
THE SENATE DEBATES

(UNOFFICIAL REPORT)

PARLIAMENT 2008 – 2013

THE SENATE

Friday, February 4, 2011

The Senate met in the Senate Chamber, Parliament Building on Friday, The February 4, 2011 at 12:00 noon.

PRESENT

His Honour Senator Dr. Branford M. Taitt, K.A., B.A., (Hons.), M.P.A., LL.B. (Hons.), D.H.L. (Hon.) (President)

Her Honour Senator Miss Kerryann F. IFILL, B.Sc. (Hons.) M.B.A. (Deputy President)

Senator the Hon. Miss M. P. O. McCLEAN, B.Sc. (Hons.) M.A., M.B.A. (Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade) (Leader of the Senate)

Senator the Hon. H. L. BENN, E.M.B.A. (Marketing) J.P.

(Minister of Commerce and Trade)

Senator the Hon. D. W. BOYCE, B.Sc. (Econ.), M.B.A. (Fin.), CMA, F.C.A. (Minister in the Office of the Prime Minister with responsibility for Energy, Immigration, Telecommunications and Invest Barbados)

Senator Mrs. V. I. SANDIFORD-GARNER, CIM, Dip. Mng., M.B.A. Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Health)

Senator J. INCE, J.P., BB.A., M.B.A, Dip (Mgmt.) (Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs)

Senator P. W. B. GILKES

Senator R. A. HUNTE, J.P.

Senator Rev. Dr. D. L. DURANT, D.D. (Hon.)

Senator A. R. WORRELL, B.A. (Hons.)

Senator K. D. SYMMONDS, B.A., LL.B.

Senator S. J. O. BRADSHAW, LL.B. (Hons.)

Senator the Very Reverend H. E. CRICHLow, G.C.M.,

B.A. (Hons.) Dunelm

Senator Dr. F. L. CHANDLER, Ph.D., B.Sc. (Hons.)

Senator R. O. MARVILLE, B.A.. (Hons.), M.A.

African Studies, M.B.A.

Senator R. G. CAVE, CBE., B.C.H.

Prayers were led by Rev. Father Errington Massiah.

Mr. PRESIDENT: This Senate is in Session.

ANNOUNCEMENTS BY HIS HONOUR THE PRESIDENT

Mr. PRESIDENT: I am in receipt of excuses for Senator Husbands and Senator Trotman, both of whom have asked to be excused from this Sitting of the Senate.

In the case of Senator Trotman, I am in receipt of a letter dated 31st January, 2011 in which he has indicated that he would like to be excused for the period 31st January to 20th February and 4th March to 28th March, 2011. This allows him, if the Senate agrees, to perform his duties as an officer of the International Labour Organisation.

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

PRESENTATION OF PAPERS

Senator the Hon. Miss M. P. O. McCLEAN: Mr. President, I am commanded to lay the Annual Report of the Grantley Adams International Airport Inc. for the financial year 2008-2009.

MOTIONS RELATING TO THE BUSINESS OR SITTINGS OF THE SENATE AND MOVED BY A MINISTER

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

Senator the Hon. Miss M. P. O. McCLEAN: Mr. President, I beg to move that Standing Order 45 (2) be suspended for the remainder of the day's Sitting.

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

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Senator the Hon. Miss M. P. O. McCLEAN: Mr. President, I beg to move that the Transnational Organized Crime (Prevention and Control) Bill, 2011 be read a first time.

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

PUBLIC BUSINESS

ORDER No. 3

TRANSNATIONAL ORGANIZED CRIME (PREVENTION AND CONTROL) BILL, 2011

Senator the Hon. Miss M. P. O. McCLEAN: Mr. President, the Transnational Organized Crime (Prevention and Control) Bill, 2011 is one piece of a suite of legislation which this Government and our Honourable Chamber will have to address as we seek to ensure, as a member of the community of nations, that we put in place the requisite legislation to correspond with our signature to a number of conventions as we participate in the family of the United Nations.

As we do so, Mr. President, we do so in an effort to demonstrate not only to the citizens of this country but to the world that we are a responsible nation notwithstanding our small size and that we are committed not only to engage in long debates, yet very important debates, in the hallowed halls of the UN General Assembly and the various committees of the United Nations.

Mr. President, we do so also in an effort to ensure that as we live and breathe and move as human beings and as citizens of Barbados, we are doing so against the background of a legislative framework and a set of laws and regulations which influence how we operate as individual citizens, how we manage our affairs as a country and how we seek to participate in world affairs as a country known and reputed to operate according to best practices.

12.25 p.m.

Mr. President, the reality is, however, as we would have experienced in several fora, the timing of the implementation of legislation does not necessarily coincide with the signature of these conventions, et cetera. Indeed, this Bill will give effect to the Convention Against Transnational Organised Crime, signed in New York on 15th November, 2000. We are talking about affixing our

signature to that convention and to the relevant protocols. We are now seeking to ensure that legislation is put in place.

Mr. President, it is an unfortunate reality but the constraints of resources, et cetera, priorities in terms of legislative agenda of successive governments have been such that there is that lag period but at the end of the day we will not only seek to put legislation in place in as timely a manner as possible, and eleven years is some time, but there are countries... Sir, Barbados is an example of this where conventions have been signed and the necessary legislation is pending.

Mr. President, specifically, if we look at the Protocols of the Convention to which Barbados is a signatory, it addresses three broad areas:

(a) the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children; (b) the Protocol Against Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air; (c) the Protocol Against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, their Parts and Components and Ammunition.

Mr. President, if we look to dissect and discuss individually each of these, we can recognise that this piece of legislation is of major importance to all Barbadians. I want to start with the issue of the prevention, suppression and punishment of trafficking in persons. If you are a regular listener or viewer of some programmes, we would recognise that in recent years we would have seen many documentaries highlighting this terrible situation. Sir, recently there was a movie made about a situation in which a citizen of a North African country was working as a domestic helper in the home of a diplomat in one of our major cities. This individual was essentially held captive and forced to provide almost equivalent to slave labour. Sir, one would ask the question in this 21st Century how is this possible.

Mr. President, the reality is that across the world we see levels of poverty, sometimes not even understood in Barbados. I am not suggesting that we do not have poverty in Barbados, we certainly have and that is an issue which we have to tackle, as we speak to these kinds of travesties. Sir, we have situations of grinding poverty where parents, with the best intention, often end up sacrificing their children to persons who have less than honourable intentions towards those children, the children are promised a better life, even sometimes by relatives and taken to strange cities or outside of those countries. Those children are then subjected to some of the most inhumane and sick treatment that there is.

Mr. President, in the Caribbean, for example, we often hear about the exploitation of women. Sir, this is

something literally very close to home. I recall some concerned raised with me directly when, in my early term as a Minister in the Office of the Prime Minister, I received calls about persons wanting to know what to do because their passports were taken, et cetera. Sir, I will you an example. At that time, Barbados did not provide work permits for domestic help and there was a method by which I discovered that would have been used to attempt or at least to allow women to stay here. Sir, that method was the continuous extension of their visitor's permits. The challenge was that there was always this fear that some day somebody would turn up and recognised them. My argument to officials at the time was that we have seen a phenomenon developed, being that there were not many Barbadians who wanted to work as live-in helpers because Barbados is a small place and a woman can take care of an employer's household, afterwards she can take a bus and go home to look after her family. Therefore, the size of the country, along with the availability of transport did not make that situation one that was attractive to many locals. Therefore, if you need that, the solution is to say to the authorities you need to look at the rules because the phenomenon of the demand for live-in help or nursing assistant, et cetera, is growing and we cannot supply the demand from internal resources, so you offer legal and formal solution. Sir, we had that kind of situation.

Mr. President, we often hear of young women being attracted by offers of employment, who come here. Mr. President, I will give you another example of one of the first matters that I had to deal with and we all recall the difficulties we faced with that flight from Ghana, which brought with it a number of young men and a handful of young women. I took time, as I had to deal with that issue, to interview some of the young men. In fact, the interesting thing was that when we looked at the young men, as opposed to the young women, the women were hard to locate. I saw the women only when we were able to put them on a plane. I understood that in no time some of those women had disappeared and were engaging in prostitution.

I was also told by some of the young men that some people genuinely bought a ticket to come here on holiday on this charter flight but there were many who came with promises of employment. As a result of that, because people want to escape hardship, they came here. Sir, the first observation I made when I saw the cross-section of young men was that they did not look like they could afford to travel to Barbados on a holiday and many of them did not, they were a number of them who saw it and genuinely bought into it but they were promised a better life and they came with those expectations. Sir, clearly somebody was seeking to exploit those persons because if there were job opportunities that they could legally access, there are mechanisms by which that can be done.

Mr. President, when we talk about human trafficking that is a very common phenomenon. It is one that is very dehumanizing. It is very destructive of our people. Our history is very much wrapped up in human trafficking but we thought we had moved away from those situations.

Mr. President, I want to suggest a situation where two things happen, there is a moral commitment on the part of the individual to not engage in those practices, we would have difficulty but more important, we need to have, because we know the moral input might not be there on the part of many people, many people do not have, as we would say in Barb, a conscience, so they would have no difficulty in taking advantage of weaker or more vulnerable persons.

12.34 p.m.

I know that we have existing in these places...

Asides.

Senator the HON. Miss M.P.O. McCLEAN: You hear the names of some exotic clubs and things of that nature. Sir, I do not go them. I have never been to one so I can only tell you what I hear.

Asides.

Senator the HON. Miss M.P.O. McCLEAN: Mr. President, I believe I am missing nothing by being absent from those things. Sir, that is where the personal commitment comes in but I believe that things that I have seen, innocuous, are in fact very damaging. I hear somebody suggest to me, and I have said to that person and, as I have said, this is only speculation because, certainly, if there were the evidence you would have to deal with it, that there are some young women from some neighbouring islands who are gainfully employed at home...

Asides.

Senator the HON. Miss M.P.O. McCLEAN: I heard of this story and I will relate it as a story because I have not been able to verify or otherwise but the person, because of the attractiveness, having come to this place on holiday and being enticed by friends to get involved with something like this, found it financially lucrative to participate but, at the same time, highly demoralising.

Mr. President, I have just to see somebody who has been involved in this speak of it in positive terms. They might tell you about the financial benefits but, Sir, then they will tell you of the damage to their psyches and to their very souls. I believe that anybody who wants to participate in this, who thinks it is nice to bring an exotic

dancer from somewhere, having promised her a job or having asked him ...

Asides.

Senator the HON. Miss M.P.O. McCLEAN: I guess there are exotic male dancers as well but I do not know because I do not go those places. Sir, some years ago, we had Chico and Max...

Asides.

Senator the HON. Miss M.P.O. McCLEAN: Sir, when those people come, some people have here under the official designation of an agricultural worker and then they disappear. Sir, I have had cases when I was responsible for immigration where individuals where "applying for a student permit", and when you look at their background, they probably could not get into any of the educational institutions that we have for adults in Barbados and, Sir, that was very much the case. Sir, they saw a way out and, in fact, essentially what happened is that they would end up in situations of bondage and, Sir, that is problematic.

Mr. President, I recall being asked to try to investigate a situation where an individual was seeking employment and in doing so the person asked about documentation et cetera, and the person said that he did not have his passport. Sir, the person admitted he was here illegally, and that it was held by somebody. Sir, this is a grown man, and not of Caribbean origin either but he loved this place, got himself caught up in whatever it was, and all I could say to the person was to tell him to indicate to the person who has it to return it to him, to get out of the country or that we would have to deal with him as well as the person who had it. Sir, they never got back to me and I presume the person is no longer in this country. I think the information was accurate enough that, failing that, we could have dealt with the matter.

Mr. President, on the whole question of trafficking in persons, I focus particularly on women and children because, as we know, children are very vulnerable. If we talk about children one of the concerns that many people around the world and, certainly, with whom I have interacted would have had with the recent disaster in Haiti, was the speed with some people were seeking to move children out of that country. In fact, as you know, there was a case against a group of persons who, based on their behaviour, did not seem to be operating above board. Mr. President, we could cite many instances of difficulties in relation to the issue of trafficking in persons.

Mr. Speaker, it also speaks against the question of smuggling of migrants by land, sea and air. We know very well because of the proximity of Mexico's borders to the United States of America, the frequent situations there. We

have seen graphic examples of tunnels dug underground to allow for the smuggling of persons. We hear of persons suffocating in the cargo holes of airlines. We have situation of persons in trucks, which are supposed to move cargo when, in fact, there are actually moving human cargo.

Mr. President, the trafficking of persons, whether they are infants who are moved by relatives, friends or strangers, is one element of another area of trafficking and that is in trafficking (5:51) in the area of firearms, their parts, components and ammunition. Sir, evidence has suggested that there is a close correlation between the trafficking in narcotics and other illegal substances and firearms. There is evidence also that some of the transactions in terms of the sale and movement of drugs, part of that transaction is settled in firearms, and so we see across the world and, certainly, in the region issues of a growing availability of weapons of all kinds. In some countries, we recognise that the authorities, the Police Force, the military and other paramilitary entities are probably less equipped than some of the persons in illicit movement of items.

Mr. President, it is, therefore, an issue which can threaten the potential problems arising from various forms of trafficking. It is an issue which can threaten the very society in which we exist and the very quality of life to which we have become accustomed.

Mr. President, if we look around the region, there was a time when a sister island, St. Kitts and Nevis, would have been one which conjures up images of tranquility, peace, close to nature et cetera, and when we start to look at the rapid escalation in crime, we recognise that something has happened in that society, as in other societies around us. If we look at Trinidad and Tobago, from a very personal perspective, there was a time when I would very easily go into Trinidad, go down Frederick Street, St. Ann's and so on but now I find the idea of doing that a bit unsettling because you may not be targeted but you may very well be an innocent victim of violence and crime which is all tied up, to a large measure, what we hear, in people engaging in illicit activity.

Mr. President, we talk about the disruption to life from a social perspective, we talk about implications of these activities for the economy. Sir, we know that smuggling, whether it is human beings, whether it is ammunition, arms and their various parts, is one in which the potential for earning is so great that if we are not able to convince our young people...

Asides.

Senator the HON. Miss M.P.O. McCLEAN: Sir, let us start with the young because they are the ones who are expected to carry the society. If we are not able to convince

our young people that we cannot focus only on the material and convince them to see life as more than that they will be very easily attracted away from the rigours and hard work of an honest day's work, to get involved in quick schemes to earn significant cash. Sir, the unfortunate reality is that once they get caught up in this, it is, perhaps, extremely difficult to extricate themselves.

Mr. President, we have a situation where apart from passing legislation, which is intended to deter persons, we have to work very hard to influence their thinking to see that the ill-gotten gains, the proceeds of such activities.

12:44

Those are things that they perhaps should not covet because in doing so they are probably exposing themselves to greater dangers than if they did, without those proceeds.

Mr. President, in addition, we are talking about ensuring that we put in place the necessary kinds of penalties, et cetera, which reflect the seriousness of these kinds of offences. I believe that as we look at several clauses of the legislation we will find that there are provisions in terms of penalties which should serve as a major deterrent. We are talking not only of formal times in prison, but we are also talking about creating mechanisms to deprive those criminal elements of the proceeds of crimes. So we have for example, in talking about this legislation, to not only look at what has been defined as areas to be regulated but the penalties to address these crimes, and therefore the consequences for those who would want to get involve in this kind of activity. Therefore, provision is made for a Criminal Assets Recovery Fund. The intention, of course, is to deprive, as I said, those persons who have been engaged in this kind of activity of those ill-gotten gains.

Sir, it is important that we do this because we want at the end of the day to deter persons and also to penalise and deprive them of the benefits. In fact, it is expected or hoped that any such Fund would then be used among other things to further strengthen the country's capacity to fight this kind of crime.

Sir, I spoke about people. I spoke about adults and I spoke specifically of women and children, but there is also another very invidious practice, and that is the whole question of not only in trafficking in human beings as individuals, bodies, persons alive, well and kicking, literally and figuratively, I suppose, but also the question of the trafficking in human parts. It sounds very macabre but it is also an unfortunate reality.

As the medical sciences have evolved, the whole question of organ transplant is a real possibility. It is amazing that people's willingness to live, I suppose,

extends to the level where they are willing to acquire human organs and human tissue, et cetera, without consent. Therefore, something which sounds like coming straight out of a movie scene, we find people being kidnaped and often times relieved of their vital organs, hearts, kidneys and whatever else as an active trade. Fortunately, I have not heard of any such thing in this part of the world, and that does not say it has never happened. We hear it in other societies. Again, people are tricked into 'the sale of organs, et cetera', and these things are taken to desperate souls, to persons who can pay for them. Some people are unfortunate to lose their lives, or if they do not die in that process they probably will be subject to a poor quality of life because the procedure by which those organs were harvested, if I could use that term, have been such that it has left the unwilling donor, or sometimes a willing donor, because he or she did not quite understand what they were getting involved, in a worse health situation than their initial state.

Mr. President, I think that as I look at the issue of Barbados' involvement in the Convention Against Transnational Organised Crime and the whole effort to prevent and control such activity. There is no doubt in my mind that it is an issue that we simply should pay lip service, but one in which we must utilise all measures available to us, inclusive of this piece of legislation, to address. I want to stress that beyond the preventative in terms of the seriousness and the provisions of the law and the punitive aspects of the law, I would want to appeal to all sectors of society, particularly those who function in influential positions, to try to instill and inculcate in our young people in particular that organised crime does not pay in the long-run and often times it does not pay in the short-run.

Sir, if I could digress a little bit and refer to some comments attributed to a young man who came to Barbados and sought to take off with almost \$1 million in jewelry, I was very happy to see him report that "the police in Barbados real good". I do not remember the exact terms. That sounds like a Bajan interpretation. In other words, having been apprehended and found guilty - I do not remember if the case is finished, but certainly he has been apprehended and brought before the courts, he was a little amazed at the quality of our policing. I would really want to signal that stories like those make us very happy, because the other side of that coin would be, if he had gotten away the public would have seen him return, or others following suit. I believe it is important that we try to do all we can, using all means, including legislation, to ensure that what we have is a situation where our population understands that organised crime is not something that would be tolerated by the society and, secondly, along with passing the legislation we put in place mechanisms to effect this legislation so that it is in fact a major deterrent to crime.

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

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Symmonds.

Mr. K. D. SYMMONDS: Mr. President, permit me to make it clear that I take no issue whatsoever with this piece of legislation. I think that, in the few brief remarks that I would want to make, I want to begin by signaling to the Chamber and, through you, to the country, the feeling of warm congratulations that I would want to extend to the Royal Barbados Police Force, who have thus far managed to do exceptionally well to guard against the crime and the scourge, which this piece of legislation is designed to protect us against without having had, in fact, the piece of legislation in place.

Mr. President, the fact of the matter is, since 2000 the group of countries which calls themselves G77, sat and deliberated, lobbied and did all the necessary things that one does in the diplomatic arena, in order to make sure that this piece of legislation that we are now discussing, became part of international law by way of the convention. Our challenges here today is to - I do not think we would have a challenge, I suspect there will not be much, if any at all, there should be no difficulty with this legislation. It makes good sense. Our mission here today, for want of a better way of putting it, is that we must now create into domestic or municipal law that which is really part of the international law.

12.53 p.m.

The difficulty that we have had in Barbados, Sir, the first point I want to make, is that we labour under a real human resource constraint, in terms of being able to cope at a realistic and meaningful pace with the international conventions, which we participate in shaping but then to translate those conventions into our domestic or municipal law because of the fact that we really, Sir, do have a limited number, and a shortage of the skilled Legislative draftspersons, in order to translate the Legislation to a point where Parliament can pass it.

Mr. President, that makes me reflect a little on the fact that when I would have been in Cabinet, these Protocols, the Protocol to prevent, suppress and punish trafficking of persons, especially women and children, that was signed as far back as the 15th November, 2000, the Protocol against the smuggling of migrants by land, sea and air signed again on 15th November 2000, the Protocol against the illicit manufacturing of and trafficking in fire arms, their parts and components and ammunition that was a 31st May, 2001 Protocol.

Sir, one felt as though one was beating one's head against a wall because of the effort to prioritise and treat

with some sense of urgency, these very important protocols and to get them to become part of our Municipal Law but then at the same time you have to balance that against the pressing reality of the myriad other issues, both of a domestic nature, a regional nature and an international nature, which equally call on the few Legislative drafts persons that we have so everything cannot obviously be a priority at one time. Sir, I congratulate the Government for having these Protocols now at the point where we can translate them into domestic law.

I want, Sir, to say that each of the three Protocols that I just enumerated, speak, in a real and tangible sense to the social and economic reality of what we understand in Barbados today. Sir, I do not think that anyone can make light of the fact that in a real sense therefore, what we are now doing is building out a Legislative capacity in this country to empower the authorities in Barbados, to better deal with the scourges that we are contemplating.

The Leader of Government Business spoke well and to some extent at length on the question of the first Protocol which is preventing and suppressing and punishing trafficking in persons, especially women and children. I would want, Sir, merely to make the point that we have seen this in a number of sectors.

The Leader of Government Business spoke to the aspect of prostitution but, Sir, in more traditional sectors, for example, agriculture, I have seen at my desk, as an Attorney coming back into practice, a lady who is now married to a Barbadian and properly a Barbadian citizen, but reflecting on a problem that she had when she first came to Barbados, in circumstances where she was skilled as a carpenter, Sir, it is an important to note for our gender that those traditional areas of skilled trades which men felt were their domain, are no longer. The ladies are doing the tiling, carpentry and all the other things, perhaps, as well as or better than many of the men. Sir, she made the point that when she came here, not only was her passport taken away but she came under - and I would not call any names - a contractual relationship with a large business enterprise in Barbados that went to Guyana and specifically sought out people, because of their skill in using the hard wood.

The fact of the matter is, Sir, that she was placed in an area where the accommodation was deplorable, her passport was taken away from her, all of those things that she understood before leaving Guyana to come here as the terms of the contract were then violated and her tools were all confiscated and kept. Sir, even if she felt that she wished to break terms with the employer, the reality is, Mr. President, as she put it, you are in a strange land with no family connections whatsoever, no access to the external society and not even any access to your tools and a way to get back home and, Mr. President, that is part of the difficulty that we face.

The Leader of Government Business makes a very telling point, the law can only go so far and I am happy now that we are putting the necessary Legislative framework into effect but there needs to be a more serious appreciation on the part of people in this society that, that which they engage in when they do these things to other human beings is morally outrageous at a very minimum.

Mr. President, I feel that if Senator Sir Roy Trotman were here he would agree with me that one of the things which need to be looked at in Barbados, not only is the Legislative framework to deal directly with these matters such as we are now contemplating but also the need for us to build out certain codes of conduct.

For example, Sir, I think Barbados would do well to have a Protocol on that which is known now internationally as decent work. What are the conditions of decent work? This does not only apply to non nationals but it actually may apply quite significantly to Barbadian nationals as well. We need to know that people howsoever and wheresoever employed are not employed in circumstances where they are being exploited and oppressed and that type of approach to working conditions and indeed decent housing as well, Mr. President, is vitally important.

I want to make the other point, Sir, that there is a need in my judgment for us also to support this Legislation by doing some work on training of our human resources. The Royal Barbados Police Force obviously is the first point at which the enforcement of this new piece of Legislation will take place but I think that while they have done well and I have signalled my congratulations to them thus far, the reality is, Mr. President, that for us to be as fully effective as we potentially could be, the Royal Barbados Police Force is going to need to benefit - it members at any rate - from some additional training in how to deal with the criminal matters arising out of this type of situation, especially, Sir, when you are talking about persons who have been, or about to be charged with a situation involving trafficking in children.

Ancillary to that, Mr. President, is the obvious social need, I think, for our health care providers to also be now brought up to speed in the new level of not only identifying where children and indeed women who may come into their contact, maybe persons who are being trafficked in some other way, abused in a manner relating to this type of Legislation but be able to give support to those victims. The support especially, Sir, to young children is going to take us to yet another area which I think Barbados has been relatively quiet on thus far but now is the opportunity for us to treat this as the emergence of a national opportunity and, hopefully, a national discussion.

I turn to the question then of the educational sector, teachers. Many children will find themselves in the formal

education environment but may not be detected because the teaching staff, the academic community, whether it is at primary school or secondary school, at pre primary does not have the necessary training and skill to easily identify when they are confronted with a situation in which the child that they are dealing with has problems that are born out of the circumstances that we talking about.

I thought it was particularly interesting, Sir, and one of things that made me make this point is because it was yesterday morning that I observed on CNN an interview taking place - this is the United States of America grappling with the same issue - where a major NGO in the United States of America is now trying to launch and move funds towards the same educational sector so that they would be in a position to satisfy themselves that teachers are in a position, when they see a child coming to school with someone who is not the parent, is not understood to have had any prior relationship with the school, but this new face appears. The child's behaviour between the individual and the individual towards the child triggers something in your mind that this may be an issue of concern, how do you correctly approach and deal with that situation.

1.04 p.m.

We have had to deal with the question of cell phones in Barbados, they made that point yesterday as well. A child that has access to large amounts of money and large amounts of material things like cell phones and so on ought also to be a child that sends off a little bit of alarm bell and one might wish to do a little bit of research as to whether this is a perfectly acceptable situation.

The point that I am trying to make is that above and beyond just the emotional thing, there is a need for us now to be able to put our teaching fraternity, our health care workers, our police service and I suspect others as well, into a position where they are now trained so as to be able to easily identify and relate to circumstances such as that which we are dealing with.

Mr. President, the Leader of Government Business was gracious enough not to make heavy weather of the fact that between 2000 and now - eight years elapsed while the Barbados Labour Party was in Government and though with the best wishes in the world the legislation did not come - Barbados, I think, it is correct to say, would have been placed on a watch list of countries which did not at first blush appeared to be taking sufficient steps in order to conform with the requirements of the convention. That is a fairly standard thing which is born out of the fact that the international community do not just pass a convention. They then seek to make sure that the convention has been applied and brought into municipal law by every country that is a signatory to it and you are therefore expected to

demonstrate that you comply with a certain amount of minimal standards.

The fact of the matter is that the requirement of establishing the watch list is born out of that so that when you check back and see where Barbados is with this legislation, it is not yet part of Barbados' law, then you are placed on a tier or in a group of countries which are being lobbied in order to comply and bring the legislation into your domestic law.

Mr. President, I have dealt with part of that difficulty before which is the legislative drafting but there are other pieces of legislation which should be in place and there are other conventions to which we have been signatory.

I think, Mr. President, the time is right for me to make the point here now that one of the areas Barbados is very strong in is lobbying internationally. You yourself, Sir, has been a Foreign Minister and you sit next to a Foreign Minister. I, Sir, have held some responsibility in the Ministry. The fact of the matter, Mr. President, is that I think that all told Barbados has had a very intense presence internationally in terms of lobbying and trying to participate in shaping these conventions.

The difficulty, Mr. President, is that one of the things we are weak on is the compilation of statistical data so that we are in a position then to say that while we have helped shaped this convention here domestically in Barbados these are the instances that have cropped up which arise under the convention born out of the issues that we fought internationally to be recognised and as a result of these 9, 10, 11, 12 or how many other cases, these are the steps that have been taken and it is in that regard that Barbados continues to fall down.

