also like to call for conservation of energy as well especially in these areas that are going to be developed and also in the various Government buildings. When one drives around at night you can see virtually all the lights in the Government buildings on even though there are security guards. I am sure that some of these lights could be turned off and we can conserve some of the energy.

Another area that I would like to call for is for the use of some form of filters in order to take the soot out of the smoke that is emitting from the generators that are used. I do not know if it is turbine or what kind of generator that emits this black smoke but this black smoke is not good for our population.

Aside.

SENATOR Mrs. P. E. RICKINSON: Well even though the fuel oil might be dirty I see that during the last couple of years in the industrial countries they have made them put some sort of equipment on the chimneys in order to filter the smoke and take out the soot. So, there is something that can be done and in my opinion should be done.

Mr. President, concern was voiced this morning about the need to recognise some of these workers and I would also like to back my colleague, Senator Trotman, who called for freedom of association and I would like to strongly call for that in 1997. I do not think that anybody should be trying to fight for the right to associate with any union unless it is declared more or less an essential service. Well that is another matter.

I was very glad to hear and I hope that I heard correctly, Mr. President, that the VAT will not send up the cost of electricity bills because I have been very ...

SENATOR T. E. BARKER: Mr. President, I do not know if the Honourable Senator is referring to me, but I did not say that.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Please proceed.

SENATOR Mrs. P. E. RICKINSON: Mr. President, it was my understanding that consumption costs would go down and therefore if that goes down the bill should go down. I sincerely hope that this will reduce the bill to the consumers of electricity because, Mr. President, we have an aging population and we do not want the elderly to resort to burning candles, or burning kerosene lamps if they cannot pay their bills, because that would be a fire hazard. Therefore I would like the Government to take note of that, regarding the energy bills of the elderly population. I think I have said more or less everything that I had to say and I support the Resolution.

SENATOR D. T. GILL: Mr. President, I rise to support the Resolution which is now being debated and, Sir, it speaks to Barbados Light and Power being able to expand the company's generating capacity and once the generating capacity is mentioned the implication here is the ability of the generators to do work which in turn would ultimately transform this work into the form of electrical energy for homes, offices, plants, etc.

Senator Farley, Sir, quite adequately outlined the efficiencies of the various turbines, whether they were low speed, high speed. For a moment, Sir, I thought that he was now into the engineering business but he quite aptly and quite cogently went through the various types of generators and the various types of fuel required to keep these generators going.
4.15 p.m.

Whether it was at low demand time or high demand time. It was also comforting, Sir, to hear him say that the Administration had plans to revisit the usefulness of other forms of energy so that they can ultimately be converted into electrical energy. Sir, ever since the period of 1798 to 1852, that is between the time of fellows like Count Ranford and J. P. Joe, the mystique of energy was removed for how energy is transformed from one form to another. Today it is a common place thing and people are much more able to understand the ability, as I said, for energy to go from one state to the other. Whenever we speak of generators, we are speaking about energy and when we speak of energy, there are certain things that go with it like conservation of energy and so on.

We should not allow the studies which were done, let us say 10 or 15 years ago, which probably at that time did not meet the liking of certain international organizations not

to be revisited or not to be pursued. I think that in the scientific field it is something that does not begin today and end tomorrow. It forms a continuance. Just as how today we know more about matter and even anti-matter we know a lot more about energy and the spin-offs of energy. Therefore, I think that areas like wave and wind energy, particularly taking into account the position of Barbados right here in the mid-Atlantic and almost 365 days of sunshine, that we have got to take these factors into account and see how best they can fit into our lifestyles and industries.

The basic precept which guides us in the area of energy is that we may not have the waterfalls of Niagara Falls or the geo-thermo springs like St. Lucia, but we certainly do not want the Chernobyl, although energy from radioactive sources is about the cleanest form of energy you can find. It is disposing of the spent materials that causes the problem. I am sure that some of the other speakers would have mentioned about bio-mass and incinerating and so on. But I would like to make it clear that with the amount of waste which we create and dispose of on a daily basis that we take a serious look at the area of incinerating.

Mr. President, Sir, when we mention the word "incineration" we get eyeballs raised and we get all sorts of words and chills running down our spines. But it is not to be mixed up and confused with burning. As I have said in an earlier speech, burning and incinerating are two different things.

Mr. President, Sir, I do not know if Senator Barker dealt with it. But another area in which we have been losing a lot of energy is in the flaring of gas. However small it is, Sir, we cannot at this point in time be able to abuse or waste energy no matter which form, or in other words not to be able to harness the various energy sources that are at our disposal.

Sir, it is sad to hear the buzz words of "sustainability", "environmentally friendly", "clean energy". Sir, sometimes these words are really and truly buzz words and they get your head dizzy. Sir, let us look at the sugar industry. The sugar industry is one which was able to bring us where we are because of its ability to generate its own energy by way of its by-products. You never hear anyone speak of the sugar industry as being a clean industry. It is a very clean industry, Sir, and it utilizes the energy which is locked up in the same sugar plant quite efficiently and at the same time being able to cut down on the amount of energy that would be required externally. The same thing goes for the iron and steel industry. I am not saying how clean that is but that industry is another industry

which uses its by-products in a way which the energy from the actual manufacturing process is able to keep the initial manufacturing process going.

Sir, recycling is nothing new – certainly not in Barbados and being able to use by-products for clean energy sources and we must be very careful how we pick up these various, as I said, buzz words hook, line and sinker and do not really do a proper assessment of what suits us at this point in time. We know that, first, high energy cost will lead to a high final cost output. Sir, I have been informed that of the sales by the Light and Power that 32 per cent represent domestic and 67 or 68 represent commercial. The commercial will be lumped in to what is referred to as the secondary voltage power and large power category where tourism takes like 11 per cent, trump services 4 per cent and business 17 per cent. But the percentage which interests me is the percentage taken by the reservoirs, and that is 7 per cent. What I am saying is that, if it is possible, Government should invest in some studies or further continue earlier studies. For example, the same reservoirs could be the major beneficiaries of the newer forms of energy. That would redound to our benefit nationally and so you go then to industry of 12 per cent. If some of these industries could be so well organized or aligned they could be sharing the spin-offs of the types of energies which I referred to earlier, then again that would be much to their credit in terms of the bottom line figure.

Sir, getting back to the area of incinerating forming part of the energy into the national grid, we know that a lot of the waste which we dispose of on a daily basis, be it plastic or pure paper, is locked up into these bits and pieces that we dispose of on a daily basis, quite a deal of energy. I will quote some figures here to substantiate what I have been alluding to. Sir, a plant which can handle let us say 100 thousand tonnes yearly of solid waste can produce what is referred to as the low heating value in the order of 1950 kilo calories per kilogram and that is a fairly important index when referring to the ability to convert energy from that form into electrical form. During the process of incinerating, the gases which would be produced and I heard Senator Rickinson speak about these emissions... Not all of the gases are that dangerous and we would not expect to push those gases into the atmosphere. As a matter of fact, those gases can be treated and then by way of cooling produce the required steam that is produced when dealing with the steam turbines. That at 800 to 900 degrees cc would be able to produce the order of some 5.2 mega watts.
4.25 p.m.

That figure is somewhat in order when I recall the figure to which Senator Farley referred that we were consuming in 1955. Rather than writing off or just discounting other forms and saying that they cannot replace what we now have, we don't intend to replace the current

method being used but it is a system of being complementary to what we have at the moment.

