
THE SENATE DEBATES

(UNOFFICIAL REPORT)

PARLIAMENT 2013 – 2018

THE SENATE

Wednesday, December 14, 2016

Senator J. INCE: ...from the aspect of world prices, not only a challenge from the aspect of the capital cost of production but a challenge that goes back as far as 1649 because the transition of our sugar industry took place in 1640 when we were moving from tobacco and cotton. As that transition took place where we were moving most of our lands that were once into cotton and tobacco into sugar, by 1649 sugar became our main exporter and our main foreign exchange earner.

Mr. Deputy President, I am going to give you a historical background because the challenges within the sugar industry can be related back to the 1640s when those changes were made. As we have it in 2016 those challenges still exist. In fact, some of those challenges not only exist in Barbados but throughout the Caribbean where we have witnessed some countries literally stopping with the production of sugar altogether.

Mr. Deputy President, 60 per cent of the lands was planted in sugar and 90 per cent was the total export and as a result of this activity Barbados was branded as a place of great wealth, fame and stature, so if you were a plantation owner in Barbados you were seen as a person having great wealth, fame and fortune.

Mr. Deputy President, between the years 1675 and 1700 building up to what we would call the sugar industry of Barbados between 7 000 and 12 000 tonnes of sugar were produced and during that period we had 26 sugar factories in operation. This island called Barbados of 166 square miles was the dominant figure in the Caribbean region as far as sugar production was concerned and it was seen as the place of the rich, the famous and the powerful and those persons of stature.

By 1720, Mr. Deputy President, the sugar industry in Barbados was no longer that commanding industry.

Changes started to take place and the reason for that is that the Leeward Islands and Jamaica surpassed Barbados. As I said, Barbados dominated from the 1640s up to the 1720s and we were seeing significant changes. We also had the European Union and the Member States within the European Union with which Barbados had to compete. By the year 1800 those 26 factories were down to 10 with falling prices and competition. We are now into 2016 and we have one factory currently in operation and that is Portvale Sugar Factory.

Mr. Deputy President, I said all of that to say that the reality is that the challenges within the industry... Despite all of the indicators that sugar as a commodity was being challenged by other sweeteners and the price of the sugar was declining the strategies and the management style within the industry remained the same, capitalised but yet labour intensive. It was capitalised but innovation and technology were absent. When I refer to the management structure I am making reference to where the sugar plantation was passed from father to son. It had nothing to do with the ability to manage a plantation but it was passed from father to son to nephew to grandson and as prices plummeted the Government of the day continued to subsidise the sugar industry.

Mr. Deputy President, this is not the first time that the Government is taking an initiative to subsidise the sugar industry. Sugar is critical to Barbados, there is no doubt about that. If we look at crop rotation and also the contribution of sugar and molasses to our rum industry and our sugar industry is threatened, it means, Mr. Deputy President, that our rum industry, that is a by-product of the sugar industry, would also be threatened.

Mr. Deputy President, as we examine the happenings within the World Trade Organisation, it is critical and important that we continue to put all of the necessary measures in place to ensure that we have a viable cane industry. Mr. Deputy President, I stress the word cane industry instead of sugar industry because sugar is a traded

commodity and once you have a traded commodity that trades on the Exchange...

As I look at the whole aspect of sugar, Madam President, and as you begin to do your research... The Barbados sugar is branded. If you go on the international market, for example, what we call the London International Financial Futures and Options Exchange (LIFFE), we call it LIFE, white sugar is traded. Barbados raw sugar, brown sugar, which is traded on the New York Exchange, the Intercontinental Exchange on the International Trading Board, and we call it ICE, is branded under what we call Contract 11. You call it Contract 11 because of the quality. Now, you have raw sugar that includes Barbados sugar being traded on a New York Stock Exchange but yet we have never seen a cane ground in New York City.

What I am saying, Mr. Deputy President, is that the changes within the industry should have been recognised and strategies should have been implemented to protect what we call our brand but it never happened and then we never moved away from commodity sugar to what we call a sugar cane industry utilising the by-products of sugar and having what we would call a sugar cane industry that is viable to all those involved in the production of sugar. As a result, Mr. Deputy President, we have seen continuous declines not only in price but also in the tonnage.

Mr. Deputy President, I have always stated that to protect our country the Government of Barbados is 95 per cent social obligation and 5 per cent profit. On the other hand, the private sector is 95 per cent profit and 5 per cent social obligation and that is why Government's social obligation and the protection of the industry is critical because when we look at all of the other things that tie into sugar, when we look at the employment within the sugar industry and when we look at the linkages between the sugar industry and tourism and between the sugar industry and agriculture. Madam Deputy Speaker, it is sad that at this stage there are so many of our sugar lands that are lying idle, that has contributed significantly to the flooding because the water now has nowhere to go because the wells are not cleaned, the lands are all busy and so that before where the water would run from what I would call the natural collection areas into the well and into the aquifers we do not have that.

Mr. Deputy President, the situation with the Barbados Sugar Industry is that in 1971 -- and these are the historical facts -- we produced 135 000 tonnes of sugar. By 1976, the tonnage of sugar produced declined and we produced 102 000 tonnes. Therefore at 1971 we produced 135 000 tonnes and five years later, 1976, we produced 102 000 tonnes, although that 102 000 tonnes, when we looked at the economic implications, was 5 per cent higher than in 1974.

Mr. Deputy President, here we are not only with the tonnage declined but we also had an impact and at this time sugar was a main contributor to the economy of Barbados. In 1971 it contributed \$24 million when compared to \$27 million in 1970. The Gross Domestic Product from sugar, however, declined by 11.4 per cent and the price of sugar on the London Daily Market the previous year was £120 per tonnage and by 1976 it was \$107 per tonnage. In 1976 sugar production contributing to Gross Domestic Product fell to 6.6 per cent from a level of 14.7 per cent in 1975, so that a year previously the sugar contributed 14.5 per cent to Gross Domestic Product and by 1976, one year later, it fell to 6.6 per cent.

Mr. Deputy President, that is why I said that the challenges within the industry started way back from as far as the 1800s when we reduced the number of factories from 26 down to 10, from the 1800s to 2016. Mr. Deputy President, despite all the studies, despite all the indicators there has been no significant restructuring as far as the industry was concerned.

Mr. Deputy President, however, history would also show that between the period 1991 to 1994 the Democratic Labour Party was in office administering the management of this economy and that Mr. Lloyd Erskine Sandiford, now Sir Lloyd, was the Right Honourable Prime Minister and the Honourable Member would have taken the initiative to restructure the sugar industry between those years, because the Barbados Labour Party came to office in October, 1994. Mr. Deputy President, as a result of those initiatives there was a 6 per cent growth in the sugar industry.

Mr. Deputy President, there is a school of thought that Government should have taken those sugar lands that were owned by private individuals who were indebted to the Barbados National Bank at the time, Government should have taken control and managed the sugar industry in a way where it could have developed a cane industry and at that time developed all of the byproducts that you would have needed when you look at the whole idea of energy, animal feeds and everything else that goes with it.

Mr. Deputy President, there are times when decisions are to be made as far as managing a sector is concerned and those decisions are not the best as far as being favourable is concerned, but we make decisions in the interest of the country. Mr. Deputy President, there are persons who would criticise. Some of the very things I am now hearing that speak to the sugar industry of Barbados are some of the same voices that I heard then. All that happen is that they were a lot younger, but the voices you are hearing now who would say to you who had all the solutions to the sugar industry were the voices I heard then and nothing has ever happen.

Mr. Deputy President, I will give you an example, that is why I say sometimes that you have to make decisions and that although persons may not see them as being favourable, we have to make them in the interest of the country. Sir, in 2000 Hayman's Sugar Factory produced 538 tonnes. By 2006, it fell to 348 tonnes. There was a constant decline in the tonnage of sugar that it produced, that is why I said the voices that you heard then are the same voices I am hearing now who would want to say to Government which roads Government should go in relation to the sugar industry. These are the same people who were around then that are around now. Mr. Deputy President, they would have seen the decline. Some of them worked in the industry. Some of them were the owners of plantations. Some of them sat on Board of plantations, yet when we look at the end result and at the strategic management that could have taken place, we see that nothing happened.

Mr. Deputy President, in 2000 the tonnage of sugar produced was 58.4 tonnes. By 2006, that fell to 33.7 tonnes. That is why I say it is important that we understand the historical nature of the challenges, because there are those who would want us to believe that this Democratic Labour Party has no answer for the sugar industry. They would want the people of Barbados to believe that the problems we are now encountering have happened prior to 2008 that is why I am taking my time to give the historical perspective of the sugar industry because this initiative to restructure and diversify a sector that is critical is now being undertaken by the Democratic Labour Party. We took the initiative to replace the molasses tanks in the Port, that is also critical to rum production, despite being criticised about the cost.