I do not seek to cast any blame because quite frankly it is not just the Ministry of Social Transformation, it is across the board. I think that many times the difficulty in our civil service is that public servants are so pressured by such a wide array of demand that the basics of making sure that statistical data is collected tends to fall by the wayside but it is an area which I think we need to be strong on or stronger on. It is an area where the international community expects us to be strong on because we must now report under these conventions as to what is happening domestically. Quite frankly, if we are just going to pass a piece of legislation without satisfying ourselves as to its social benefit by way of some analysis, then we are wasting time. It is something that I thought I would mention at this particular point.

Mr. President, speaking specifically to the question of organised crime very briefly, again in my earlier days at the private Bar I did a lot of criminal law. The Leader of Government Business makes reference to the night clubs

and I confess to having represented some non-national young ladies who were arrested in a night club in Baxters Road. I remember it well. It was a most interesting case.

Asides.

Senator K. D. SYMMONDS: Well, I was retained to do the work. I did not had to go to the club. Those who went to the club came to me.

The point, Mr. President, is that I remember well that in none of the cases of the young ladies who were arrested were they in a position to negotiate their way back to, I almost said the name of the country, the Caribbean country which they came from because they did not have their travel documents. The documentation had been withheld as part of the conditions of that which was described as their labour.

Mr. President, I need not say to you that this falls squarely within the realm of that which we are discussing. We speak of organised crimes as though sometimes the only thing that comes to mind is the Cosa Nostra, the Italian Mafia. Quite frankly, Mr. President, we live in a region where we would be fooling ourselves. Once one has sat in Cabinet, one becomes privy to a number of national securities issues and I therefore want to treat to them with as much sensitivity as is required in this place but one would be fooling oneself if one does not accept that we live in a region in which the borders are becoming, especially in economic terms, almost seamless.

The movement of human beings in pursuit of employment also allows, to some extent, the movement of persons who are not necessarily looking to be involved in productive and beneficial activity but rather nefarious activity. Sir, this is a region which has produced some massive organised criminal lords. Dole Chadee in Trinidad and Tobago held a whole society at bay. I was at law school at the time when Dole Chadee was at the height of his powers. Douglas Coke in Jamaica is of recent memory.

Mr. President, we have to understand therefore that there is at some level a connection between the organised criminal structures which we are seeing in neighbouring Caribbean countries and the rest of the Caribbean and Barbados is no exception. The other fact of the matter is that as recently as when we hosted the Cricket World Cup here a couple years ago and the heightened security took place around the Cricket World Cup, it was most interesting to recognise the extent to which extra-regional organised crime took an interest in this region. The presence of the Russian Mafia in the Caribbean was something which one might never have taken for granted but certainly had become a reality.

I make those points therefore to say that we have to be eternally vigilant because organised crime is not just going to be about a drug trade. Organised crime very often is also about a number of other businesses which then seek to legitimise themselves. I do not want to anticipate a debate which I suspect is yet to come but I think that a partnered piece of legislation to this would have us deal with the question of money laundering.

The reality, Mr. President, is that we have a lot of shows that take place in this country and we have a lot of almost off the cusps type small or apparently small enterprises which appear and then disappear and one has to be very careful whether these are legitimate exercises that are taking place or just an opportunity to pass corrupted money through the system and then bank it formally. That is one of the things we have to guard against.

The presence also of commercial pornography in this country is a matter of some concern.

1.15 p.m.

Mr. President, I do not think there is an office space in Barbados which has not seen some email arrived and on that email there is usually some type of perverse activity or usually some type of pornography and very often involving a child. In many instances, it is not treated with the level of seriousness that it ought properly to require. Sir, the fact of the matter is that in every instance something like that happens, that is somebody's child, somebody's family and very often it is in a situation where that particular young man or woman is being tarnished and damaged emotionally, as well as physically for life. Sir, a society we have to guard against it.

Mr. President, I must confess that I am somewhat perturb about the extent to one sees these domestically-produced types of emails being sent around the place and when it is opened, it is a little girl from somewhere and then it carries a very interesting subtitle: "Barbados on display" "St. John on display," "Christ Church on display." Sir, at some point along the way, we have as a society, especially as a group of legislators here, to pause and reflect on what steps need properly to be taken to bring that process to a halt.

Mr. President, I think it is also fair for me to make the point now that increasingly at the Criminal Bar, we are seeing instances of children who are being used as either mules or lookouts. I am alarmed. Mr. President, people send their children to school with the best wishes in the world but if you have one child in that school yard, who is connected in some way to the drug trade, then it is an avenue and those who pursue that avenue, do so ruthlessly. As far as they are concerned, you can penetrate a whole school through that one child. Sir, innocently, parents out

there give their children pocket money, innocently children ask for things which we as parents give, while not understanding the potential that is there for that gesture of goodwill to be abused because of that which is taking place.

Mr. President, I do not want to create any alarm by saying it is widespread throughout all schools but what I do believe is that we are seeing it increasingly, where the risk-takers in the drug trade are prepared now to use little children, because little children can easily go under the radar. When the police are mounting surveillance, the police are looking for big, hardbacked men. Increasingly, the police may be looking for women as well but very often they are not thinking that a little girl is carrying to school in her lunch box a few packets of marijuana. Sir, the reality is that we are living in a rapidly changing society and this piece of legislation is welcomed because it empowers the society to deal with some of the threats that we have.

Mr. President, like the Leader of Government Business, I am particularly happy about the establishment of the Criminal Assets Recovery Fund and the power to confiscate and forfeit the proceeds of crime. What I think we must also focus on is Clause 13(4) of the legislation, which speaks to the compensation of victims of crime. Mr. President, this has been an issue that has been tossed around. I first heard of it when, I believe, I was at law school. It has seen several governments come and go but we do not formally, before today, have anything that appears to be a piece of legislation which compensates the victim of crime. What Clause 13(4) is seeking to do is to provide the following:

"Restitution must compensate, where applicable, for any of the following: (a) cost of medical and psychological treatment; (b) cost of physical and occupational therapy and rehabilitation; (c) cost of necessary transportation, temporary housing and child care; (d) lost income; (e) attorney's fees and other legal costs; (f) compensation for emotional distress, pain and suffering; (G) any other losses suffered by the victim which the court considers applicable."

Mr. President, for the first time in the Laws of Barbados it introduces emotional distress. Sir, in a sense, this is a revolutionary and path-breaking piece of legislation. It reflects the anguish which a victim could feel and could bear when that victim has been ripped from their country of origin, under false pretenses and brought to a strange land, where you have no contact or no communication; where you have all of those things that you hold essential confiscated from you, such as your travel documents, your money, your access to the outside world. You are on your own, you are put up in the worse possible accommodation, very often being subjected to forms of physical and sexual abuse and you are there but

for the strength of God, on your own. Sir, I think it is at that point that the idea and ideal of compensating victims for some of that which they go through becomes vital importance.

Mr. President, I think this particular Clause 13(4) is highly desirable and I am happy to associate myself with that and by extension, I am happy to associate myself with the piece of legislation now before this Honourable Chamber. Mr. President, I am obliged.

Senator Mrs. IRENE SANDIFORD-GARDNER: Mr. President, I too rise in support of this legislation and it is very seldom that I find myself on the same page as the Honourable Senator from the other side who just sat. Sir, I will say today that I think the Honourable Senator's contribution was indeed enlightening and that the rest of the political vitriol that we usually witness and I would say that for the most part I agree with everything the Honourable Senator did say today.

Mr. President, this piece of legislation is important to me for many reasons. First of all, I am glad that we have hasten to ensure that we are going to pass it today. Sir, as was said earlier, we signed the Protocol since 2000. I am interested specifically to part of the legislation which relates to trafficking to women and children. Human trafficking is of specific interest to me as Vice-President of Inter-American Commission of Women, which would have allowed me to attend a number of international meetings recently, where Barbados' ranking was mentioned on more than one occasion. The Honourable Senator mentioned that we are at a Tier Two ranking and I would wish to explain that we were put on a Tier Two watch list, which means that we in Barbados, according to the Department of the United States, were seen as a Government which does not fully comply with the Anti-trafficking Protocol which we would have signed. We do not comply with it and that the absolute number of victims is very significant or is significantly increasing in Barbados. That was a source of great concern to me.

Sir, one of the points Senator Symmonds made was a point I made in Washington D. C. in October. Where is this information coming from? I was invited to a meeting with a member of the State Department who would be responsible for this region, where the ranking was mentioned again. Sir, again my question was, where does this information come from. I would have read the report from the State Department and much of the information was anecdotal, a lot of it came from local newspapers. Sir, I would wish the media to understand that many times when we are being rated in the international arena, some of the information comes from stories printed in the newspapers. That is why we have to be very careful what we say about Barbados. We have to ensure that when we print certain things that

they are verifiable and that the integrity of the country is not pull into question.

Mr. President, as I said, my concern was from where did the information come. They spoke about the migrant trafficking and forced labour that would have occurred with the Indians during World Cup, 2007. That was a factual piece of information in it but there was a part of the report that mentioned uncorroborated evidence. This is their words: "uncorroborated evidence that women and girls from Guyana, the Dominican Republic and Jamaica were being actively recruited for prostitution and promises of working in strip clubs in Barbados." Sir, the report said it was uncorroborated, meaning that they could not back it up with anything, except hearsay.

1.24 a.m.

Mr. President, these reports are important because they influence the assistance we may or may not get from the same international agencies. They can decide that they can impose sanctions on Barbados based on the reports from the State Department, so I would agree with Senator Symmonds that there is a need now in Barbados for us to allocate resources for the garnering of data which is verifiable so that we can walk with it when we go to represent our country and stand up and say, well, this is what the position is.

Mr. President, I would also wish to mention that the Organisation of American States, and international agency, has assisted Barbados with training. It was mentioned that during the past 10 years, since the signing of the Portocol that we had not sought to enact the legislation but work was still being done. The Bureau of Gender Affairs engaged in training with the Organisation of American States, a coalition of persons who would have been engaged in anti-trafficking actis in Barbados was formed and they would have coordinated efforts with Government agencies to ensure that employees in the Immigration Department, the Welfare Department and other State agencies were aware, or had the tools to measure and assess when cases came to them, to assess whether or not these persons were victims of trafficking. Sir, persons who work at the airport and various other areas other than immigration also would have been trained to identified cases of trafficking so that even though we would not have the legislation, work was being done. Sir, I would give the former administration for having the foresight to ensure that the formal sector and the informal sector would have had that training done. We now need to ensure that the data is collected, as I have said, and probably the same international agency that would have helped with the training in 2004/2005 could come forward now and assist Barbados in collecting that data.

Mr. President, as was said before, we are country of scarce resources and we would welcome the assistance for the research, so that the passing of the legislation shows that we, as a country, are serious.

Mr. President, I congratulate the Government on this initiative and would just advise and request that we go that one step further now to see that we get the assistance to ensure that whatever data is collated on Barbados is verifiable and data that would serve us in good stead.

Mr. President, I thank you.

SUSPENSION

SENATOR the HON. MISS M.P.A. McCLEAN: Mr. President, I beg to move that this Sitting be suspended until 2.30 p.m. today.

The question was put to the Senate and agreed to and Mr. PRESIDENT suspended the Sitting accordingly.

1.28 p.m.

RESUMPTION

Mr. PRESIDENT: The Senate is in session. Senator Marville you have the Floor.

SENATOR R.O. MARVILLE: Mr. President, I rise in support of this Bill. It is a bit regrettable that we have taken this long to get it in place because in spite of the, perhaps, anecdotal nature of information that has given us something of a lower rating than we should, the notion that we are a trouble in this respect has been circulating on the web in other places, and therefore it is a lot more general than we believe.

Sir, I am particularly in support of that aspect of the Bill which allows the seizure of criminal assets and compensation for victims. The notion of compensation for victims is something that I think we ought to have had in place for a very long time, not only in this respect but in all other respects. The question of the seizure of assets would be particularly interesting if we could perhaps get at some of the bigger people who pay for, and, to some extent, organise the crimes involved.

Sir, human trafficking, one of the crimes mentioned, is to my mind nothing more than modern slavery, particularly as it involves women and children. I remember a time, in fact most of us if not all of us, but the youngest Member of us were children at that time, when there was no thought of drug trafficking or when there was no thought of human trafficking we were in a different world. Then suddenly it was realised that we were an excellent transit point for smugglers. The result of that, of course,

was, some of the things on the back of a truck fell off and we became involved in all sorts of things, including drugs which bring with them not only the specific danger to the people taking them, and specific addictions that many children are forced into. Sir, they also bring guns because the enforcers need guns. Sir, I am not talking about baby guns, I am talking about some of the most advanced dangerous weaponry that you can think of.

I remember a specific incident where a cousin of mine - we were both working in the Secretariat in Guyana, then unfortunately he went off to the airport and stayed at the airport for the night. When he came back he did not recognise his house. He had unwittingly left the alarm off and the people who broke in turned the alarm on, thinking that they were turning it off, the police came and they started shooting at the police. They had most of the stuff and put in the truck. On one occasion the police saw a laser beamed on his forehead and he ducked and the bullet hit the wall. The police withdrew realising that they could not handle this one, so they called the Black Circuit Squad. They came and mowed them down. When they were finished, apart from the blood all over the place, they discovered that they had laser-guided guns. They had machine guns. They had weaponry that the police had heard about but had never seen. The point is, when this become endemic in any society, and we have a couple of neighbours to the South where the problem is, you recognise quite soon that the society chances in a way from which you could never really easily recover.

Sir, fortunately we have not reached that point yet. I think that this legislation may well go long way in being able to apprehend people in this business. Like I said, I hope that we apprehend the ones who are funding this stuff and not only the mules forced into it, or the little children used to process it.

Sir, with respect to human trafficking I insist that it is more than slavery, because what happens is, people are lured out of their homes, as has happened with our ancestors, long ago, and brought to places where they do not know the ways are very often horrendous in modern terms. The living conditions that are subhuman. They are treated like animals. They are misused, abused, particularly sexually, and it goes on and on. Sometimes this last for so long that you are bound to end up with people who themselves are deranged.

Sir, I think that beyond the question of the penalties for the people involved, we need to look at instituting a process of public education for our policemen who are responsible for this. I think we ought to introduce as well, apart from additional training for the police, we ought to create a special unit within the police which is responsible for dealing with this Bill, who could possibly be recompensed by not necessarily monies but by additional

life insurance, because this is a dangerous job. They could be given preference in privilege access to housing and things of this sort, all of which they could lose if they are not effective in their job. If they are corrupt, for instance.

Sir, we need to look at this thing a lot more widely, because we have began the process. We now have something on the table that is likely to help us down the line, but we ought to look at all the angles and see how we can strengthen it and produce in our society an awareness among everybody. In fact, several people become involved in crimes that we do not really know they are committing, and if we can get the education programmes to the level where everybody understands what it is all about and are on the lookout for it, then, perhaps, we would have reached the point where we handle it and keep control and regain our reputation like when we were children.

I thank you, Sir.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Worrell.

Senator A.R. WORRELL: Mr. President, I rise to support this Bill, the Transnational Organised Crime Prevention and Corruption, and in particular the protocols relating to the Bill dealing with trafficking in women and children, the protocols against smuggling migrants by land and sea, and also illicit manufacture of firearms and ammunition.

Sir, this is an important piece of legislation. Basically, it is a fulfilment of our responsibility being signatories to the UN Convention against transnational crime. It is not also, not necessarily timely, but if you would recognise that the world has changed significantly over the years. Right now we in Barbados and within the Carribean can no longer think that our borders, or we can control could not happen within our borders.

Sir, if you would go back to the days where we were dealing with the signing of the Shiprider Agreement with the Us in terms of the Caribbean being used as a transshipment route for drugs, you can tell that there are players out there who have the capacity to control and dictate what goes on within your environment moreso than we do. An argument was made in terms of the whole drug situation as it relates to the Caribbean. When you hear the value of a shipment of drugs which was held on its way from the Caribbean or South America to the end users, which would more than likely be the US or the UK, often times the value is more than that the GDP of a number of Caribbean regions.

Sir, in my contribution to this debate, a number of persons would have looked at it in terms of the human trafficking and so forth, but I want to focus more on the social aspects behind it. In essence, what we are dealing

with is crime and we are dealing with a situation where an environment is in place for either crime to take place in your location, or for persons from outside to come and manipulate your environment for the purpose of crime, either for financial purposes, for the transport of drugs, or for the exploitation of persons in terms of labour. Sir, whatever the reason is, the bedrock of it is basically curtail that level of activity abd that level of crime as well.

2.57 p.m.

Mr. President, what I wanted to look at would be the push and pore factors to this criminal behaviour and also the social value system which we have in place. I think this is a worthwhile opportunity for us to look at the morals of our society and our social value system and what can be done so that these elements. Even if they are from within or from outside, they would not be looked upon as anything being favourable. At the end of the day, these things are often done for persons to make a quick buck or for someone to avoid honest work and look for crafty opportunities for them to exploit persons for their own personal gain.

Sir, we have to look at the situation that is being created and more or less try to minimise so that persons within our jurisdiction would be less likely to turn towards that. Our value system would be of such that in terms of situations where persons are being exploited in situations either for prostitution or labour, because these people have to live somewhere and they have to be involved in some community. There have to be persons within neighbourhoods that recognise and understand what is going on so then, why is it that persons are not seeing it as their responsibility to be an advocate for these people and more or less to do something to assist them?

We have heard a number of Senators here speak today in terms of persons coming into Barbados or any area for one reason or the other because often people would take up these opportunities, with the expectation that it would be giving them an opportunity to better themselves and to better their livelihood but then they are often exploited. It is not necessarily just here in Barbados and not to say that it only happens here but it happens throughout the region and in a number of different places as well.

Sir, in recent times I have been watching a documentary on BBC World and this is something that happens to a number of African women who go to different parts of the Middle East where obviously, the pay is much better. They think that they are going for a simple job as a maid within a house but then when they get there, they realise that it is far different from what they expected and just as was said, their passport and so forth taken away, they expect to receive wages that they can send back home to support their family but then realise that is not just the

case, they are not going to be paid. They tell you that you will be paid after a certain period of time so basically it is another form of slavery.

Sir, what we need to look at is what is it that makes this sort of behaviour seem to be almost more acceptable and to try in anyway possible to diminish this kind of behaviour and the way in which it is accepted within societies. In terms of looking at these push and pore factors, you have to seriously consider, especially as it relates to transnational organised crime because this is a situation where the crime does not originate in your jurisdiction. It could happen with persons living far afield that have never even touched feet in Barbados or in any other Caribbean territory but they so happen to have met contact with someone from in this area or who decided, well look, this is an environment which we can exploit and manipulate to our own benefit and implant someone in the jurisdiction to take advantage of persons that would help them to whatever end.

Sir, we have to seriously consider in terms of things like the drug culture and the gang culture. All of these things are embodied within this Legislation and also, persons who may have lived outside and saw things being done in a particular way and accustomed to a certain type of criminal behaviour and then coming back here to say that this may be an opportunity for me to be the big man around the block, so that I can introduce other persons to this idea about this criminal behaviour as well.

Sir, what we need to look at is really and truly our social value system. Our values are the mental pictures of important needs and goals and it affects how one thinks about and sees for oneself, what one wants out of life and what one is willing to trade off to get something in return. Some values reflect the preferred states of being or feeling, while other values reflect preferred ways of behaving.

Sir, what is important for us to look at, at this stage? We recognise that in Barbados over the years, our value system has changed but has there been any research, any studies which have been done to pinpoint how Barbadians value certain things such as honesty, reliability, kindness, friendliness, a concern for others which would be compassion and obviously, if you look at compassion. If you see someone being exploited, you would have to have the compassion to see how best you can assist that persons and be an advocate for that person in that situation.

Sir, things like politeness and forgiveness and generosity, we really need to do some studies to see where we are pegged in these areas and what we can do to help enforce and to develop a culture where these things become important again, especially things such as compassion. We have more or less been moving towards an individualistic society but we need to start strengthening our community

bond, and realise that in order for us to exist we cannot do it all on your own.

Often, you hear a lot of sentiments where persons are only concerned about what is in it for me and as long as it does not concern me, as it long as it does not bother me, I will not move one foot in order to make a change about it. These are things that we need to move away from. This Legislation is not just a legal perspective. It does not have only to do with the Royal Barbados Police Force, it does not only have to do with the Immigration Department but it also has to do with every single person in Barbados upholding aspects of Legislation, because once it is passed and it is on the Statue Books and it is a part of the law, if you do not uphold it, if you do not enforce it there is no value in it. Sir, underneath that, we need more so to create the environment where these things become more so important, in terms of our values because our values determine what it is that we go after, and how we go after these things as well.

We also have to look at the social responsibility in terms of who will be the advocates for these persons who will be exploited, for the victims, once they are here. There have been many stories over the time in terms of even in situations where persons may have come from our neighbouring Caribbean islands in search of jobs here in Barbados, then they end up here in Barbados or in other jurisdictions and they realised that they are exploited. We heard it mention, I believe by Senator Symmonds earlier this morning, persons coming for one thing and they end up being in another situation, have deplorable living conditions and so forth.

I cannot believe that these situations go on and other persons do not recognise it, do not know anything about it.

Asides.

Senator A.R. WORRELL: What can be done? Also too, what avenues are available for persons who would find themselves in a situation where they end up here and their passport is taken away and they are being victimised. Sir, you cannot have a situation where that person goes to the police department or the Immigration Department and instead of receiving the kind treatment and the assistance that they need to get out of the situation that they are in but more or less, they are victimised and make it seems as though they are the criminals.

Yes, it may be that in some situations, they participated in the criminal element in terms of coming here illegally or whatever the case may be in search of a job and not going through the right channels but recognising that the situation that they are living in is worse than what they expected and they are now seeking some sort of assistance, in terms of getting out of that situation. I

think that avenues must be made available and it must be made clear where these persons can go to find assistance and where they can be helped as well.

We also have to look at once the Legislation is passed how do you enforce the Transnational Organised Crime Convention. I imagine that is something that not only we here in Barbados have to consider but is also being considered in places such as Canada and the United States of America. How do you police it? Does our police force have the necessary manpower and training to police it, especially if you look at the incidence with regards to organised crime and gangs?

Senate A40, sequence 10, 10.15 p.m.

Friday, February 04, 2011

Senator A. R. WORRELL: If you look at the instant threat with regards to organised crime and gangs, a lot of the activity and the information could be shared even without touching ground in Barbados through mediums such as the internet and Facebook and in overseas calls and so forth. How are these things going to be policed? How are you going to have surveillance in areas like that? We have to realise that we are moving into a technological age and therefore we must have the necessary resources.

I believe that the Royal Barbados Police Force have been doing a pretty good job so far in terms of protecting our borders but you have to recognise that the persons you are dealing with are oftentimes more sophisticated than you and they have at their disposal revenue and income that would put them in contact with the sophisticated technology, so therefore in order to stand a chance in combatting it you must make sure as well that you are au fait with the technology and you have the resources that you can police as well.

Mr. President, the question would be what provisions would be in place for surveillance and also too the level of cooperation between the CARICOM states in policing and surveillance as well. I think that this would be a good opportunity for a number of the CARICOM states to actually test their legislation and to test their police manpower and so forth to make sure that the communication channels are there and they are open up because they are not just coming from North America, the United Kingdom or South America to Barbados, this is something that would include the entire region. I think that the point must be made that there must be stronger collaborations between the CARICOM states in ensuring that they can police and probably enforce this legislation as well.

Mr. President, there are different ways of doing it because I think that the United Nations also recognised that

the implementation of the convention is important. There was recently a pilot study done with a number of different countries in terms of how best to go about implementing these protocols and having the legislation in place. They looked at two tracks, which were either the Peer Review Track, where the countries would go through a survey of their system and another country would review the information. You also had the Expert Review Track where the United Nations Secretariat would provide you with a checklist of information for you to go through and you would provide the reports back to the United Nations. All of this is done because it is recognised that there are a lot of technical areas within this legislation and a lot of work which would need to be done within the legal profession, within the police force, within the judiciary and even within the Immigration Department, to get it working the way how it ought to be working.

You could only benefit if you are collaborating and sharing ideas and best practices to make sure that when you roll out a package it is a package which can be quickly implemented and would fit into your jurisdiction and at the end of the day you would have a piece of legislation which is doing the work which it is supposed to do.

Mr. President, in terms of the trafficking and the smuggling, it is not always the situation where - actually just to bring to mind something which would have happened recently in terms of Haiti in terms of the outbreak of cholera. There was a news report where there were persons from certain Caribbean countries who were willing to smuggle persons from Haiti into their country, and this is an issue, so it not only in terms of persons trafficking drugs directly for crime but sometimes persons may think that obviously they do it for some sort of financial reward. You also have to realise that there is the risk too in terms of the spread of disease.

Sir, imagine what would have happened if some of those persons who were smuggled from Haiti to another Caribbean country, just to get away from the living conditions that persons in Haiti are experiencing as a result of the earthquake and then with the outbreak of cholera and so forth, had been infected with cholera, then we could possibly have an outbreak there because they would be unknown to the authority and you would an opportunity for an outbreak.

Mr. President, it is not always a situation where persons are deliberately going to find jobs but they may also be trying to evade a bad situation or they may also be thinking that they may be helping someone in that situation but doing it nonetheless for their own personal gain.

With regards to the instance of gangs formation and so forth and in dealing with the issue of gangs, we need to pay more attention to who our children associate with when

it comes to that situation, who they are communicating with, what are they doing when they are on Facebook and who are they meeting on Facebook and in those locations.

Sir, it is stated within the legislation that you can have an association of a gang by just being in the community of those persons within the gang. I do not think that the legislation really has much for proof and evidence of association so the mere fact that our child or a family member may be in constant company of someone who is involved in a gang or may be promoting some aspect of the gang culture, from what the legislation says, it makes them a part of that gang so therefore the onus then is on parents or communities to pay more attention to what our children and persons in our communities are doing and the activities in which they are involved.

This is very important in terms of squashing out any aspect of the gang culture because even though they may say that in certain areas that gangs are really not an issue to deal with, the formation of one negative gang is a problem and therefore is something which should be contained. Recently in Trinidad and Tobago legislation was passed to deal with gangs in Trinidad and Tobago. I think they reported that they had probably like 100 gangs with 500 members. Trinidad and Tobago that has a population much larger than Barbados are concerned about the working of 500 people and the havoc that they are causing in their environment.

I do not think that we should sit back on our laurels and say well look we really do not have a big issue with gangs here in Barbados. The formation of one single gang is an issue and it is something that you should deal with quickly and nip it in the bud because you do not want a situation where it gets out of control. Do not wait until the horse is out of the stable then to try to close the door, you deal with it and nip it in the bud. This is also important within this legislation in that you pay particular attention to these things.

Mr. President, you want to create an environment where people do not have to turn to exploitation as their only means of making a dollar. People must realise the value of honest labour and earning an honest dollar. It is very saddening that you have a society where you have to exploit persons so that you can have some sort of financial gain. I think that our social value systems should be of such that it would be deplorable for that person to even mention it or even think about it. We really need to get back to that situation where we develop that sort of caring society where we focus more on our values and not necessarily about what is in it for me and how much money I can make from a particular situation.