I would hope that with all this talk going around whether we would be better off after the tax or in terms of our energy bills that neither of the major players, be they the importer of the Bunker C or the utiliser of the Bunker C, would work their stocks down to a minimum which would put the country in a precarious position. As I understand it, if the VAT is going to be charged, then it can be reclaimed. So I reiterate I would hope – I am not talking about any consumer – that neither of these major players, in an attempt to reduce the apparent losses on the VAT come January 1997, would not work their stocks down to such a point as to put, not only the country but the health of the country, in such a precarious position.

Mr. President, with these few words I endorse this Resolution.

Thank you very much.

SENATOR N. P. WELCH: Mr. President, I want to make a few comments on this Resolution. I want to support the concerns that Senator Rickinson expressed earlier about environmental matters. I am one who is particularly concerned that that stretch of land which sites the Light and Power and also the rum refinery has been an area where there is significant evidence of marine degradation as a result of the effluent and the hot water that go out there on a daily basis to cool the steam turbines.

I share these serious concerns. I recognise that Senator Farley in his presentation made reference to interest substitution and the areas in which this money will be going to areas such as alternative energy sources and I am hopeful that in future, if not at this present time, if it is not too late, that some of this money will be spent to ensure that the results of fuel generation does not impact negatively on the environment in Barbados. Because on the one hand I see energy and the Light and Power Company as the heart and the blood of industry and life in this country but, at the same time, we have a serious commitment to protect our natural resources, particularly when tourism is still our number one industry.

I also want to make a couple comments on the area of conservation and my comment is simple. When we examine the fact that the Barbados Water Authority is perhaps the largest user of fuel in this country and that by and large that fuel is used for pumping water from underground to the surface it goes without saying that any conservation programme if it is going to be worth its while must not focus just on conservation of energy at the consumer level but must by and large focus on the

losses that we are shown are occurring in the water distribution system of Barbados.

Although there is no accurate and clear figure, we believe generally that there is significant leakage in the system and that our fuel bill can be significantly reduced if all efforts are made to ensure that the leakages in the system are corrected. I know there was an effort by the Barbados Water Authority last year and the year before to replace a lot of rusted cast iron pipes with PVC and I know there is also an ongoing programme and I hope that in the not too distant future we can see the positive returns of energy conservation from the efforts that would have been made in leak detection and correction of these obvious sources of energy wastage.

Mr. President, there is one particular concern which I have not heard mentioned in here today which I have had some experience of in the last 6 months or so, and that is the issue of what technical people call dirty electricity. I am not talking about dirty electricity in terms of the environment but in dirty electricity from the point of view that people in Barbados now are very sophisticated in using a lot of computers and other sensitive equipment that are high priced and need to have a clean electricity supply. Although there are what people call surge suppressors and things like that I remember that about 6 months ago a power dip went through this country that cut out the entire operations at CDS – the Central Bank was out – the whole central air-conditioning there for a couple of days. We had problems where I used to work and we must ensure that with the development of the Barbados Light and Power that industry and individuals are not disadvantaged because on the one side you are producing power but you are not cognisant of the fact that your power needs to be very clean. I am sure that each and everyone of us in here may have had an experience recently. I personally had a situation where my refrigerator went out twice largely as a result of dirty energy and I think the need has come at this point in time for the Light and Power to set up a department or sector within the company which would deal with these concerns. I have received quite a lot of negative comments from the public out there that when they lose a fridge or stove or television or piece of computer equipment as a result of what they cannot prove – but most people believe and accept, both technical and lay people – as a direct result of a start-up or shut-down by Light and Power, that they get treated with scant respect.

It is with these few comments, Mr. President, that I support this Resolution and implore other Senators to give it their wholehearted support. Thank you very much.

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

ORDER NO. 3 – RESOLUTION FOR COMPULSORY ACQUISITION OF LAND AT ORANGE HILL, ST. JAMES

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. President, approval of the Senate is being sought under the relevant legislation, section 4 of the Crown Lands (Vesting and Disposal) Act, Cap. 225, for the compulsory acquisition of land at Lancaster in the parish of St. James. This land is really part of the property which is used by Standard Cricket Club which has been in use by the club for well over 50 years.

There are two parcels of land involved, one being that part known as Old Standard which is the first area which was leased about 50 years ago by the owners of the plantation to the club. Subsequent to that, an area of land opposite Old Standard became used for cricket. The club however continued to use the Old Standard area for other sports and for car parking and general recreation.
4.35 p.m.

In addition, over time in order to meet the requirements of the Barbados Cricket Association for full boundaries, an area to the west of the existing cricket field has been cleared mainly by residents, members of the Club and the private sector to meet the purpose. The owners are willing to part with the property and the process of acquisition is necessary in order that the Crown may have title and therefore be able to effect payment to the former owners.

I ask the Senate's support for this Resolution which seeks to acquire land which has been used by the Standard Cricket Club for a number of years to allow for the communal use of the area for recreational purposes, as well as to effect certain expansions.

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

SENATOR C. K. LAURIE: Mr. President, I wholeheartedly support this Resolution. For a change I am very, very pleased to see that we are acquiring land that is not in active agriculture. I went down there myself on Saturday to have a look at this land and it was with great relief that I saw this land and I could for once get up and support this Government's acquisition of land.

I also notice that further north of that land there is a piece surrounded on one side by a gully and by a village on the other, about another 10 acres of land. You are very welcome to go and acquire that also for housing. I do not

even know who it belongs to but, for sure, I would be very happy to see that kind of land being used for housing.

Therefore, Mr. President, I wholeheartedly support the Resolution.

Mr. PRESIDENT: I think the spirit of the season is with us.

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

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

ORDER NO. 4 – RESOLUTION TO APPROVE
THE SALE TO CLYDE BRATHWAITE OF
223.8 SQUARE METRES OF LAND AND
BUILDING THEREON AT BLADES
HILL, ST. PHILIP

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. President, the Resolution seeks the permission of this Senate for the disposal by way of sale of some 223.8 square metres of land owned by the Crown together with the buildings thereon situate at Blades Hill in St. Philip to Mr. Clyde Brathwaite for the sum of \$7 000.

This decision to sell this property which is one of the disused public baths which are dotted around the country and which, over the years, because of a change in the conditions of persons in these various neighbourhoods, a number of these baths have become disused.

These baths, as you will recall, Sir, were a very essential part of community life in the days before indoor plumbing was widely available throughout the community. These baths generally have not been used. There are one or two that are still in use. I know of one at which point the Greens and St. Judes buses terminate, for example, and persons who are waiting for the buses there do congregate in that area, but there are a number of them that have not been used for a while and have become eyesores and harbouring holes for undesirable elements. The Government has therefore decided to offer for sale by public tender a number of these properties. The Tenders Committee met, reviewed the tenders and recommended the sale of this property to Mr. Brathwaite.

The Senate's approval is being sought under section 5 of the Crown Lands (Vesting and Disposal) Act, Cap. 225 for the sale of this parcel of land and the building thereon to Mr. Brathwaite.

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

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

ORDER NO. 5 – RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE LEASE
TO THE BARBADOS TABLE TENNIS ASSOCIATION
OF LAND AND THE BUILDING THEREON AT
JOHN BECKLES DRIVE, CONSTITUTION
ROAD, ST. MICHAEL FOR USE
AS ITS HEADQUARTERS

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY Mr. President, the Senate's approval is being sought for this lease of land to the Barbados Table Tennis Association for use as their headquarters, playing facilities and the like. The Barbados Table Tennis Association for very many years used facilities that were available through the generosity of a private citizen. However, the property which was made available for use by the Association as a temporary measure, although the temporary measure continued for many years, was needed for use in the business for which it was originally intended. The Barbados Table Tennis Association therefore had to find a location from which to operate.