Mr. Deputy President, we were heavily criticised about the cost but let us step and think what would have happened this Administration had allowed those molasses tanks in the Port to fall apart. Let us think about what would have happened to the rum industry in Barbados. Sir, that is why I say that sometimes making decisions they might not be favourable to those persons who would want to see it that way but when it comes to the protection of the country and to the protection of a vital sector it is important that those decisions are made. What this Administration is proposing to do is to develop that cane industry and, as I said, to look at all of the byproducts of sugar cane; making the sugar cane industry viable so that it would then be attractive to many of those persons who would want to enter sugar cane production. Mr. Deputy President, I have the experience of not only working in a cane field but I also have the experience of cutting canes and loading a cane truck. Once you live in the countryside, some families normally would have at least about an acre or two; so those who lived in the areas of St. George, St. Andrew, St. Lucy and St. John would know what I am talking about. Most of the time you learnt to drive by driving the cane truck, because in those days your parents could not afford to pay

to go to lessons for a driver's licence, so the owner of the truck would teach you how to drive the truck but you had to drive it with the door open, Mr. Deputy President. The reason for that was that if the truck was going to overturn, you had to jump out. That is how, as a youngster, I learnt to drive. I can call his name because he has gone to the Great Beyond: Mr. McNeil. I learnt to drive Mr. McNeil's old Bedford. At that time, the steering was hard; a big, hard steering with a long stick shift almost up to your shoulder blade. Then you tied back the door; there was a string on the door so that when you began to drive through the trenches of the ground, you would tie the door back in case, as I said, the truck began to overturn and you had to jump out. That was how we learnt to drive in those days.

Then you learnt to do what I call driving the mule-cart. I always said if you cannot drive a mule-cart, you cannot drive. You drove the mule-carts carrying canes to the factory. My father was a factory worker but he was also a small cane farmer, and many Barbadians built their lives around sugar cane production at the time; so did this country. Mr. Deputy President, this is why it is critical that we not idly sit by and allow the sugar sector to just fall apart or fall away. When we examine what has happened in the Caribbean region, countries similar to Barbados such as Jamaica had their fair share of challenges within the sugar sector; and may I say more so than Barbados? They had tremendous challenges, but the Government of Jamaica at the time did not throw their hands in the air and say, "We are going to allow the sugar industry to fall apart." No. What Prime Minister Bruce Golding did at the time was to allow foreign direct investment into the industry through China to the tune of US\$166 million, and the Chinese bought three major sugar estates. Not only that; the Jamaica Government carried out what we call a strategic plan for the sugar industry of that country, and now that industry is showing positive signs. They recognised how critical the sugar industry was to the Jamaican economy.

Let us look at Brazil. Brazil is currently the largest sugar producer in the world, yet Brazil also had its challenges. Mr. Deputy President, while I was reviewing the financial side of the industry and the economic impact, what I realised was that all of these countries and the sugar sector had something in common; it was a debt problem. At some point in time, each government had to subsidise the industry, so as far as Barbados is concerned this is not anything new. I can remember back then in 1997, the Government of the day which was the Barbados Labour Party subsidised the sugar industry through the National Insurance Scheme (NIS). The NIS purchased the bonds and the proceeds of that bond purchase went to financing the sugar industry. Mr. Deputy President, what I also noted, and I smiled, was that a major bank in Barbados, despite all the benefits that the bank's country would have gained from the sugar industry, never once financed or helped to finance the sugar industry of Barbados. Mr. Deputy

President, as I went through the information, I smiled. Mr. Deputy President, at no time -- the bank is not here in Barbados and I can mention it because it is a fact -- did Barclays Bank which was at the time a major entity in Barbados ever at once gave Government one penny, despite Government approaching that bank for help with the sugar industry. In fact, they never had deposits from Government from the NIS until they established BarFinCor, but that is something else we will discuss a little later. The fact is that here you had Barbados which was considered 'Little Britain', where we had tobacco, cotton and sugar, and our sugar was being exported to Britain; yet when the sugar industry needed the financing, Barclays Bank refused to finance the sugar industry of Barbados; at the time when it needed it. Then in 1997 most of that financing came out of Citicorp, Trinidad. I can speak to these things. The facts are there.

What I am saying is that the challenges existed, and despite being confronted with those challenges, the Government at the time persisted. Both Governments -- the Barbados Labour Party and the Democratic Labour Party -- took initiatives to ensure that the sugar industry remained viable. Mr. Deputy President, the management of the sugar industry is not a political issue. It is an issue that both parties, as I said, grappled with going back to the 1970s. Then there was the whole idea of changes within the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) group as well as the European Union (EU).

As I said before, when you look at Brazil -- I am doing this to make the correlation between the similarities in the industry -- as a major producer producing 623 905 000 tons of sugar, despite all of that Brazil encountered a debt of US\$163.4 million. It was challenged with a debt, but the administration in Brazil did not say, "We are going to close the industry." Mr. Deputy President, what they did was to carry out a strategic plan, because by 1970 Brazil had lost the foothold or the power base that it had as far as the production of sugar was concerned. When we go next door to Trinidad, that country said, "No, we are going to close. We are going to wipe out the sugar industry. We are finished." The Prime Minister of St. Kitts-Nevis, Dr. Denzil Douglas, says he is not going to allow the sugar industry to destroy the economy of St. Kitts, and they phased out the sugar industry. As a result of Trinidad making that decision, they now have to import 70 000 tonnes of sugar per year. Sometimes, Mr. Deputy President, you make decisions and then you sit back and say, wait a minute. They now have to import 70 000 tonnes of sugar per year, whereas Jamaica stuck with it and have now seen an increase in production, and is currently meeting all of the local demand for sugar. That is what we are looking at in Barbados. That is why we are looking at restructuring the industry. If you meet the local demand for sugar, I am of the opinion that once we meet our local demands for sugar, then there would be no need to import sugar into

Barbados. I am confident Barbadians would pay the premium price for their sugar. Barbadians love the local sugar. I am confident about that, Mr. Deputy President.

Sir, not only that, we can now protect our rum industry because the structure of the sugar industry in Barbados, where there are some factories that produce nothing but molasses and there were those factories that produced sugar. One such factory I can remember is Four Square. Four Square produces molasses and syrup, Carrington produced the sugar. I think Guinea was also one that produced molasses and syrup, and Guinea specialized. Sir, I can remember we would walk to Guinea factory to get what you would call ... Senator Fraser would know about that. You would go the factory to get a hard something called a sugar cake. Senator Boyce would know about that. You boiled the syrup and when it becomes hard, it looks like a sugar cake. You would walk to the factory to get it. Sir, when I look at it, that could easily be converted into a candy. We never made use of it, but we as children would go to the factory to get this. That was part of it.

We have a culture in Barbados. We know about the days of the cracked liquor. We know about the days of the syrup with some lime and you make a good swank. That is Barbadian. That is what we know and that is what we understand. So it is critical and important that we do these things, not because we want to say to other persons we have a better initiative. No, it is about Barbados. It is about what we want to do. So this borrowing of \$73 million, Sir, as I said, is not only to diversify and upgrade, but also part of the whole idea of diversifying the sugar industry. Not only diversifying but establishing those critical links between sugar, agriculture, tourism and manufacturing.

Mr. Deputy President, we speak to the EU, and the EU as far as I am concerned, never did the Caribbean a favour as far as our sugar is concerned, never did the Caribbean a favour. In fact, come September 30, 2017, the quotas within the EU are going to be abolished under the WTO, 2017. When you look at the structure of the EU, part of that was the demise of the sugar industry in the Caribbean. It was part of the demise of the sugar industry, Mr. Deputy President, in the Caribbean. So the European Union never did us a favour. The EU had protectionist policies in place since 1968. In 1968 the EU had those policies in place. Think about 1968 to 2017, to protect their own. So the quotas we were given was just a gesture of wanting to be kind, appearing to be kind. When we look at the tariff quotas of the EU, when we look at the prohibited duties, when we look at the open quotas, the EU set open quotas. Tell me how many producers in the Caribbean, outside of Brazil, that could have met an open quota of 289 977 tonnes to any country? That is what the EU said, we are going to give you a quota, 289 977 tonnes for any country and we are going to give you the quota for 7 years. Who could meet that quota?

There are others within the EU regulations, 400 000 tonnes of sugar imports, another quota set by the EU, but we are going to give you duty free. I ask the question, who in the Caribbean region could have met a quota of 400 000 tonnes? These were some of the things within the EU that contributed, along with the decline in the high rising cost.

Mr. Deputy President I support the borrowing of this \$73 million. As I said, it is a borrowing for the protection of the industry. It is set on the principle of diversification, restructuring and diversifying the industry. It is set on the principal of a short, medium and long-term when we look at developing a cane industry and not a sugar cane industry, and there is a difference. A cane industry and not a sugar cane, because sugar is a commodity and what we want to do is to have a commodity that is well branded, but we also need the by-products and also how you can generate energy. That is why we are in the process of looking at a multipurpose facility. If we look at the borrowings you will see that some of that borrowings, you would see that some of that money is for the whole idea of capital infrastructure, what we call capital development.

Mr. Deputy President, persons may ask about the terms and conditions. I am going to go through the terms and conditions for those who would have questions. What we call the terms sheet.

The Issuer, Barbados Agricultural Management Company Limited. The Guarantor is the Government of Barbados. The issue is a fixed rate non-callable bond. What do you mean by that? It means the rate remains fixed for the duration of the bond to maturity date. In addition that bond cannot be called by the Government or by BAMC if they so desire. That is why it is a fixed rate non-callable bond.

On the other hand, unless there is something adverse the issuers just cannot call it either. So Ansa Merchant Bank just cannot get up one morning and decide they are going to recall the bond, fixed rate non recallable. The face amount -- we all know it is \$73 million, and that is in the Resolution. There are two classes. You have a Series A, \$32 million. You have a Class A, Series 2, \$22 500, then you also have a Class B Barbados \$18.5 million. If you had to total the \$32 million that is Class Series 1, \$22.5 million and \$18.5 million you will get \$73.0 million.