There is also a need for vigilance in terms of making sure that companies and individuals do proper due

diligence in terms of when they are looking to go into business transactions. Part of the legislation also speaks to the confiscation and seizure of property. It does not have to be solely purchased with tainted funds. Even if the tainted funds are intermingled with legitimate funding, it can also still be seized. I guess it calls for a society to recognise that it needs to pay more attention to what is really going on around it, to know more about the persons that you are doing business with, to know more about the persons that your family is associated with and to know about the persons your children are associated with when they are at school, when they come home from school and in between. From the time they leave your eyesight, you need to know about them.

3.18 p.m.

You cannot just accept things at face value any longer. It just goes to show that you need to spend a little bit more time and the things that you think may not necessarily be important or the behaviour that you see that may just be on a small scale, you should investigate it some more. When you investigate that behaviour, you may find that there are some underlying problems or issues which you would probably need to deal with and stamp out as well.

Mr. President, I want to wrap up by saying that this Bill not just in terms of supporting the Protocols but we also need to look seriously at our value system and the environment that is created which would cause persons to want to engage in such activities. I am not saying that we would ever have a perfect society, without crime or such like but I think we can set a benchmark of a certain standards that we want to enforce within our society and hope that it would pick up. It has to come from the higher level and it must certainly trickle down to the children. Parents need to do their job of parenting, recognising that they need to instill the values within their children. Sir, as a grown man, the things that you do have some connection to the things you were taught and the behaviours that you were encouraged to do when you were raised up as a young man. Therefore, it is never too early to instill the right values in persons because when it is instilled in an early age, it is very difficult for you to break away from this. This is what we need to pay strong attention to in terms of ensuring that we start developing programmes within our schools, our churches and communities, to get persons to act or to behave the way we want them, so that they would become productive and law-abiding citizens within our community. If we start on that programme, I think it would make it harder for persons to entice them to a life of crime, to entice them to manipulate and exploit persons, to entice them along the path of considering joining a gang, to entice them towards using illegal drugs or anything of that sort. Therefore, we need to start early and it is not too late, even though some of them may be already out of the school

system or out of the family house but there is still some ways of influencing them and making sure that they have the right direction.

Sir, we do not need to have a situation where a number of our young men would spend the majority of their productive years behind bars or in situations where they cannot make a valuable contribution to the development of Barbados. We need to encourage and enforce people to look the right way and to turn away from the lifestyle of crime. If it comes too easy, possibly there is something wrong with it. As was said, there is nothing wrong with hard work, there is something good in hard work. That is the situation where persons are turning away from the hard work and they are lured to the life which is easier, the things which come so easy that you simply have to ask a question.

If you have to simply ask a question or asks for something and somebody gives it to you, I think you should consider what it is that you are getting yourself into because nothing is life is free and nothing in life comes easy. The best things are the things that you would have worked hard for and you know how to achieve those things. You have achieved those things by your sweat and hard work. Once you do that, nobody can confiscate it or can take it away from you.

Mr. President, with those few words, I support this Bill. I am obliged.

Senator R. A. HUNTE: Mr. President, I rise in support of this Bill, namely the Convention Against Transnational Organised Crime. Sir, there are a number of things of which I am concerned, not necessarily the input of the Bill, when this becomes law.

Mr. President, Senator Worrell mentioned about the policing of the Bill. Sir, it is alright to put a law in place, the thing is for it to be carried out and managed properly. We have a problem in Barbados in certain departments where many of our departments are understaffed. I recently came across a report where the work of the Audit Department is being hampered because of the fact they do not have sufficient personnel. This is a problem we do have.

3.23 p.m. This is a problem we do have. I look here in the Bill in Section 9 and I see that the Office of the Authority, which it will be named, shall comprise the financial Intelligence Unit, which consists of a director and other public officers whose offices shall be established in accordance with the Public Service Act. Sir, I do not know what the staff complement will be eventually but we know in Barbados that there are a number of laws in place but the problem is for them to be managed and managed successfully.

Mr. President, let us not fool ourselves, we have had a number of problems in Barbados over the years in terms of trafficking and there are laws and certain regulations in place but we still have those problems. I can see that all aspects of this Bill are going to run conflict with our Immigration laws in Barbados and, let me explain that. Sir, currently, we are having a very tight rein on those persons who come into Barbados. They come to Barbados for all sorts of reason, some genuine and some not so genuine. I have seen comments from others in the society that there are a lot of persons in Barbados that are laundering money. I have no knowledge of such but the question I would ask is this: If those persons are responsible citizens and they know that for a fact why have not the authorities know of this. Sir, I saw other comments that show that Barbados has become the entertainment centre in Caribbean now where people are using shows to launder money. Sir, I have no proof of that but the point is that those persons who are supposed to have this knowledge and this information about this society why did they not submit this information to the authorities who could do something about it. Sir, I call that hypocrisy in society because if we feel so strong about Barbados ...

Asides.

Senator R.A. HUNTE: Sir, even looking in an Explanatory Note, Clause 4 (a) states:

“Establish and implement measures for detection and prevention of money-laundering and financing of terrorism consistent with the obligations of Barbados as a member of the Caribbean Financial Action Task Force.”

Mr. President, that means that there is a Caribbean Financial Action Task Force and (c) of that said Clause:

“Maintain the reputation of Barbados as a financially strong and stable jurisdiction for investment.”

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Hunte, I do not wish to interrupt you but I draw to your attention that it is unacceptable in the second reading to look at Clauses of a particular Bill, that is not parliamentarily acceptable. Please continue.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Mr. President, it was only a reference not necessarily to define the Clause per se. Sir, there are concerns in that particular area which we do have about managing what happens in our society.

Mr. President, I want to say this and to say this quite frankly. I have heard for a long time, and anybody with any modicum of morality obviously would object to any human being transported any where and passport being held on to and then they have to do things, whether it is immoral or illegal and, Sir, nobody can agree with that sort of thing.

Mr. President, what about those persons who make prostitution their business and their trade. Sir, I live in the Dutch Antilles for two years, in St. Marten, and I met persons who made that their trade. I remember one particular person, not a Barbadian, who I left in St. Marten in 1978 and I am going down there by Tudor Street which we call Milk Market and the same persons shouted “Baje” and he was here in Barbados before me to carry on her trade. Sir, it is a fact.

Mr. President, it is all right to come out and be an advocate legally or otherwise for persons who intend to make certain trade patterns theirs. Sir, I will not defend that sort of thing. We are not talking about the oldest profession as they refer to it but there are people who practise what they practise. (6:07)

Mr. President, I used to go to Canada very often because my parents lived there and when I was in Canada, I met a Mexican lady, who spoke English very well, who told me that she was going back to Mexico because she had worked for enough, so she was going back to her children. Sir, I need not say what her trade was. Sir, I am not going to stand up in here in debating a bill of this nature and defend the indefensible because I have a moral obligation and because I grew up in a society with certain standards as far as my parents are concerned. Sir, these things have been going on for a long time.

Mr. President, we talk about drugs. I do not want to use a strong word like trafficking but there are people who go before the law court for drugs. Sir, I remember one guy, who I knew quite well - that is only one - who said he was using drugs from at school.

Asides.

Senator R.A. HUNTE: Sir, I would not call the institution but that is what he said about himself. He said it big in a magistrate’s court that he was using drugs from at school. Sir, I will not name that particular institution because I have too much regard and respect for it.

Mr. President, let us not fool ourselves. These are things that have been going on for quite some time and laws will not change that.

Mr. President, I recently saw in a daily publication the photograph of three young men. I know two of them from the time they were little boys. Sir, I never knew them to be fishermen but they went fishing. I do not know if they got caught or if something caught them but, Sir, the point is that we are a jurisdiction that is opened to a lot of things. We sometimes get pressure from other areas in the world, the big countries so to speak, to sometimes put these laws in practice. The question is: Are we going to get financial assistance with some of these programmes? Sir, are we

going to? Sir, I think that so far, we have held a very good record in maintaining certain standards. Sir, I wish to say this. I do not think there will be any objections if I say that the Leader of Government Business who once served in a certain capacity has done an extremely good job after 2008 to get a lot of things into practice in this country and it is on track. I do not know if any got off track but somebody has to bite the bullet and, Sir, she did. She did her job diligently and I wish to congratulate her now at this level publicly, I never did it even privately but I am going to do it publicly. (9:39) Sir, when we have problems in Barbados, the question is whether or not the strengthening of these laws will see what we expect to see.

Mr. President, whether we see people masquerade in a society as so-called decent people or whether we will see them probably in front of the newspapers in handcuffs for encouraging this kind of behaviour .

Asides.

Senator R.A. HUNTE: Sir, I speak on it because I do not participate in those things.

3:32

Sir, I speak on it because I do not participate in those things. You came along as a young person and tried some things for its experience, while maintaining that reputation. On becoming a father, and a parent, there must be respect for your children and grandchildren. So there are some things I can speak of very fiercely, because that is the way I live in the society, simple and modest. Sir, I make no apologies for these things.

Sir, I think that if we, some of us, who call ourselves decent, in Barbados continue to patronise some of these places, that are rumoured, to be trading in these practices, I only ask the question, if there is a raid it is going to be interesting to see who are some of the people in these places. Madam, if there is a raid, there are going to be a lot of embarrassing faces, people putting their hands to their faces blocking the cameras.

Sir, for instance, last Saturday night I heard about a place that I did not know existed, but when I heard of the persons...

Asides.

SENATOR R.A. HUNTE: Sir, when I heard of some of the persons who frequent these persons, let me be pluralistic, I was amazed. I could not believe that in a day like today, people would be having excitement in areas such as these. I was really surprised. In fact, I never knew they existed, because those things do not interest me.

Sir, there are, and I should not say clauses, things about this Bill that are extremely important. I sincerely hope that the necessary staff complement would be in place. I know that we are running a very tight budget in this country right now, but I sincerely hope that we would be able to put the necessary persons in place, trained, because they should have a background in legal matters, financial matters, et cetera. I sincerely hope they would have some background in honesty to put these people in place, not necessarily to draw the tax payers' money. Sir, there is no divide on this Bill. So there is no reason to convince anybody. We are all Barbadians and decent Barbadians. I do not see anybody here in this Chamber that I can associate indecency with, not one. We are all decent Barbadians here, we are, and we have a responsibility as legislators. We are not here to warm a seat. I did not come here to warm any seat. Some people may not agree with all the things I say, but I am going to say them nevertheless.

Sir, some people may think that history does not matter. Sir, you were honoured recently. You were not honoured for anything that you are going to do tomorrow. You were honoured for something you did yesterday, and deservedly so. So those persons who think that they can come into this Chamber and speak as though...

Asides.

SENATOR R.A. HUNTE: Well they should be in the Church and they would take some lessons from Senator Dean Crichtlow, as though they do not want to hear about history. Sir, they are going to hear a lot of history in debates in here. They will hear that, and a lot of it too.

Sir, the point is, all of the freshness and so on that we hear, that is alright, that is looking for sympathy, and if persons want to come here ... we do not know anything about the future.

Asides.

SENATOR R.A. HUNTE I cannot tell you what he will do tomorrow. I know what is happening now. So if there are any clairvoyants in here who wish to speak in terms of tomorrow, they can. I will be glad to listen, but for now we have to speak about today and we have to speak about yesterday, because that is what we know.

Sir, my intervention was very short. I wish to say that I support this Bill, because I think, in every sense of the word, there are over forty or so recommendations that Barbados has to fall in line with, because this Bill is on the statute books already. It is only in a different form now, and changes and amendments have been made, but we have already had our Bill. I do not even know when it was past. I am not sure under whose administration it was past under,

but the title is not new. The amendments and so are added, but I support it because there is no divide on the Bill.

Sir, I wish to thank you very much. I am glad you had some patience with me today. I do not think that I have ran afoul of anything, no breaches, but I appreciate my involvement and I am so obliged.

Thank you.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Durant you have the Floor.

SENATOR Rev. Dr. D. L. DURANT: Mr. President, my colleagues have really spoken well on this issue, and I stand to also give my full support to this Transnational Organised Crime Prevention and Control Bill, 2011. I am overwhelmed by the level of support. The Leader of Government Business, Senator McClean, did a very good job, as well as our Senator Symmonds and the other Senators. So there is not much more, just about two things I want to add to it.

Sir, I believe any legislation that will suppress, punish and prevent the trafficking of human beings is something that should really be overwhelmingly supported and that is what I have experienced here today, and I am very glad for this.

Sir, there is a moral commitment that we all have to uphold a standard of righteousness. I do not want us to be afraid of this word righteousness. It simply means, right living. Righteousness exalts a nation but sin is a reproach to any people. Human trafficking could never be something that should be condoned. It is not right. It is unfair. Also the illicit manufacturing of firearms as well is something that should not be encouraged.

Sir, many of these young ladies are lured into this situation by false promises, as we heard before. They come here may be being promised a better life and then find themselves in a trap, and they really cannot get out. There are no travel documents. They cannot get away. They find themselves in a trap. They are affected psychologically, emotionally, physically and spiritually. Then they become resentful and hateful. Their whole attitude is changed, and it is not fair.

Sir, I have been much burdened for this for some time. I remember a few years, a strip club that was here, I and two other Pastors decided enough is enough. So we approached a Striptease Club in this island. Of course we carried a newspaper with us because we were annoyed about it. We wanted something done. When we went to the door, the man came out. Of course, when he saw us he jumped, but we said, "What you are doing with these young beautiful ladies is not right." We were very strong

and very firm on the message we gave him about getting that place closed down. Of course, he was alarmed at first, jumped and mumbled a couple of things. Then a kind of fear came over him, but when the fear past, he got a bit bounteous and said that he can do as he liked, and banged the door in our face.

Of course, it was in the papers the next day, our photographs in front of this Striptease Club. Sir, do you know what is the good thing about that, about four to five weeks after that place was closed down. So I am saying that sometimes we have to go beyond just talk and rise up and take some action. Sir, what two other Pastors and myself did really paid off, because the Strip Club is now closed down. As a matter of fact, myself and the former boss now are friends. He respected what we did and I now talk with him on a very good basis.

Asides.

SENATOR Rev. Dr. D. L. DURANT: Also, I remember sometime after that two other Pastors and myself approached a newspaper here that was having a lot of nudism. You saw the young ladies in hardly anything on the front pages, middle pages, and all over, and that was a popular newsprint here on weekends.

3.32 p.m.

One day we said that enough is enough again and we went straight to the newspaper to speak with the persons whom we knew was responsible. He did not know what we were coming for so when we sat down we told him why we were there. We see these young ladies every week, every week with hardly anything on and I asked him what kind of spirit are you sending to this country.

I remember going into the garage of one of my mechanics and I saw the wall pasted with all the nude pictures. I had to cover my eyes. It was awful. I said is this what you enjoy doing here. He felt a bit convicted and I believe he started taking off some after a while but this is what they were being fed. They were being fed this diet over and over and it incited them and during those periods we had a lot of rapes, some reported and some not reported because that kind of imagery really provokes and incite, especially men because men are like a light switch, just flip and turn on and a lot goes by what they see.

These days, coming to see a Bill like this being passed is very encouraging and I want to applaud the Government and the Police department and all who are responsible for putting it together, as well as the international arena. Sir, to me the days for these pimps are over. People making money on the beautiful young ladies, prostituting their bodies, and giving them next to nothing

and they are having all the big bread on their table. To me that is slavery and those days are over.

When we spoke to the guy at the newspaper, he said, well we have to make money and that was the excuse he was giving. I said that you can make money other ways, rather than just prostituting young women like this and having their naked bodies advertised in the newspapers every week.

The long and short of it, I told him to call the boss and I do not want to say what kind of interaction happened with the boss and us but a few months later, that paper is no more in Barbados. We are very happy that we were able to make that kind of approach and also put the cards straight on the table, what we really do not like about it and it is no more.

Asides.

Senator Rev. Dr. D.L. DURANT: Senator Symmonds spoke about the pornography and that is a real issue. This is also on cell phones. You talk with young people, you counsel young people from time to time, you are hearing about threesome sex acts that are on cell phones passing around. This kind of pornographic material is not only in our schools you will find it of course in our communities as well and not only secondary schools but also in primary schools and that is a hurtful thing to happen within our land.

We are hoping that through education and through teaching our young people and trying to really put some values and morals into them that we will see a change from this level of behaviour and they will recognise that there is a better way and that form of exhibitionism is not the really way of expressing themselves. What we are seeing here is that these crimes against humanity to me represent the ugly side of globalism and we need to really watch that, in a small island developing state like Barbados, this level of prostitution, pornographic material, drug trafficking and the illicit manufacture of firearms.

I knew growing up, it was said that in St. George they used to manufacture guns. I do not know if that was ever true or not but that is what we heard growing up as young people. Maybe it was not true but wherever they are coming from, we need to support the police in trying to identify these areas, so that we can give them information, so that this level of trafficking in firearms does not continue, Sir, because in a small island developing state like Barbados that is very dependent on tourism, we cannot have that kind of negative publicity being highlighted week after week in our newspapers.

My support goes out for this Bill and I only hope that the law will be implemented because I know that we

are good at passing laws but we want to strengthen the implementation of the laws. After this Bill is passed, I would like to see good policing being done so that some of these pimps can be picked up and charged and incarcerated. We have to make an example of some people so that they will know we are serious in seeking to bring about some morals and some good values again to our dear lovely land. Barbados is a wonderful place and a beautiful island for us to live, to do our business, to raise our families and we do not want to see it spoiled. Let us continue to do whatever we can as Legislators within our power to bring that level of righteousness and sanity back to our nation.

With that, Mr. President, I want to thank you. Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator McClean.

Senator Hon. Miss M.P.O. McCLEAN: Mr. President, as I rise to wrap up the debate on this Bill, I want to signal that clearly its importance has been established by the several contributions of my colleagues. There is recognition of its critical importance, in terms of addressing both in a preventive and a punitive manner, a series of crimes, characterised by behaviours that are not conducive to a peaceful, orderly and decent society.

Overall, Sir, it is recognised that Legislation by itself does not cure evils. The concerns would have been raised about the capacity of a small country like Barbados to put behind the Legislation, the necessary supporting mechanisms, manpower, personnel, financial resources, et cetera.

The last contribution, the Honourable Senator pointed out that if we look at a globalised world, this is perhaps a negative side to that and to use his words, he mentioned, the ugly side of Globalization, which indeed it is and given the immediate access that persons have to the most remote parts of the globe, it is a matter that has to be addressed in a similarly globalised fashion. In other words, the pornographic movies, homemade or otherwise referred to earlier, can be produced in Barbados and literally, second shared as far away as Shanghai, Beijing, Tokyo, Timbuktu, you name it, Timbuktu of course being closer to Barbados than the other two cities, the countries that they are found.

The point I am making in terms of a globalised effort to fight this, one of the things that we certainly have to rely on, and already they are in existence, a number of bilateral and multilateral agreements which, hopefully, would allow us as small countries with limited resources to fight this crime with the support of others.

We would have heard in previous times of the arrangements, negotiated between Barbados and other Members of CARICOM and the United States of America to address issues of national and regional security. It is

those kinds of cooperative agreements that we would want to count on, at the official, state or Government level.

Sir, at the people to people level, I am happy to share some information which Senator Sandiford-Garner, given her interest and official involvement in matters relating to women's right, et cetera, would have reminded me. The Women's Global Power Network has actually announced an UN Trafficking Fund for non Governmental organisations, which is supposed to create and provide access to a small grant's facility for the victims of human trafficking.

3.52 p.m.

Funds such as this should ensure that we can as a collective, non-governmental organisations, community organisations, churches, whatever, fight the issues and the anticipated problems that would arise where there is evidence of trafficking in its various forms as would have been described here.

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

On the motion of Senator the Hon. Miss M. P. O. McCLEAN, the Senate resolved itself into Committee, Her Honour Senator Miss K. F. IFILL in the Chair.

COMMITTEE

MADAM CHAIRMAN: The Senate is in Committee.

Part I, Clauses 1 - 2 were called and passed.

Part II, Clauses 3 - 7 were called and passed.

Part III, Clauses 8 - 10 were called and passed.

Part IV, Clauses 11 - 13 were called and passed.

Part V, Clauses, 14 - 20 were called and passed.

Part VI, Clauses 21 - 26 were called and passed.

The First Schedule was called and passed.

The Second Schedule was called and passed.

The Third Schedule was called and passed.

On the motion of Senator the Hon. Miss M. P. O. McCLEAN, Madam CHAIRMAN reported the passing of one Bill in Committee to His Honour the PRESIDENT and Mr. PRESIDENT resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

On the motion of Senator the Hon. Miss M. P. O. McCLEAN, the Bill was read a third time and passed and cited as the Transnational Organized Crime (Prevention and Control) Act, 2011.

ORDER No. 1

RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE GUARANTEE BY THE MINISTER RESPONSIBLE FOR FINANCE OF THE PAYMENT OF THE PRINCIPAL AND INTEREST IN RESPECT OF THE BOND ISSUE OF \$161 000 000 IN THE CURRENCY OF BARBADOS ISSUED BY THE BARBADOS AGRICULTURAL MANAGEMENT CO. LTD. BY WAY OF A LOAN FROM THE BARBADOS NATIONAL BANK FINANCE AND TRUST CORPORATION FOR THE PURPOSE OF FINANCING THE SUGAR INDUSTRY

Senator the Hon. Miss M. P. O. McCLEAN: Mr. President, the Resolution guarantees a financing facility totalling \$161 million from the Barbados National Bank Finance and Trust Corporation to the Barbados Agricultural Management Company Limited known as BAMC. This would be done through the issue of bonds to finance the out-of-crop operations of the BAMC covering a three-year financial period, 2008 to 2009, 2009 to 2010 and 2010 to 2011.

In effect, this is intended to finance the working capital of the Barbados Agricultural Management Company and therefore would, if we look at the years covered, relate not to current working capital but to previous working capital. In explaining the rationale for that, if I can look at it from the point of view of if I was personally financing something, it is almost as though you are consolidating the debts of that institution. In essence, what I mean is that over the previous two financial years, 2008 to 2009 and 2009 to 2010, the Barbados Agricultural Management Company would have engaged in borrowing from a mix of institutions to finance its operations, and that is why we are looking back instead of looking forward.

4.08 p.m.

Mr. President, in very simple terms, this is money, some of which would have already been expended, provided by other sources and now they are debts that have been consolidated.

Sir, specifically, this Guarantee would be done through the Barbados Agricultural Management Company Limited (Sugar Bonds Guarantee) Act, Cap. 255 of the Laws of Barbados. Therefore, in essence, what that is also saying is that there is provision in the legislation for this company to have its debts guaranteed by Government and so Government is functioning squarely within the law.

Mr. President, if I could elaborate a bit on the contents of the bond, the bond is issued in two tranches, Tranche One is \$111 million, at a rate of 6 per cent fixed rate bond. It will be issued in two series, one being BDS\$50 million for five years, with the second series being a bond of US\$30 500 000. The Second Tranche would for BDS\$50 million, with an 8-year bond, at 6.5 per cent interest. Those are some of the specifics of the bond.

Mr. President, it is useful that we look at the mechanisms because we need also to address how those funds are managed and how we prepare and provide for the repayment of those bonds. Under the legislation at Cap. 255, this requires that a Sugar Industry Revitalisation Fund be established, into which the funds raised from the bond issue are placed and the moneys in that fund are then applied to the financing of the operations of the sugar industry. In addition, a Sinking Fund is also set up for the purposes of meeting the redemption of these sugar bonds and to pay other expenses incurred in the process of redeeming those bonds. Of course, as an important matter of some regulation and good practice, provision is made for the continuous auditing, according to standard procedures.

Mr. President, it would be useful perhaps to say something about the history and background of the sugar industry, first about this management company. In 1994, coming on the heels of what I would probably describe as major difficulties in the sugar sector, a sector which was, to a large extent... I cannot spell out specifically what percentage of the industry in plantations would have been - but the industry could be characterised in one in which estates were heavily indebted and more specifically, heavily indebted to the Government, the Barbados National Bank. Sir, a decision was taken to create an entity which would allow for the separation of that debt from the financial institution, a part of it would have been to improve the financials of the bank but also to bring those funds under a single entity. In addition, when this the Barbados Agricultural Management Company Limited was created, it operated the three sugar factories which existed at the time, Buckeley, Andrews and Portvale.

Mr. President, Buckeley was closed around 2002 and the Barbados Agricultural Management Company Limited was required, under an arrangement, to operate those indebted estates under a lease arrangement. That lease arrangement was one in which, I supposed, the Barbados Agricultural Management Company Limited continue to produce sugar, the revenues from that which would have accrued to the individual estates would have been used to cover the lease and perhaps service the debt, et cetera. Sir, I could talk a lot about the performance in the industry but I am sure that there are some here who are better knowledgeable of the industry than I am, who would talk about that.

Sir, at the end of the day, the Barbados Agricultural Management Company Limited as an entity would be generating its revenues from the sale of sugar, molasses and hopefully other crops. I specify other crops because for the time I have been around Barbados and have some knowledge of how those estates producing sugar operated, there was also what I observed as the production of non-sugar crops. There are some questions as to how the revenue were accounted for in terms of the performance of the estates, et cetera but I would flag that as an issue when we talk about the performance. Sir, the Barbados Agricultural Management Company Limited continues to operate like that, producing other non-sugar crops and hopefully this is something that we would see continuing into the future. Sir, if I could digress a little bit, this would especially be so in terms of all that is projected in the short, medium and long term for agriculture.

Mr. President, we in Barbados are facing a situation where weather patterns continue to confound us. We have a situation where I believe, whether for mere minutes or longer period, heavy or light rainfalls, since the year began we have been having rain and we are into February. My recollection of February is that it is normally part of what we see as the dry season. We look at perhaps one or two or three largest sugar producers in the world, Australia. Australia has been subjected to severe floods, they recently had a cyclone. Russia has had its fair share. We have had unusual winters which not only affect our tourism arrivals but also the ability of British and farmers in the United States of America to get into the cultivation of other kinds of crops.

Mr. President, while talking about sugar we also have to look at the role of those estates in the context of Barbados. Sir, the point I am making is that we are looking at our sugar industry and what is done on sugar lands, against the background of some unprecedented increases in commodity prices in the near and foreseeable future. Sir, for example, I saw an item on some projected prices for commodities. It is projected that orange juice in the United Kingdom will, perhaps by June, increase by 80 per cent in price and that is a simple explanation. The largest producer of orange juice and its outputs is Florida and Florida has been faced with the kinds of temperatures that are not typically seen at this time of the year.

Mr. President, in essence, when we talk about the industry and its history and its presence, we are talking about a sugar industry in which a number of things are happening directly in relation to the production of sugar and in relation to other kinds of commodities produced by our farmers or substitutes for commodities produced by farmers overseas. Mr. President, what we are facing, if I can come back directly now to the sugar industry, is a sector which had its glory days in Barbados but which has been under pressure given the recent developments in the

industry and in the World Trade Organisation's arrangements by liberalisation and the dismantling of protective arrangements. As we look to make decisions about this industry, we are talking about an industry which served us well and did us proud in the past but which is under pressure.

Mr. President, I want to say something about the future of the sugar industry. I can say that this administration, within the last two years, have been looking squarely at what is the future of sugar. I personally have some notion as to its importance.

4.12 p.m.

Mr. President, I am not a geologist, a geographer or an agriculturalist but a person who drive around Barbados and observe that we have very little top soil, one that is perhaps best suited to grasses. Sir, the persons in our midst who understand these things better will either explain and help me, or contradict what I am saying.