The area in question, Sir, is approximately 2 511 square metres of land. There is a single storey building situated on it which needs some substantial work which the Association has undertaken to perform. The situation is that this building will allow the Association to continue its practice sessions in a way that it has not been able in recent times.

Since 1992, the Association has been without a permanent home. They have tried using the Sir Garfield Sobers Gymnasium but the fees there for use for practice sessions ranged from \$50 to \$250 an hour depending on the nature of the event and what was being conducted whether it was just training or actual competitions. That represented obviously a stumbling block in the way of the Association as it sought to prepare its players. It is interesting, of course, that in spite of these obstacles the Barbados Table Tennis community has still been able to produce a number of successful players, players of the calibre of Robert Roberts, Kibibi Moseley and so on.
4.45 p.m.

However, the Government in response to a request from the Barbados Table Tennis Association has decided to grant a lease of that property mentioned at John Beckles Drive to the Association under the usual conditions, Sir. The lease would be for a period of 15 years with an option to renew, \$100 per annum rent reviewable with 5 yearly periods, the lessee pays all of the land tax and other outgoings and they would be responsible as well for

the refurbishment of the premises and its maintenance and the other usual conditions. So I am urging the support, Sir, of Members in the Senate for this proposal which we believe will go a long way towards assisting the Barbados Table Tennis Association as it seeks to continue to help us maintain some level of success and improving our performance in tennis growth in the region and in the wider international community.

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

The question was put that the Resolution do now pass and agreed to without division.

**ORDER NO. 6 – A RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE
LEASE UNDER SECTION 5 OF THE CROWN
LANDS (VESTING AND DISPOSAL) ACT,
CAP. 225 TO THE BARBADOS NATIONAL
TRUST OF THE PARCEL OF LAND
SITUATED AT GUN HILL IN
THE PARISH OF
ST. GEORGE**

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. President, the approval of the Senate is being sought for the lease of land, Sir, at Gun Hill to the Barbados National Trust. Now, Sir, the Barbados National Trust, Sir, as you know, operates a number of historic sites including the Gun Hill Signal Station. They already have a lease on a property at Gun Hill, the portion for which there is a lease in existence is on the property. There are a number of basic parcels although the divisions are not openly obvious. What is being proposed, Sir, is that the National Trust will surrender the unexpired term on the existing lease with respect to some 35 835 square feet of land and that instead, Sir, they would take out a new lease on a larger area. Basically what is being done, Sir, is that the area of Gun Hill under the management of the Barbados National Trust is being expanded.

In terms of physical description, Sir, the area for which a lease was previously given was the area on which the actual Signal Station stands, including the building near to the entrance known as the cook house. There is also a property east of that, Sir, which once housed the School Meals Centre for St. George. That area ceased, for many years, to be used for that purpose. In fact the building is now in a total state of disrepair. What has made it worse is that sometime back in about 1993, I believe the instructions were given by the Minister of the day to have the roof removed, so that allowed water to penetrate into the walls of the structure, there are a few plants growing

out of the walls of the structure and the roof is very much exposed – there is no roof, actually, Mr. President. Clearly the property, if the property is to be salvaged and to be able to be put to good use and maintain the ambience of the Gun Hill, it will have to be refurbished and integrated within the existing and very attractive and very successful Gun Hill operation.

What is being proposed, therefore, Sir, is that the area of land to be leased to the Barbados National Trust be expanded to include the building which formally housed the School Meals Centre at Gun Hill, which is adjacent to the area already leased. Sir, the Trust therefore will enter a lease with respect to lot "A" of 2 826 square metres, Lot "B" 2 864 square metres for a period of 25 years at the rate of \$100 per annum with rent reviews coming, Sir, in the 10th and 20th years and the lessee will meet all the usual expenses, Sir, including the refurbishment of the property and I should say, Sir, that since the first section of Gun Hill was restored by the Barbados National Trust from the derelict state, which it was in the 1970s and the early 1980s, it has become one of the premier tourism attractions. Seventy five thousand visitors visited the facility this year, I am advised, and in fact it is now also expanded its scope and has become an interesting choice for cocktail receptions and other local activity by, particularly, corporate Barbados. We believe that with the refurbishment of the only other derelict building on the property, that the range of opportunities and activities can be expanded.

Certainly we would want to ensure as well, that in catering for this expansion, opportunities are also provided for sale of items – both food and non-food items by small entrepreneurs. We would certainly want to urge the Trust, we mentioned that in our discussions with them, that as much as is possible, they should seek to contract out these various operations and provide opportunities for other persons to also make some profit and experience some benefit from the increased tourism activity which is generated in the area.

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

SENATOR Mrs. A. P. THOMPSON: Mr. President, I am sure the Leader of the Senate is either in possession of or has seen a copy of the development plan for the Gun-Hill area in which plans were pretty advanced for the use of the same building for the residents of the surrounding districts who have an interest in producing articles for the tourist market, especially souvenirs. Part of that plan, Sir, is to train our young people from around the Workmans, Taitt Hill and St. George Church

to get into making souvenirs at home. One of the sad things about Barbados is this, you visit Barbados, you buy souvenirs of sights in Barbados and those souvenirs are made overseas. We are not yet placing enough emphasis on making sure that a souvenir is a true representation of the people of Barbados and we need to look at that. As we look at the tourist attraction at Gun Hill and as we spoke, there are a number of young people in the areas that I have interviewed who were very keen on getting into ceramics and having replicas of the Lion at Gun Hill and the Signal Station. They wanted to do all forms of basketry, produce table mats and coasters which would all be displayed at the Signal Station at Gun Hill, and they wanted the opportunity to not only to display but to sell their ware at Gun Hill.

I notice that having given all of the general information on the National Trust and its proposed activity, the Leader of the Senate then went on to say a few words that they are holding discussions and hoping that opportunities for small business people would be created and I do not think that it should be downplayed. 4.55 p.m.

I think a lot of emphasis should be placed on that. If you get 75 000 visitors a year at Gun Hill I think the people in St. George would benefit because there is very high unemployment in St. George areas, especially around Lower Estate, among our young people and I think the Government should get ahead with its plan to train our young people to work from home, to get our cottage industries going and try to give them some opportunities in these areas. It is very lucrative at Gun Hill from what I have heard and I believe that our young people in St. George should be able to benefit from it. So I am making an appeal on their behalf since it would appear as though Government has gone ahead. I understand that there is some small area at the Powder House, that is being allocated to craft markets but I really wanted to see our people, the indigenous people, occupy a part of that high ground, that very visible area there at Gun Hill. In Jamaica and other Caribbean islands they seem to be much more conscious of that part of national development. So that even though I recognise the work of the National Trust – I would never be one to put their work down – I recognise how much they help us to keep our old buildings in good condition and our heritage tourism is promoted by them to a large extent. I also recognise the importance of making sure that we can empower a larger percentage of our people by getting them into these areas. And even though I will support this I am hopeful that I can see some of our people occupying some of that space, that highly visible space at Gun Hill, Sir.

SENATOR C. K. LAURIE: Mr. President, I would just like on a matter of clarity to declare that I am on the Council of the National Trust and at the present moment

there is one contractor. There is only one space there for a restaurant or small cafe. The National Trust has just spent about \$50 000 building a dining hall of the same vernacular or architecture to be given to small entrepreneurs. So the Trust is very, very interested and has no interest themselves, I think, in running anything of the nature that Senator Thompson was saying but is very interested in using entrepreneurs where they can and I think it is a very laudable idea.