The currency is Barbados currency. The use of the proceeds are outlined in the Resolution, but here in the term sheet it speaks to provide funding the BAMC for current expenses and costs related to Barbados Cane Industry Support Project. The person who would underwrite the bond, who would ensure that all of the risk management criteria are met, Ansa Merchant Bank. The placement agent -- when we speak of placement agent Ansa McCal would look at their portfolio and decide

whether institutions would want a share of the plan. There are individuals who purchased large tranches of the bond. So the placement agent -- whether they are going place it with pension funds -- where one Government or a central of the area may need to purchase for investment purchases, and then you have the coupon. Class A 106, 6.75 % per annum for 3 years; Class A, 1B, 6.50% for 3 years; Class A, 206, at 6.75% per annum for the period February 12, 2018, then you have Class A, 2B, 6.50% for the period February 12, 2018. Then you have Class A 2B, 6 at 6.50% for the period February 12, 2018. You have the Class B that is fixed at 8% per annum for eight years, that is the longer period. Why you have 8%, the longer you go the more risk you undertake. Why it is important that you have the bond in US dollars as well as Barbados, to create a currency hedge not only to create hedge, but there are persons who would also want to purchase the bond in US dollars. There are some pension funds, there are some individuals who may want to purchase in US dollars, critical and important.

Sir, when we look at the overall debt portfolio, when we speak to debt management it is important that you sometimes create these balances to make it not only attractive to Barbadians but also to international investors. As I said, one of the critical things is to create that currency hedge.

The term to maturity of 3 years, as I said before, the basis of calculating the interest rate is 360. You call it 30th 360th. The reason why you say 30/360th is that sometimes within a year you may have what we call a leap year. Some weekends, depends on how you calculate it, you could have 2, 3, 4 or 5 mumbles within a month, so 30 360th is the calculation method you use mostly for bonds. If you want to break it down into simple terms, it is just 1/12 when you speak of calculation.

It issue price -- we speak to these things when we look at the different classes. Persons may want to ask the question, when you look at your term sheet, how did he arrive at the issue price? There are some steps where you can arrive at the issue price. It is a bond. It has a face value. We know what the face value is. We know when the interest rates that are going to be paid. The interest rates are paid at the bottom of 3 or 8 years are really annuity payments, similar to annuity payments.

Mr. Deputy President, not to be technical, we used something called a present value table. You would look at the cash flows of the interest to the bonds and you would go 3 years, then you would pin the results of those 3 years to the inception date of the bond. I am making it simple. The bond that is 8 years you would use what is called present value cash flows. You would ask what the value of this bond is 8 years from now. If I had to take this money and spend it 8 years from now, what is the total if I had to

spend it in 2016? That is what you call the present value tables. You would take the present value of the interest rate, as well as the present value of the bond and you arrive at an issue price. That is what you call method, the method of calculating the issue price.

Principal and interest payment -- why the varying interest rates you would have within the series, there are some bonds that carry 6.75 % and there are some that are carrying 6.50%. The question that may be asked is, why is it that some bond holders are getting 6.75% and others are getting 6.50%? If you go the principal and interest payments, it is spelt out there. It would say no principal payment during the tenure of Class A bond. During the life of the Class A bonds that are 3 years, you are not going to get any interest payment. So, if you are not going to get any principal payment but you are going to get interest, it means you are taking more risk that the individual who is getting paid principal and interest semiannually. As a result of the risk than one bond holder is undertaking, you are going to give him a little something extra. In simple terms, if the bond holder of A is working a little harder that bond holder is going to get an additional scoop of rice, or an additional scoop of potato, in simple terms.

Mr. Deputy President, all of the other categories in here Register and Payment Agent Trustee, all of these other things are simple and straightforward. The arranging fee, the covenant and the governing laws are standard. These are standard. There are self-explanatory standards as far as the bond issue is concerned. We are looking at a Government -- it speaks to a letter of comfort now replaced by a Government guarantee and if there are any fundamental changes. Those are standard, Mr. Deputy President.

As I said before, I support the borrowing of the \$73 million. It is for the restructuring and diversifying the industry, looking at the short, medium and long-term development, not only protecting our rum industry but also having a development road map for Barbados as far as our sectors are concerned, tourism, agriculture and sugar. With those roads, Mr. Deputy President, I am obliged to you.

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Senator Sir Dr. Henry Fraser.

SENATOR Sir Dr. Henry Fraser: Thank you, Mr. Deputy President. Like Senator Ince, I too am a country boy. So I grew up among the sugar cane. In fact my mother in her spare time was a small farmer and part of the rented plot from Pool Plantation, which, of course, is now in weed and cow itch. Part of that rented plot was grown in sugar. So I too like Senator Ince had the experience but we left that property at the age of 11 when my father's job as Broker and Treasurer called for the relocation of his office. So I could not be a cane grower when I got older than 11

and at 11 I could not do very much with it, but in the cut canes we used to fly our kites and we learnt as children to run across the cane field chasing the kite which got away, and you had to know how to run across the cane field so that you would not cut your feet on the cut stumps of the ratoons.

Mr. Deputy President, I am not a financial wizard and I am not going to say much or anything indeed about the details the bond about which Senator Ince's expertise has so nicely expounded. I would like to know a little bit of the business plan for this loan and I would like to add a little bit of the context, because mostly we do not appreciate, as Senator Ince said, with the latitudes under which the sugar industry has operated over the 350-odd years, and they really have been quite enormous because there have been serious periods

of drought when we had several drought years in succession, not like the modest droughts of the recent 30 years, occasional droughts of one year at a time, but periods when there were 3 or 4 successive years of droughts and the sugar output fell dramatically by more than 50%. Then there were disease. Disease has riddled the sugar crops across the Caribbean and it was in fact our favoured \$2 bill portrait man, J.R. Bovell, who begun the cane breeding process resulting out of a discovery by a sugar worker on a plantation of a seedling which he said this has got to be a sugar cane seed, and that led to Barbados developing the first cane breeding experimental station in the world, followed by one in Singapore. The two have always been in some degree of completion, but it was the cane breeding station -- I give tremendous credit to the operation of that station of over 130 years which has produced the resistance varieties which have been able to keep Barbados and other Caribbean countries in sugar industry production for a long time because of their ability to breed sugar cane in an intelligent and scientific way. These are important elements, without the disease. Finally, of course, in the 1980s and 1990s the sugar in France which almost destroyed the sugar industry in the Caribbean, and as a result of which most of the plantations in the Caribbean and certainly in Barbados changed hands with many of the people who have been ...

Sequence 6

INSERT S7 JULIETTE

Wednesday, December 14, 2016

Senator Prof. Emeritus Sir Henry FRASER: Where is your business plan? What do you want this money for us from? What are you going to do with it? Mr. Deputy President, I am not seeing that in this Resolution and from my attempts to follow the sugar industry I am not exactly clear what this \$73 million has been spent on or will be

spent on. A general reference was made, a point was made, but I am not sure if this is to cover losses or to cover development or exactly how that would go.

Mr. Deputy President, my visit to the Portvale Factory was an interesting one. I had a lot of questions when I did that a few months ago while the crop was operating. I cannot say as a businessman but if I were a businessman I would want to see the business plan as to where the money is going, if any of it has gone and what are the details. I think that is important for management because there is no question that the decline of agriculture in Barbados and the decline of the sugar industry do not suggest that it has been efficiently managed and therefore some degree of transparency, I think, would be of interest to all Barbadians.

Mr. Deputy President, we have been losing money. Agriculture is recognised as being possibly on its last legs and I would certainly hate to see the River Tamarind and the other bush of Barbados reach the mountainous forested areas of St. Kitts. On my last visit to St. Kitts just a couple of years ago, it was a devastating scene where all of the former agricultural land was now in forest and because of the higher rainfall of St. Kitts it was deep and high forested. St. Kitts looked almost as it must have looked to Columbus when he arrived in the West Indies at that time and I do not think that is what we would like to see in Barbados. Agriculture does need to be redeveloped and I might almost say resettle by our new Barbados. As a celebration of our Golden Jubilee I would love to see some serious effort put into the redevelopment of our agricultural lands and of our agricultural industry.

Thank you, Mr. Deputy President.

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Senator Boyce.

Senator the Hon. D. W. BOYCE: Thank you, Mr. Deputy President. I just want to spend a few minutes on this Resolution first to say that I support very much the Resolution and then maybe to spend a few minutes to make some clarifications which may be useful. Both parties that have formed the administration of this country have for several years put considerable amounts of financial resources behind the agricultural industry. We can go back to what happened pre 1992 with the amount of money that was lent to the sugar cane industry from what was then the Barbados National Bank and before that from the other institution that was there and then the restructuring which took place in the early 90s. Since then because of the vagaries of price and disease and weather and of course the low yields that we have been experiencing for several years in the sugar cane industry both parties through the Government have had to subsidise the sugar cane industry in very large amounts because we directed subsidies into the farmers and so on for the price of canes but then the

Government has had over the years to provide subsidies just for the operation of the factory.

Beyond that, the Government has had to provide funds on an annual basis to service the debt of the Barbados Agricultural Management Company Limited and that money has always been used for the sugar industry. Probably about five or six years ago I did some rough numbers and at the time it was suggested to me that the annual subsidy to the industry was upwards of \$80 million a year when you consider the different schemes, the debt service and so on, so it is not particularly accurate to say that the Government has not put resources behind the sugar industry in the country. All I could say it has not put all of resources we had behind the agricultural sector generally speaking.