Mr. President, as I look around, unless we can, in short time, come up with alternatives there are significant benefits over and above the immediate economic benefits. I think there is an environmental benefit to sugar cane because I happen to travel to St. Kitts and to be in St. Kitts on the last day of the official operation of that industry, the day when they shut down sugar, a couple of years ago in St. Kitts. I have not had a chance to go back there and I have always wondered what the landscape looks like. In fact, I was told by somebody that a lot of the lands are still covered in sugar cane.

Mr. President, the point I am making is that we recognise that there are some geological realities what we can do and what we cannot do on our land space. We also recognise the value of maintaining certain levels of grain. When I talk about the coverage of land, one of the things that came home to me with the passing of Tomas was the fragility of our trees and the large number of trees that toppled. I think of them toppled largely because of the thinnest of our soil and so, the question is: How do we protect that?

Mr. President, outside of the environmental kinds and the aesthetic value of nice rolling green sugar cane fields et cetera, is the fact that sugar cane, as a specie, has some interesting values. I believe that I can make reference, and if I have to make it available I can so do, but in trying to understand some of the issues around this, I came across an article. It was a keynote address to a well known individual Maurice Patureau. Sir, if I remember correctly, he is Mauritian and for those of us who have some idea, Mauritius has been a major producer of sugar. It is an island kind of like ours and they have been involved in sugar. Sir, the address was offered by three individuals

from Cuba, another one of our regional States that has been very involved in the production of sugar cane and the derivatives of sugar cane.

Sir, it was interesting an article and in this articles of 1998, there as a statement made that the international sugar market will show different characteristics in the next century, that it will be a deregulated and highly competitive market, that exports will be concentrated with more than 70 per cent accounted for by the five leading exporters and it suggested that the EU would take the first place. Sir, they are talking about the sugar market, they did not talk necessarily, Sir, about sugar produced from sugar cane but the fact is that we are competing with other forms of sugar, beet sugar, et cetera.

Mr. President, an interesting statistic which is of concern to us and of significance to us, is that 80 per cent of imports of sugar will be made by the less developed countries compared to about 30 per cent in 1970 and, interestingly enough because of our previous arrangements, we have been utilising other people's sugar for domestic consumption by and large.

Mr. President, it is an interesting industry, one in which we have sought to earn foreign exchange et cetera but, at the same time, in order to that we have been importing sugar for local consumption. Sir, the question has been asked, why continue with sugar? I think that is one which we have sought to do the necessary research and engagement and, unfortunately, I must confess that adequate attention has not been paid to this. I say this because as I read this article which incidentally is titled, "The Sugar Cane, its byproducts and co-products", sugar cane process, as the article suggested, in terms of its many uses, using chemical and biotechnologies, can produce a high number of products and is surpassed only by those obtained from petrochemistry. Sir, that is an interesting statement for a layperson like myself. (5:36) Mr. President, what they are saying to me is that sugar cane is not only for producing brown sugar or sugar to be processed into white sugar or molasses, that sugar cane the plant, first and foremost is a fibre. It is a plant and it is fibrous so we need to think in terms of its multiplicity of uses.

Mr. President, I recall some years that one of my fellow students at the University of the West Indies who has made his name as a well-respected professor in the United States of America, who has patented a number of pharmaceuticals and so on using carbohydrates - I do not know if I can call his name, I think normally we are not allowed to - but he has sought to be involved...

Asides.

Senator the HON. Miss M.P.O. McCLEAN: I think there were some initial discussions and we are now again

trying to re-engage him. He has been doing some excellent research where he is looking at alternative uses of carbohydrates including our sugar cane. What has also come across to me in my research is that in a country where we are seeking to achieve true green economy status, et cetera, we are talking about a plant that is a renewable raw material with uses for both human and animal feeding, for example. It also has the capacity to produce a number of base chemical.

Mr. President, I am venturing into a field in which I can only go by what the researchers tell me. I have never chemistry, biology or physics in my days at school, I did other kinds of things. I was into history and the other things that not so bright students did so I only know of these things by reading.

Mr. President, I took time to share some of this information from this article because I believe that if we, as a society, spend some time studying the possibilities, we can come up with a lot of interesting solutions. Sir, the articles also talked about a plant, that is the sugar cane, with a yield not equaled by any other plant and as they have said, it is the ideal crop for the next century. Sir, if that is the case, I just pose a question: Should we be exiting the production of sugar cane because we have focused largely on the sugar cane, producing sugar and molasses and not even sufficient molasses for our own use.

Mr. President, I will not attempt to give all that is in this article, you can just Google it and it is available. I trust you know what I mean when I say to Google it.

Mr. PRESIDENT: I do not wish to give you a soliloquy on Google, please continue.

Senator the HON. Miss M.P.O. McCLEAN: Sir, it really highlights in this article the true potential of sugar cane. Sir, let me talk about baggage which, as you know, is a key by-product of sugar. Sir, we talk about the fibre and this is a critical component of that because it is fibre which is another non-soluble solid. (9:10) Sir, the question is, beyond fueling our factories, what can we do with the bagasse? Mr. President, I can tell you that I have been exploring with some persons the use of bagasse as a growing medium for some other interesting crops and, Sir, it is used by the poultry industry and so on. Sir, the point I am making is that when we start to analyse this sector, we recognise that there are lots of usage.

Mr. President, I believe that we have the capacity as Barbadians to turn around an industry which, by the nature of the guarantee that we are here to deal with today, to turn around this industry in a way that can positively impact on not only the financial of the BAMC but can encourage farmers.

4:22

I will use an analogy and I trust that the example would be of benefit to those who hear me.

Sir, only this morning talking about fibre, plants, local and alternative uses, I had a discussion with an entrepreneur who in another life I used to assist as they were starting up a business, and the person shared with me that coming out of some experimentation with some other grasses, and I think I must have mentioned this before, this person has now come to the stage when he is are looking to use corn, not the corn on the City of Bridgetown but the stalks, which is a by-product of the plant, the process of producing corn for consumption, in a manufacturing arrangement for furniture, and is now actually seeking actively to encourage farmers to produce.

Sir, if you can in your mind's eye visualise a corn stalk and the leaves of the corn and cane and so on, you are probably talking about, not the cane stalks, the blades or whatever which we have to strip away, et cetera. We are talking about a plant which has a range of possibilities.

Sir, what we in Barbados need as we seek to mould this industry along, and to move it forward and to put it on other legs, is to think - I do not like to use these cliches. I was going to say, think outside of the box. Think beyond the traditional to identify a whole range of possibilities. Sir, what this would require is the supporting of research and development. I want to echo now that if we are talking about biotechnologies, et cetera, the Government cannot do it alone.

I know there are entrepreneurs who are looking to explore opportunities, et cetera. I believe that with some creative thinking with the encouragement of our young people, we can look, at the end of the day, to find ways working locally and collaboratively, as I said, with ... we know the kind of work that is happening in Cuba. We know the work that has been happening in Mauritius, and Barbados has, in fact, in terms of the industry, perhaps done quite a bit of work.

Sir, a lot of us understand that species of sugar cane grown around the world, many of those species might have been developed and encouraged right here in Barbados. I do not know if some of the younger Barbadians would know of the work done at our breeding station, et cetera, but we had a reputation in the past, and I am not sure what the status is of that, but we have had a reputation of doing that kind of research and development into the raw material, that is the planting material, the varieties of cane, et cetera. Sir, we need now to go to the point where we are looking at ensuring that we take it to the next step.

Sir, as I said, if I can now think in terms of the actual financing of this, et cetera, this is a lot of money in terms of a guarantee, but we recognise that as an industry which in the past has been the backbone of our economy. It is not one that can disappear overnight without major disruption. Therefore, the Government recognises that it has a responsibility to sustain the industry in a way, certainly by providing such a guarantee, to ensure that whatever the transitions are done in a way that is minimally disruptive.

Of course, it is not simply about supporting an industry that is dying. I spent quite a bit of my contribution talking about an industry which can be revitalised. If I can use a marketing term, we talk about a product life cycle and we can talk about an industry life cycle. We have seen an industry where in the past we focused on producing, like I said, molasses. We focused on producing raw sugar for export in bulk form. In fact I can tell you that in talking to a gentleman some years ago, who would have retired from the sector, we did experiment in Barbados with refining sugar, but, of course, given our relationships with our major buyer who would have bought the bulk sugar, et cetera, it was not made easy for those people who sought to be creative and innovative and pretty much would have sought to prohibit such innovation.

Having said that, as a Government, we are committed and we have done a number of things, to move from that situation of producing bulk sugar and molasses only to focusing on specialty sugars.

I recently, and I think I mentioned it here, brought home from London a package of sugar. Do you know why I bought it? I bought it to show some persons. It was sugar and in fact a mixture of eighty something per cent. I recall standing here and mentioning it, if I am not mistaken, and the rest of it was molasses. I used it, having brought it to show people, in the making of our good old Bajan Fruit Cake for Christmas. I brought it home because having done the same thing in England, I was demonstrating to somebody how to make the cake, that it worked very well. It is a simple addition.

Sir, I looked at it and said, "You know what, I can almost bet that the basic sugar is probably sugar from Barbados."

Sir, there have added another ingredients, something which also is produced, and they have created what they call a soft sugar. I do not know that we have done that, but it is a specialty market. It was sold for a somewhat higher price than if I had bought the plain brown sugar.

Sir, we have looked at those kinds of things and we need to look at other kinds of uses. I believe that as we explore the efforts to diversify our uses of the sugar cane plant itself, as well as to diversify our presentation

packaging of our sugar, et cetera, there is perhaps, in my mind, and there should be scope for this industry.

It would be a very sad day to see people focus on the narrow usage of sugar to which we have long been accustomed and fail to take advantage of the many opportunities suggested in my earlier comments, recognising that sugar is much more than something which can yield raw sugar cane. Even with the raw sugar cane, one of the things we also have to highlight are the nutritional benefits of raw brown sugar. Refined sugar, if we are talking about nutrition, et cetera, is bad for you, and it is something which we ourselves need to share. Sir, people have been using the names of our sugars and capitalising on those things, and we need ourselves to do that.

Mr. President, I believe that the Resolution is one in which we have demonstrated a commitment, an industry which is challenged, which, in fact, has been neglected for a long time. One in which focus has not been on moving that product from a mature and dying life cycle to one in which we seek to revise and to revitalise it, and move it on a growth path, literally and figuratively, and to utilise this critical grass in a way which has a multiplicity of benefits to Barbados.

Sir, I believe that as we seek to sustain the industry in the short-term, we are also focusing on ensuring that it has a place and a role to play in our landscape, as in our economic strategies for moving Barbados forward.

Sir, with those few words I beg to move that Resolution do now pass.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Symmonds.

Mr. K. D. SYMMONDS: Mr. President, I want to say at the outset that I will not be taking any issue with the substance of the matter which is before the House. There are some issues which we are going to have to discuss candidly. I confess equally at the beginning that I came here with one type of mentally organised approach to that which I was going to say about this. When I listened to Senator McClean speaking passionately with all of the overwhelming conviction of recent discovery, I felt that I have to help the Government.

4.32 p.m.

I really feel, Sir, that what I interpreted was a plaintiff cry for assistance and you cannot respond to such a cry with any element of aggression. You have to help and I suspect, Sir, that it might have been good - and I make this only as a suggestion - if the former Minister of Agriculture, Senator Benn had led off this debate because I think some issues were brushed and maybe, Sir, he would

have been able to develop better but we will come to that, as I try to assist the Government, Sir, but let us begin by dealing with some housekeeping matters.

Mr. President, I think it is important for us to understand at the beginning that this is a matter which allows the country to understand clearly what the Barbados Labour Party means when we say - without any malice but only out of a sense of national concern - that there are issues and areas where it is clear that the Government of Barbados has not yet understood how they can pay their way and earn their way out of the recession. Sir, this is one of the areas.

Equally, Sir, this is one of the areas where we say that it is possible to build capacity, even in the middle of a debilitating recession so, that when you come out of it, you are well ahead of your peers and in a position to capitalise on all the opportunities that must come, when the recession ends. We know that it cannot be a recession for ever.

Mr. President, I think it is only fair that having said so, I give you a commitment from which I will not deviate that I will explain in detail, how we can pay and earn our way out of the recession and how, not only agriculture but the sugar industry sector, could be a major player. Mr. President, we are asked also before we generally discuss the sector, to deal with a matter of a guarantee of BDS\$161 million and we are going to be guaranteeing the payment of principal and interest in respect of a bond issue.

Mr. President, it does not take an Attorney-at-Law or a practitioner in the world of commerce to understand that Government is a former exercise and you cannot do a formal thing in an informal way. Sir, I will use the following analogy because Cap 318A of the Laws of Barbados is the Securities Act and it defines bonds and shares as securities. If Senator Cave in the private sector was to say that he wanted to issue securities in his company, which is well known then, Mr. President, he would have to do so in a very formal way and he would have to do so in the context of which the fullest and most frank financial disclosures were made to the general public so that people of a reasonable mind could understand what is the financial state of the company.

Equally, Mr. President, that applies to any other business. We enjoy the company of the late and beloved Senator, John Stanley Goddard and Sir John Stanley, if he were to have done the same thing, would have been obliged by law, in the form of the prospectus to offer a clear understanding of what the financial position of his company was, Sir.

Mr. President, I would be the first to concede that the Securities Act does not call upon the Government to do a prospectus but the Government has an obligation, not just

to come and say we want Parliament to guarantee but the Government has an obligation to say that if you are going to guarantee \$161 million that this is the financial circumstance in which the company finds itself today. This does not have to be mandated by law that can be something born out of an abundance of good faith that you are saying to the public that something as large as \$161 million is what is guaranteed and therefore you would want at the very outset to have the fullest financial disclosure so that persons of a reasonable mind, not a so-called Barbados Labour Party yard fowl or a Democratic Labour Party yard fowl, would be able to support but, Mr. President, a person of a reasonable mind would be able to say, look, this is the profit and loss situation of the company. This is where the assets and liabilities of the company stand.

Senator Hon. Miss M.P.O. McCLEAN: Mr. President, on a point of order. The Honourable Senator is misleading this Chamber. His suggestion that Government is a formal exercise and we cannot do a formal thing in an informal way, and his continuation to explain what he sees to be in an informal way, really misleads.

The Barbados Agricultural Management Company (BAMC) is required to file financial statements annually. This issue of a bond, not by the Government of Barbados but by the BNB Finance and Trust Corporation or a series of bonds, will result in the offering of prospectuses, prospecti to prospective investors therefore the formal activity that you speak of will be part of this process. Anybody participating in such a bond can go to the places in which Government will file them, including asking the Library of Parliament or a Member of Parliament like yourself, a Member of this Senate to borrow those financials if they did not want to wait on the bank, so to suggest that is suggesting that something is happening outside of the norm and that certainly is misleading, Sir.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Symmonds, you may continue.

Senator K. SYMMONDS: I am obliged, Sir.

My friend anticipates that I am going where I am not really going, Sir. I am saying that for the benefit of this Chamber there is a desire, and if the Government does not wish to accept the desirability that is a matter entirely within their right so to do but there is a desirability on my judgment that matters of this nature are being dealt with. Sir, those of us who are charged with the responsibility of deciding to vote Aye or Nay should have a more full understanding of what is the state of affairs financially of that company. I will tell you why.

Mr. President, it is because of the fact that we need to be abundantly clear in our minds that the company realistically is going to be in a position to pay its way after

having benefitted from a loan of this magnitude. If it does not, Sir, we are in a situation where we are going to say that \$161 million will be added to the public debt.

Mr. President, I do not know how Members on that side feel but on this side, Sir, we feel that it is a sufficiently large sum of money and we need to proceed with caution, with the fullest possible disclosure, with the fullest understanding of the capacity and the likelihood of the company to be able to repay the money because we are talking in the end about public funds and I am not prepared to treat likely to that, Sir.

Mr. President, I want to go a little further on that particular issue. When we look closely at the Resolution, we see that it contemplates the years, 2008 to 2009, 2009 to 2010, 2010 to 2011, which is where we are now. I say to you, Mr. President, and I think I have said it before, when I was much younger, I was fascinated by the book which is known as Alice in Wonderland. There is a phrase in there which says that it grows curiouser and curiouser. We have been told by Senator McClean that this is essentially a matter of consolidating debt but that takes me right back to the original concern that I raised because it is easy to simply say we are consolidating debt.

4.42 p.m.

We know, Sir, that there has been a standard practice engaged in by the Ministry of Finance but we are hearing now that there is a debt to be consolidated in the tune of \$161 million. The question therefore becomes: Is this the totality? Are we now to understand... Again, I use Alice in Wonderland. Let us say what we mean and mean what we say. Is it the totality of the debt which is facing the Barbados Barbados Agricultural Management Company Limited? Is it that the company is in \$160 million in debt? Is it an overdraft facility? What exactly is it? Frankly speaking, are the assets of the company, the expected receipts, sufficient that this is going to be able to continue to trade as a feasible institution or is it really now bordering or reaching the stage of technically bankrupt. Those are the concerns that we have to have. It is not to make a charge against anybody but it is to ask for the fullest possible and the most frank financial disclosure because we are dealing with an extremely large sum of money for a statutory corporation in Barbados.

Mr. Speaker, I go again to the Resolution and the Schedule which the Leader of Government Business spoke to. I am not able to do things in the way the Leader of Government Business does them, she reads exceptionally quickly. I am therefore assuming that as a result of happenstance and not intended oversight... When we came to the point of arranger, there was a footnote. While it has been noted that the Barbados National Bank and Finance and Trust Corporation will be the arranger, it has not been

noted that the financing, in the footnote, will be arranged on a "best efforts basis only". What does that mean?

Mr. President, it goes on to say accordingly the issuer will receive the net proceeds only on the bonds that have been sold to investors so we are trying to raise money by way of a bond issuance. The statutory corporation is getting the backing through this Parliament of the Government but the reality is that that entity which is financing is saying that if you only get \$10 million in bonds, then forget about the \$160 million. That is what in effect this footnote means and therefore there is a question now of the confidence that the financier has in the Barbados Agricultural Management Company Limited.

I am not prepared to gloss over that because it bowls bowls to my mind the concern that was raised in this place a few months ago when the National Housing Corporation seeking to get only \$40 million on the domestic market had to go through all the twists and turns that are consistent only with the international financial market in order to get the backing.

There seems to be a lack of confidence in the local financial marketplace which the Government is not speaking to directly but which we are seeing crop up time and time again now by way of Resolutions which are coming to this place and being bypass, that is why I say that the fullest disclosure... That is not to attack any Senator or the ruling party but to say that those of us here, the Independent Senators, for example, would need to be able to see so that they may feel free to say in their best judgement and professional financial experience... There are some on that side that... In the fact of all that is before us, this is something that is perfectly transparent and in order so that people of right-thinking and reasonable mind may feel free and willing to join in this. Mr. President, that is to deal with the financial side of the thing. I have said that I heard the Government to be almost begging for assistance.

The Barbados Labour Party position is that in its present form, to be very candid with you, this sugar industry is right now uncompetitive and not likely to be able to survive without substantial support from the Government and we all know that the Government is not in a position to give it. Now, there is a lot of history in this but there is also a lot of policy in this. I promise that I am going to try to speak less to the history and more to the policy because I think that the Government can be assisted.

To assist the Government, Members on the Government side have to be willing to hear. What we heard today were expressions of interest and in some cases shock and surprise on discovery of things which have been in place since the Barbados Labour Party was in office back in 2005 and 2006. Before Senator McClean waxes warm in

her seat, I am going to help her by demonstrating where it happened.

Sir, we have to begin with where we found the industry in 1994. There was at that time a Barbados Agricultural Credit Trust located under the Ministry of Finance. The purpose of the Barbados Agricultural Credit Trust was that it had been established to take over and refinance the loans of the indebted sugar estates. There was also, Sir, born out of the Barbados Agricultural Credit Trust, a Barbados Agricultural Management Corporation.

Asides.

Senator K. D. SYMMONDS: It is not the same thing. That is perhaps where the mistake lies. The Barbados Agricultural Credit Trust is the BACT and then a second company was created, the BAMC with a separate purpose. The BAMC was formed so as to manage the indebted estates. Mr. President, we found both of these companies located under the Ministry of Finance. The Ministry of Finance therefore was treating to these institutions which are fundamental to the future and the development of the sugar industry in Barbados, not the Ministry of Agriculture. The policy direction for them was not coming from the Minister of Agriculture at the time, it was coming from the Minister of Finance.

The only logical conclusion therefore in the absence of any other thing to the contrary - and I have searched in vain to find... For the benefit of those on that side, I can say to them now that yes I was part of that side at the time so I knew and that is one of the things that worried me then.

The reality, Mr. President, is that back in 1994 you would have had a situation where the Barbados Agricultural Credit Trust and the Barbados Agricultural Management Corporation functioned largely to dispense with and to rationalise as best as could be done the financial burden that was carried by the estates. During the process of time that is being done they are being managed by the Barbados Agricultural Management Company and then after that they are going to be sold off to whoever would come along and do what they will with them. Today, Sir, we have a number of estates in St. John. We just come out of St. John where we spent a lot of time. We have the famous Todds Estates and plantations like Pool, Venture, Henley and Wakefield.

Asides.

Senator K. D. SYMMONDS: Yes, we took a lot of licks but do not mind that, the plantations are still there and some of them are in cow-itch, that is the point. The policy direction coming from the Ministry of Finance was more about, as I understand it, an urgency to resolve a critical financial situation but it was not a policy direction aimed at

putting the sugar industry on a sustainable and resuscitated footing.

There is a Democratic Labour Party way of doing things. In this Chamber with us today sits a former Minister of Agriculture who came to that office in 2008 and he is in a position to verify that he would have had responsibility for agriculture but without the BAMC. The BAMC would have been under the Ministry of Finance. There is a way of doing things on that side.

4.53 p.m.

Mr. President, in contradistinction, we took a position that the Barbados Agricultural Marketing Corporation (BAMC) was going to be moved back to the Ministry of Agriculture. The Minister of Agriculture, along with his technical experts, was mandated to devise a strategy on the way forward for the sugar industry. Mr. President, I want to direct the Leader of Government Business to a document, which is not only part of the records of both Houses of Parliament but part of the record of her Ministry. It is called the Barbados Adaptation Strategy, 2006 to 2014. Mr. President, that Adaptation Strategy, among other things, speaks specifically to the sugar industry. The reason the chapter was put there referring to the sugar industry was that had to find a way to manage, transform, diversify and make competitive the sugar industry in this country back in 2005/2006.

Mr. President, why was it necessary to do that? I am going to walk this Honourable Chamber through this because it is essential that we understand. This is not about party politics, this now became an issue of urgent national protection and the protection of the Barbados economy. The party politics was how it was managed back in 1994 and then how the change took place after 1994, to take the Barbados Agricultural Management Corporation (BAMC) from under the wing of the Ministry of Finance and treat it as an entity that could help promote and diversify the sugar industry. Sir, the larger issue to which my learned friend, Senator Bradshaw, continue to ask this Honourable Chamber to speak is where we carry the country in the future. Sir, that projection was done in 2004, for a number of reasons. Sir, the first reason - and I accept the Leader of Government Business makes the point, there is vast social, cultural, economic and environmental significance to the sugar cane industry in Barbados. There are small communities whose every financial activity turns around the sugar industry. That is true of rural parts of Barbados. Environmentally, we would be just like St. Kitts, and I accept the analogy, where St. Kitts is overwhelmed with bush, were it not for the sugar cane here.

Mr. President, there is a larger issue, in 2004, Barbados was a part of the grouping known as the ACP countries. That grouping had a subgrouping within it of

about 18 or 19 members who were known as the sugar protocol beneficiaries. Under that protocol, we enjoyed an arrangement, which was entirely preferential with the European Union who was the trading partner. The European Union guaranteed us that they would buy or import an agreed quantity of our sugar. In many instances, for example with Barbados, it was virtually as much as we could produce. In many other instances, it was as much as they could have produced. The European Union guaranteed that they would import an agreed quantity of sugar for an indefinite period of time, at a guaranteed price. Therefore, there was a guaranteed market access to the European Union indefinitely.

Mr. President, anybody could tell you - you do not have to be a Solomon to understand - that nothing in there speaks to improving your competitiveness. There is a guarantee, you are having a guarantee price, you are having market access, competition out there in the real world has nothing to do with you. Sir, that is how we were cruising alone merrily. Australia, Thailand and Brazil decided that if you are going to treat one set of people like that within the European Union, then you have to treat everybody the same way because those countries sell sugar too. Those countries were against the most-favoured notion to the other countries, they all wanted to be treated likewise. They lobbied to international tribunal and had decisions made; their preferential arrangements given to certain countries were shattered. The consequence of that is that you woke up on morning in 2005 to hear that 38 per cent less would be given to you for the sugar that you sold. Sir, at that point you had to sit down and forget the party politics, you had to determine how can you rationalise this industry.

Mr. President, I agree with Senator McClean, it has to be salvaged, it has to be saved and it has to be maintained but you had to rationalise it and make it financially viable and feasible. Sir, that is where the adaptation strategy became vitally important. It is there in black and white for all those who have eyes to see and who cared to read, to read. Sir, even Senator Gilkes would find something of interest in the Adaptation Strategy. I do not want to be pejorative to my friend Senator Gilkes, I am just saying that I know him not to be an agriculturist but he would find something in there that would provoke him. Mr. President, we then have understand what we are talking about.

Mr. President, Senator McClean makes the point about Mauritius but the larger point about Mauritius is the point that today 80 per cent of the energy used in Mauritius is grown in the sugar fields of Mauritius. I beg of the Government to go back to the Mauritius model and look at it. Mr. President, we brought into this country the new species of cane that was tested in 2007. If the Government does not know this I will say it and Minister Benn must know that in 2008, when he came to the Ministry, there

were fields of fuel cane planted in Barbados as part of the pilot test project. It is not something we now decided to talk about after we lost the Government, it was there and you have to begin with a pilot project. Sir, the fields had been planted in 2007. We lost the Government in January 2008 but the reality is...

Mr. President, I am constantly hearing this harangue in my ears, and I will ask that you would allow me to be heard in silence.

Mr. PRESIDENT: I am not sure I am going to allow you to say you are constantly hearing a harangue. That is an assault on the President.

Senator KERRIE D. SYMMONDS: No, I am sorry, Sir, you may not have heard it.

Mr. PRESIDENT: I have not heard any assault on you.

Senator KERRIE D. SYMMONDS: Very well, Sir. I will struggle through manfully. The reality is that by 2007 I am saying to you that not only were the test fields of fuel cane under production but it was in pursuit of a larger economic objective. Again, I ask the Government to go back to the records which are there in their files. Sir, there was no secret, we had carried to Parliament the projections that by 2013, two years from now, we wanted 30 per cent of the gas used in this country to be out of the renewable source called fuel cane.

Sir, we have started a fuel cane project. For those who do not understand what it was about, it was to take a high fibre cane and you were going to get ethanol from that high fibre cane.

Sir, we went a step further, we said if you are going to talk about the gas which you are using, and using the ethanol as an additive, so you do not have to be worrying about a fuel import bill where a barrel of oil is costing between \$90 and \$100 a barrel and due to the madness happening in Egypt it is going back there today. We said let us also take a multipurpose approach, let us build a multipurpose factory.

Asides.