There is also an area at Gun Hill where there was storage for dynamite in the old days. That is the large building there that is still in relatively good condition. It is on the high ground overlooking the St. George area, the whole of the St. George North area and it should certainly be developed. I 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. 8 – RESOLUTION TO APPROVE
GUARANTEE BY THE GOVERNMENT OF A
LOAN TO THE BADMC

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. President, approval of the Senate is being sought for the provision by the Government of a guarantee in respect of a loan to the Barbados Agricultural and Development Marketing Corporation, also known as the BADMC. Sir, the BADMC will be borrowing some \$22.6 million from Citicorp. Merchant Bank Limited for the purpose of liquidating its indebtedness and providing working capital for its redevelopment. Details of the loan, Sir, are spelt out in the Addendum and basically, Sir, this Government guarantee is to enable the Corporation to have access to these funds which will be used for its restructuring and allow it to have a more managed approach to the rebuilding effort.

I should tell you, Sir, that the BADMC has found itself in a position in which its current indebtedness is something in the region of \$20 million but this should not be a surprise because when the two predecessor organisations, the Barbados Marketing Corporation and the Agricultural Development Corporation were merged in 1993 they started out with a debt of \$12.5 million so that a new corporation was started already with a serious debt problem. The debt was substantial.

In addition, Sir, subsequent to that time by 1995 the debt had increased to some \$14 million. That basically, Sir, has been due to the fact that in spite of getting

some in-flows from the Government by way of annual subventions the net inflows into the Corporation have not been enough to allow it to cover its total operating costs. The majority of those inflows were by way of its import marketing arrangements. As you know, Sir, the Corporation had been the chief importer of sugar from Guatemala and other places, chicken wings and onions, among other things. It runs a duty free shop and two minimarts at the airport, a dairy farm, some estates and so on. They also import turkey wings, Sir. The net profit that it derives from these activities were mainly in the area of the import trading activities. Virtually all of the other activities were operated at a loss.

As a result, Sir, of the imbalance in the finances of the Corporation the Corporation, has been unable to pay its creditors, including foreign suppliers who supply it with its merchandise for trading. Members will recall there being some complaints from the suppliers of chicken wings overseas about non-payment by the BADMC. It also, Sir, had reached the point where it had exceeded its overdraft and it was therefore unable to repair and service its machinery and equipment and it could only at this point then, Sir, access supplies on a cash basis which obviously provides substantial delays in the operation of any business. So that basically, Sir, in that scenario, as you would expect, it cannot and it does not meet its statutory obligations in respect of the National Insurance Department and the Inland Revenue Department. Of course, when you are in search of cash, things like the payment of insurance premiums and other matters become somewhat of a secondary consideration.

5.05 p.m.

Sir, the picture is really one of a corporation which was started off on the wrong foot. To start a corporation with a debt burden in the region of \$12 million, where in the normal course of its operation the income does not exceed the expenditure, you can therefore expect on an annual basis that you will be increasing the debt position of the entity. But what was interesting, Sir, is that although that represented the profile of the institution at the point of merger in 1993 and although one would have expected certain benefits that would have accrued where, Sir, if you are merging two organizations, then you could reasonably expect that you could effect some savings in terms of your common administration, certain common services and the like. It was interesting to note that not only did those benefits show themselves but in addition to that soon after the merger there were some 57 added very quickly to the staff. This was late 1993 or early 1994.

So that as well, Sir, would have added to the increased burden of meeting current obligations in a situation where the profile indicated that the revenue flows do not match the expenditure flows and where there is

already an overhead burden that has to be covered. For example, Sir, the estate operations – after the result of the merger there were 7 estates – Bath, Bawden, River, Fairy Valley, Haggatts, Spencer, Spring Hall. These estates, Sir, were all operating at a loss. The sugar yield was amongst the lowest of estates for those that were into sugar. The dairy, Sir, when compared with dairies of similar size, it was the only one not being able to either meet its quota or make a profit. If one were to look at the expenditure and revenue on the estates, one will see that in many cases it was a question of subsidizing the operations of the estates. So that over the 4-year period, for example, 1990 to 1994 accumulated losses would have been somewhere in the region of \$7.5 million on these estates alone.

The other thing about that, Sir, is that the bringing of the estates into this amalgamated body was occurring at the same time that a restructuring of the sugar industry was being undertaken where the Barbados Agricultural Management Company had been formed. I think, Sir, that it was not a wise move to have two separate sets of Governmental agencies managing estates. We have since corrected what was obviously a gross error by having the estates, with the exception I believe of two of them that are to be leased out into small portions – the ones in St. Andrew, Bawdens and the other one – leased to persons who are interested in this area. Basically, Sir, you had a situation where the Government was taking over privately owned plantations to rehabilitate them and put them back into the hands of private ownership, yet there were Governmental plantations which were also in need of rehabilitation and perhaps rather than putting them back into Government ownership they could be rehabilitated and used to enfranchise the poor farmers which the Honourable Member on the other side of the Table speaks so much about. I believe that there would have been more than two farmers who would have been in need of enfranchisement by the provision of land which under the expert management of the BAMC which they had set up would have been rehabilitated with the help of Booker Tate and so on and to be able to be turned over in good husbandry. But they decided that they could do it for the large plantation owners who had incurred debt over and above the value of the estate but it could not be done for the small landless farmer who would have been glad to have the opportunity to acquire some land given to him not in a state of overgrown weeds and so on but land which would have been part of a programme where the land would have been put into a good state of husbandry. Just like the traditional wealthy plantation owner, he would have been able to benefit from that programme if the lands had been placed into that particular condition.

But as I said, Sir, the estates continue to make a loss where money is poured every year and hardly any revenue is collected.

Now in terms of its trading operations, the Corporation became infamous for its dealings in sugar. The BADMC was involved in the matter of the importation of sugar which, of course, represents a policy decision that saw the need to have these trading operations to pay for the cost of running a bloated operation and put them on a collision course with the objective of rehabilitating the sugar industry. There was also, Sir, as evidence has shown, tremendous mistaken priority and tremendous mistaken interest where actions taken were not always in the best interest of the country or the Corporation as far as sugar goes. The stench which has been associated with that trade in sugar is no where as sweet as the smell of sugar or at least good quality sugar normally is. But that operation still managed to make a little profit for the organization. I suspect it made greater profits for those persons involved to the organization who were involved in other aspects of the sugar trade.

The Corporation influenced itself in the matter of chicken wings, Sir. It was their highest burning area but it is a matter in which small entrepreneurs, the kind of people the Democratic Labour Party likes to talk so much about but then their actions are entirely to the contrary, but persons who were running small rum shops, persons who were running little cook shops, persons who were selling a few drinks and so on on the weekends could not get a chicken wing, not one chicken wing without having to go through twists and loops and beg somebody here and ask for a contact there and pick them up at the back side of the airport. It was a totally ridiculous situation which basically reduced the small black business people to a position of indignity in trying to procure the basic inputs which they require for them to make a living in this country. This BADMC under the Democratic Labour Party distinguished itself by its infamy in regard to its trading operations particularly in sugar and chicken wings.

5.15 p.m.

But, Sir, we also have again the matter of the farm support services which it provided. The motor tractor cultivation scheme, the irrigation service and the extension service. I have two farmers here, I do not know what they might be able to say about it.

Aside.