I know that within the Ministry of Agriculture and Water Resource Management we have got a very large cadre of very well qualified agriculturalists and very well qualified technicians and the Government has always found opportunity to place those very trained persons in positions in that industry. Mr. Deputy President, I wanted to just give that little clarification because sometimes we take the view that because we are not making money in agriculture that the Government is not supporting it, but the Government has supported it very, very significantly for all those years. I happened to have been part of the team that would have helped with the restructuring back in the early 90s and so I know the numbers we are talking about in that matter.

Mr. Deputy President, I also wish to draw attention to the purpose of this loan which is to help partly to meet some of the operating costs and partly to help with what is called the sugar industry support project. Mr. Deputy President, that project has as one of its objectives to bring back lands that used to be in agriculture that are no longer in agriculture back into gainful production. That project would address the concerns Senator Fraser has raised about the lands having gone out of agriculture and the need to bring those lands back into agriculture. It is important that the lands come back into agriculture and perhaps particularly into sugar cane because of the ecological benefits of having the sugar cane and because we have found over the years that when you have a good sugar cane industry you also have a good food production sector because of the rotation aspects and once you rotate the cane then you put in the food to keep the food supply going. Mr. Deputy President, this project will help to deal with that, to bring the lands back into production both for the sugar cane and for food production in the rotation process.

Another thing that this project will do will seek to raise the yields in the sugar cane industry by applying better technology, better fertilisation regimes and so on that we will get those yields back up to the kinds of levels that we would have known about in the early 60s and in the

50s, so it is not only to bring lands back into production for sugar cane but it raises the yield for sugar cane and raises the land and gives us the opportunity to produce more food to make the country more self-sufficient in food and therefore more resilient to food prices on the world market and to do all sorts of things.

Mr. Deputy President, the matter of the lands that CLICO owns will obviously get dealt with as part of this project when the courts have finalised their decisions in respect of the CLICO matter, and therefore I will not say anything more about that.

Mr. Deputy President, it is interesting what the owners at St. Nicholas Abbey are doing in terms of integrating sugar cane production with rum, and one wishes that more of the private sector would do that. There is now a very clear separation in Barbados, except for the St. Nicolas people, between those who grow sugar cane and those who use the syrup from the molasses in the sugar cane production.

We wish that more private persons would get involved in some of this industry. Mr. Deputy President, part of what this project also does is to enable us to produce electricity all day long, year round from the biomass for the purpose of running generator, so that we can generate more electricity, once again, to save foreign exchange and also to produce a product for which there is a constant and ongoing demand and therefore to make the industry more financially viable.

Mr. Deputy President, that is important that we do that and therefore we have to move the industry from just exporting to making sure that we have enough sugar locally for which we will get a better price than simply exporting. Mr. Deputy President, in all I think this is a very good project. It is a project that has had its genesis about 10 years ago. It is being refined, we have had to look at it, to revise it here and there to make sure that it could fit into something that we could handle and therefore I think it is a very good project for us to pursue. It will also help us to be able to restructure the economy, to restructure some of our production facilities particularly when in relation to rum and to electricity generation in the country, without the fossil fuel input into that.

Mr. Deputy President, I am delighted therefore to support this Resolution for this guarantee.

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Senator Adams, you have the Floor.

Senator Alwin A. ADAMS: Mr. Deputy President, last week I made the point that it was in our enlightened self-interest to support the Green Economy Scoping Study

and in relation to this Resolution I would like probably to use the same language.

Mr. Deputy President, the history of the sugar industry, as was outlined by Senator Ince, was a very expansive introduction and was very enlightening. Mr. Deputy President, apart from the fact that Senator Ince indicated that the sugar industry was the lifeblood of the Barbadian economy, the Honourable Member also mentioned the vagaries, vicissitudes and fortunes that it went through as a result of the world economy, the price of sugar and things of that rate. Mr. Deputy President, Barbados was indeed a very important sugar island and the economy of this country depended extremely heavily on it.

Mr. Deputy President, a lot has happened since those heady days and we are now in a position to make a decision in a way as to whether we would want to abandon the sugar industry or whether, in fact, we ought to support it. Mr. Deputy President, there are basically some kind-of rhetorical questions that we should have to ask ourselves. One question is, should we abandon agriculture? Mr. Deputy President, in abandoning the sugar industry we would, in a way, be turning our backs on agriculture.

Mr. Deputy President, I say that because the history of agriculture in Barbados has shown that when the sugar industry did well, the non-sugar part of agriculture, that is, the food part of agriculture also did well and that had to do with our food security. Therefore it will follow logically and in a practical way that if we were to abandon the industry at this stage, we might, in fact, be writing our death warrant. Mr. Deputy President, that is a very good reason for supporting this Resolution.

Mr. Deputy President, non-sugar agriculture has always been rotated around the sugar. That has a lot to do with the soils and the climate of Barbados, the soils are thin and alkaline and cannot withstand a lot of tillage without losing its substance. With sugar, we have a situation where because of the ratoon system, the sugar can, in fact, rotated with non-sugar crops, can produce the canes some three, four or five years in very good soil without having to plough it up again. It also naturally gives to the land the trash which gives it cover and therefore does not expose the thin soils to the vagaries of the rains, winds and so on and hence brings about erosion and the diminution of the substance of the soil.

Secondly, the concept of the aesthetics, in other words, should we abandon our countryside and allow it to run ruin, as my grandmother would say, with bush and as a result, as we are starting to see, we will no longer see the green leaves and the canes swaying gently in the breeze. I think that that obviously would be a retrograde step and hence we ought not to abandon the sugar industry.

Mr. Deputy President, in relation to employment and things of that nature, first we should consider food security. It would be foolhardy to make a decision that the bulk of our food should come from 'over and away' while at the same time we give up our lands to building of houses, golf courses and things of that nature. Therefore we feel that we would be in a good position to give our wholehearted support to this Resolution, whether we are large or small landowners, whether we are old people or young people or whether we are capitalists or members of the trade unions. I think that we ought to recognise that the demise of the sugar industry will be to the detriment of us all.

Mr. Deputy President, Senator Ince made a number of points about sugar production and I would just like to reinforce some of what the Honourable Member has said since I have some statistics here to back it up. It has been said that since 1932 the production of sugar exceeded 100 000 tonnes. It was below that before, but after 1932 there were only four years when sugar production in Barbados did not exceed 100 000 tons of sugar. That was in 1935 when there were 81 000 tons, 1940 when there were 97 000 tons, 1948 when there were 78 000 tons, and 1975 when there were 96 000 tons. That is an extremely good record, and indeed I ought to mention here that in 1957 and again in 1967 the tonnage of canes in Barbados exceeded 200 000 tons. We have obviously gone a long way from those halcyon days. Nonetheless, because of that and notwithstanding the fact that some of us did not benefit in the way that we felt we should have, the economy of Barbados and the population of Barbados did benefit in a very significant way from the industry, in the sense that if we did not have it, we wonder at the time what would have replaced it. I just want to reinforce that point in relation to the kind of input that we had from the sugar industry. For example, it was said that taking a household of four during the 1970s, there would have been about 30 000 people being supported directly by the sugar industry; people who were actually working in the fields and in the factories. Outside of that, you would have had people driving trucks, mechanics repairing trucks, carpenters, masons, and a whole set of kindred artisan work that would have directly and indirectly been a spinoff from the sugar industry. I wanted to reinforce that point which was ably made by Senator Ince in his introduction.

There was another point, too, which is of some importance, and it has to do with the byproduct of the sugar industry which, as was mentioned also by him, has a lot to do with the new sugar cane industry and the Bill that we are discussing. Even before that, we had the situation of rum, and the position with rum was that it is made from molasses. The good rum, indeed, is made from the best molasses; and unless we have the sugar cane industry, it follows that we will not have the molasses. Therefore, if we do not have the molasses, we cannot have the rum. The rum is a major growth industry in Barbados and last year, I

think it was, the now manager of Mount Gay indicated that there was a great demand for the rum -- Senator Sandiford-Garner would be pleased about this -- in all the major metropolitan centres in the world: Paris, Luxembourg, London, Russia and China. We really cannot supply enough to satisfy the demand for Barbadian rum. The point that we need to get back to in relation to the sugar is that the European Union (EU) and indeed other countries import these products from the point of view of the origin of the condiments in them, and if it has been found, for example, that we are not producing the molasses from which the rum is being made, it could in fact hamper the export of the rum, particularly to the EU. That is a very significant point, so we cannot rely on the importation of inferior molasses from elsewhere, which in fact would affect the quality of our well-known rum, and still expect to have the industry. The other point deals with Falernum. Again, it was last year when Sir David Seale indicated that Falernum is a unique Barbadian product. It is a phenomenon. It is not made anywhere else in the world, and because of the quality that it has and the fact that it is used in the mixture of drinks, corn-and-oil and so on, it means that all across the world again we have this demand for Barbadian Falernum. Hence, this is another significant point as to why we ought to support the sugar industry.

The new direction in which the industry is going also is looking at other aspects of the byproducts, and I would mention from memory the production of wax and something called lignin which is used to harden high-quality cement. I think it is only made from sugar, and in the new direction in which the industry is going, that would be one of the byproducts. Therefore, we believe that when we are discussing this matter that those things are of particular importance. There are some other byproducts, of course, such as the clean energy which we mentioned. Even before this notion of renewable energy, when Portvale factory was built down in St. James, one of the significant points in the building of that factory was the fact that it generated its own electricity from bagasse and, in fact, also sent some of that electricity to the national grid. This will be one of the factors of the new sugar industry, and therefore in our push for renewable energy that is an area which I think we also want to look at.