Senator KERRIE D. SYMMONDS: Do not worry about how much million because the Barbados Light and Power Company Limited...

Asides.

Senator KERRIE D. SYMMONDS: Mr. President, I like to hear when they start to prance up in their chairs. What I should be hearing in this Honourable Chamber is

what has become of the letter expressing interest from the Barbados Light and Power Company Limited, that they felt was a useful project that the Caribbean Development Bank was prepared to back.

It would be a simple matter, we would be generating electricity as well and that the electricity is coming from the same bagasse that Senator McClean speaks of with recent discovery. We have been using the cane trash that Senator McClean speaks of with recent discovery, the river tamarind that is running wild all around Barbados and the Barbados Light & Power Company Limited, not Kerry Symmonds, viewed it as a worthwhile project, have written expressing an interest to the Government and this is part of the records of the Ministry of Agriculture and part of the records of the Ministry of Finance. Sir, all that they wanted to do was to be able to take that electricity produced there and feed it back into the national grid.

Mr. President, for the first time in Barbados, therefore, we would have had a situation where we would not just be relying on that which Barbados Light & Power Company Limited produces but independent of the Barbados Light & Power Company Limited a substantial percentage of the electricity used in this country, airconditioning, light on in the parliamentary Chamber, at night in people's houses and in factories all around the island, hotels, where have you, that would be coming from renewable sources.

Mr. President, it was a concept defined, not along Party's lines but along national development lines to transform and diversify and restructure this economy and you cannot hear a word from the Democratic Labour Party. Sir, not a word of what is the status of that particular aspect of the proposal.

Mr. President, I go further. We were cognisant as well of the fact that we had a golden opportunity to do something by way of value added to the sugar industry and I say, Sir, that Senator McClean when she speaks of speciality sugar has only collided, given a glancing blow with the substance of the issue.

Mr. President, 2005 saw the introduction in this country of a Barbados brand of sugar called Muscovado Gold. It saw the introduction in the United Kingdom of plantation reserve, a value-added product, Mr. President, branded, packaged and marketed as Barbadian sugar. Sir, why was that necessary?

Mr. President, I really want to walk this Chamber through where were. We faced a situation where the cost of production and, Sir, I will be very honest with you and say that the last figures that I had were in 2007. Sir, \$3 000 per ton for bulk sugar, that was the cost of producing a ton of bulk sugar but, Sir, you know what we got by way of

receipts when you sold bulk sugar, this bulk sugar that we have been tied to for years, Mr. President, it was \$9.17 a ton, so you were destined to encourage massive losses.

The Government then said that you had to make sure that because you want to preserve the sugar industry, you have already dealt with the ethanol thing, you are already looking at electricity but we say that we take the sugar crystals, package them, brand them and in accordance with Article 22 of the Trade and Intellectual Property Agreement, you market it.

Mr. President, you have a Barbados Plantation Reserve which is being sold in the United Kingdom that today should be being sold all across Europe but its market share has fallen off but today it should be all across Europe and marketed in the same way that champagne is marketed because of its allegedly special quality coming from champagne in France, so you blend the jurisdiction, the country and the product together. You have the Ceylon Tea from Sri Lanka from the place called Ceylon in Sri Lanka, the same thing and you blend the country, the town and the jurisdiction together.

Mr. President, this was not rocket science, this was what the international trade law allows you to do and we, having negotiated all of these new relationships, and new rules and market access, we have to put it to work. (5:16) Sir, I cannot hear in the Other Place, in this place or any other place, Mr. President, a serious discussion about where we are taking this opportunity. Sir, you have Brussel cheese and the Greeks will tell you about fettered cheese, you have Blue Mountain Coffee and everybody is doing it. We have a product that has been packaged, prepared and branded. Sir, the Government changed, nobody is quarelling about that but the Government changed and the project is handed straight to the Democratic Labour Party and I have spoken in this Chamber in two Estimates debates when Senator Benn was Minister of Agriculture, so it is not new. I have impressed on him the urgency that there is golden opportunity going a-begging for us to market that which you have in an aggressive way. Sir, that is what I talk about when I say that you should earn your way out of a recession. Sir, I hear that the sugar is still being

Asides.

SENATOR K.D. SYMMONDS: Sir, this is where the issue is. I am not going to dispute that the Minister is selling a little plantation reserve but I will say that all that I have been able to understand is that the plantation reserve has lost its market share.

Mr. President, I go further because in addition to all those things I talked about there was a question of a gentlemen by the name Professor Hollingsworth. Sir, I

have not asked your permission to call his name but I apologise for calling it. Sir, he is a distinguished scientist ...

Asides.

SENATOR K.D. SYMMONDS: I am only calling Professor Hollingsworth's name in order to help the Leader of Government Business but now I am hearing that I do not respect the Rules.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Honourable Member, will you please address the Chair?

SENATOR K.D. SYMMONDS: Sir, that gentleman has verified by way of his scientist research... Sir, I want to help Senator McClean because she seems to be vague on the issue. Sir, he has verified by way of his scientist research the fact that sugar cane can be used in a number of pharmaceutical products. Sir, it went further. We then enter into an arrangement with the University of Michigan. I can speak with specificity, pellucidity and clarity on the matter because I understand where the economic opportunity lies. Sir, it was studied carefully because it is serious business. You go into the University of Michigan and (8:10) you say this is the research of the good professor and the university accepts it as something we can work with, let us then devise a strategy to share the intellectual property rights and all Barbados has to do after that is settled is to set about producing the pharmaceutical product. Sir, that is all it has to do. The intellectual property issue is put to rest by a leading university in the sphere.

Mr. President, three years of Government and that is why I say that you can earn and pay your way out of a deep recession, you can build capacity ...

Senator the HON. Miss M.P.O. McCLEAN: Mr. President, on a point of order. The Honourable Senator is misleading the Chamber and since he has called Professor Hollingsworth's name, I will use the name of Professor Hollingsworth. Sir, to give the impression that under his administration there was a done deal and an agreed contract, et cetera, in the way he expressed it. When we came to office, Professor Hollingsworth had not finished whatever negotiations he did, and whatever was discussed and was in the process of negotiation was in abeyance and we are in the process of trying to resuscitate that, Sir.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Point made. Senator Symmonds, you may continue.

Senator K. D. SYMMONDS: Mr. President, I am obliged to you. Sir, that reminded me of the excuse we heard recently about the fishing agreement but we will get to that point too. Mr. President, the reality is this.

Mr. PRESIDENT: We are not going to get to that point because we are not going to discuss the fishing agreement here today, not in this debate.

Senator K. D. SYMMONDS: Sir, not now but another time.

Mr. PRESIDENT: It is my ruling that you will not discuss it today.

Senator K. D. SYMMONDS: Sir, I am guided by your ruling. I am grateful for it. May I continue, Sir?

5:12

Sir, I want to go further. We had the policy in place in the same Adaption Strategy when you wanted to create a Living Sugar Museum. It would have been a refreshing and new additive to our tourism product. It would have been an exciting new additive to our cultural industry product. You would have a museum that would blend in nicely with all that people understand, when they come to Barbados, what Barbados' history was about. Mr. President, even the Living Sugar Museum this Government cannot get movement on.

Sir, again, there was another project because the sugar cane has been researched, by the same Professor. You are now producing bottled water, the bottles are available and so on, Mr. President, no movement, and you can go on.

Sir, I know that time would not allow but there are about fifteen.

Asides.

Mr. K. D. SYMMONDS: I am glad that Senator Benn knows there are twenty, because that only just means the level of chastisement that should be directed to Senator Benn is even greater, for it makes no sense speaking to all of the things that could have been done, and they should have been done, when your Cabinet Minister - we are in the middle of recession and you are saying that you have to go on bending knee to accept at the worst possible interest arrangements a \$160 million loan from banks in Barbados, which are pushing you around as though you are not a sovereign Government, when you had an opportunity to economically enfranchise yourselves and to put yourselves in a position where you can pay your way out of this situation.

Sir, this is the problem we face, that there is a policy framework which is necessary, and when you test this Government you are getting high marks on the rhetoric, you get very high marks on the emotion, you get very high marks on the promise to perform, but then when tested for

performance its traipsing. Sir, I have heard one or two people of the fairer gender described Senator Benn in the same way.

Asides.

Mr. PRESIDENT: No, I have never heard anybody describe Senator Benn.

Mr. K. D. SYMMONDS: Sir, the real concern for us on this side is that we cannot continue to feel comfortable in an environment where little or nothing is being done to put the industry on a sustainable and competitive footing. That is the real point, Sir.

Mr. President, the Opposition will not stand in the way of the Democratic Labour Party Government trying to raise such funds as is necessary. We do feel, and I reiterate, that the better way to approach these matters is to have full and frank disclosure. It is not that you want to pry into any private business. It is a public company. We are saying that a \$160 million loan to a public company which everybody understands is not on the best of financial footing, is automatically a cause for some concern. I am not going to carry it as far as to alarm, but it is a cause for concern and you would want to know that the fullest disclosure has been given so that people can safely feel that this is a commitment of a financial nature that can be discharged by this company.

Sir, on the policy side, the sugar industry deserves better. I do not think Senator McClean can be interpreted as saying anything other than she agrees that there is vast potential, but where we part company is that the vast potential is not being satisfactorily pursued, and we have, therefore, Mr. President, I think, to be realistic in our approach and to come to the understanding that unless Government is prepared, stop beating its chest, let us get past the bravado, the election exercise is over. It is time to govern. The planning and so on have been done.

Sir, I say to you that there is a very strong supporter of the Government, whose name I will not call, unless the article in the Nation Newspaper was attributed to him. He is an agriculturalist, a Doctor in Agriculture, a PhD. in Agriculture. When I read it I could not believe, saying that the sugar industry can do better if only we did go into energy and the Ethanol Project is something we could look at, as though this is something that is breaking new ground. I heard the same kind of approach by Senator McClean today. It is not breaking any new ground. It has been around as an idea, a policy framework has been shaped, and all the Government has to be prepared to do is a little more work and shake off the inertia.

I thank you, Mr. President.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Chandler.

SENATOR Dr. F.L. CHANDLER: Mr. President, I feel exhausted even before I have started to speak, honestly. I agree totally with support for the sugar cane industry, but I do not support using the taxpayers' money to pay for BAMC's inefficiency, both in the factory and in the field. From the factory's point of view, I understand that the poor operation of the factory results in a lot of our sugar going out in molasses. Therefore everybody loves our molasses because it is filled with sugar.

SENATOR Hon. Miss M.P.O. McClean: Sir, I am sorry to interrupt the Honourable Senator, but she is misleading the Chamber when she said that we are borrowing money. The Government is simply guaranteeing.

Mr. PRESIDENT: I assumed that you are on a point of order.

SENATOR Hon. Miss M.P.O. McClean: I said that I am on a point of order.

Mr. PRESIDENT: I did not hear it.

SENATOR Hon. Miss M.P.O. McClean: Let me repeat. On a point of order. I believe that the Honourable Senator Chandler is misleading this Chamber in her statement that we are borrowing money. The Government is merely guaranteeing the money, Sir.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator you have the Floor. Please proceed.

SENATOR Dr. F.L. CHANDLER: I did not use the word borrow at all. I said that I did not support taxpayers paying for BAMC's inefficiency both in the factory and in the field.

Sir, as far as I understand, BAMC was meant to show the other farmers how it was to be done. Well I do not think they have done that at all. I think they have shown them how it is not to be done. I also think that BAMC is a very top-heavy organisation with a lot of bureaucracy which inhibits any sort of productivity.

I must say that I thought that Senator McClean's presentation was interesting but I was most disappointed that we still do not have any decision. The private farmers, at least, are in the dark about knowing where the industry is going, and I was disappointed to hear that we are still looking at the future. We are still looking at the pharmaceuticals. We are still hearing about the Professor that we were hearing about since 2004 or so. We are still hearing about the possibilities. We are still hearing by analysing. One minute the fuel cane is the way to go, and

the next minute the fuel cane is not the way to go. Then you have the plantation reserve boiling up and boiling back down. I think that company honestly is like a Phantom company, certainly it is difficult to get in touch with.

Mr. President, we continue to hear about more and more studies. I think that if we had taken all the thousands going into millions of dollars which were used in these studies to implement at least one positive thing in the industry, we would be a lot further now.

We had a very reasonable and doable plan done by a local person in 2003, and it was using the old sugar cane plant including making fibre board instead of just concentrating on sugar. You were concentrating on the sugar cane plant, and that was done in 2003.

Asides.

SENATOR Dr. F.L. CHANDLER: It was ignored.

5.22 p.m.

Sir, it was done in 2003 and it was ignored. Since then we have had so-called experts because you know, Mr. President, once you are foreign, you are an expert, so we have had them one after the other from every part of the world that you and think of, coming to study and restudy our agricultural industry, without one item being implemented.

I attended a talk sometime ago by a Doctor Pie from Canada about producing Lignol and during this presentation, he said that the reason why the Lignol Plant in Canada has not been feasible and did not succeed was because it was too small. I was wondering how in little Barbados, we were going to have a plant that was going to be big enough to be feasible if the one in Canada failed because it was too small so I concluded that Dr. Pie was talking about pie in the sky.

Asides.

Senator Dr. F.L. CHANDLER: Mr. President, the producers do not have anything to go on because the signals keep changing all the time. Last year we heard that Andrews Factory was going to be closed and Portvale would hold the strain for the year while Andrews was being upgraded. A lot of people who are experienced in the industry said that Andrews did not need to be closed, because any changes could be done in the off-season, and Andrews could handle the crop. Andrews did not close but as far as I know and no upgrading was done either.

There is a unit called the Cane Industry Restructuring Project. I think that cost a considerable amount of money to run each year but I must say I find the

Estimates document very complicated to be able to find specifics when you need them so I cannot say the exact month but I am sure it is a considerable amount and I would like to know what this unit does because its main mission was to produce this multipurpose factory and that multipurpose factory idea when through the window a long time ago so I am not sure.

Senator D.W. BOYCE: Mr. President, on a point of order. I think that Senator Francis is inadvertently misleading the Chamber. The multipurpose factory idea has not gone out the window. The work that has been done in the last couple of years has been to try to reduce the cost of that multipurpose factory from \$400 million to \$200 million at the moment, so it has been time well spent but the idea has not gone through the window. It is trying to make it something that is affordable by the country.

Senator Dr. F.L. CHANDLER: Thank you but I would wish that this sort of information could come to the public before the divorce so they would know what is being done because definitely, the feeling out there was that we would have this factory done and if we were not to have this factory done, we were to upgrade Andrews Factory. Andrews Factory did not get upgraded and so it went on and on. Sir, we have seen drawings and I went to a seminar and we had studies but we have not seen anything concrete come out of them. My opinion is that you should make a decision about this soon. We hear about restructuring but soon we would not have anything to restructure, if we do not make some sort of decision, even implement one positive thing in the sugar industry.

Sir, some say that we should do away with cane. Now I do not agree with that. I was glad to hear that Senator McClean recognised all the other attributes of cane, apart from producing sugar. It certainly protects the environment and even from the tourism industry and from the point of view of other non sugar crops if you try to grow a field of non sugar crops without rotating with cane, your cost is extremely high and the quality is not good so, definitely rotation with cane is important.

We know when we look for another crop to replace cane that was done in the 1960s when they tried hundreds of crops to try to replace cane, a crop that could stand up to all the rigors that it has to stand up to deal with our shallow soils, cane was the crop so to find another crop to replace cane is not easy.

We cannot cover the island in houses and concrete. We think that we must be at our level of golf courses, if we have livestock pastures and we are talking about employment, if the sugar industry employs about 2 000 people, if you had all livestock pastures, it would employ a lot less people, I would think.

The non sugar industry has gone forward and people have done some innovative things in the non sugar industry. Why then is the sugar industry so different? Why we cannot get innovative ideas into the sugar industry and resuscitate it? I just do not understand why it is just continuing year after year after year, the same way. You only hear about the things that could be done but not one of them is implemented.

We know that the sugar cane industry must change. It definitely needs to change if it is going to survive. In fact, the whole agricultural industry has to change its attitude, if it is going to survive. Then, I think the players in the industry should be told, in no uncertain terms, that the Government will not be supporting them, if they are not willing to change and willing to implement recommendations on cutting cost and improving productivity. Since the late 1990s to the year 2000, those who are interested in change, we should bring them together. We should go ahead with the ones who are efficient and leave the others behind. We may have a smaller industry but a much more efficient industry.

Mr. President, we have the same problem over and over every few years with wage negotiations just before the start of the crop and it has happened again this year, where the start of the crop will be delayed and you know we had cane fires already, which further exacerbates the problem. What I do not understand, Mr. President, is the Union trying to get blood out of stone because I heard the C.O. Williams Company which is involved in construction that has been booming in the last few years, saying that it had to put its staff on rotation so that they could keep their jobs. Sir, if the construction industry has to do that, how could you expect the sugar industry that has been ailing now for years to be able to support a big wage increase?

I would also like to know what has happened to the Productivity-based Compensation that was in vogue a few years ago, which seems to have gone by the wayside. I think that should be reintroduced so that there would be some incentive to be efficient. Mr. President, we heard of the co generation, we heard of the special sugars, we heard of the other things over and over but we just cannot see anything substantial happening on any front.

A few weeks ago, a cruise ship wanted to buy some sachets of brown sugar and I went about trying to find these sachets. Apparently you could get sachets of refined sugar but not brown sugar. I called the BAMC and I understand they have the equipment but it is something like they have to do a cost benefit analysis or something before they can get into that. Anyhow, it is a big long story but what I would think is that the Cost Benefit Analysis should have been done before they got the equipment and there is no way that I could see that sugar in sachets could not be more profitable than selling bulk sugar.

Mr. President, I feel that making no decision is worse than making a decision that may be less than perfect.

5.31 p.m.

Sir, I am looking forward, and I am sure the whole sugar industry is looking forward, to some decision being made before it is too late because as I said before we talk about restructuring the industry but if we continue like this we would not have any industry to restructure.

I thank you very much.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Marville.

Senator R. O. MARVILLE: Thank you, Sir. I appreciate your decision after your hesitancy.

Mr. President, I am not going to speak about Alice in Wonderland, my notion of fairy tales has changed somewhat since I have grown up and I am not going to say that I do not know anything about sugar unlike the Leader of the Senate. I will not say that I know little about sugar. I did both chemistry and history at school and I grew up in the middle of sugar cane in the country.

Mr. PRESIDENT: I am not going to listen much more to what you are not going to say.

Senator R. O. MARVILLE: Oh, well, then I will tell you what I am going to say, Mr. President.

We are not competitive in the sugar industry. As we all know, we face larger producers and more efficient producers like Brazil, Thailand, Malawi, Mauritius and the Philippines. These are people who ultimately use the breeds of sugar that we produce in Jerusalem, St. Peter years ago and made better use of them. We are probably one of the lowest producers per acres of sugar from sugar cane and we have to be able to correct that.

Of course, I agree with everybody who had talked about the environment. In fact, in my former incarnation, I had quite a bit to do with sugar. As you would recall, I spent long nights in the CARICOM Secretariat arguing over the amount of sugar that Barbados should be allowed to export to Europe under the ACP quota. I remember distinctly, Sir, that you and your colleagues spent another long night trying to reorder what we had sold carefully put together and ended up accepting exactly what we had put together but I blame you not, Sir.

Sir, with respect to the environmental issue, in another incarnation I actually managed to persuade the Europeans to maintain a quota that we were asking for by insisting that since Barbados' top soil was so thin we needed grasses to keep it from blowing away into the sea

and that sugar cane was the most productive of such grasses. Again, I had to persuade a little bit the Minister responsible for Commerce and then when he presented it and we got the quota, he was very pleased.

The second thing I would like to bring up is that I once brought a Barbadian chemist to Barbados. He was a Lecturer in Britain. That was about 1995 I think. He simply wanted a post at the University of the West Indies. He had been doing experiments in Britain which he will continue to produce chemicals and medicine from sugar cane. Basically, if he had been accepted and had been successful, our sugar industry would be profitable by a wide margin. The fact of the matter is that he was just turned away. He had a second idea. He said for the purposes we were not producing enough sugar, we could add to that stock by reproducing Sorghum, guinea corn, all over the place, and from the stalks, we could produce sugar. The seed, sorghum, the grain, would be incidental. We import, I think, something like 80 tonnes of Sorghum a year to make animal feed. We brought this stuff from West Africa and we used to eat it, now we import it from elsewhere for animal feed. It grows practically in the wild. The advantage of it over sugar cane was that it required less soil to grow in and it could grow in more arid places than sugar cane easily. That was thrown out of the window.

At the same time or a little bit earlier, I brought a group of Italians here who were interested in converting the bagasse into animal feed. They said: Look, we will put up a small manufacturing plant here, we will take all the bagasse you can offer and make animal feed and export it back to Europe. The response from the sugar industry was: "We ain't got no bagasse." We were producing about 450 tonnes of bagasse that year and I do not know how they manage not to have any, so that never came to anything.

Incidentally too, we ought perhaps to talk to the Cubans and the Peruvians about how you convert the same bagasse into paper or chipboard. The point about the sugar cane is precisely like the point about the train in the United States of America. People thought of the industry as building trains to get across the country. If they had thought of the industry as transportation, it would have been a lot better diversified and improved. We thought of the sugar cane. Accidentally, some clever guy took some of the molasses, fermented it and made what was called rum bullion and we have a byproduct that is of a considerable quality that can stand on its own. Today, we do not produce enough vacuum pads or other molasses to make rum, we have to import that to make rum. The rum industry is of course doing much better than it did once upon a time. We do not need to get into that entirely but the point is that there are several industries that could come out of the sugar cane. If they do not exist, we would not be competitive in sugar and I really do not know how we would manage to go forward from here.

There was also a Canadian who came to Barbados to buy the sugar cup based compound that could be used in the base of ice cream. He said he would buy all the sugar that we could produce and he would give us a long-term contract with an escalating price so that it match whatever world prices would be like and a little more and our dear friends at the IDC said but perhaps you could leave us the formula on how you make this stuff and that was the end of that story. This may sound anecdotal but it is true, Sir. I went through most of this stuff and it was very painful.

The problem is that we have to stop looking for new studies, there are enough old studies there to get things going. We need to diversify the sugar cane plant because I do believe that we need it, I do not see how we can replace it. I think we should also bring back the growing of Sorghum, it makes excellent bread and it is a much better alternative to the wheat to which several of us are allergic. I think we need to look at this in a holistic way, bring back a product... By the way, we should have been making Muscovado Gold and Plantation Reserve a long time ago, that was the only way we could have made the moneys on the sugar.

Additionally, we were way ahead in the sugar industry a long time ago. In the 1920s, we made white sugar up at Searles. Of course, the Brits who were our colonial masters at the time did not like the competition and so we had to export raw sugar and then re-import white sugar which is largely a sweet poison because it has no food value in it at all and this is where we are now. We really have... We have a lot of know-how about the place. I do not think we need to go through this process of doing more studies to get thrown into a bundle somewhere, they may be or may not be read but nothing is done about it, we need to act. This is not a matter of them, us or the other.

Throughout the history of Barbados, the sugar cane industry has been subsidised when it needed money because in the beginning it made so much money. When sugar was king in the 1650s and later everybody thought this was forever. It was like the train. The train in the United States of America is practically useless because it is so slow.

5.42 p.m.

They were talking about trains and not transportation, so whereas everybody else, the Chinese, the Japanese and the French thought of quick trains, because they were talking about

quicker transportation, the US was stuck with trains, although they were so far ahead right at the beginning. We are in the same boat, let us get out of it. I thank you.

Senator the Hon. HAYNESLEY LaV. BENN: I rise to support this Resolution to approve the guarantee by the Minister of Finance for repayment of the principal and interest in respond of the bond issue of BDS\$161 million, issued by the Barbados Agricultural Management Company Limited, by way of a loan from the Barbados National Bank Finance and Trust Corporation for the purpose of financing the sugar industry.

Mr. President, you would have heard the Leader of Government Business outlining the reason for the bond issue. We are aware that the Barbados Agricultural Management Company Limited was incorporated to manage the operations of the heavily indebted estates. It was expected that the Barbados Agricultural Management Company Limited would have been able to effectively manage the estates and eventually to liquidate the debt of the Barbados National Bank. We are aware that the Barbados Agricultural Management Company Limited entered into a lease arrangement with the estates in the first instance with a 12-year period, with an option to extend. Of course, the lease arrangement is still in operation.

The bond issue is for the period 2008 to 2011. It must be stressed at this point in time that it is to redo the debt. The point is that the Barbados Agricultural Management Company Limited is to continue its operation. The bond is for three years and the proceeds are to pay off debts incurred during that period.

Mr. President, the sugar industry has made a significant contribution to the development of this country over the years. This Government still considers the sugar industry to be the centrepiece of the agricultural sector for valid economic reasons. Sugar provides a source of income, particularly for rural Barbados, it earns valuable foreign exchange for the county. We are all aware of the fact that any further reduction in the sugar acreage could have a negative impact on the country's food security efforts. Mr. President, sugar production, as we are aware, has fluctuated. It peaked in the 1960s and 1970s but in recent years it has declined.

Mr. President, I am not going to seek to address much of what Senator Symmonds said in his contributions. Senator Symmonds was doing extremely well. I was actually listening to him and taking notes and learning from what he was saying, until Senator Symmonds started to move into the 20/20 version of West Indies Cricket and begun to swipe. Mr. President, the production of the sugar industry into Barbados must be viewed within the multifunctional role, in terms of protecting the environment, the prevention of the segregation of the landscape, its soil and water conservation abilities. Its resistance and resilience to droughts and its contribution to employment.

Mr. President, socially the contribution of the sugar industry and its development and its culture of Barbados is clear, since the premier festival of Barbados has its origin in sugar cane. The contribution of the sugar industry in meeting the country's food security needs must not be overlooked. Therefore, given the significant production of vegetables and root crops, as has been mentioned by Senator Chandler, it is imperative that these productive lands be maintained as part of the country's strategy for ensuring an adequate level of food sovereignty and food security.

Mr. President, all is not well within the industry, as we are all aware. There are a number of problems facing the industry which has resulted in the lack of viability of sugar cane production over the past ten to fifteen years. We are all aware of production at the field and factory levels. We are all aware of the inefficient management within the Barbados Agricultural Management Company Limited but there is also low moral within the industry. Mr. President, in recent years, the uncertainty with respect to the future of the sugar industry has led to a further decline. Overall yields have declined in part to the nation's soil fertility.

Sir, later on I want to put in a case for what I call the linkages between the agriculture industry and the Minister of the Environment, Water Resource Management and Drainage, where even before I came to this Honourable House I left home and went deliberately to the Separation Plant at Vauxcluse, only to confirm the potential up there for the use of the byproducts from that landfill that can be used in building up the soil in the sugar

cane fields.

Mr. President, I remember as a boy, my uncle used to drive a truck, E22, at Pleasant Hall Plantation and we would join with him every Saturday morning and journey would Caymans Sugar Factory, only to load the mud and spread it by shovel into the fields. That helped during the crop season to build the fertility level, to increase the yields of sugar cane. Nowadays, I do not even see any trucks going to the factories to correct that mud.