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY: I am hearing that one is a dog farmer and the other is a bull farmer, but we have some farmers among us who might be able to comment more fully on the quality of the service. In all seriousness, Sir, the fact of the matter is that as the Corporation found itself going deeper and deeper into debt, the more the services declined. Because the motor tractor cultivation scheme apart from suffering some of the typical inertia which is sometimes seen in certain governmental

operations also found itself in a situation where basic parts and maintenance could not be obtained for the tractors to put them in a ready condition to do the necessary work and that, like I said, in addition to some of the other typical problems which you will get, Sir. Of course the staff will still have to be paid even though there is no equipment for them to work with.

There have been a number of these areas in which there have been problems with the institution. Where we are at though, Sir, is that we have a situation, which obviously cannot continue, where there is \$20 million in debt to be liquidated. Not only is the interest of the Corporation at stake, but at the end of the day when suppliers, particularly suppliers from overseas, are dealing with an entity in Barbados, particularly if Government has some interest in the entity, as far as they are concerned they are not dealing with a strict, narrow entity called the BADMC, they are dealing with Barbados. And to have a situation in which you could have a corporation owned by the Government which is not paying its bills is obviously doing a disservice to the good people of this country. To have them associated and being described as persons who do not pay their bills is really not the kind of situation which we know at all. We are not like other countries in the world where not paying bills is a standard feature. In fact, I understand there are even some countries who are not particularly keen on paying their staff overseas and so on. So every now and again you may find a diplomat abroad taking a rest on the park bench because payment has not come through but there is too much trouble at home to return.

We want to clean this mess up. We want to ensure that people are not disadvantaged, but what is interesting is that amongst the persons who have found themselves on the list of suppliers who cannot be paid by the BADMC are again some of the same small, black business people the Honourable Member on the Other Side likes to talk about. I like to talk about them too, but my actions are always consistent with my words. So that you have situations where persons who would have supplied fruits, vegetables, beef and so on to the BADMC obviously cannot be paid. They have to hold the strain whilst the BADMC tries to get its act together, and we are going to do that for them, Sir.

What is being proposed is that this loan will be raised primarily for the purpose of debt consolidation, repayments will be made on the loan over an 8-year period and a small amount will be made available for working capital which will allow the BADMC to restore its respectability and, by extension, the respectability of the Government and people of Barbados in terms of their capacity and their willingness always to meet their obligations.

Some restructuring has already taken place and more is in the works. What has already been done is that the estates of the BADMC have been transferred to the BAMC for management and operations. The revenue making area for the time being will be kept to ensure that there is an income stream, so that the Corporation will continue with the importation of any sugar that is not available locally. The two will not be in conflict as was the case in the past. It will also continue to operate the duty free shops and the minimarts at the airport for the time being, again to assist in getting an income stream to keep the other aspects of the operations going. It will also continue to operate the abattoir until the private sector is finally able to get its act together and have a new abattoir which meets all requirements. It will also operate the onion bond, irrigation extension and food promotion unit, export packaging unit and so on.

The areas which are proposed for discontinuation, Sir, would include the motor tractor cultivation scheme and one or two other areas. For example, what is proposed for the motor tractor cultivation scheme is that that scheme will be offered to the employees to allow them to create business opportunities for themselves and, as has been experienced in a number of corporate endeavours, sometimes loss making entities which form a department of a corporation can be turned over to the employees of the same corporation and be turned into profit making ventures. There are reasons for that which I will not get into at this point, but certainly one of the early things is that the customer base of the newly created entity is not limited to the customer base of the original entity. This has been done in corporate Barbados as far as the soft drink distribution business is concerned, in wholesale distribution and one or two other areas. What it is also doing, of course, is allowing and empowering people to have an ownership stake, because rather than just driving your tractor by day, parking it in the evening and slamming some tar or whatever, you have an asset. It becomes yours, you do whatever you choose with it in terms of making some money.

The proposal, therefore, Sir, is for the financing to be raised by the BADMC on the basis of a business plan that has been prepared by the Corporation, the Corporation will therefore be able to operate on a new path and seek to meet the targets that are established in the business plan. The consolidated debt will allow for a planned restructuring exercise which would seek to keep the Corporation current as far as its general expense and revenue situation is concerned, and we are satisfied that the restructuring plan which is to be financed by this activity will correct the serious flaws which were made in the past with the BADMC and will have a fragrance associated with the Corporation which has not otherwise hitherto been known to exist.

5.25 p.m.

Mr. President, I beg to move that this Resolution in support of the Government Guarantee for the BADMC do now pass.

SENATOR C. K. LAURIE: Just a few words, Sir. I am not a high financier but I am a bit confused here. We are talking about 1993 that we had \$12 million left, by 1995 it had gone up to \$14 million, by 1996 it had gone up to \$20 million and we are going to borrow \$22 million. How are they ever going to service that debt? This doesn't change the debt. They are going to borrow this money or are we going to give it to them as a grant? If they are going to borrow it, then they have gone through the eddoes already because there is no way that they can service a \$22 million debt with the inflows that are supposed to occur.

I was told once by one of their people, their higher staff, that they have a positive cash flow at the Hope Dairy. Yes, they have a positive cash flow because they don't pay for the feed. It is simple thinking. If you sell milk and don't pay for the feed you are bound to have a positive cash flow but the feed mills would never give anybody else that kind of credit but they figure it is Government so in the end you will get paid.

The export scheme has a positive cash flow but at the expense of the BADMC. They owe the BADMC well over \$1 million. In fact, the BADMC stopped selling them anything because they were never getting paid. They were taking this money, drawing it and saying they had a positive cash flow. I have not seen this business plan but I am horrified to believe that this could ever service this kind of debt. Why are we doing this? Why don't we just close the thing down, pay it off and forget it. I don't really see it has anything...

Aside.

HIS HONOUR SENATOR C. L. BOLDEN: Mr. President, I do not want to get as excited as the Honourable Senator who just sat down. I am not criticising the Government because I know exactly what happens with the functionaries that you have to deal with on account of their little secret interests and unless you know what is happening you cannot remedy the problem.

One of the things that I have always taken great objections to are the four-day experts who come to Barbados and advise us on how we must run institutions in this country and I had my clash with experts when I was Minister of Agriculture looking at this same BMC because when they walked into my office and asked for all the papers that our people have collected, I told them, "No. You all are the experts. You come to advise Government. You have been paid to do it. Prepare your own papers."

They went around here for weeks and they have given Government nothing and they are gone. I understand that the merger of the BMC and the ADC was as a result of experts who I believe came from the IADB and advocated this merger and the last administration fell hook, line and sinker for it and merged it but we have to understand the psyche of our people when we are doing things.

If you take a careful look, all of these experts who come here and advise Government to do things, they never work out. They have their training, their bases and their outlook at countries different to Barbados. Unfortunately, once they come from over and away, things happen and they accept that.

Let us take a little move off of this. Look at the ABC Highway. When I criticised it and said it is bad I have not heard an engineer yet come out and have the guts to say that things are wrong with it. You put a local man to work with the experts and he gets contaminated and whatever they tell him he swallows. Look at every roundabout in this country and see they are death traps but we don't have the guts to tell them that they are wrong. I think this is what is happening with the way the BADMC is run. This goes back for a long time.

Mr. President, when I was Minister of Agriculture we had the same experts who advocated the movement of research out of the Ministry of Agriculture proper into the ADC and I believe that is the first thing that has got to happen. There is nobody responsible for the ADC. You spend wild and you employ wild and you do whatever you feel like. You will always lose money. I think that you really need a restructuring of agriculture. Take the research out of ADC/BADMC and put it back where it rightfully belongs in the Ministry of Agriculture. You have a Chief Agricultural Officer, you have all the technical experts in the Ministry of Agriculture and you can have the input from farmers into the Ministry of Agriculture. You have somebody responsible that you can deal with. You have nobody responsible when it comes to ADC or what is BADMC. That is where we lost a lot of money.