In relation to the Barbados Agricultural Management Company (BAMC), I do not remember exactly when it was set up but that does not matter too much; it has a mission statement which says in part that it should develop the agricultural industry through application and innovation of technology. I think we are going in that direction in a way. It also has been tasked with the marketing arrangements for the production of agricultural products in this country, obviously including sugar, and with creating opportunities for investment in the industry. In other words, if people are to invest in the industry, then it should be managed in such a way that investors would want to put their money there. I

think it was Senator Fraser who asked a question about that, and perhaps it ought to be looked into in the sense that we notice that the bank is asking the Government to guarantee the loan. The banks in Barbados are not making a loss -- they have been making profits and have been charging Barbadians exorbitant fees -- and we are wondering to what extent they are really supportive of industries such as our agricultural industry, in that they only have to invest the money if the Government gives the Guarantee.

1.07 p.m.

INSERT S11 JULIETTE

Wednesday, December 14, 2016

Senator the Hon. Miss M. P. O. McCLEAN: I do not propose, in my contribution to this Resolution to guarantee the sum of money to the BAMC, to speak for a long time but I felt it necessary as Minister of Foreign Trade to speak to something I hope did not confuse some persons who might have heard the contribution in respect to the European Union. I believe in his lead off Senator Ince might have made some suggestions which could be interpreted as us being abandoned by the European Union and therefore I think it necessary to set the record straight from where I sit, as I said, as Minister of Foreign Trade.

The critical point to be made is that in the process of liberalising trade and therefore eliminating preference arrangements between the European Union and members of the African Caribbean and Pacific countries (ACP) a number of measures were put in place to ensure that there was a cushion so to speak, and I would just want to highlight those. There is a programme called the Accompanying Measures for Sugar Protocol Countries. Similarly, there is one for banana and cotton but I would speak to the one relating to sugar. This would have followed the 2006 reform of the European Union sugar regime where of course as we know we used to have preferential treatment. The critical part of that was a programme designed to support the adaptation process for 18 countries within CARICOM. I could cite Barbados Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, St. Kitts and Nevis and Suriname and in Africa, Tanzania, Swaziland, Zambia and Uganda as examples. The intention was to give us some space to adapt to new market conditions and also to support efforts at economic diversification specifically, if I cite one significant initiative which has been highlighted in this Honourable Chamber from time to time, the Barbados Human Resource Development Programme which has allocated to Barbados 50 million Euros. I believe today that we would have been able to draw down 43 million Euros. Our Minister of Labour, Social Security and Human Resource Development colleague would have spoken to that on several occasions.

I would also want to flag that in relation to the sugar sector significant support has been given to what we call WIRSPA, West Indies Rum and Spirit Producers Association. They, of course, would be receiving funds under the EDF, the European Development Fund, which proceeded the first measure that I spoke about but which was intended to facilitate the transition as former colonies and later as major trading partners. In that programme I am happy to say that between 2012 and 2016 WIRSPA has been able to implement a project called the CARIFORUM Rum Sector Support Project which has two elements of importance to us here in Barbados and to other members of CARICOM and indeed CARIFORUM if you add the Dominican Republic. One element has to do with a marketing and communicating programme which is a campaign for the Authentic Caribbean Rum Mark which is supposed to ensure that our brands are promoted and highlighted, and that initiative provides technical collaboration and focus on improving quality and the application of best practices across the rum industries of member states.

I would also want to flag of course that in 2010 the organisation WIRSPA would have completed the implementation of a major programme which preceded the marketing and communications programme which was to modernise the industry generally providing upgrading technical support, and again Barbados would have capitalised on that. In fact, WIRSPA has suggested or stated rather that because of the initiative it would have stimulated some 108 million Euros investment in the rum industries across the region. I can tell you that the European Union has provided a total of 40 million Euros. That 40 million Euros is part of a larger sum of 58 million Euros and Barbados would have been a major beneficiary.

The last point I would want to make in relation to that is that many of us are familiar with the Caribbean Export and Development Agency (CEDA) or as we call it Caribbean Export. That agency is a unique agency within the region which is also working to help us to address the issue of the diversification of our economies given the loss of protection, in this case it is the protection of our sugar markets and in the case of the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) of bananas et cetera and so I would want to put that there.

In his absence, I would want however to suggest to the Honourable Senator Fraser that this Resolution and the moneys allocated to the Barbados Agricultural Marketing Corporation are done within the context of a strategic plan. The Honourable Senator made reference to his management experience or practice and I can tell you that you will not see a strategic plan attached to a Resolution but you certainly would have heard, if you follow the contributions of the Minister of Agriculture and Water Resource Management to discussions in the country what

he has articulated over and over again, the plans for the sector. Clearly, we are looking to revitalise an industry in a way that moves it away from sugar production to a sugar cane industry and I do not need to go through that. Mr. Deputy President, I thought it critical that I certainly put that information on the table lest I be considered lacking in my responsibility. As people would say, that worn old phrase, it would have been remiss of me if I had not made that contribution.

With that contribution I certainly want to support the contributions of others and acknowledge what Senator Ince has said in his opening comments as he led off this debate, and I therefore support this Resolution.

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Senator Watson.

Senator J. A. WATSON: Thank you, Mr. Deputy President. I just want to say a few words on this Resolution because the contributions so far have been so comprehensive that there is little that you could add, but I want to definitely support the Resolution. I think that it is a Resolution that Barbados needs. I think we need to support the sugar industry, there is no doubt about that in my mind. I have already recorded my support for agriculture and the idea that we should not destroy our sugar cane industry. It has a lot of benefits to Barbados. The money that this Resolution is seeking is to support the working capital of the Barbados Agricultural Marketing Corporation to support the sugar cane industry support project which I think is important if we are to get the idle lands back into production. Too much land in Barbados is lying idle right now and I think that anything that has to be done to get it back into production should be done. As far as I am concerned sugar cane has more to it than just an economic value. I think Senator Adams would have mentioned the greenery of the sugar cane. There is a beauty about the sugar cane fields in Barbados and there is a beauty of the hedgerows around those sugar cane fields, and I think that is extremely important because it is a characteristic that emphasizes the aesthetic value that Barbados needs for our tourist industry and from that point of view I think it is important just to have the sugar cane to begin with. There is a greenery that exists with the sugar cane but also at the time of maturity the sugar cane also puts out some arrows which themselves are very beautiful when they swing in the wind, they produce a kind of beauty that we would enjoy while driving along the countryside. Even when the sugar canes are cut, then we have the fields of trash in colours that vary in all types of earth tones that again gives a beauty in the country. Mr. Deputy President, from that point of view I think that sugar cane has that value and that it also has the economic value which is what we were discussing.

Mr. Deputy President, sugar cane has to be planted but before that, I think we used to have a cane breeding

research station in Barbados. I think it is very important that we continue to be the leaders in sugar cane production. We were known in the world when we started out to be the leaders in sugar production and we have no right to be at this present stage right now, we should have been farther ahead but like most other things we neglect maintenance and continuity of the things that we do.

Mr. Deputy President, there is a sugar cane I remembered going into St. Lucy at an old plantation owner. We went there to visit because he was getting on in age and so we thought that we would visit. I was amazed that when we were leaving and we told him that we wanted some canes, he took us to another type of soft cane that we use for sucking. Therefore there was a method in the way we produced canes in those days, apparently there were different breeds of canes and they were planted differently, so that the old plantations had a good way of making sugar cane growing effective in more than one way.

Mr. Deputy President, I am saying that because when we do our research it is to find out the best canes possible for us to plant, the kind of yields that we would get from that cane. Added to that, there is the question of fertilizer. I think one of the things that we have to make sure is that we get the best yield per acre. I am told that we get something like 20 to 25 tonnes of canes per acre now. There are countries, I am told, that get up to 40 and 50 tonnes per acre. I think that we probably would need to get to that kind of production.

Mr. Deputy President, at present we use mechanical harvesting and while it may be good there are still some downsides to it, mechanical harvesting cuts canes a lot faster than manually but at the same time it causes us to have to replant the canes at least every two years, whereas when that cane is hand cut it could go as long as five or sometimes six years without having to replant cane if it is cared for properly. Mr. Deputy President, the mechanical harvesting provides a large quantity of cane production but it also causes a drawback in terms of the cost of having to replant canes every two years.

Mr. Deputy President, I am sure that the economists could try to determine which is better. Should we continue to use harvesters and have that causing some damage to the fields, or should we hand cut? Mr. Deputy President, if we hand cut it might mean that we may not necessarily have the labour to cut the canes but as I have said here before, I see nothing wrong with importing labour. I think that every country, at one point or another, when they have industries that need low-level labour, those countries usually have to import that labour. Barbadians leave Barbados and to pick fruits. We used to drive buses with Lion Transport in England, so that once you have developed a country you would find that there are certain occupations that are not as attractive to many of the locals.

Mr. Deputy President, I believe cutting canes have become something like that. I see nothing wrong with having 500 or 600 St. Lucians, Guyanese, Vincentians, Haitians or whatever come to Barbados for the period to cut canes to save our sugar industry. At the same time they would be providing economic activity because they have to eat, clothe themselves, rent somewhere, et cetera. Therefore it can also be something of a benefit to us in the economy.