Sir, sometimes I would wish that when we are looking at the sugar industry, an area that is very vital to the development of this country, that in the midst of our criticisms and our approaches, we would want to take a national approach rather than a partisan approach to agriculture. Mr. President, everybody in Barbados should look at any of our industries and should take a national approach to it, instead of partisan approach. Mr. President, this is Barbados and we have a lot of bright people in this country. Senator Chandler spoke about the number of studies that have been done, some of which I have already read. Therefore, if we would only embrace the recommendations of those studies and would only

implement one or two of them, we would not have people who are of the view or who get the impression that this new Democratic Labour Party has done nothing or is doing nothing to take the industry forward or that we are doing something to kill the industry.

Mr. President, I will make a call on all of us who has a responsibility to help develop this country at this time to throw away the shackles. Sir, I am calling on those senior persons involved in the various departments, agriculture, tourism and environment, to go up by the Landfill, turn left as you leave central and you would see the heaps of those commodities that can be used. Some people say that pile includes metal and other things but I have not seen any metal there. We need to go there to see if we could create linkages within this country in an effort to take the country forward.

5.52 p.m.

Mr. President, some are without land and want to be able to get a piece to build their own house to their own satisfaction and specification and Sir, we must pursue these matters. We have to look to provide land for the landless. We have the Land for the Landless Programme in agriculture and we need to make sure that we have land for the landless in housing as well.

Mr. President, that is why I think we have to take a look again at the Physical Development Plan. Sir, we have contended in this Honourable House that there are pieces of land that are rated as marginal that can house every last person in this country. We know that there are also some lands that belong to estates that are lying idle. Sir, some were in sugar cane that have come out because of the cost of production and they are losing money, some have come out of food crops because of praedial larceny and some are losing money on that and, Mr. President, I would wish that something could be done where those fertile lands that have some marginal lands attached, where the owners would like to take that stretch of marginal land, what we called grass piece and gully hill land years ago and have it sold off. I am sure that those persons with those large tracks of land could have those marginal lands sold off and they get enough land, Mr. President, I know there would plough some of that money back into agricultural production. Sir, as a matter of fact, I am hoping that we could look very seriously at our proposals right now where when we are putting people on marginal and unfertile land, that even with the housing development that we are going to do now even at Haggatt Hall, I am looking forward to making sure that those housing units have a portion of land at the back, at the side or at the front where the people can plant food. Sir, not just 800 square feet or 1 000 square feet that will take up most of the housing unit but I am going to be lobbying for an extended portion of the land that people can put up their homes and still have a piece of it, not to

plant grass but to plant some fruit trees and to plant food so that the Honourable Senator Symmonds would be satisfied that at least the Minister of Commerce and Trade would have made an effort to ensure that we continue to feed ourselves.

Mr. President, we talked about houses that are being built for \$99 000 and up but I know people in the countryside who, if they had a portion of land that I spoke about and we are able to have their families and friends to construct the houses can come in under that price, so I am hopeful that we can provide very quickly those units out there that people particularly have recommended in the St. Michael area, I am only talking about those in the countryside, can own that piece of land and then go about constructing it for themselves.

Mr. President, I want to just make a few points because when we were talking about the use of land at Haggatt Hall, Senator Bradshaw made a dim hit about how the land was obtained, perhaps by private treaty on October 2010 to a Charles F. H. Thompson and the rest of it. Sir, I am not going to get into that part about it is owned by. Sir, she wanted to find out whether the money has been paid the C.F.H. Thompson while other are waiting for ten years and stuff. Sir, if the money has been paid to him, that is testimony of a Government that is acting very quickly and is able to expedite matter. Sir, I feel very hurt where we come across people who have had their lands acquired by Government ten years and twelve years ago and have still not yet been paid. Mr. President, there are people where the Rural Development Commission went and build roads and took up people's lands even without permission and the past administration did not see it fit to even acquire it compulsorily and compensate those people adequately and we have Senators who were part of the Cabinet of the pass administration ...

Senator K. D. SYMMONDS: Mr. President, on a point of order. Senator Benn is misleading this Chamber.

Mr. PRESIDENT: What he is saying is untrue.

Senator K. D. SYMMONDS: Sir, what is saying is completely untrue. (5:34) Senator Benn must know that it is completely improper to allege that Government took up people's land and did not pay them for it. Sir, we still live in a Constitutional democracy where everyone has access to the court. Sir, unless Senator Benn can produce to this Chamber or point us in the direction of some matter that has been raised in a court of Barbados where some litigant has said, "I am a citizen of this country and this is what happened to me." Sir, that is real conjecture, it is improper and unnecessary. Sir, I think that it should be struck from the record because it caused a terrible aspersion on the way in which business is done in Barbados even if Senator Benn is trying to say it is only done that way under the

Barbados Labour Party. It is beneath the high level to which I have grown accustomed of associating Senator Haynesley Benn.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Benn.

Senator the Hon. H.L. BENN: Mr. President, you know, sometimes we like to be very intellectually dishonest.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Benn, you have to be very careful with the language you use. When you say, we like to be, you imply that Honourable Senators like to be intellectually dishonest. I would prefer if you would rephrase that sentence.

Senator the Hon. H.L. BENN: Sir, I can rephrase. I might even want to drop it and have it deleted. Sir, the point that I want to raise is that Senator Symmonds knows this. I can talk about land in Rock Hall right now, I do not want to call the owner's name where the representative has also written letters asking that the matter be addressed. There is a farmer at Bonwell Farms that Rural Development Commission took up his land and he has not been compensated for it. The land was taken up by the Rural Development Commission and all through the Urban Development Commission and Rural Development Commission, particularly Rural Development Commission, have taken up lands, built roads on those lands and the owners have not been compensated for those lands.

Senator K. D. SYMMONDS: Mr. President, on a point of order. Sir, again Senator Benn may be unwittingly misleading the Chamber. The critical part of that to which I objected is when Senator Benn said that these things have all happened without the owners' knowledge or permission. Sir, Senator Benn knows had always been and it continues to be today, that you go to the owners of the pieces of property and say what we would like to do.

Senator the Hon. H.L. BENN: Sir, the Senator had his say when people were driving home. He knew he had an audience and he was palavering. I am not going to let him sidetrack me, Mr. President. I am going to say to you that people have had their lands taken up by the Rural Development Commission and those persons have not been compensated and, Sir, the lands were taken up without their approval.

Mr. President, we came in this place and talk about validating this. I know that ordinary people, perhaps, do not understand what I mean by validation but a lot of things were done in the last administration that we are now correcting. Mr. President, I want to ask a question here. This very parcel of land, I am surer that the former administration knows about this parcel of land. I want to find out if the previous administration had not taken up this

same parcel of land for the same purpose. I want Senator Symmonds and Senator Bradshaw to research that in time for the next Sitting, perhaps next Wednesday. I want them to research it to find out if the past administration did not take up this same parcel of land and did not pay up to the point in time of their departure to compensate the owner for the land.

28:40

Mr. President, we cannot compare ourselves with Brazil because Brazil has a vast expanse of land. Brazil produces 475 million tonnes of cane. We are producing about 30 thousand tonnes? Brazil is producing 475 million tonnes. Brazil's export accounted for 19 million tonnes of sugar, 3.5 billion litres of alcohol. We had nine sugar factories a few years ago, before my friend Senator Symmonds was born. Today he is now experiencing two, with a prospect of reducing it to one. Sir, with Brazil's growing demand, over 77 new mills are being assembled to accommodate their growing industry. Again I come back to the point... I do not think Brazil has people there like we have down here. I believe Brazil has people down there who are honestly thinking about their country, and not Party, thinking about taking their country forward and not holding the rein pulling it back like a jockey on a horse. I believe that Brazil and those other countries making strives have the interest of their people at heart. I think we mix too much politics in the things that we have to do. I am again calling for us to shake off the shackles of Party politics and look at...

Asides.

Hon. SENATOR H.L. BENN: Mr. President, we have recognised that non sugar agriculture has been doing some good things and has been outstripping what the sugar has been doing. I would want to make a call, it might sound strange coming from me, that the same interest shown in seeking to tidy up a lot of what is happening to an industry we consider to be ailing, but is still alive, we ought to seek to spend some money to take non sugar agriculture forward.

Mr. President, the non sugar sector is ensuring adequate food. We have seen over the past three years crops down in production, this new Government was able to create the interest and support given by farmers to the then and now Ministers of Agriculture, has seen the production increased.

Sir, I am in constant discussion with the new Minister of Agriculture, and I can tell you that he has an approach that I wished I had. I want to be honest in saying that. I know he is going to take it to a new level, the proposals that he has in mind. Once you can get the cooperation of the people in the Ministry of Agriculture

and they decide to forget the partisanship and work for this country, the Minister of Agriculture will get things done, that no other Minister of Agriculture could get done, including me. I am telling you that, and I am wishing him well.

Sir, we hoping that those resources, though limited, and channel some through the non sugar agricultural sector, we can ensure our food quality objectives and we can look at exporting some of our primary product and a value added product. There is potential for our export to earn valuable foreign exchange in addition to what we are doing with sugar.

Mr. President, one of the by-products from the sugar cane industry is molasses. We make rum. I heard Senator Chandler say that a lot of the sugar is being left back in the molasses, and that is why everybody likes our molasses. I need to make a call for us to pay a lot of attention to increasing production, with a view of increasing our level of production of molasses. Right now we are importing substantially more molasses for our rum industry than we are producing here in Barbados. Sir, let me give you an idea.

In 2007, we produced 16 008 tonnes of molasses and imported 38 307 tonnes. In 2008, it was 15 515 tonnes and we imported 48 957 tonnes. In 2009, we produced 8 296 tonnes and imported 42 952 tonnes. Sir, to make it worse, the price of the imported molasses is about twice as high as the present local molasses. Sir, I am not going to test or question the quality of it, but we paid BDS350 for a tonne of molasses, imported. We pay less than a half of that for local molasses.

Sir, the cost of producing rum using - no wonder it is so expensive to get drunk.

Asides.

Hon. SENATOR H.L. BENN: Mr. President, I am making a call therefore for us to look at the potential of increasing our production of sugar cane. I am not bothering about the fuel cane. I am talking about the sugar cane for other by-products, including molasses, to save foreign exchange by producing more molasses locally and reducing our dependency on imported molasses.

Sir, Senator Symmonds spoke about a speciality sugar. Though I do not wish to say a lot about that, because when it comes to specialty stuff I keep away from discussion on specialty matters. Sir, I remember when I was at school there was a class called 'Special', and special boys used to go into 'Special'. We came and found that.

Mr. President, the West Indies Shipping and Trading Company was established in 2006. It is a good idea to look

at the specialty sugars. Let me tell you that BAMC sold to that company specialty sugar and they bought it at three times the price than they were selling to other markets, so that they could make money. The company did it to establish itself and ought to have been doing well in the United Kingdom market. Mr. President, that same company, and the Senator knows this, had projections that it would become profitable in the year 2010. It lost money in 2008, \$515 000. I championed a Paper at Cabinet where we put \$2.9 million into the company, because we had the confidence in it that it can do well once it gets its feet in the market. Anybody who sets up a company in Barbados or anywhere else knows that in the first, second or third years you do not make the kind of profits that you expect to make. So that company is projected to recover a small profit of US\$102 362 in 2010.

I do not want the Senator to give the public and this Chamber the impression that this company had all the potential in the world, they set it up in 2006, and we came onboard and allowed it to totter on the brink of woe. That is the message that came out of his lips. That is the way it met my ear. It might not have traveled from his lips in that manner, but that is the way it met my ear. I want to put it on the record that the company has not folded. The company is seeking to find its way. It has competition.

Sir, do you know that when you put a new product on the market...as a matter, it changed its branding. There is no longer the silver tin, because that was expensive as well. Other countries saw that special sugar and said that they are going to do that too.

6.02 p.m.

A few years ago, Barbados was exporting sweet potatoes in quantities. When it comes to South Africa, they said, "Oh yes, you could export it, we could do it cheaper." They did it cheaper and knocked out our market completely. Barbados is a small country that would often find little niche markets or markets that they thought would be niched but as soon as one of the bigger elephants come on board at a lower cost, it would go through the eddoes.

It is not that we have not been trying. We have not abandoned the ethanol thought although for me, I would put it on the back burner. We have not abandoned the WISCO Company U.K., Ltd., the West Indian company that is doing the sugar in England on the U.K. market but we are supporting it. We put some money in it and we are confident that, given the right approach, the right support from all people, taking the politics out of it and putting Barbados at the front of the equation that we all can make it happen for Barbados. I am confident, Mr. President, that this country can come out of its economic woes climbing on the back of the agricultural industry in this country, with

sugar playing its role, though minor but with some emphasis on non sugar.

We are self-efficient in poultry and egg productions. We are self-sufficient in fresh pork production. We have enough land, Mr. President, that given the interest and the help, we can produce enough vegetables in this country that we do not have to import one commodity. It takes about two or three acres of cucumbers to flood the market in Barbados. It takes a few acres of carrots and the market is full. Sir, all we have to do is to take care of things like praedial larceny and one or two niggling problems and we can be on the way.

Mr. President, what bothers me is that there are some people, I do not know where they come from but I hear them on the call-in programmes from time to time, expressing disgust when it appears as though something is to happen. Two weeks ago, I was listening to the call-in programme. The Governor of the Central Bank has come out and made some statements about the prospects of Barbados having a 2 per cent growth in the economy. The guy on the call-in programme was so vex, saying he wants the Governor of the Central Bank to come out and prove to him that this could. It cannot happen, he said. I said Oh Lord have mercy. This guy should not get on like this in Barbados. I thought he would be saying, "Wow, we are now in the midst of this recession and the Governor of the Central Bank, who has the expertise, the experience, the training and the knowledge could tell us that. I hope his words are true, and lift his hope, as a Barbadian.

Asides.

Senator Hon. H. LaV. BENN: Of course, he was supporting the Barbados Labour Party, so he did not want to see that happen, once the Democratic Labour Party is in office.

I am asking them not to get in the way of progress but to join hands with us. We have been in Government before. A lot of us have experience in management and other things but stop wishing us worse, stop wishing us bad, throw away, shake off the shackles and let us start to look at Barbados.

Mr. President, I am not calling for that because the economy is tootling a little and struggling but it is going to get back on its feet again. Sir, when we have access to those hundreds of millions that the Barbados Labour Party had in its heyday, and did not do justice to it - that is why we are here. I wish we had access to that and when we have access to that, we will be able to show Barbadians that we are worthy of our calling.

Mr. President, I want to thank you and I want to call on my fellow Senators to give their full support to this Resolution as I am giving to it too.

I thank you, Sir.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

SENATOR HON. Miss M.P.O. McCLEAN: Mr. President, I beg to move that this sitting be suspended for ten minutes until 6.30 p.m. today.

The question that the sitting do now suspend until 6.30 p.m. today was put to the Senate and agreed to and Mr. PRESIDENT suspended the sitting accordingly.

6.17 p.m.

RESUMPTION

Mr. PRESIDENT: The Senate is now in session. Senator Ince.

Senator J. INCE: Mr. President, I rise to support this Resolution that is before this Honourable Senate in respect of the issuing of BDS\$161 million by the Barbados Agricultural Management Company Limited.

Sir, the sugar industry in Barbados has faced many challenges, which were of an external environment as well as an internal environment. We should be aware that the sugar industry was once labour-intensive and then it moved to being capital-intensive where harvesting was done by machines instead of people but the challenges continued as far as world prices were concerned as we have seen in the expansion of the European Union. Once the EU market expanded, it threatened the viability of the sugar industry in Barbados.

Sir, in light of the criticisms that we have heard, constructive criticisms in some instances and criticisms that in my opinion need a response from this side as far as Senator Symmonds is concerned, it is important to understand history. I always say that history is important when it comes to the sugar industry. The Democratic Labour Party is accustomed to making strategic decisions in the interest of guiding sectors in this economy that are critical to our overall development.

Sir, may I remind this Honourable Senate that in 1985, the Democratic Labour Party was in office in 1985, because we lost the election in 1986, and we made decisions to restructure the industry. The Barbados Labour Party assumed office in 1986. Sir, again in 1993, we made a decision when the sugar industry was under pressure to restructure the industry. The industry at that time was heavily in debt and it faced problems of management of the

various sugar plantations as well as management of the sugar factories.

Mr. President, at that time the Government made a decision, through the BAMC and the Barbados Agricultural Credit Trust, to take over the management of 47 plantations and we amalgamated those 47 plantations into 18 farms that are productive today. I clearly remember that at that time the Barbados Labour Party huffed and they puffed because they wanted to blow the house down and they are still huffing and puffing today. At the end of the huffing and the puffing when they say to the country that they are going to make changes, that we had thrown the sugar industry at the deep end, not one change was made. In fact, they continued along that path and little was done.

Sir, the Democratic Labour Party huffed and puffed with results. They huffed and they puffed with no results. They huffed and puffed for 14 years so I am not surprise that the Senator is huffing and puffing now again. Sir, as I said before, the Senator is not going to set the agenda of the Democratic Labour Party.

Sir, the purpose of that amalgamation was to reduce the overhead costs of operations. We scaled those operations down and made the sector productive. Sir, we also said that we were going to have the two factories, Portvale and Andrews, under the management of BAMC.

Sir, here we are in 2011. Senator Symmonds made reference to all of these ideas, ethanol and the creation of all of these exotic products. I wonder where Senator Symmonds was when the Barbados Labour Party was in office as he sat as a Minister in another place carrying a portfolio. Were these ideas obsolete? What happened to the ideas? Sir, within three years, we are supposed to produce every known product and we are supposed to implement every study that comes before us.

We are now making a decision that the sugar industry needs to be diversified. It is going to cost us money. We are going to restructure the industry as we did in 1993 and it is going to take \$161 million to do it. We are not afraid because we know that at the end of the day the people of Barbados as well as those involved in the sugar sector are going to benefit and benefit tremendously. Sir, we are not going to be sidetracked as to what is going to happen to this industry.

Senator K. D. SYMMONDS: On a point of order. I think that Senator Ince has misled the Chamber and thrown us into a state of perilous confusion. Senator Ince was just heard to say that the \$161 million under consideration is for the purposes of restructuring the industry but the Leader of Government Business, I am almost 100 per cent sure, said that the purpose of the \$161 million loan was for the consolidation of debt. There is a difference between the

two concepts, Sir, and I think it is necessary at this stage, given the fact that the Government is not speaking with one voice, for us to have clarity on the matter.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Ince, you may continue on.

Senator J. INCE: Mr. President, may I continue, Sir? Thank you very much. I always said that it is important for Senator Symmonds to consult with his Chief Economist, he knows who is chief economist is, before he gets up in this Senate and asks questions. Restructuring involves debt and it involves capital expansion. Sir, in his opinion restructuring is most likely the building of a new factory. Maybe he understands it that way. Sir, I will repeat. Restructuring means capital expansion, consolidating debt and restructuring your production lines. All of that falls under the terms of restructuring as far as finance is concerned.

Mr. President, let me turn to something that is very important. This document that Senator Symmonds criticised, the borrowing of the bond, says here, Schedule, Terms and Conditions, Barbados Agricultural Management Company Limited, \$161 million for financing facility. He said there should be a prospectus.

Senator K. D. SYMMONDS: On a point of order. At no stage did I say there should be a prospectus. I made the point that the private sector would be asked to produce a prospectus. Quite frankly, I said that at this stage I would expect that we would have had in this Chamber the fullest possible disclosure. That is what I said. I was at pains to say that and I gave the reasons why we should have the fullest disclosure.

Senator J. INCE: Mr. President, may I continue?

Mr. PRESIDENT: Yes, please continue.

6.32 p.m.

Senator J. INCE: Mr. President, what we have here is standard procedure for the issue of bonds to the Government of Barbados. If Senator Symmonds would go to the Library or the Ministry of Finance and read the files, Senator Symmonds would see that this is standard procedure. It outlines the amount of bond. It is a preliminary prospectus. It contains the very things that a prospectus would contain. It says the Tenor, the Purpose, the Type of bond, the Issue Price, the Instrument, which are Fixed Rate Bond. It speaks to the Arrangement Fee. It speaks to the Paying Agents. It speaks to Registered Fee. It speaks to Trustee Fee. It speaks to Legal Fees. Mr. President, it is all explanatory.

Mr. President, Senator Symmonds then criticises...

Senator KERRIE D. SYMMONDS: On a point of order. Mr. President, the specific issue to which I addressed the attention of Honourable Senators was the question of the profits and losses of the company, the assets and liability of the company, the capacity of the company, the projection and the ability to discharge this debt obligation. Sir, that is what I spoke to. Sir, none of those things has Senator Ince parted his lips to address and I would be happy if Senator Ince would so do.

Senator J. INCE: Mr. President, Senator Symmonds sat in a Cabinet that borrowed \$50 million for the National Housing Corporation and the National Housing Corporation was not in any position to repay. There was never financial reports, annual reports or the ability to fulfill an audit obligation. That Cabinet borrowed \$12 million for the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation, where the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation was never in a position to repay. They borrowed \$100 million and put the Barbados Water Authority \$150 million in debt. There was no annual report or no audit report of the Barbados Water Authority. Where was Senator Symmonds when that was happening?

Senator KERRIE D. SYMMONDS: On a point of order. Mr. President, Senator Ince is misleading this Honourable Chamber. Sir, Senator Ince cannot approbate and reprobate at the same time. If Senator Ince is going to argue by inference that all of those borrowings in the conditions he alleges took place - and I do not recall but if Senator Ince is saying it is so. He is an honorable man and perhaps it is so - Senator Ince must equally then not say that if it was wrong to borrow without all of that information being made available to the public, then equally it is wrong to do so now. Mr. President, the electorate has solved that issue.

Senator J. INCE: Mr. President, in all of that, there was not one word from Senator Symmonds for 14 years.

Mr. President, Senator Symmonds criticised a footnote on this document, where it says:

"The financing will be arranged on a "best-efforts" basis only. Accordingly, the Issuer will receive the net proceeds only of the bonds that have been sold to investors." Mr. President, Senator Symmonds termed it "Alice in

Wonderland," that the Government is going to get whatsoever was the proceeds of the bond. Sir, this is standard procedure. Sir, there is no merchant bank or financial institution worth its salt that is going to promise you or guarantee that they are going to sell you all of the bonds, they use this clause.

Mr. President, page 5 is also standard procedure. If you look at page 5 under the title Status, it says:

“The bonds will constitute unconditional, secured and unsubordinated general obligations of the Issuer and will rank *pari passu* among themselves and with all other present and future secured and unsubordinated obligations of the Issuer.”

Mr. President, if Senator Symmonds would go down to Taxation. It says:

“All payments to be made by Government to the Arranger under this Agreement shall be made free and clear of, and without withholding or deduction for, any taxes, duties, assessments or governmental charges of whatever nature imposed, levied, collected, withheld or assessed by or within the Island of Barbados or any authority therein or thereof having power to tax, unless such withholding or deduction is required by law...”

Mr. President, these are things that would normally be written in a bond schedule and so there is nothing fascinating about it. Mr. President, I would remind Senator Symmonds to please speak to his chief economic advisor before criticising something like this.

Mr. President, reference was also made to the interest rates. What is wrong with the interest rates? The interest rate is clearly defined at 6 per cent. At Interest Rates, it says:

“Tranche 1 - Series 1: Fixed at 6 per cent;

Tranche 1 - Series 2: Fixed at 6 per cent;

Tranche 2 Fixed at 6.5 per cent.”

Mr. President, this is fixed rate bond and I do not think that Government could have asked for anything better. If you have to compare this with the 30-year US Treasury Note which is normally done by financial institutions and merchant banks when they are going to issue a bond, you use the live bond rate, you then fix a premium to the live bond rate. It clearly states:

“The final price is subject to prevailing market conditions at the time of issue, and will be based on a spread of 25 basis points above the comparable rates being offered for Government of Barbados debt of similar maturity.”

Mr. President, we in the Democratic Labour Party are clear as to what we are doing. I think the challenge for the Opposition is that they cannot conceive how a Government, facing one of the world's worst global financial crisis, can make a bold decision to find \$161

million, to be repaid at 6 per cent, when governments across the world are facing challenges with their debts. I think the challenge for Senator Symmonds is how in this present climate a small country like Barbados could find money at 6 per cent to restructure a sugar industry, while the Opposition had that money, starting at \$411 million and could not find to borrow to be repaid at 6 per cent? When their VAT went to \$501 million in 2001 they could not find money at 6 per cent repayment. Therefore, Senator Symmonds is baffled.

Mr. President, the Democratic Labour Party is on course. We know what we are doing. In the face of this recession we were able to stabilise this economy. We were able to keep unemployment at a reasonable level. We were able to do a robust housing programme, maintain the health services and restructure sectors of this economy when it was necessary to do so. Mr. President, the people of Barbados have given us that vote of confidence to carry them forward. We are going to continue to do the people's business in an efficient and effective manner and we are not going to allow detractors to set our agenda. Mr. President, with those few words, I am obliged.

Senator R. A. HUNTE: Mr. President, I shall not be long. I rise in support of the Resolution to guarantee the repayment of a Bond Issue to be issued to the Barbados Agricultural Management Company (BAMC).

Sir, the history of the sugar industry, and I could not have led off the speaking in this debate but it makes interesting reading because the sugar industry started off with a crisis in Barbados. It started off from the very first beginning from 1967 when it was introduced by the Dutch, after tobacco and cotton, the early industries in Barbados ran into serious trouble because of lack of labour and lack of prices on the market. Sir, around 1627, the Dutch introduced sugar into Barbados which, of course, was mainly used in the early stages for animal stock and things of that nature. Then, in came the wealthy British people, who bought up a lot of land, which cause the land to rise in value and then they started creating the plantations that we still know of today even though they are in serious trouble.

Mr. President, 100 years on, because about the 1800 or so, they were able to establish about 10 sugar factories throughout Barbados, and I was sitting here noting the ones that I remember but I have not got past about 12 of them but Senator Benn will probably help in this regard. I had a number 13, Spring Hall, but I am not quite that Spring Hall was a sugar factory...

Asides.

Senator R.A. HUNTE: Spring Hall was Fairfield, so we are doing about 14 sugar factories up to when they

started to come down to the two or may the one that we know now. Sir, of course, the Belle was syrup factory.

Mr. President, the Sugar Producers Association that was established over the years after the British had long left and gone even though their descendants, so to speak, would have remained but the Sugar Producers Association that controlled the sugar industry in this country cannot be exonerated. They cannot be exonerated for the stagnation and the lack of progress and innovation in the sugar industry. Sir, they cannot be, after they had drawn the blood out of the sugar industry in this country and, of course, they banked their monies in Lombard Banks and all the banks in Europe. Sir, they are smart because they offloaded the sugar factory and the Government...

Asides.

Senator R.A. HUNTE: Sir, regardless to whatever debate we talk about wasting taxpayers money, the Government of the day, no matter which Party is in power, until a decision is made as to what will happen to the sugar industry they have to be prepared to finance it. Sir, you either do so or get rid of it one time but as long as it is around, the Government has to take up the responsibility which Governments, over the years, have been doing. Although I remember, Sir, at a very crucial stage a former Prime Minister had said, "Not a cent for the sugar industry," at a very crucial time.

Mr. President, history records a lot of things. Sir, people do not like to hear about history but that is the only thing we know unless, of course, you are a fortune teller and, Sir, I am not one of those. Sir, the Sugar Producers Association, as it was then and, as I have said earlier, cannot escape the lack of progress in the sugar industry. Sir, all the things that we are talking about now, ethanol and all these things could have been looked at seriously about 45 years ago and, it is true that we are at the stage now where we cannot compete with Brazil.