I can go back and say that I used to sit on a board where a certain gentleman from the ADC came to that board and borrowed \$1 million to plant cotton in St. Lucy and did not reap a pound of cotton. They were all eaten. You see we have a peculiar fallacy about cotton in this country. The experts will tell you Barbados can only grow 3 crops of cotton. Thereafter you have to be out. BAMC will learn that shortly and I want the Senator to tell them

that I said so. They will learn that shortly, because I will still be around when they lose a lot of money in cotton.

We have the mahoe tree. We have the okra tree. We have the wild cotton tree and we have the bush cotton. The only places that don't clear the cotton bush, although the Act says there is a closed season, is Government lands. So after every 3 years there are so much insects in the cotton that you always fail in cotton after 3 crops in this country. Even after 2. The Senator agrees with me too but you still see BAMC advertising and planting cotton all over the place. So you know why? Because they come from away too and they bring their own concepts here and nobody wants to tell them they are wrong. I tell them they are wrong when we meet so they don't like me. I tell them they are wrong like how they threw away a lot of money in sugar the last crop. I think the Senator is on the board, and he will throw away a lot of money in a crystallizer down at Portvale but you cannot tell them they are wrong because they come from overseas and the last manager who just went home told me whatever we do, whenever the money is lost, it is the taxpayers of Barbados money.

Aside.

HIS HONOUR SENATOR C. L. BOLDEN: So you see we must go wrong. We shut down a dairy at Haggatts because we said it had reached a point in development when dairying can be handed over to the farmers themselves but they keep the one at the Hope at which you are still licking money when you owe the feed company for it and the little bit of sales were going elsewhere. All you talk about it, nobody listens. The worst dairy you kept but if you go back – I don't know. I am outside but people call me at night and tell me things – and ask who were the officers at the Hope and what they were buying for themselves and balance that against their salaries then you will know what was happening. I don't know anything about finance. I only talk what I hear. I cannot add too well.

You take the plantations and what do you do? Rather than give the plantations to an entity that can run plantations you leave them in ADC. Now we had a tree planting programme in St. Andrew that was coming on very good. You could get guavas, cherries and everything. You had a small processing plant up there in Wildey and you used to process yams. We had export markets for yam powder. What happened to it? They pulled it down and every bit of machinery was left to rust out. They did not sell one piece of machinery.

5.35 p.m.

Go down in Haggatts now. The land has run away with bush so you cannot tell cherry tree from wild

grass. You cannot tell a guava tree from a love vine and all of that is Government land, taxpayers again.

You talk about the ploughing scheme? They had more machinery than one of the plants that produced ploughs and tractors in the United States.

Aside.

HIS HONOUR SENATOR C. L. BOLDEN: But you cannot get your land ploughed. You cannot borrow machinery. You cannot do anything. When you go in there the tractor driver is sitting down there and tells you, "They have not told me what to do today so I am waiting to find out what to do." As I said, there is nobody with responsibility when it comes to BADMC. We seek to take so-called experts, civil servants who go to work at 9.00 o'clock...

I used to be a Minister. We once had a certain civil servant who used to sit down in an office with files all around him. When you passed, he looked up in the air. When I asked what was happening, he was meditating. Things got so bad that they had to recommend him and send him to an international organisation as an expert. That is why I do not have any use for experts.

I remember when I was at MTW we had a team of experts come down here to look at the Transport Board and I got very malicious and officious and I started to run down who these were. One was a woman that used to work in a South American country where she never produced anything at all, not even children, and they transferred her to an international organisation to come down to Barbados to tell us how to run buses. When I started to talk to her I said: "Madam, what I would like to do is to have a scheduled bus service." She said: "What are you talking about?" And she was an expert. When I hear about these experts they and I are always at war.

First of all, I think we really have no use for the thing called BADMC in Barbados today at all. The BMC was bad. When I was Minister, I fought tooth and nail. Imagine, we grow onions. The farmers out there were growing the onions. The farmers out there have the market for the onions but the BMC must insist they must charge you to export your own crop. I say you can charge me an inspection fee because the receiving country wants to see a certain certificate issued from a Government department. Charge me an inspection fee but leave it to me to do it. If the BAS was really a proper organisation, those are the people who should be looking after the export and import of agricultural commodities.

Asides.

HIS HONOUR SENATOR C. L. BOLDEN: I could tell you about the Liquor Store at the Airport. The Liquor Store came about when I was Minister of Transport and Works and they were given half of the Liquor Store to help them out of their difficulties financially. I believe it is the only entity that makes money. They should have made money out of sugar but sugar got so sweet that the proceeds from the sugar never reached the BMC.

A couple years ago we had a boat down in the Harbour held up for about 8 weeks with sugar on board and even people from other islands, like Trinidad, were tied up in the sugar deal. I got a call one day begging me to come and let us draw some documents. I am not calling any names. Let me leave that.

Mr. President, I do not see why the BADMC should be in the minimart at all at the Airport. It is not something for a Government organisation of any size to be in. The minimart sells little bags of sugar, a little bag of peas. Why cannot you put it out to tender and give it to a little small businessman? Why must the BADMC be involved in that? The administrative cost alone to the BADMC makes it non-profitable. The Liquor Store could be rented out and get the same returns for Government as you rent the other part of the Liquor Store at the Airport. BADMC has no right being in that at all.

The Tractor Scheme, I agree... Give it to the operators and it will make money. This is one time I agree with Senator Laurie. Write off the debt. The taxpayers of Barbados will have to write it off one way or the other. Put the functions back in the Ministry of Agriculture. You have a Chief Agricultural Officer. You have all the Technical Officers. They are the persons who would be responsible. Other than that I do not see any real reason now for the BADMC. It has no practical function in Barbados. When you do that, you have to put some limitation on the BAS because I know about them too.

In 1974/75 when I used to be running about helping the little scout troops, the 4-H Clubs and all these things, I met a lady called one Glenora Simmon, a Canadian. She was down here on the CIDA programme. She was then a 4-H expert, an overseas expert. We met in Queen's Park drawing up a plan for the 4-H young people. By 1976 she went up one month and came back down as an agricultural expert attached to the BAS.

Now, I became Minister of Agriculture and I wrote a letter to the BAS all in good faith saying, if we want to help out people in Barbados, particularly the farmers, I want you to send to me each month the date showing

what you are planting, how much of it you are planting, when you are planting it, the expected date of reaping and expected returns because consumer affairs and imports came under the Ministry of Agriculture.
5.45 p.m.

I told the business houses in Bridgetown you will not be able to import anything that farmers in Barbados can grow. You will have to satisfy me that it is not available locally before you bring it in the island. We even got down to the point where I said that you will only be allowed to import certain commodities in institutional size cans, because they contended that they wanted baby carrots and these things and I said well, you bring them in 6 – 10 pound and 20 pound cans and I will allow you. This Glenora Simmon and the Senator got up there and they said you must not cooperate with the Government, farmers all around the world control Government not Government control farmers, and told them not to reply to me. After making a big speech, in my first year, at the BAS setting out a policy, the next year they did not invite the Minister of Agriculture anymore, they invited the Minister of Tourism to give the feature address.