Mr. Deputy President, there is then the sugar factories. I am still wary of this idea of a one-factory operation in Barbados. As a matter of fact, I always believe that small is beautiful. I do not believe that big is always the best, regardless of what you are talking about. Small is beautiful and I believe that we probably need four factories in Barbados so that we can divide up the island into four equal parts to service the factories. Mr. Deputy President, the fact is that the sugar cane factory has almost been almost self-sufficient. As was said earlier, it produces its own power. Almost everything in a sugar factory is used, the mud that comes back out is used to be put back into the fields as manure; the bagasse goes to make the steam to run the factory; the bagasse could also be used in animal feeds; some people also make board with it. The sugar factory itself, when properly managed and run, is a very productive unit and it is something that we should look at, instead of this massive factory that I am hearing about.

Mr. Deputy President, the other thing is that I believe that our arable lands should be used for food production. I worry when I see that we have to plant 'river tamarind' to run a factory, we should be using that land to plant sugar cane or whatever crops. Mr. Deputy President, the other thing about sugar cane production is as Senator Adams has said, whenever there is higher sugar production, there is higher vegetable production as well, because you have to rotate the crops from time to time. Therefore that is one of the things that benefit Barbados. When we think of our import food bill and we could do anything to reduce that, it must help our fiscal deficit going forward.

Mr. Deputy President, questions were raised about the management of the Barbados Agriculture Management Company. I am one when anytime that criticisms are laid out, I think that some attention should be paid to it. I do not think it should just be dismissed. Even though sometimes we feel that things are going the best way and therefore criticisms should not be made, I have a feeling that there is good enough evidence, I think, to suggest that the management of the sugar industry can be improved.

Mr. Deputy President, one of the things that seem to be a problem is equipment, I think that maybe the equipment at the Barbados Agriculture Management Company is not as well maintained as it should be, and therefore having to buy new equipment or having to spend

large sums of money on the repair of equipment that was not properly maintained all leads to inefficiencies within the company. Therefore, the concern with having to put out \$73 million now has to be a real one, because that \$73 million should be as productive as possible. I know it cannot all have returns on it because if you look at the reason for the \$73 million, it is for working capital. One of the things they taught me at a very young age when I was trying to start a little business was that you never borrow money for working capital. "If you cannot generate working capital, do not worry with the business," it was said. I know that is not always the case. I think that there are times when you have working capital shortages and you have to make them up, but you still have to be mindful about how you do that.

In terms of the provision of money for expenses and some costs relating to the sugar cane support project, again I believe that the use of hand-cutting rather than machine harvesting is something that needs to be looked at. I think we could get the yields up if the canes are cut by hand, and we will be able to save on the amount of times that we have to replant. Replanting every two years is probably a burden on the industry. I think that in the good old days when we could replant every five or six years were far better, and as a matter of fact my understanding is that when you cut the canes by hand, you get a higher tonnage because you cut right down; whereas with the harvester you leave a fair amount of the cane in the ground. Therefore you might be losing a lot of tonnage there.

Mr. Deputy President, I think the marketing of the sugar cane industry could be a little more innovative. I have mentioned in this Senate on more than one occasion the importance of our brown sugar; I mean our really brown sugar, not the sugar which we get now because that is not really brown sugar. That is called brown sugar. The sugar I am talking about is the sugar that is very close to molasses, and you can actually taste the molasses in it. When you put a teaspoon of that into a cup of tea, that is it. Many of the people who are the sellers or marketers of sugar consider that to be a low-level sugar, and I think that is probably what might have made us believe that refined sugar was the way to go. I believe that brown sugar is the way to go, but that we not sell it or market it as a sweetener. We have to market it as a health food because that is what it is. Molasses is used as a health product all over the world, and if we are looking at the sugar cane industry, then we could easily come to the conclusion that sugar is not the main money-earner of the sugar cane industry but that molasses is and rum is, and the sugar is what you get that might give you the profit. The other things would give you the cost. If we produce enough molasses to make our rum, as was said earlier, we will be safeguarding our rum from not getting blacklisted because of not meeting the criteria for local product and we will obviously be able to produce a high-quality rum. It is well

known that there was a product called Barbados Sugar, and I do not think we capitalised on it. We changed it to some fancy name called Muscovado or something like that, but it is Barbados sugar, and that is what it was known as for years. That was what people throughout the world expected from Barbados: Barbados Sugar. There is no reason now why we cannot rebrand our sugar as Barbados Sugar -- at least not Barbados Sugar but Barbados Brown Sugar -- and sell it as a health food.

I am told that the brown sugar has some benefits, and in checking with a professional I am told that all these ingredients are good for your health. They are phosphorous, calcium, magnesium, potassium and iron. Those are the ingredients which you get from brown sugar, and there is no reason why our professional marketers in Barbados cannot design a package -- not design just the look of the package but all the writing and the image of the package itself -- and put a pound or two of sugar in a package like that. Instead of us getting ten and 12 cents a pound for sugar, we could be getting \$5 or \$10 a pound. It is not impossible. I have said before that there are little packages of sugar being sold in souvenir shops in Barbados; some in crocus bags, some in white bags with a little writing on it, and they are being sold for \$9 and \$10 for half-pound, not a pound. I believe that is not beyond us. I think that Barbados and our creativity have been stifled. We need to break out of this rigidity that we have experienced, because most people who dominate the decision-making are engineers or accountants or economists. We need to start getting some of the creative people in decision-making positions, and I am sure that the sugar industry can make a lot more money by going in this direction. I used to see our rums in just a rum bottle and being sold at regular prices. Today, they use all sorts of fancy bottles and fancy labels and the rum has doubled in price; not because the rum is any different but because the marketing is different. I think we need to do that with the brown sugar in Barbados.

Finally, Mr. Deputy President, two things were mentioned today which caught my attention. Jamaica sells ackee and salt fish, and it is in tins and bottles with labels, and it is just an ordinary meal. We have cou-cou and flying fish, though I am not too sure that is still our staple, but we also have swank. Why can we not be selling swank as a beverage? Barbados swank.

Aside.

Senator J.A. WATSON: We do not have to do much to Falernum. We just have to market the Falernum much more. We have two products which could be good marketing products as byproducts of sugar, and all of this would add to the overall value of the sugar cane industry. Mr. Deputy President, I believe that when you put all those things together -- the sale of Barbados brown sugar as a

health food and the use of those two products as Barbados indigenous products -- we have a name, Barbados.

1.46 p.m.

INSERT S15 JULIETTE

Wednesday, December 14, 2016

RESUMPTION

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: This Sitting is resumed.

ORDER No. 1

RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE GUARANTEE BY THE HONOURABLE MINISTER OF FINANCE OF THE PAYMENT OF THE PRINCIPAL SUM OF BDD \$12.0 MILLION TO BE BORROWED BY NEEDHAM'S POINT HOLDINGS LIMITED FROM FIRST CITIZENS BANK (BARBADOS) LIMITED FOR THE PURPOSE OF ASSISTING WITH RENOVATIONS TO THE HILTON BARBADOS HOTEL

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Senator Sandiford-Garner.

Senator Mrs. V. I. SANDIFORD-GARNER: Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy President. It gives me great pleasure today to introduce this Resolution which in essence is the request for a guarantee of the Government of Barbados for a loan from First Citizens Bank to refurbish the Barbados Hilton Hotel. The sum is BDS\$12 million and it is to effect refurbishment of specific areas of the Barbados Hilton Hotel. Needham's Holding Limited is a company and it is the holding company which manages and finances the running and the operations of the Barbados Hilton Hotel for those who do not understand who or what Needham's Holding Limited is. It is a Barbados Government company which manages the hotel because the hotel is an international franchise and there is a management contract in place for the running of the facility so our job here today is to approve the Resolution for the Barbados Government to guarantee the loan, meaning that we will guarantee the loan, we will be as a Government ensuring that the loan is dispensed basically.

This Needham's Holding Limited manages, as I said, the Hilton Hotel. The Hilton Hotel is an investment so we have to approach this as us investing in a profitable entity as well because the hotel is a very profitable investment for us, so I will consider this to be one of the productive loans, a loan that will garner a level of profitability for us or continue to garner a level of profitability because the hotel is doing very well, and I would wish to share with you what the Hilton Hotel has been doing for the past year.

For the year ending March 2016, the hotel reported BDS\$63 million in income, and this was an increase of \$2.4 million over 2015. Mr. Deputy President, \$2.4 million in profitability is no small amount for any entity in an industry which would have had its share of challenges during the world recession because obviously the hotel depends on patronage from persons coming from countries which would have experienced some level of hardship, but it speaks a lot to the management and the marketing of the Barbados Hilton and also to the slow turnaround which we are having in the world economy which would then garner us gains as a country. The occupancy rose to 76.5 per cent over the past year which is a 1 per cent increase over the previous period of 2015 and both the room and the food and beverage departments registered growth. Sometimes you may register growth in accommodation figures but you may not register growth in food and beverage but the Barbados Hilton Hotel registered growth in both of those areas. This year's winter season was the best on record for the hotel since it reopening in 2005 and that winter growth contributed to the 2015 growth overall, so the comprehensive income for the year grew to \$2.424 716 million, a 56 per cent increase over 2015, the largest profit since the property reopened in 2005.