Mr. President, just about three days ago, I was looking at some information on the sugar industry and Barbados alone is one sugar plantation in Brazil and trying to talk about competing as far as the production of sugar is concerned, I do not think that we will be in this world and the next one be able to compete. We came out that era, we reached a stage...

Asides.

Senator R.A. HUNTE: I have heard today that we only started producing a brand sugar called Muscovado Gold when somebody saw us in the market and said, "Oh, yeah", and started to produce it. Sir, that's the level we are at. Sir, we create but people will surpass because (1) they either have the cheap labour or (2) they have the land space

to produce but, Sir, we do not have that. We do not have that but I would hate to see the day where we would completely close out our whole agriculture base whether it is cane or other crops and have to turn around and import. I would never to see that day and I would not like to live long enough to see it. (6:01) Sir, agriculture is still important but when you talk about agriculture think you are only talking about cane but, Sir, that is not necessarily so. Sir, it would be sad day if this country has to import everything. Sir, look at what is going on around the world. We are debating here today an important Resolution against the background of problems in the Middle East. Sir, if things continue the way there are in the Middle East and oil reaches \$150 a barrel, all of the plans that we are talking about as a small country ...

Asides.

Senator R.A. HUNTE: We are a small country and it does not make sense fooling ourselves about it. Yes, we are holding our heads above water but the point is, we are still a small country in this global world. Sir, if the problems continue in the Middle East, we would be returned to a situation where you, Sir, was part of a Cabinet that saw oil rise from \$3 a barrel to \$11 in a short space of time. Sir, that is threefold or quadruple, and we know what that situation was in 1973/1974.

Mr. President, you were the Minister of Trade then. Sir, I am not getting you into the debate but you have to give Jack his jacket. Sir, you did not get an honour for so, you got an honour because you contributed to the society of Barbados. Sir, it was during those crisis years that we had difficult period where a small country can see the price of oil move from \$3 to \$11 but God is a great God.

Mr. President, by 1975, we produced that year 96 500 tons of sugar and we were able to satisfy our quota within the Commonwealth and the then Minister of Finance, he has to take the credit, I do not care who initiated the idea but because of the fact that he was the Minister of Finance and he was the Minister of Economic Affairs, the late Errol Walton Barrow, took the decision to sell our surplus sugar on the open market and, Sir, we reaped a whirlwind in 1975 after that crisis of 1973/1974.

Mr. President, I do not like to mention it because it hurts a lot of people but the Democratic Labour Party has done more for the sugar industry, as a Government, than the people who were getting the loads of money out of the sugar industry and the sugar producers. Sir, they cannot escape it. They have gone on to invest into supermarkets and all kinds of things but they had this industry in their hands and, Sir, if it is not unparliamentary, they raped it. (9:06) Sir, I hope it is not unparliamentary. It is not? They raped the industry then.

Mr. President, records speak for themselves. Sir, a fund was set up, and I saw the report came out here the other day called the Sugar Workers Providence Fund. Sir, the Sugar Workers Providence Fund was set up before the Democratic Labour Party came into power but the changes that the Democratic Labour Party made to it was for all sugar workers. Sir, I have the report here and it says that it was established since 1969 but it was only for certain people in the industry but the Democratic Labour Party amended that Act and made it a Fund for every single sugar worker and, Sir, it still exists to this day.

S/A40/7:07

Sequence 33

Wednesday, February 4, 2011

SENATOR R.A. HUNTE: Sir, this is not 1907. This is 2007. We made this public fund for all the sugar workers in Barbados. Today, the record is here. Today they still get funeral grants, they still get pensions which has nothing to do with their National Insurance. This is what they contributed to. That is the work of the Democratic Labour Party.

In 1958 there was a sugar workers' strike. The Democratic Labour Party was in Opposition but, of course, they showed solidarity with the workers. Believe it or not, despite the fact there was a Trade Union Act since 1943, workers could not picket in Barbados, in or near a house. It was a watershed when those sugar workers in 1958 did what they did then, walked to Government House and saw the Governor, who was then Sir Robert Arindell. I remember he used to walk down into Carrington Village, and so on, in those days. I remember. My grandmother came from the Garden Land, but my family came from Carrington Village. The Governor, at that time, used to walk down Tweedside Road. There were suggestions to the Governor, for the record, that they should try to lock up the members of the Democratic Labour Party.

Sir, it took the Democratic Labour Party in an amendment to the Trade Union Act that sugar workers should be able to picket in or near a home. In 1962, a Party only just months in office, I said months because they won the Government on December 4, 1961, and by 1962 the Democratic Labour Party reversed many things in this country. You have to talk about those things. It was a revolution by the Democratic Labour Party when they came into power in 1961. I am sorry for those who do not want to hear it, but that is the record of the Democratic Labour Party. The Sugar Workers Minimum Wage and Guarantee and the Employment Severance Payment Scheme were introduced. There is no need for me to go on.

Sir, I know that whenever I speak they go for the Rule Book. There is no need for me to go on. The truth of the matter is, most of what was done for the sugar industry was done by the Democratic Labour Party. After that there is not a lot talk about the industry. I still talk about the sugar producers and it is coming right down now into Barbados that a certain sector of people, now that they have drawn to from what they have drawn to certain industries and businesses in Barbados, they sell them off, not to Barbadians.

I suspect that there are a lot of people in Barbados with money, probably people like Senator Kerrie D. Symmonds can buy into some of these businesses which are being offloaded to foreign people. You can tell me with all of this money that is being washed away in the banks and all of these Lottos that people are winning, that people could not get together and buy into places like BS&T and these other places? It seems that once these are finished, Barbadians cannot get these businesses and run them.

Mr. President, there is an Asphalt Plant in Christ Church that was bought over by the workers. It is a successful operation, based on what I heard. It was bought over by the workers some years ago and it is being run successfully, but nobody wants, traditionally, must remain the status quo and must be entrenched in Barbados.

Sir, I am saying that the sugar industry is reaching a stage where Governments, I said Governments because whether it is this one or any new Government after the Democratic Labour Party, and that is another 30 or 40 years, that will have to take a decision on the sugar industry. All of what has been formed, Government or the taxpayers I should say, I am going to use the terms taxpayers, will have to take up the slack. We have to finance it. We have to find the money.

Sir, I totally disagree in the circumstances with anybody who says they are against taxpayers' money, but we are taxpayers too. Sir, until a decision is made on what to do with the sugar industry, the Government of the day, whoever is that Government, and Government is constant, whatever Party is in control, will have to spend the taxpayers' money. There is no other choice.

Sir, I could not let up on this. There is a lot more that I can say. We all know the importance of the sugar industry. The foreign exchange and so on that it has brought in over the years, but in truth and in fact we have to reach some very serious decisions in this country regarding the sugar industry.

Sir, you will not get people to go back to the sugar industry in the form that it was years ago. It is true that the labourious way in which people worked in the sugar industry has changed somewhat because of more

mechanism. You might ask the question, was it the best thing to mechanise the sugar industry? It had to be done.

Sir, I worked in the Hotel Industry in 1968, only for a season because in those days hotels were closing down for half of the year. Now hotels are open year round even if they send home some of the workers, but they open year round. Sir, I mentioned the hotel industry because the hotel industry was developed, not created, it was an industry before the Democratic Labour Party came into power, it was almost at a standstill but a Democratic Labour Party, again, that is why when that speech was made at Kings Park, I do not hear nobody talk about it now. When the late Errol Barrow said that one day he would like to see, from where he was all down to St. Lucy, and then the Headline in the Advocate, at the time, was, "Not a Cane Blabe". I remember. I was living in Black Rock then, down by my aunt. I remember that headline in the Advocate. It was not gainsaying. The late Errol Barrow used to say that people should not be heading canes out of a ground like beast of burden.

Sir, the major decisions were made to push our people along, I benefited as a result of the Democratic Labour Party coming into power, not in a personal way. I worked in a hotel. I bought my first car at the age of seventeen-and-a-half-years-old, in 1967, a little Angler. Sir, you had an Angler? I gave a small piece of change for it, because it was a \$1.68 to the US dollar at that time. Sir, my sister assisted me in saving money and I was able to buy that car.

Sir, I am committed to the Democratic Labour Party. I do not see the Democratic Labour Party as individuals. I see the Democratic Labour Party as an institution that has created and developed progress for this country, and when I defend it, I defend it with a passion because I saw and I lived the progress.

Sir, anybody who feels that you should not be talking about these things, I am very sorry. I am extremely sorry. I will continue to talk about them. This country was moving at a pedestrian pace before 1961. You could not believe that a country could move so fast in a short space of time between 1961 and 1966.

Sir, on the Resolution before us, sooner or later, I am not an expert in the field, a decision will have to be made regarding the sugar industry. I am not saying to replace it with concrete and blocks. I am not saying that at all. That will be a sad day, but some decision will have to be made regarding the sugar industry. We are in a crisis, a big one, some are manmade. We are debating this with a crisis in the background around the world, manmade, natural disasters, et cetera. We do not know what tomorrow will bring. Some people do not like to hear about history. They better tell us what tomorrow will bring. We can only talk

about what has gone before and what is happening today. We do not know.

Mr. President, all the food that probably will be channeled to certain countries now, must go into other countries that are experiencing natural disasters. Look at Australia. Could you imagine a disaster taking place in Australia with one of its States much larger than Germany and France put together? Sir, for Barbados we will be under the water, but God has been good and good so far.

7.17 p.m.

Sequence 34

Friday, February 04, 2011

Senate A40, sequence 35, 7.17 p.m.

Senator R.A. HUNTE: Sir, I support this Resolution because we are mandated to do it as a Government in this country but I wish to say the history of the sugar industry does not make very good reading. We know the importance. We know what it served us but it does not make good reading and I am saying, Sir, that a decision will have to be made sometime soon, or later, on the direction on our position with the sugar industry and note, I did not say agriculture, the sugar industry.

With those few words, Sir, I thank you very much.

Asides.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Durant, you have the Floor.

Senator Rev.Dr. D.L. DURANT: Thank you, Mr. President. I too stand to support this Resolution to approve the guarantee of BDS\$161 million to the Barbados Agricultural Management Company, in the form of a loan from the Barbados National Finance and Trust Corporation for the purpose of financing the sugar industry.

I want to be very short and just follow on something that Senator Benn has said earlier about diversifying because I believe it is about time that we diversify our industry and not depend on sugar alone. I believe that the level of support that the Government is giving to the farmers in the sugar industry that some concession should be given on their part to put some of their arable land into non sugar crops, which can help supply food on our tables, supply our supermarkets as well as maybe improve our export capability in the area of non sugar crops. I really believe that they should make this in a sense that they are being propped by the Government and subsidise in a large way by Government.

Mr. President, in saying that, I must also say that one of the reasons some farmers are afraid to go into non sugar crops is because of the problems of praedial larceny. They prefer to go with the sugar because they know of its multi functional role in our society, the prevention of the degradation of landscape, its soil and water conservation capabilities and so forth, as well as its ability to withstand drought, bad weather, even hurricane force winds.

Sir, Tomas just passed and my plantain suckers and banana suckers went flat. Do you know what? The sugar canes remained standing, blowing and leaning but yet they remained. Really, when you look at it, the sugar cane does not give you the kinds of headaches like your non sugar crops will give you, then for people to be coming and looking at your crops and when they are about to be harvested, the people just taking up what does not belong to them. This prevalence of praedial larceny is something we have to help the farmers to overcome. This has been spoken a lot from this Senate already but I think we need to put more action to what we say and help in this area because it is not fair for a farmer to put all his savings into the planting of certain crops and then hardly able to reap anything at the end of the day at one, two and three o'clock in the morning, vans coming taking off with your crop. This would really annoy people and if we are not careful, some people would take the law in their own hands and we will have more serious problems.

I really believe that we should also implement the whole idea of people bringing some kind of certification. If they are bringing vegetables and non crop sugar items to be sold, I believe there should be some kind of certification so that you will know that these crops are legitimate and belongs to this individual. Rather than people at supermarkets and other places just taking whatever crops come to them in a van at a very cheap price and maybe knowing too that it does not even belong to the individual, but take it because they are getting it reasonably. Sir, this is not the right thing and it should be stopped.

Mr. President, there is also one other thing I want to mention. I believe, I could be speaking subject to correction, that Guyana had offered Barbados some land, I think more than 100 acres, and I am wondering why we did not take up that offer.

Asides.

Senator Rev.Dr. D.L. DURANT: If we do that, we could employ Guyanese and we could plant a lot of vegetables down there, a lot of crops could be planted and it would be very reasonable for us in the area of exchange.

Asides.

Senator Rev.Dr. D.L. DURANT: Maybe two or three inter island vessels could be offloaded in our harbour every Thursday morning, just before the weekend, with tonnes of produce, reasonably produced in Guyana. Guyana is 83 000 square miles. There is an island in the Essequibo River in Guyana that is larger than Barbados. I believe that we can take advantage of that opportunity and have a lot of crops produced that are difficult here in the little space that we have in Barbados and it will really benefit us.

Sir, it will create employment for many Guyanese, more than 100 or more, and we will have a few Barbadian managers and supervisors coordinating things and then shipping, inter-island, every week, offloading in our harbour. We could get things like pineapples and a lot of vegetables, carrots, beets, christophene, a whole list of vegetable, as well as ground provisions coming in here very reasonably, if we take up that 100 acres offer or even if it is 200 acres we get, I am sure we can really make a very versatile market in our crop production.

In the area of the ethanol for energy, I believe our island is too small to produce the amount of sugar that is needed to produce ethanol of any large quantity. I would leave that, Mr. President, for Brazil and India that have acres upon acres of land that they can use for purpose, and with our 16x21, 166 square miles, I do not think we have the kind of land space to produce.

What I think we need to look at is capturing the sun, solar power, solar energy, for example, to supply our hospital, the QEH and to supply the Barbados Water Authority. They could install solar energy to really push those pumps, instead of the Barbados Water Authority paying the Barbados Light and Power more than \$1 million a month, and the Queen Elizabeth Hospital paying the Barbados Light and Power more than \$1 million a month. Why we cannot? We have a pasteur right beside the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, let the people go and practice on Weymouth ground and maybe we can use that pasteur for a lot of the panels and so forth, or even use on top of the very roof of the hospital that is flat and saturate it with panels and create that kind of energy.

The sun is faithful every day to us. Every day it rises in the east and sets in the west and we enjoy the beautiful sunshine. We have been enjoying it every day. We can also capture some of that energy that is just wasting when the days come and really use it effectively and pull down our Light and Power bill, in these major institutions like the hospital and the Barbados Water Authority, even at the airport. Of course, we will still have them on standby in case we have a problem. This is my little bit just to followup on what has already been said because I know this was really spoken well into already but I would like us to really look at that. The idea of the praedial larceny, is

something that is causing farmers to be hesitant to divert into other non sugar crops and we need to help them to really police that area and catch some of these people and maybe jail them or have them pay very huge fines so that we can discourage them from this kind of activity, and so cause our farmers to have greater confidence in developing the non sugar crop market so that we can have a greater possibility of developing our export market in the non sugar crops in our island.

With that, Mr. President, I want to say I support this Resolution for this Guarantee of \$161 million.

Asides.

Senate A40, sequence 35, 7.27 p.m.

Friday, February 04, 2011

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator McCLEAN.

Senator the Hon. Miss M. P. O. McCLEAN: Mr. Chairman, as I stand to wrap up debate on this Resolution...

Mr. PRESIDENT: We are not in Committee. I am not Mr. Chairman.

Asides.

Senator the Hon. Miss M. P. O. McCLEAN: Mr. President, I am tired, it has been an extremely long day, mine did not start when we got here this afternoon, mine started several hours before this.

Mr. President, as I stand to wrap up the debate on this Resolution, we would have heard several contributions about the importance of this guarantee. I want to emphasise that it is in fact a guarantee by the Government to the Barbados Agricultural Management Company (BAMC).

We have heard of several strategies. I want to assure you, Mr. President, that there is a commitment on the part of this Administration to address the restructuring of this industry. We have invested in initiatives which were identified by the previous Administration as would have been referred to by Senator Kerrie D. Symmonds. I am following my distinguished colleague on my right in making sure that I clearly identify my colleague who spoke for the Opposition.

The issue of the multi-purposes of sugar has been part of a strategy. The factory to which we refer initially estimated to cost \$400 million has been revisited to come up with something that is much more realistic. We would have heard in an earlier point of order that we are looking at making this happen at a much realistic price. I believe, Sir, that the importance of sugarcane as opposed to the

sugar industry in its current manifestation is vital to the topography of this country. We have been exploring a number of things. We have also established that the production of ethanol cannot be done competitively in Barbados, that as a stand-alone it would not be efficient or cost-effective and therefore it would have to be done within other kinds of parameters.

Mr. President, it is necessary that we look at what happens when we engage in sugar production. If I could speak to the contribution of the last Speaker, Senator Durant, who talked about making compulsory the production of non-sugar crops by sugarcane farmers, I would just indicate that we may need to revisit the legislation which was in effect during the war years where access to imports would have been restricted because of the war conditions. I think was the 1942 Food Crop Ordinance Act, which mandated farms to produce 12.5 per cent or to put under cultivation 12.5 per cent of arable acreage in food crops.

When we came into office, the same BAMC management and so on had been advised, and I can almost say instructed, that they look to engage in this kind of arrangement to enhance our production of root crops. Mr. President, I trust, because I do not have the figures in front of me, that the increases that we would have seen and the figures cited on more than one occasion by our former Minister of Agriculture, Senator Benn, would be attributable to them. Mr. President, I will have to do the research and I like to have my facts before me but we certainly would have seen an increase. If that has been followed faithfully by those plantations under Government control some of that increase would be attributed to them.

We have also, as we talk about sugar, been experimenting with a number of other crops. I can tell you that contrary to the impression given by the Honourable Senator on the other side that this Administration has done nothing is in fact fallacious. What I would say is that is the mantra... As a marketer, I know that if you select a theme and you say it long enough people would start to believe you even those who concocted it.

In fact, only last night I was reading an article in which they were talking about the internet and children and they showed you where some teachers had some youngsters researching a tree octopus. These children went on the internet and they pulled off some information. They were sent to a particular website. Sir, here you have these young people in this classroom believing that there were such a creature as a tree octopus. That is the kind of approach I think that if we do not be careful, if we let it stand alone, would happen. There is no such thing as tree octopuses and therefore there is no such thing as the Democratic Labour Party doing nothing. Sir, I can tell you that as we undertake to continue to revitalise the

agricultural sector, whether it is addressing issues of praedial larceny in the legislation which is hopefully coming forward soon - I have seen drafts and we have had some discussions on those things and obviously we need to expedite that in the interest of our agricultural farmers - we will see greater diversification, we will see a strategy that has been discussed and worked out across three of our ministries where we seek to broaden the involvement of our young people in agriculture. Sir, both our sugarcane derived activity as well as traditional food crops and other non-traditional food crop are part of a comprehensive strategy.

In light of all that has transpired, and I would have mentioned, Mr. President, that the projection for commodity prices rising, the projections are very clear, that we would experience these and we obviously are seeking to respond to those. Food crop agriculture fortunately is an industry in which we can have a significant level of transformation within a six months to a one-year period. This Government stands ready to support all sectors of the industry and we certainly will continue to support them through guarantees such as this. There is one last point, Mr. President, that I would want to make in relation to the role of Government and the way in which we do business. Guarantees have been undertaken. I know the Honourable Senator on the other side mentioned, in respond to my colleague here Senator Benn, that something that might not have been right then should probably not be right now. What we seek to do as quickly as we can is to put these things in place. We have had to come to this Chamber to bring and formalise a number of guarantees. We have sought also, as we guarantee the financing of activity by our statutory corporations, et cetera, to do it in a way that we can be very orderly and be in a position to clearly identify what are our outstanding commitments in terms of guarantees so that at any point in time the Government can see what that is.

Mr. President, I trust that this is the approach we would continue to use. This is an important industry. It goes, as I said, just to reiterate the point, beyond the earnings from our export of sugar. Our rum industry, which as we would have heard, has relied for several years and continues to rely heavily on imported molasses. Hopefully, as we move forward we could increase our production of that as well because our rum generates significant foreign exchange.

Senate A40 Sequence 36

7.22 p.m.

Friday, February 04, 2011

SENATOR the Hon. M.P.O. McCLEAN: Mr. President, it is an area in which we have been pursuing to have a branded Barbados rum.

Mr. President, I have no hesitation in asking that this Resolution do now pass.

The question was put to the Senate and agreed to.

ORDER NO. 2 – RESOLUTION TO APPROVE IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 5 OF THE LAND ACQUISITION ACT, CAP. 228, THE COMPULSORY ACQUISITION BY THE CROWN OF THE PARCEL OF LAND SITUATE AT MASON HALL STREET IN THE PARISH OF SAINT MICHAEL IN THIS ISLAND, FOR THE PUBLIC PURPOSE OF HOUSING DEVELOPMENT.

Mr. PRESIDENT: SENATOR the Hon. M.P.O. McClean.

SENATOR the Hon. M.P.O. McCLEAN: Mr. President, this Resolution to approve in accordance with Section 5 of the Land Acquisition Act, Cap. 228, the compulsory acquisition by the Crown of the parcels of land situate at the corner of Mason Hall Street and Lakes Folly in the parish of St. Michael is for the purpose of housing construction. As you know, Sir, we would and will continue to have either acquisitions or vestings of lands. This land will be vested in the National Housing Corporation and it is intended to further enhance this administration's housing programme, H.E.L.P. Sir, with the compulsory acquisition of this piece of land, we will be in a position to add to the stock of high-rise housing in the City.

I want to emphasise the critical importance of the availability of housing and persons residing in the City. It is evident from cities around the world that if you want to resuscitate or sustain the vibrancy or life of a city, residential accommodation is critical. Over the years, we would have recognised that many areas of Bridgetown have been transformed and this certainly has been recognized. We acknowledge the contributions of the former representative of the Honourable Member for the City of Bridgetown but I will share with you the comment I often use, when I spoken in another place and in another environment, as I acknowledge those development and contributions. We talk about the Wickham Boardwalk and the upgrading of the area around Independence Square. I used the analogy of the front street, versus the back street, as happened in St. Marten.

Mr. President, what we had was an ignoring or neglect of the very conditions which exist in the City, as far as our housing stock is concerned. It is believed that any attempt to enhance the environs of Bridgetown are far from

complete, if there is no addressing of the housing needs. The Honourable Member for the City of Bridgetown often speaks of the problems in relation to poor housing conditions. Therefore, I believe this particular initiative would not only make him happy but also the residents and I anticipate that as we address that issue of housing solutions, as we get those units erected, that we will be able either to rehouse persons within the environs or to accommodate many Barbadians who presently are looking for housing accommodations.

Mr. President, this week I heard a business proprietor, a young woman from the sound of her voice, who runs a restaurant in Bridgetown. This lady was expressing her desire that she could see more activities in Bridgetown after dark, where, for example, rather than simply serving lunches, she would be able to engage in the business of serving dinners. Her concern is that after certain hours Bridgetown becomes dead.

Mr. President, this housing project is important. If we have a renovated area, the enhancement that will come only in terms of the aesthetics but also the physical activities surrounding that area, will give rise to the demand for shopping and recreational activities. Overall, this acquisition will lend itself to revitalising of Bridgetown, not only providing people's needs for housing or improving the general quality of life for many people in that area but also persons who may come into the area.

Mr. President, it is but one other element of our multi-pronged approach to housing development across the country. Therefore, speaking to the acquisition of that land is vital to the accomplishment of our housing targets and can only go towards perhaps addressing what is seen by Barbadians to be their most pressing need, the need either to rent or to acquire. Mr. President, with those few words, I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass. I am obliged.

SENATOR S.J.O. BRADSHAW: Mr. President, I rise on this occasion with respect to moving the passing of a Resolution to approve in accordance with Section 5 of the Land Acquisition Act, Cap. 228, the compulsory acquisition of the parcel of land at Mason Hall Street, in the parish of St. Michael for the purpose of housing development.

Mr. President, let me first of all say that I noticed the tone of the debate for today's proceedings has certainly taken a high road. I am glad to see that Honourable Senators on the opposite side have no doubt taken some of my suggestions.

Asides.

SENATOR S.J.O. BRADSHAW: Mr. President, while in principle the acquisition of the land by the Government of Barbados on this occasion poses little or no debate from either side, because we all agree that we have to acquire lands in Barbados to be able to vest to the Crown for the purposes of housing development. We also acknowledge that the needs of Barbadians are several but that in relation to housing, there are several pressing needs in relation to housing in this country. Mr. President, I therefore intend that the contributions I will make this evening, albeit that the time is upon us, will no doubt continue to take the high road that has been set out since coming to this Honourable House. Mr. President, first of all I note from the Order Paper that despite the description given where the land is situated and despite Leader of Government Business indicating the lands are at Mason Hall Street, it is also referred to as Lakes Folly.

S:No:A40 (37)7.46 p.m.

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SENATOR S.J.O. BRADSHAW: Sir, I think it would be wise if the members of the Senate also had at their disposal, perhaps, copies of the plans so that whilst we may be able to refer to the description that we, also, would be in a position to look at the plan and determine for ourselves as well exactly where this piece of land is located. I do not think it is enough for Honourable Members to be able to come here and be able to contribute fully without actually being able to, perhaps, even visit the area, speak to some of the residents and even do our own assessment with respect to this particular acquisition, or any acquisition for that matter coming before this Honourable Chamber.

Mr. President, I would say that if, for instance, it is not possible on this occasion, I would humbly suggest that it is something that we look at doing in the future.

Sir, one might say that on previous occasions the Opposition may have brought a land acquisition to this Honourable House and may not have brought plans but I believe that in moving forward and, certainly, in setting a tone for the future, I believe that we are here as Senators not only to rubber stamp what happens in the Other Place but also, basically, to contribute to the debate and, hopefully, to improve the system with which we are here to do our business.

Mr. President, I know that this matter would have come to this stage obviously, after some debate and some assessment by those on the other side and with projects as described as I saw in the reports of the Nation-News paper yesterday, this project that is being undertaken will taken the form a high-rise building, I believe some seven storeys or eight storeys were ventilated, and I believe that an

environmental assessment no doubt would have been done in relation to this project. Sir, again I believe that the Honourable Senators whilst we come here to debate land acquisition that we, too, should have something as it relates to an environmental assessment study in relation to this particular development.

Mr. President, I believe it is necessary because there are a lot of issues that need to be ventilated in this forum. Sir, putting down a high-rise complex such as the one that is being discussed will, no doubt, lead to issues in that particular area with respect to garbage collection and it would lead to issues in relation to recreation. Sir, as far as I am aware the closest pasture is perhaps Kensington Oval in relation to which this acquisition will take place but then there is also Passage Road and so I think it would be of interest to this Honourable House if we could hear what the long-term vision is, in relation to this development. Sir, as it relates to Kensington Oval, we all know that Kensington Oval is not available to all and sundry and that, at this moment, one would have to seek permission and, therefore, it is not free and accessible to the general public on a day to day basis.

Mr. President, the nature of the development that is being proposed strikes me as one that would have required us hearing a little bit more of the intentions of the present Government as it relates to catering to the needs of the persons whom it proposes will be occupying these particular premises.