And it went on to reach such a point that the BAS never even supplied Government with any information – they wanted – but they never supplied – you all must know the history of the BAS. They just fired a manager up there and he has gone mad. The BAS never catered to small farmers in this country. They never catered to small farmers – it is after they start asking Government for subventions and we said to them that if they want subventions from Government you must have an open policy that anybody can join the BAS – that is how they got money from us. I refused to give them any money because there was a policy that they only had certain people in the BAS.

One of them sat down and told me, when I was asking about growing crops in this country, we cannot plan, we cannot tell you prices *et cetera* because the small farmers alone buy 5 times the amount of seeds that the plantations buy. It reached the point under Glenora Simmon where they never gave Government any information, whatsoever, but complained that we were allowing the merchants in Bridgetown to bring in crops that they were growing but they never gave you any information.

I am saying now, I am not backtracking, I am saying the BAS has a role to play but they must be open and Government must be able to monitor what they are doing and they must treat all farmers the same way. They must not treat some one way and some the next. They are falling apart but the Government will have to look at whether or not they are going to keep the BADMC and throw away

money or whether Government will make a policy and the BAS will sit down with Government and have a unified policy for agriculture. That is exactly what we need. A unified policy for agriculture and Government will have to, at the same time – that is why I want to see one basic unit for agriculture. I want to see that we do not have people in the Ministry of Agriculture sitting on 16 files for farmers who want rebates. Do you understand?

Asides.

HIS HONOUR SENATOR C. L. BOLDEN: All I am saying that we must look at this – I do not believe that the BADMC will ever be able to pay back the \$22 million which is going to it today. It will have to be a very active and productive organisation and for what I know of it, it cannot. I do not think that you have the skills and the leadership available to make that institution viable to pay back this money. It probably will profit the taxpayers of Barbados better if Government accept, write off the \$20 million, shut it down, transfer certain people in certain place, you have to give them certain guarantees *et cetera*, their pension rights whatever the case might be, but let us have a unified unit that we can control agriculture. The question of export packaging *et cetera*, the BAS can develop certain units for doing those things and there should be merging of these facilities into one and we would do better.

I went to Taiwan and I can tell you and this is why I say you need one unit for agriculture in this country where you are going to have a basic policy. They ask me to get up one morning and look out, and I saw hundreds of those farmers with boxes – bananas, a little bit of this a little bit of that, what is called a multi-use factory. When I ask what are you doing with those bananas – when I went inside the factory they showed me what they were doing with the bananas – bananas that would be rejected in St. Lucia, bananas where they do not care anything about, they were being processed and put in boxes – the interpreter said that they ship them to the United States for making banana daiquiris. He said that when a Bartender puts a daiquiris in a drink you do not know if it is a good one, a bad one or else – it's a banana flavour.

These are the things that we need to look at in Barbados. Nobody caters to the small farmers out there. They have produce and you could pass and see little bits and pieces that have spoilt being thrown out because we do not have the unified agricultural policy in this country. Something has got to be done. Why throw \$22 million down the drain and in another few years come back and you are going to be another few million down with a lot of employees and you getting no where in the long run.

Thank you, Mr. President.

SENATOR Mrs. P. E. RICKINSON: I did not plan to speak on this but from what I can hear in agriculture, it seems to be chaos. Mr. President, I feel that agriculture is so important to this society in order to feed our industrial population, to bring down the prices. At present you have to pay about \$5 a pound for tomatoes, \$5 a pound for sweet peppers, all of this chaos to be going on.
5.55 p.m.

We have read about dirty sugar and all these things. We should be able to do better than that so I will urge those who are concerned to try to do a bit better so that we can get agriculture to make the utmost contribution to our social and economic development.

SENATOR Mrs. A. P. THOMPSON: Mr. President, I believe the Government, on taking office, made several commitments to the people of Barbados one of which was to make sure that agriculture would be placed on a firm, sustainable footing. I am therefore interpreting the measure before the Senate today to be one of its efforts in fulfilling such a promise to the people of Barbados.

Yes, there has to be concern that we are attempting to liquidate further debt and that we are speaking of capitalisation of our debt ridden corporation with further debt and one wonders when we will fully extricate ourselves from this debt position. I think that as we look at the area of agriculture we would accept that around the world, countries have subsidized agriculture and I believe all Governments of Barbados have been philosophically committed to such, recognising of course that from time to time because of acts of nature individuals and businesses will set out to produce, to meet requirements and then through no fault of their own cannot realise such.

There has been a lot of talk about all kinds of misdeeds. I am not in a position to delve into that kind of talk. All I would say at present is that when you live in glass houses you have to be careful where you are throwing stones because this is an area that I have been looking into quite recently and after all the talk about the number of persons hired and all that I have noticed two individuals who were unsuccessful candidates in general elections posted in the very high positions in the same BADMC. I have not really questioned why I have seen no ad in the newspaper for such positions, neither have I enquired what were the basic requirements for such but I note that they have risen to the heights of Assistant Manager and Special Officer and nobody has questioned that. This is not to say that wrong must be backed by wrong but it is to say that whenever we intend to clean up we need to clean and keep clean at all times. Also I am aware of individuals who have been taken on even though

we are talking about the cost of running the BADMC, who have been hired since the change of Government to work at the same BADMC and at the very bond in St. Philip that you stated has been over staffed. So, one has to wonder sometimes about these things.

I have also been made aware of a consultancy contract that has been out for a sum of close to \$100 000 for consultancy work in the same BADMC. I therefore look forward with great expectations to the production of a business plan which has been promised for some time now and which should point the people of Barbados to the direction in which the Government of Barbados intends to take agriculture by way of this agency, the BADMC.

Now, from time to time, I have to make comments in here that cause some people to become angry. I know that in recent times a very large fruit and vegetable outlet has been established in Barbados and I note that it has come at a time when we have been hearing about reorganisation within the BADMC and just at a point before we heard about severance and all of that, we heard about the sudden appearance of this very successful venture. It is interesting that over the years we have not been able to hear of many profits in agriculture but in a short, sharp period of time one can hear about such successes. The point I want to make is that there is something wrong with our attitude as a people. We have an attitudinal problem which has to be corrected. We believe that once something is associated with Government, is managed or funded by Government, that it is a free-for-all and that the people of Barbados at all levels have a right to treat it with disrespect. This is something that we need to deal with.

I have no doubt that many of those individuals who supply or who have supplied the BADMC over the years will probably be supplying this outlet and I can guarantee all people that the quality, the cleanliness and all the necessary requirements will be in place as they deal with such an organisation. We need to speak with our people about these things. Whether we close the BADMC down or whether we open something else, until our people understand that a business does not have to suffer or fail because it is managed by Government, until we get our people to understand this, we are going nowhere. Government has got to come in at some point and get things going in order to empower its people. There are some areas in which our people will not have the resources to make that first step and if a Government is really serious about the empowerment of its people it must at some point intervene and guarantee its people that at some point they can take over and carry on which means that that Government must absorb certain losses which would be associated with the teething or the starting up stages of such enterprises. We must find a way to get the

message through to our people that businesses in which Government participates should and must not necessarily fail. Until we get that message through we are wasting our time.

I am not going to join in a call to close the BADMC down. The former DLP administration had started to transfer those estates to the BAMC, those which were with the BADMC, the three of them were transferred under the former administration so I believe that both political parties believe that is where they belong. I agree with Senator Bolden that we have to be very wary of these foreign people.

I think our sovereignty is threatened as an independent nation when we find ourselves in a position that very important elements of our lives are dictated to by individuals outside of our land.
6.05 p.m.