The improved profitability of the hotel was due in part to the increased emphasis on cost control and deficiency and the reduction in expenses, something which is very difficult to manage in the hotel industry but they got it done. Utility costs decreased by 23 per cent, \$1.4 million due to the energy saving initiatives and falling fuel adjustment costs. Interest costs also declined due to paying down of outstanding loan balances. There was a strategic plan to do that and it was done which would then have reduced the interest but you could only reduce loan balances if you are making money, and the Hilton Hotel management would have determined that this is the approach they would have taken to reduce the cost of our borrowing at the end of the day.

The hotel was able to increase its room occupancies and revenue by improving its market share and marketing to several larger groups in the winter period and this strategy resulted in the hotel having the largest winter revenues so the winter revenues which I just spoke about would have come about as a result of strategic marketing to large groups. The total revenue for the year was \$60 million and the room revenue alone was \$41 million with an average occupancy for the year of 75 per cent, an increase of 6.7 per cent over the corresponding 12-month period, so the comprehensive income for the year grew to \$1.5 million and this is the largest annual profit to date of the Barbados Hilton.

Mr. Deputy President, the Resolution which I am introducing today seeks now to enhance the plant. We have a Hilton Worldwide Management Agreement and the

owner relationship is with Needham's Point Holdings and the key project areas are full bedroom and corridor refurbishment, a coffee outlet in the lobby area, spa facilities to be repositioned, which is complete, and the staff gym has been relocated. Mr. Deputy President, that is now a staff and public gym because a good few members of the public of Barbados use that gym and that has been completed and that gym is an international named gym as well.

We also have what is called a FF&E Reserve which is a Fixture, Furniture and Equipment Reserve. In accounting the reserve is there for maintenance so in every contract or in contracts which include refurbishment we usually add that FF&E Reserve. Mr. Deputy President, in accounting the reserves is there for maintenance, so that in every contract or contracts which include refurbishment we usually add that FF&E reserve. That is money that is set aside to maintain the property, which is something that we probably should look at entering into for a lot of the new buildings that we have in Barbados, because we build then and then we leave them. It is always wise to have that clause in your contracts when you are entering into contracts with international agencies as well, so that you are guaranteed that the building will always be at a certain level of maintenance.

Mr. Deputy President, we have that with the Needham's Points Limited, so that even though the Guarantee is for \$12 million, the total amount of expenditure is really and truly a total of \$22 million, because we have the FF&E reserve of \$10 million, so that we are having the guarantee of \$12 million but we also have \$10 million set aside, so that the refurbishment will be adequately funded.

Mr. Deputy President, I will explain to you what is to be done and I will wish to give further details if you do not mind. Mr. Deputy President, it is always good to know where your money is being spent and in the final analysis the taxpayers are being asked to be guarantors of this loan. Therefore, I just want to detail what will be done at the Barbados Hilton. I am also doing this because I know that the Barbados Hilton is a property that is particularly dear to the hearts of Barbadians; a number of Barbadians have invested in the Barbados Hilton in a very emotional way. They are hundreds of Barbadians who every year choose the Hilton as the hotel of choice for anniversary celebrations, breakfasts, et cetera. I am talking about Barbadians of all walks of life who head to the Barbados Hilton to celebrate, particularly the breakfast. I do not know what is so attractive about the breakfast, but I find that numerous people celebrate birthdays and special occasions with a Hilton breakfast. They would go either on a Saturday or Sunday morning, they take pictures which you would see on the social media with these families on the steps of the Barbados Hilton for breakfast.

Mr. Deputy President, if I may say so, I myself am very attached to the facility because I got married at the Barbados Hilton when it was the Old Hilton Hotel. Actually, Monday 12th December gone we celebrated 29 years. We got married at the Old Fort of the Barbados Hilton. Mr. Deputy President, I hope you would forgive me but I was not particularly enthused about going into an organised religious facility so we had a compromise. Sir, there are certain people present here who were present there. We compromised because my husband is a Methodist. We decided that we would have it at the Old Fort and that beautiful setting was the setting for our nuptials. I also have a very personal attachment to the Barbados Hilton.

Mr. Deputy President, I remember when was imploded in 1999, I felt I felt as though I was losing a part of me, but then the new facility quickly assuaged that discomfort in that I remember the date it was reopened the management of the Barbados Hilton at the time was sensitive enough to bring back all the old staff members. I am speaking about staff members who would have been with the institution from its inception. They had all of these people at the entrance of the new facility, which told me that this was an institution investing in its employees, where it had both retired and current there to welcome the guests to the new Barbados Hilton in 2005.

Mr. Deputy President, what we are proposing to in this Resolution is to refurbish the bedrooms. There are 350 units in the Hotel, spread over two towers. We are looking to refurbish all of the bedroom stock over the period 2015, 2016 and onwards and address the key points which are, to provide new and modern fully-equipped rooms, taking into account our unique destination; meeting the Hilton brand requirements; providing a clear differentiation between standard suites and executive rooms; converting a number of parlours to provide full room facilities; upgrading the eight floor of the Prime Minister's Suite; converting the five rooms previously utilised as the old fitness centre and spa into bedrooms. That has been done. The elevator lobbies are to be refurbished and corridors refreshed. Mr. Deputy President, I do not know if many of you know but the Barbados Hilton was where Prince Harry stayed when he was off his yacht during the Independence celebrations. Mr. Deputy President, that speaks to the caliber of facility of which the Barbados Hilton is.

I would also like to speak about the scope of works. There will be a full strip out and change of the current tile work; full redecoration; new drapes and bed valances; new face goods, including a serenity bed programme which is a marketing programme; new bathroom vanity sets; faucets to be replaced; the upgrade and replacement of toilets with a more efficient model; guest room corridors will be refreshed, as each floor refurbishment is carried out.

Mr. Deputy President, from May to October 2015 the north tower was done consisting of 198 rooms. In May to October 2016, 156 rooms were worked on in the south tower. Progress at November 2016, there were 150 rooms completed for the summer of 2015. There were 139 rooms completed in the summer of 2016. There are 100 rooms to be complete summer of 2017. The refurbishment programme, according to management, was well executed by the contractor who worked well with the hotel management to ensure that as little disruption as possible occurred. I do not know that many of you who were visiting the hotel during that period were ever aware that refurbishment was taking place but it was being done. I would have mentioned the overall room stock of 350 rooms spread over two towers and eight floors.

Mr. Deputy President, I spoke earlier of the management of the hotel and I would to take this opportunity on the Floor today to congratulate the current management and the management before, but particularly the current management because during the year 2016 the Barbados Hilton was voted the top property in the Americas. I am speaking about the entire North America which would be United States of America and Canada, as well as Latin America. The Hilton Hotel Barbados came out tops of 3 000 hotels in the hemisphere, our hotel. It also would have been the Global Team Member Opinion of the Year winner and the winner of the Genius of the AND Award.

Mr. Deputy President, people keep asking what is the Genius of the AND Award. This is an award that is given to a property, to explain it outside of marketing terms, it gives the guest the 'wow' factor, so that your creativity and marketing coming together must deliver for the consumer. Once you are able to deliver on your marketing expectations which are developed through the creativity which you employ, you win the Genius of the AND Award, because not many brands and certainly not many hotels are able to deliver completely on expectations, so you see the ads, you are inundated with the marketing but sometimes these things come short when you arrive at the property or when you buy the product. Hilton Barbados was able to receive genius, again, out of all its properties, not only in the Americas but out of all because it was able to deliver on expectations and match its creativity and marketing with real-time delivery. That is no mean achievement, and I would wish to congratulate Mr. George Stansfeld and his staff for an excellent job done on behalf of Barbados. Many persons who know the individual understand how passionate he is about Barbados, to the point where he would have had a Barbados baby this year. He could have had his baby anywhere in the world, and this particular hotel manager was determined to have a Barbados baby; so that, to me, speaks for itself in terms of the commitment and the love of country which the general manager of the hotel has. His workers exude the same

enthusiasm and the same level of professionalism, and I must say that Hilton Barbados in 2016 has definitely outdone itself in terms of its service to Barbadians and visitors alike; so it is no surprise that they have been able to secure these awards. These employees have put their best foot forward at every single step of the way.

With that said, Mr. Deputy President, I beg that this Resolution do now pass.

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Senator Hunte.

Senator R.A. HUNTE: Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy President. I feel honoured, really and truly, to speak on this matter. The first reason is that I saw when the Hilton Hotel was being constructed, and I also saw when it was imploded.

Aside.

Senator R.A. HUNTE: I saw when it was imploded some years ago and I thought it was a sad day for Barbados, but of course there are some things that have to be done, and sometimes they prove very profitable and important in the end, and other times they do not. In this particular case, the Hilton Hotel has proven to be a success; the second time around, I should say. Mr. Deputy President, I think it is a very important day in this Chamber, in that we are discussing two matters -- one we have done already -- namely, sugar and tourism. They are both important industries in the life of Barbados, as argued previously, and of course at this point this is well understood because tourism is our business, and it is even proving to be more than that in the life and the economy of this country.