Mr. President, I would also say that the area is already densely populated. I know that the Leader of Government Business indicated earlier that the City in other international territories are growing in terms of being attracted to persons who may wish to settle in the city because of the nature of development and so I think it is important that the Government presents a long term vision for the City. I do not think it is enough for us to come here and speak about housing every last person but yet we do not have a clear White Paper on housing as it relates to the development of housing in this country. I think it is something that, certainly, needs to be brought to this House, maybe not for this debate but, again, if Honourable Members on the other side would take some guidance at time, I believe that it would certainly inform the debate and allow us to articulate to the public of Barbados what the present administration and no doubt from our side on the Opposition what we see as the vision for housing development in this country.

Mr. President, that brings me to another point because with acquisition also comes compensation and I took a short bit of time to go through the Manifesto of the Democratic Labour Party before I came and I noted that at page 43 there were some promises made with respect to compensation.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Excuse me, I do not wish to interrupt you but are you going to make it a document of the Senate?

SENATOR S.J.O. BRADSHAW: It is already a document of the Senate.

Mr. PRESIDENT: I see. You may continue.

SENATOR S.J.O. BRADSHAW: You may continue. Sir, the Manifesto of the Democratic Labour Party indicated that the intention was to pay compensation on the replacement value rather than on the market value of the property and, therefore, I wonder whether with respect to this particular acquisition, seeing as how the legislation has not come into effect as indicated and promised by the current administration, whether that is the intention in the near future because, as we would appreciate, the Manifesto is something on which the administration came to power and, I believe that in a lot of cases, the policies articulated there, people in Barbados have certain expectations that those would be followed through.

Mr. President, I also wonder what it is actually costing the Government of Barbados to acquire these lands. Sir, we have heard nothing brought to this House with respect to what this piece of land that is being acquired would actually cost of. I have heard nothing with respect to whether there were persons who are currently on the land. There was mention about the relocation and we have not heard anything advanced with respect to how many persons would be relocated if they are persons to be relocated. Sir, I would certainly hope that if there are persons to be relocated that such persons would be afforded the opportunity not to have to wait several years before such relocation actually takes place.

Mr. President, the Leader of Government Business, Senator Maxine McClean, indicated that obviously the Government was looking to facilitate persons in the surrounding environs and other persons who were looking to own and purchase accommodation in the project which they are proposing to build. I also noted that the Minister stated yesterday that the accommodation was for rental and also for sale but there has been no number given for the total number of accommodations, whether rental or sale, that is proposed for this specific project.

I believe the headlines spoke about 400 new facilities for accommodation but it also named other locations where housing will also be built and so I wonder how many persons would be accommodated in this particular project.

Mr. President, I think that we have to address a very real situation of squatting. I agree that persons in the surrounding environs of any new development should

certainly be accommodated. I do not know whether there has been any statistical data because none has been brought before this House with respect to how many persons would actually be required to be rehoused, how many people have actually applied for that particular housing development, if it has reached that stage as yet but I believe it is important that some document ...

Asides.

SENATOR S.J.O. BRADSHAW: Sir, we spoke earlier about statistical data and I think that should continue to inform not only this Government but also future administrations as well in relation to the housing policy. It is not enough simply to say that you are building a number of houses or putting up sky-rise building that we cannot have a clear picture of how many people actually require accommodation. We do not have a clear picture of how many persons in the next 10 years will actually require accommodation.

Mr. President, there is an old saying, "Where there is no vision the people perish", and I would hate to think that we find ourselves year after year and administration after administration in the same position where we are not articulating a clear policy as it relates to housing in this country.

Mr. President, I would also like to speak to the suitability of the land because that also has not been presented here this evening with respect to the nature of the project that has proposed.

Mr. President, we are well aware of issues of acquisition and housing projects being done across this country and then we find ourselves coming back to Parliament to discuss things like cost overruns, the contractors butt up all kinds of issues in relation to flooding and issues of drainage and, therefore, I would want to think that sufficient thought has gone into this particular acquisition such that we would not find ourselves constantly coming back to Parliament to ask for additional funds to be supplemented for projects of this nature. Sir, by the very nature of the project which has been put on the table, I seriously hope that some consideration has been given to such issues as the foundation. Sir, as you know, the foundation of most project costs significant sums of money and so I would hope ...

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SENATOR Miss S.J.O. BRADSHAW: ... the foundation of most projects cost a significant sum of

money. Sir, I would hope that we would not be coming back here for variations, whether your administration or the Opposition regaining the reins of Government at some later stage, to deal with issues relating to bad management or failing to assess properly the situation as it relates to this particular development.

Now we have several situations, and I think this is a particularly critical point, because we have several situations in which we have seen the cost overruns and the problems which arise as a result of not bringing all the facts to the table. We have had projects, for instance, in Lower Burney, and I have no problem putting the Lower Burney's issue on the table even if it was negotiated under a Barbados Labour Party administration. I will put that on the table only for guidance as it relates...

Mr. PRESIDENT: The President is giving you guidance. You cannot decide to put the Lower Burney issue on the table. You bring a Resolution or ask a question.

SENATOR Miss S.J.O. BRADSHAW: Yes, Mr. President, I am guided.

Let me just say that I am seeking to give examples of situations which I hope we can possibly avoid in the future. So in relating to those situations, I would mention other developments where problems have arisen under previous administrations, and we have seen such cases in, for instance, Lower Burney, where there are issues in relation to drainage. There is a housing development in that particular area but every time rain falls, residents experience issues of flooding and blocked drains. Recently with Tomas there was severe flooding in the particular area.

Sir, we have also seen similar situations at Warrens where we had problems when the Caves were discovered. Years ago, with East Terrace, Wildey, where we discovered cracks in the foundations. Again, both administrations in a sense, experienced problems over the years.

Asides.

SENATOR Miss S.J.O. BRADSHAW: There were problems also at Murphy Pasture as well, as it relates to the same thing.

Mr. President, history, I hope, will not repeat itself. I believe we do need full disclosure of a number of things when land acquisitions are brought to this Honourable House so that Honourable Senators are in a position to make decisions that would not come to haunt us in the future.

There are several situations I have alluded, and I hope despite the high road that I often speak about, that those on the other side will perhaps take guidance from my words, and as we chart a new direction going forward, we can see perhaps some Paper coming to this Honourable House as it relates to housing and housing development, and that Housing Every Last Person and Helping Every Last Person, as ambitious as it may be, certainly does not fall along the wayside because we are so caught up in trying to prove that we have fulfilled our obligations to the public with respect to providing houses, that we do not neglect the very basic things. We need to bring things to this House that present an assessment of where we are looking to go as a country, and it is not about just simply building structures and being able to tick off achievements, is not enough at the end of the day let me say that building the structure a person is still not earning a living economically, or the person is still unable to put food on their table. Sir, I believe we have achieved nothing. Therefore, I hope that the policy of Housing Every Last Person actually takes into account that we need to also drive engines withing our economy as well, in order to achieve this purpose.

Sir, in closing I did promise that I would not debate on this particular Resolution, but I do believe that the Opposition certainly supports the acquisition of this land, but as I stated before I believe that in the future we need to have full disclosure of everything that is possible to make proper decisions as it relates to housing and the acquisition of lands.

Thank you, Mr. President.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Worrell.

Senator A.R. WORRELL: Mr. President, I rise to make a brief contribution to this Resolution for the acquisition of land at Mason Hall Street, for the purpose of housing development. It is indeed a pleasure for me to make this contribution following the high-level contribution by Senator Bradshaw. It also warms me to see that the two Opposition seats have decided to join with Members from this side. We have constantly raised the level of debate and we are glad to see that you are trying to raise the level of debate from your end as well.

Asides.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Worrell could you please address the Chair.

Senator A.R. WORRELL: Mr. President, I also want to comment on some of the things Senator Bradshaw mentioned. She said something with regard to cost overruns, a problem which this administration has not faced, but certainly plagued the previous administration. I

do believe she means well, too, in taking the debate to a higher level, I have noticed that she has even gone to extreme pains to point out some of the mistakes which were made by the previous administration to guide us from not making similar mistakes, especially when she referred to the issues at the Lower Burney Development. We have taken that to heart, recognising you mean well with the higher level debate. We do our due diligence. We do our studies and will make sure that we do not fall into the same trap which the previous administration fell into.

Mr. President, the main importance of this Resolution is to house people in Barbados. This administration has taken very seriously the whole idea of making sure that every last person in Barbados has adequate access to housing and to shelter. When this administration came to office there was a large backlog on the National Housing Corporation's roll, and we have made dents into that backlog with a number of different housing projects. Sir, at nearly every Sitting there is probably a vesting or a land acquisition for some housing project. There are a number of persons who have noticed a change and realise that there is a possibility of getting housing within Barbados. Sir, with regard to the high-rise housing development, it gives more persons in Barbados an opportunity to housing in Barbados, either through Rent to Own or by renting the property. I want to commend this administration for the good work that it has been doing.

Sir, in taking the high road and not playing game as it was coined at our last Sitting, the politics of politics, when you are critiquing, I think you should go a step further by offering the solutions as well, rather than just criticising or commenting on the short-comings, but also offer the solutions.

We do recognise that the high-rise project is something totally new to the Barbados landscape...

8.05 p.m.

Sequence 39

Friday, February 04, 2011

Senate A40, sequence 40, 8.07 p.m.

Senator A.R. WORRELL: In moving forward and going to a higher level in terms of our housing development within Barbados and what the National Housing Corporation is doing, there has been a lot of talk in terms of renewable energy and using solar power and so forth.

These are things I believe that in order for them to really become a reality in Barbados, seeing that the National Housing Corporation has taken on building the

majority of the houses and the new developments, it seems to me that this is an area that the Government will have to pay some consideration to, to make sure that wherever possible and however it is feasible that all of their housing projects down the line have that component in them, in terms of the renewable energy.

Sir, I see it as a great opportunity that you are building these high-rise houses and you should have the solar panels at the top of the house, not just the solar water heating panels but also the solar panels to generate electricity because renewable energy is a viable alternative for Barbados. As you look at the world economy right now, the price of oil is constantly increasing. We do not control the price of oil and we do not control what our energy bill will be but we definitely have ways and means of reducing them by paying more attention to renewable energy.

Yes, the point that Senator Bradshaw made about garbage collection is also important and something that we need to pay close attention to and I would hope that when the plans are developed to this project that consideration is taken to recycling because you have a whole community living together on floors above each other so serious consideration must be given to recycling. I believe in that way, if you give consideration to implementing recycling in that community, it would also trickle down into other communities within Barbados and then it would seriously have a recycling programme in Barbados. Sir, also too, the treatment of waste because there is some energy that you can obtain from the proper treatment of waste.

Sir, I believe that this administration is capable of giving full consideration to these matters so that unlike the former administration, all of the ideas would not just stay there in their minds or somewhere on paper but they would be eventually implemented. Since this administration has come to office we have delivered on our housing projects and we have delivered on being able to house every last person. I believe that these ideas would not just stay on paper or would not just die in a Parliamentary debate but they would actually be worked on and implemented.

Asides.

Senator A.R. WORRELL: We cannot wait that long.

Mr. President, I want to emphasize the importance of using the renewable energy sources in the housing project. I also want to further commend the Government again for their vision in providing a new way of housing every last person because it would create a lot of opportunities for young families who want to move into their own homes. Therefore, you would have certain social programmes in place because you want to make sure that this is a new type of community.

You would also want to make sure that you have the green spaces available as well so we can draw from best practices overseas and places such as Sweden, where the green spaces do not just have to occur on the ground floor but you can find other areas, probably on the roof for the green spaces, even new ways of making sure that the green spaces do not just occur on the ground floor setting but there are a number of different ways to incorporate that and you are developing a community so therefore you must have access to recreational activities, opportunities for the children to come outside, playgrounds to play. All of these things have to be given consideration.

Sir, since we are only doing the acquisition of the land, we have at some point to come back and do the vesting and then we would have to develop the project, I am certain that between now and the time when the first person turns the key in a lock to the new housing project, we would work hard to come up with the ideas, not just to criticise but to make sure that we have programmes in place to avoid any shortcomings which could be envisaged.

Sir, we do not want to turn them into a slump area but we do want these to be highly productive communities in Barbados, where good decent family values or community values are displayed, so all of these things need to be considered and worked on.

Mr. President, I support the Resolution and I thank you, Sir.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator McClean.

Senator Hon. Miss M.P.O. McCLEAN: Mr. President, as I stand to wrap up this debate on this Resolution, I really need to first of all commend Senator Worrell for his set of recommendations in terms of focussing on contributing, as we move into now approaches to housing provision that we do so mindful of the need to pursue our plan and dream of attaining Barbados' dream and intention to become a green economy.

I however have to take some time, notwithstanding the time of day to speak to the issues raised by the Senator on the other side and hopefully to assist her senior colleague training her, on the realities on what obtains.

If I understood correctly, there was a suggestion that we produce drawings or details of housing. First of all let me establish very clearly that the Resolution before us is for land acquisition and yes it is the attention of the Government to construct housing and in the selection of the site, clearly attention would have had to be played to its suitability but I do not believe that while the necessary geo technical work and so on might have been done to establish the suitability that work also would have to be more

detailed as to whatever buildings on the ground be removed and a comprehensive assessment be done. Sir, those things would have been done and therefore to suggest that we bring all of these things is pie in the sky, unrealistic and fanciful.

Senator K. SYMMONDS: Mr. President, on a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the Chamber and I think unwittingly so. Sir, from the time of the no confidence motion which was brought by the then Leader of the Opposition, who would have been the Honourable Member for St. Michael North West, against the former Minister of Housing, who would have been the Honourable Member for St. James South, a practise evolved that at the point of bringing the Resolution to Parliament there was an attachment of the site plan, so that you were able to identify it. It may have not been attached in error but it is a valid observation, Sir, because it has been and I have seen it in this place before. I am observing from the nods from the Clerks side of the Table that it is not an unreasonable observation.

Mr. PRESIDENT: I think you mean the Clerk.

Senator K. SYMMONDS: I beg your pardon, Sir, and I am obliged.

Senator Hon. Miss M.P.O. McCLEAN: If I may continue, Mr. President, clearly the problem then is that the Honourable Senator needs to be able to better articulate her statement because from what I heard, it did not sound as though she was talking about a site plan. She was talking about plans for housing and whatever. Now I am very clear because I sought clarification from you after I heard her comments so if that is what she means, then that is a difference. If you want to see the location plan, that is quite different from what you are talking and so maybe it is a misunderstanding on my part or the nature of the presentation but I want to assure her that should be made available. It is on the file that I have but I cannot share with the Senator on the other side the Government's file. If that is missing, I would trust that the persons responsible for circulating the Order Paper will make that correct, so that her files will reflect the full information.

Senate A40, sequence 40, 8.17 p.m.

Friday, February 04, 2011

Senator the Hon. Miss M. P. O. McCLEAN: I want to assure you that references to the difficulties, to put it nicely, at Warrens should not obtain here because there have been many expensive lessons learnt in relation to that, the standard procedures would be followed. As I said, the necessary geo-technical work has been done. You mention the pasture, but in a city where we are talking about overcrowding, et cetera, that would be addressed at some

time. Clearly, there is a provision for green spaces. I do not know what is envisaged so in the same way that I misunderstood, let me leave it at that, but green spaces would be provided for the residents.

This Administration recognises that, even though we will provide high-rise buildings given the sheer numbers requesting housing, there has to be proper accommodation for that. Mr. President, this will be part of an effort to upgrade the general conditions of housing in the city. I envisage that as this unfolds, other things would unfold as well. We would see the clearing of areas there, which would lend itself to the greening of some of those areas.

I also want to reassure the Honourable Senator that the notion of the production of a White Paper is one which sounds good. I also believe that you may ask yourself what is the purpose of a White Paper. Certainly, from my reading of White Papers in the past, they are to communicate Government's strategies in a particular sector or in relation to certain broad policies as it relates in this case to housing. Reference was made to what we promised the people of Barbados. The problem of housing, the types of persons who are most in need and the areas of major difficulties have all been articulated over and over again and I believe that is very clear. The production of a White Paper could be used but it will not detain this Administration from completing its very important task. Mr. President, those of us who interface with Barbadians who are not Members of Parliament would tell you that one of the key things that Barbadians keep asking about is housing. The point was also further made, Mr. President, that while we provide housing - again I am interpreting and I trust I am correcting my interpretation - we also need to address other needs including the productive sectors, translating it in relation to the citizens, jobs, et cetera. Mr. President, I will contend that has been an issue which preoccupies this and every Government.

Mr. President, one of the issues that has to be tackled if this society is to remain one in which people are comfortable, one in which people believe that they have the potential to realise their dreams, to self-actualise, et cetera, is housing. A person who goes to work - and I have made this point in here on several occasions - and leave his or her house however humble knowing it is their's because they pay rent, they are paying a mortgage or because they have finished paying for it, will function in a way that is very different. Sir, when we start to think about people's hierarchy of needs... Yes, people want jobs but people want as they work to be able to see themselves using some of the wages, et cetera... There is again this false dichotomy that is being pushed. You would remember, Mr. President, when I spoke earlier that I said that sometimes people would want to raise certain notions and when repeated often enough would be bought into by persons.

Mr. President, when we talk about addressing social needs, and housing is a social need, we are doing so because of the relationship between issues relating to... What was said is that the Democratic Labour Party talks about Barbados being a society but a society is the overarching reality. The social setting shapes the economic and the political and therefore when we talk about society, that does not mean that we are forgetting economy. In fact, the very Opposition when it was in Government heralded its activities in construction as a critical plight to its economic activity. By the construction of these houses, we will see just that. People would be employed, the persons who will tile floors, persons who will put in the windows, the persons who are making windows because the windows that we would be using in these houses will come from local manufacturing operations, so this also is a way to create jobs.

This not only creates jobs but it is also solving some very specific problems. It is building houses alongside those that are built for expatriates who have money to build or buy very expensive villas, it is building houses for the gardeners who will work in those villas or hotels, it is building houses for those persons who will be the maids and it is building houses for the police officers, the nurses, the teachers and the post men and women, so we must not try to dichotomise these things. It is important to recognise that housing at particular levels is a major need in this country.

Mr. President, I started out in my opening comments speaking about the front door and the back door of the city. Walking down Broad Street or walking from the entrance of the Port up to the esplanade on Bay Street opposite Government Headquarters is a beautiful walk but if you go inland to where houses are across the road by Government Headquarters, in fact, go on the balcony of Government Headquarters and look behind the building, you would see terrible conditions, which is what we want to solve. We do not want to have what is seen as a beautiful facade or a beautiful gallery or patio, we want to have a beautiful city and that has to be housing.

Mr. President, as we do this, I trust that some of the people in the neighbourhood may find it their business to go and seek work with some of the companies that would be involved in this. I can assure you that in terms of the construction of high-rise that we would ensure that the persons who are contracted to construct these high-rise complexes would be persons experienced in doing that. I can tell you that in hearing contractors talk about this there are some people who would tell you that they would not do these kinds of jobs because they do not have the necessary expertise. It would have been nice if that same kind of thing would have been applied to that building in Warrens that now cost us so much money that would have helped us to construct these.

Mr. President, I am mindful of the time but in looking at this Resolution to compulsorily acquire this piece of land in the Mason Hall Street/Lakes Folly area, we are doing so in an effort not only to make Bridgetown look pretty but to do it in a way that will make the people who will reside in these houses feel a real part of a city that is revitalised and that they themselves as they acquire the ability to occupy these premises whether to rent, to rent-to-own or whatever would be the configuration, would do so in a way that would make them proud of being residents of Bridgetown and not probably having to apologise.

8.27 p.m.

Mr. President, I have to say this, when we have the World Cup, 2007, there was the pink washing, white washing and yellow washing in a haste because when people got up on the high stands in the renovated lovely Kensington Oval, they were looking down on squalor and in order to cover up that, some temporary measures were taken. Sir, we do not want that, we want to offer some solutions and this is part of what that would be.

Mr. President, as I said before, we are looking to reenergise the City, we are now focusing not on the streets at the front, not on the public buildings... I was very happy as an Anglican when I saw what was done at St. Mary's Church but we have to go behind the church. I am sure that the present Rector of St. Mary's and all those who will come after, would be happy to know that when they look at their parishioners they would not have to feel sorry for them or in the words of one of the priests who said he never thought he would have had to find ways to keep children away from home. That was because of the conditions of the home and wanting to give those children the best opportunity possible during their vacation.

Mr. President, we are looking to develop the City in a holistic way. We are working on what I consider to be a major area of neglect, notwithstanding all that went on in the front row of Bridgetown, we are now dealing with the back streets and making sure that we address the needs of the people.

Mr. President, with those few words, I now beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

The question was put to the Senate and agreed to.

ADJOURNMENT

SENATOR the Hon. M.P.O. McCLEAN: Mr. President, I now beg to move that this Honourable Senate be adjourned sine die.

The question that the Senate be now adjourned sine die was put to the Honourable Senate and agreed in the

*affirmative without division and Mr. PRESIDENT
adjourned the Sitting accordingly.*

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EDITORIAL NOTES — NOT PART OF THE REPORT

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

EDITORIAL QUERIES

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

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

Q2. Opening. The convening sentence reads ‘Parliament Building on Friday, The February 4, 2011 at 12:00 noon.’ Printed as in the source.

Q3. Order No. 1, Senator the Hon. H. LaV. Benn, *take-slips* ‘5.52 p.m.’ to ‘28:40’. In the middle of Senator Benn’s speech on the sugar bond, about 1,450 words (from ‘Mr. President, some are without land’ to ‘compensate the owner for the land’, including points of order by Senator K. D. Symmonds and the President’s caution about the words ‘intellectually dishonest’) concern land at Haggatt Hall and Senator Bradshaw’s remarks on it. The same passage, word for word, appears in the report of the Sitting of 2nd March, 2011 (*take-slips* S:No.41 (28) and S/A41/5:28:40), where the Haggatt Hall Resolution was debated; it appears to have been placed in this file in error. It is printed here as in the source. Please confirm.

Q4. Order No. 3, Senator R. A. Hunte. After Mr. President’s ruling that Clauses may not be examined on second reading, the continuation of Senator Hunte’s speech (about 430 words, beginning ‘Mr. President, it was only a reference’) carries the label ‘Mr. PRESIDENT’. The passage is Senator Hunte’s. Printed as in the source.

Q5. Order No. 3, second reading. Senator the Hon. Miss M. P. O. McClean moves that the Bill be read a second time, and the next line records the Senate going into Committee; no question on the second reading is recorded. Printed as in the source.

Q6. Order No. 1, Senator D. W. Boyce. On a point of order during Senator Dr. F. L. Chandler’s speech, Senator Boyce says ‘Senator Francis is inadvertently misleading the Chamber’, apparently referring to Senator Chandler. Printed as in the source.

Q7. Order No. 2, Senator S. J. O. Bradshaw. Senator Bradshaw, speaking after the Leader of the Senate, begins ‘I rise on this occasion with respect to moving the passing of a Resolution’, though the Resolution was moved by Senator McClean. Later, after a *take-slip* dated ‘Wednesday, February 4, 2011’, her speech resumes mid-sentence (‘... the foundation of most projects’). Printed as in the source.

Q8. Take-slips. Some *take-slip* notes appear as ordinary text in the source: ‘S:No:A40 (37)7.46 p.m.’, ‘S:No:A40 (42)8.30 p.m.’ after the adjournment, and ‘(5:34)’ within Senator K. D. Symmonds’s point of order. Printed as in the source.

Q9. Speech labels. Some names appear in more than one form: ‘SENATOR the HON. MISS M.P.A. McCLEAN’ once for Senator M. P. O. McClean; ‘Mr. K. D. SYMMONDS’ as well as ‘Senator K. D. SYMMONDS’ and ‘Senator KERRIE D. SYMMONDS’; and ‘Senator Mrs. IRENE SANDIFORD-GARDNER’, whom the Leader calls ‘Senator Sandiford-Garner’. Printed as in the source.

DEBATE SUMMARY

(Editorial summary — not part of the record.)

The Senate met in the Senate Chamber on Friday, 4th February, 2011 at 12.00 noon, with the President, His Honour Senator Dr. Branford M. Tait, in the Chair; prayers were led by Rev. Father Errington Massiah. The President announced excuses for Senators Husbands and Trotman, Senator Trotman being excused for two periods in February and March to perform duties with the International Labour Organisation. The Leader of the Senate, Senator the Hon. Miss M. P. O. McClean, laid the Annual Report of the Grantley Adams International Airport Inc. for 2008-2009; Standing Order 45(2) was suspended and the Transnational Organized Crime (Prevention and Control) Bill, 2011 was read a first time.

Under Order No. 3, Senator McClean said the Bill gave effect to the Convention Against Transnational Organised Crime, signed in New York in November 2000, and its three Protocols on trafficking in persons, especially women and children, the smuggling of migrants, and the illicit manufacture of and trafficking in firearms. She spoke of exotic clubs and dancers and of people brought in as agricultural workers who then disappeared. Senator K. D. Symmonds supported the Bill and raised pornography; Senator Mrs. Sandiford-Garner, Senator R. O. Marville, who welcomed the seizure of criminal assets and compensation for victims, Senator A. R. Worrell, Senator R. A. Hunte and Senator Rev. Dr. D. L. Durant also supported it, the President reminding Senator Hunte that Clauses were not to be examined on second reading. Senator McClean replied that legislation alone does not cure evils, and the Bill passed through Committee, Her Honour Senator Miss K. F. Ifill in the Chair, and its remaining stages.

Under Order No. 1, Senator McClean moved the Resolution approving the Minister of Finance's guarantee of a \$161 000 000 bond issue by the Barbados Agricultural Management Co. Ltd., by way of a loan from the Barbados National Bank Finance and Trust Corporation, to finance the sugar industry. She explained that it covered past working capital, recalled the company's history since 1994, and spoke of the potential of fuel cane and specialty sugars. Senator Symmonds did not oppose the substance but questioned the Government's direction, recalling that by 2007 test fields of fuel cane were under production; the President ruled that the fishing agreement could not be discussed. Senator Dr. F. L. Chandler opposed taxpayers paying for BAMC's inefficiency and called it top-heavy; Senator D. W. Boyce said the multipurpose factory idea had not been abandoned.

Senator Marville and Senator the Hon. H. LaV. Benn followed, Senator Benn calling for more sugar cane to be grown for molasses and other by-products and comparing

Barbados's output of about 30 thousand tonnes with Brazil's 475 million tonnes. After a short suspension, Senator J. Ince defended the bond as standard procedure; Senator Hunte recalled the sugar workers' fund; and Senator Durant urged agricultural cooperation in the region. Senator McClean replied, mentioning efforts for a branded Barbados rum, and the Resolution was agreed to.

Under Order No. 2, Senator McClean moved the Resolution under Section 5 of the Land Acquisition Act, Cap. 228, for the compulsory acquisition of land at Mason Hall Street and Lakes Folly, St. Michael, for housing development, arguing that residential accommodation was needed to revive Bridgetown. Senator S. J. O. Bradshaw agreed in principle but asked that plans be supplied to Senators and that cost overruns such as those at Warrens be avoided, and was guided by the President when she raised Lower Burney. Senator Worrell supported the Resolution. Senator McClean replied and the Resolution was agreed to. The Senate was then adjourned sine die.