We spend so much money on education. We have so many university graduates with first class honours degree in all areas. I have 8 clients who are qualified in Agricultural Science to the level of Masters Degree and one with a Doctorate. It is not that the Government has gone out and bypassed the people. But because for some reason we go out there on the market and we get these people's money we then have to accept their conditionalities, one of which seems to be always that they are allowed to put their technical experts in there who know nothing whatsoever about our culture, people and our way of life and they come and impose all kinds of requirements on us. So I would like to caution the new Government and some of its young Ministers and junior Ministers that in their excitement, in an attempt to want to lay at the feet of the former administration blame for many things, that they seek to understand Government well enough to the extent that they recognize that once they are out there in the marketplace negotiating for people's money, you have to determine whether you are going to accept their conditions precedent for the attainment of such funds.

I believe that agriculture is very important to our livelihood. I think that we need to get to that stage where we are more self-sufficient in our food production and I would not be one to stand in the way of any Government that is attempting to regularize that area of our lives. I too have my concerns. I realize that the BADMC cannot service its debt. How can it? Regarding the revenue generating areas here in the duty free shops, the importation of the chicken wings and so on, the interest rate and the conditions set here are not in keeping with the regular commercial conditions. I believe that this will come back to us. I have no doubt that the Government of Barbados will come back to this Parliament in order to service this debt on a regular basis. The Government of

Barbados has to come to the people of Barbados for money such as supplementaries during the Budget in order to make sure that this debt can be serviced. So maybe it would not have been a bad idea had the Government made the decision to make it a grant. A lot of this has happened already. It is already there. We have been told that it is affecting credit ratings not only at home but externally. This is something that we should be concerned about. We want to be able from time to time to go on the international market especially where we have major developmental projects. So I believe that the Government should have made a grant to the BADMC and pushed off from that point.

So my appeal now to the Government is to come swiftly to the people of Barbados with its business plan so that we can have a very clear idea of where we are going and how we plan to get there. I therefore, Sir, will not hesitate to support the Resolution before us.

SENATOR THE HON. G. S. H. MURRAY: Mr. President, I just thought that I should try to put some of this debate in its perspective particularly after Senator Thompson spoke. First of all, I would like to set at rest what seems to be a growing opinion that Government in regards to the BADMC is likely to be dictated to by some foreign experts. There is no indication anywhere that I have seen or heard that the business plan is to be prepared by a business expert or that the terms or conditions will come from any foreign experts no matter what you say about foreign experts. In order that that suspicion does not grow into a perceived fact, I will put that to rest right away.

But I thought that Senator Thompson made some interesting contributions and the whole tenor of her contribution was interesting because she was half saying things. I thought that this was a trend where you would give the whole story or truth and nothing but the truth.

Mr. PRESIDENT: You seem to be suggesting that she was not telling the truth.

SENATOR THE HON. G. S. H. MURRAY: No, Sir. I was just using a very well known phrase but I meant that she would tell the whole story with all the facts and information, all the deeds and especially the misdeeds. It is all right to talk about the misdeeds, but I would rather if you have heard of misdeeds to come out and lay it out flat so that if we do not know we can take corrective action.

Because when we had to speak about the misdeeds of the past administration at the BADMC in regards to the distribution of sugar like the Guatemala sugar, the

whole question of onions, chicken wings, and transportation of these items where you would have items imported and transported to a bond house in St. Philip only to be brought back to Bridgetown for distribution. All of those are part of the misdeeds. The chauffeur driven car of a 5-year contract was part of the misdeeds. I think that I could speak of those things in detail if I have to. But if you are going to hint about misdeeds, I will not hint of the misdeeds but I will give you chapter and verse from all of the misdeeds.

The Barbados Labour Party's record from way back in agriculture is well-known and well respected. We have never had any hangups about agriculture. We have all recognized the importance of agriculture. We do not think that you have to have two Ministers of Agriculture to take agriculture seriously. We think that one good Minister with a serious policy on agriculture can help to take corrective action. But I was particularly interested in her hints about these ex-candidates at BADMC. She did not say that they were unqualified. She did not say that they were not doing a good job. She did not say that they were stealing or anything of that matter. Must ex-candidates not work? We have seen all kinds of red herrings all over Government and statutory corporations overnight. You do not advertise overnight. I do not understand why all of a sudden we seem to have this obsession that everything must be advertised and everything must come to them for their own stamp of approval. I just thought, Sir, that I would bring the past record back in order to show the kinds of half cuts and half swipes made. I do not understand what you are doing. I thought the Honourable Senator would have come clear and put everything on the table and we could have taken it to task.

I thank you, Sir.

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

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

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

ORDER NO. 1 – TO MOVE THE SECOND READING OF THE BILL TO AMEND THE PROPERTY ACT, CAP. 236

HIS HONOUR SENATOR C. L. BOLDEN: This is a very short amendment to the Property Act, Cap. 236 of the laws of Barbados. Our Property Act, Mr. President, was drafted in 1978/1979 and it followed the Property Act of Ireland and also the English Act. But apparently in drafting section 7(2) the words "whether or not" have crept in which defeat the very purpose of the new amendment to the Act. As a result of this, there was a case which came before the Courts in 1982, Case No. 488 of 1982 and the

judgment delivered by the then judge who is now our Chief Justice said that these words "whether or not" in section 7 (2) should be removed from that section. The question is what is it all about? People go to banks and so on and have what is called an equitable mortgage by depositing title deeds. The bank holds the title deeds. If at anytime there is a transfer of that property, what section 7 (2) did was to say that you could not override that equitable interest irrespective of whether you knew of it or not.
6.15 p.m.

If at anytime there is a transfer of that property what section 7(2) did was to say that you could not override that equitable interest in respect of whether you knew of it or not. It defeats the very purpose because if the land is transferred that equitable interest should be transferred from the land to the consideration which is the money but as it stands that could not be. The Learned Trial Judge in giving his judgment said this:

"Before closing I should note that the words "whether or not" in section 7(2)(a) of the Property Act seems to have created the difficulty confronting the Receiver. They do not appear in the corresponding provisions of the English Act nor do they appear in the like provision of the legislation of Northern Ireland which I understand formed a model for the Property Act, 1979 – Number 11. Indeed their inclusion in section 7(2)(a) seems to defeat to a large extent the purpose of the section which as I understand it is to freeze the legal estate from encumbrances wherever possible or appropriate and transfer them to the consideration monies."

What we are doing at this point in time is to have these words removed from section 7(2). This should have been done long ago but as is customary it has taken 14 years before it comes to the Chamber and comes by way of a private bill.

I therefore move that this Bill be read a second time.

The question was put to the Senate and agreed to.

On the motion of His Honour SENATOR C. L. BOLDEN, Mr. PRESIDENT left the Chair and the Senate went into Committee on the Bill, SENATOR Miss O. P. SYMMONDS in the Chair.

Madam CHAIRMAN: The Senate is now in Committee.

Clauses 1 to 3 were called and passed.

On the motion of His Honour SENATOR C. L. BOLDEN, Madam CHAIRMAN reported the passing of one Bill in Committee and Mr. President resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

HIS HONOUR SENATOR C. L. BOLDEN: I beg to move that this Bill be now read a third time.

The question was put to the Senate and agreed to and the Bill was cited and passed.

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY: I beg to move that the Report of the Select Committee on the Insurance Bill be adopted by the Honourable Senate.

The question was put to the Senate and agreed to.

ADJOURNMENT

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. President, I beg to move that this sitting be adjourned until Monday, December 23, 1996 at 11 a.m.
6.25 p.m.

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