I remember the construction of the Hilton Hotel at the time, and I remember I previously made statements in that regard in this Chamber. I remember the comments that were made about the Hilton Hotel at the time when it was being built, but of course here again foresight is one thing and hindsight is another. At that time in Barbados the reason why a brand name like the Hilton was used was because in the east of the island you had Sam Lord's and the Crane, and the South Coast had Accra and Rockley and Blue Waters as far as more than ten rooms were concerned. Others were small guesthouses and so on, such as Super Marie and Bag Shot. All of those hotels I used to go to, because I was then working as a youngster at the Sanitary Laundry and they had nearly all the business in the island, and they used to collect all the laundry from those hotels. On the West Coast, you had Paradise, Coral Reef, Colony Club and Miramar which were the major hotels on that coast. Hence it was very important, since the tourism industry was moving ahead from about 37 000 visitors in 1961 to approximately over 150 000 stay-over visitors in about six to seven years after the tourism really had a push

from the then new Democratic Labour Party. It was very important to have built the Hilton Hotel with that brand name. History says that Mr. Barrow and the then Premier, Mr. Crawford, along with one another person who I do not recall now, had visited Conrad Hilton in the United States of America to negotiate having that franchise in Barbados. It was constructed, and it has been a tremendous success ever since it was constructed in Barbados; even though it was referred to as a white elephant by the late Bernard St. John. I heard him myself referring to that hotel as a white elephant; but of course hindsight is one thing and foresight is another, Mr. Deputy President. That formed a very important part of Barbados and remains so, as you heard the figures given just now of that construction after all these years. It just celebrated its 50th anniversary along with the anniversary of our Independence in Barbados.

Mr. Deputy President, I am very pleased and honoured to have seen its construction, and today to speak on any matter and on any funds, loan, grant, Guarantee or otherwise for the Hilton Hotel, because it has been a real feature. Several of my relatives have worked there; a brother and two sisters, before one of them moved onto Sam Lord's Castle. It has made a contribution in the lives of members of my family, and I feel honoured by that. I moved into the hotel industry in 1967 and I worked for about two years or so, and immediately -- I said it in this Chamber already -- I was able to purchase a motor car. It was a little Ford Anglia; I could not afford anything more at the time, but of course that came out of the hotel industry where I had moved from one stage of my life to another as a young man. Overall, I am not going to delay the Chamber any longer, Sir, but I feel very honoured that I am able to speak on any matter concerning the hotel industry and, by extension, the Hilton Hotel. With those few words, Mr. Deputy President, I am much honoured.

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Senator Sandiford-Garner.

Senator Mrs. V.I. SANDIFORD-GARNER: Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy President. I would just like to add, before I wrap up, that the loan is a ten-year loan. I neglected to say that in my introduction. It is a term loan and it is for ten years, and interest will be 6.5 per cent per annum; six for three years, thereafter subject to a three-year reset with a floor of 6.5 per cent.

3.47 p.m.

INSERT S19 JULIETTE

Wednesday, December 14, 2016

ORDER NO. 9

RESOLUTION THAT PARLIAMENT APPROVE THE BORROWING OF THE SUM OF USD\$15 MILLION FROM THE FIRST CITIZENS BANK LIMITED IN TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO. THE PROCEEDS OF THE LOAN WILL BE USED TO FUND PROJECTS APPROVED BY THE GOVERNMENT OF BARBADOS WHICH MEET ALL THE REQUISITE CRITERIA FOR THE UTILIZATION OF FUNDING AVAILABLE TO THE GOVERNMENT OF BARBADOS FROM THE DEVELOPMENT BANK OF LATIN AMERICA

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Senator Ince, you have the Floor.

Senator J. INCE: Mr. Deputy President, I rise to move the passing of a Resolution that Parliament approves the borrowing of the sum of US\$15 million from First Citizens Bank Limited in Trinidad and Tobago. The proceeds of the loan will be used to fund projects approved by the Government of Barbados which meets all of the requisite criteria for the utilisation of funding available to the Government of Barbados from the Development Bank of Latin America.

Mr. Deputy President, like the Local Loans (Amendment) Bill, I do not see there is any need for any elaborate discussion on this. It is a simple and straightforward matter. The facility is a revolving credit line. The purpose of the loan is outlined. We said utilising the fund available to meet the criteria. The amount of US\$15 million should be stated. The lender is First Citizens Bank. It is to the Government of Barbados which is the borrower. The repayment, principal and interest at maturity. The term is six months but it is what I said is a revolving credit line which means that what you would have is that as you reach maturity you can easily turn over the credit line. It does not have really what we term a maturity date so every six months you can revolve and borrow again. In simple terms, it is similar to what you call a line of credit at a credit union. If you understand how a line of credit union functions then you would understand basically how this revolving credit line works.

Mr. Deputy President, with no further additions or elaborations on this Resolution, I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

The question that the Resolution do now pass was put to the Senate and resolved in the affirmative without division.

ORDER No. 5

INCOME TAX (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2016

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Senator McClean.

Senator the Hon. Miss M. P. O. McCLEAN: Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy President. I rise to speak to the Income Tax (Amendment) Bill 2016, and I seek your permission to treat this as a cognate debate in my contribution by speaking also of the Land Tax (Amendment) Bill, 2016 given the nature of these two pieces of legislation.

As you would recall, Mr. Deputy President, in the Financial and Budgetary Proposals of 2016, the Minister of Finance would have proposed a waiver of penalties and accrued interest on arrears in relation to the income tax and land tax arrears owed by Barbadians.

The unfortunate reality, Mr. Deputy President, is that many Barbadians in the normal scheme of things are tardy in paying their requisite land tax or income tax obligations. Of course, in recent years we have gone through as a country, as has many other countries in the global economy, some challenges and therefore we might have found that some people were facing more than usual or unusual kinds of financial constraints, but whatever the circumstance or whatever the reason the Government of Barbados continues to find itself challenged to collect all of the amounts, and I would suggest they are challenged to collect a significant minority of amounts, due to it under those fiscal obligations.

Mr. Deputy President, a tax amnesty is not new. It is, of course, a decision on the part of Government to address the reality of non-payment but at the same time in circumstances such as this recognise that people may be challenged. In fact, when people allow their tax obligations and the arrears to get away from them sometimes the penalties and the accrued interests are substantial which makes it even more difficult to collect.

In the Financial and Budgetary Proposals, it was indicated that persons could access the waiver or benefit from the tax amnesty if they paid the principal by a date identified as February 15, 2017. In order to make the collection of those sums legal we have to put the necessary legislative amendments in place and therefore this is to put in effect the necessary legislative framework to allow that to happen. As such, Sir, it is important to have this legislation in place. I think it is more important of course to ensure that Barbadians take advantage of this. I am sure that in other places, and having to speak to this matter, the Minister of Finance has indicated that amnesties such as this are not often in the making and therefore it is highly unlikely that in the reasonable future we would see such a situation. That, of course, applies to both the income tax and land tax, and I think it is important that Barbadians take advantage of this.

There is another reason why this becomes important because if you note the deadline is February 15 which is just about a month and two weeks shy of the upcoming financial year, the Government financial year running from April 1, 2016 to March 31, 2017. That also coincides, Mr. Speaker, with the fact that the Barbados Revenue Authority which was set up to bring a high level of efficiency and effectiveness to tax administration, more specifically tax collection, has been undertaking a number of initiatives to operationalise such efficiency. We would have heard of the need to bring citizens account so to speak under one umbrella and therefore, for example, at a glance any official of the Barbados Revenue Authority, as we have established that, can determine whether I have paid my income tax, my land tax, my road tax, et cetera and the issue of tax clearances for whatever purpose will become more efficient and easier.

Part of making that process more efficient and simpler will be the allocation of a single tax ID number to citizens and corporate entities, et cetera. My description of it therefore is that it is a clean-up process giving taxpayers an opportunity to do that because clearly in the past if for whatever reason, for business purposes or whatever the case may be, an individual or entity or corporate entity were asked to indicate or to get a tax clearance they would in fact have to get tax clearances, one for land tax, one for income tax and one for road tax or whatever the case may be. As I said, with the new system that is going to allow for a single identification and the generation of a single tax clearance certificate and therefore part of doing that would allow persons to ensure that they have no difficulties.

Essentially, this is a mechanism which hopefully would allow Government to offer some relief, in some cases some significant relief, for persons who have been extremely delinquent, and certainly, it should do something to reduce the very significant level of arrears. I believe I have heard a number between \$750 million to close to \$1 billion that is being owed to Government. Mr. Deputy President, we need to look at that because while I am speaking of income tax and land tax, I know that people complain about Government not issuing VAT refunds, et cetera, but there is a relationship between VAT receipts and the ability to have cash to generate VAT refunds. Mr. Deputy President, the interesting about VAT is that when VAT is collected, that is cash collected on sale and therefore when a business person or place collects VAT on a sale, they are actually collecting moneys on Government's behalf and which should not be comingled with their own personal receipts but that it should be handed over as promptly as possible. Mr. Deputy President, moreover, there is time lag of about a month between receipt and as such what has to happen is that they should, as promptly as possible do that, and with the even more collection of revenues, then Government's cash flows will be improved.

Mr. Deputy President, I sought to link the two Bills, the Income Tax (Amendment) Bill, 2016, with that of the Land Tax (Amendment) Bill, 2016, because while they are two different sources of Government's revenue, the intention of the amendment in each case is to offer waivers and penalties and accrued interest on arrears, as indicated by the provisions in the Financial Statement and Budgetary Proposals, 2016.

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

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

On the separate motion of Senator the Hon. Miss M.P.O. McCLEAN, the Senate resolved itself into Committee on the Bill. Senator Alwin A. ADAMS, Chairman of Committees in the Chair.

COMMITTEE

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Senate is now in Committee.

Clauses 1 and 2, inclusive, were called and passed.

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

On the separate motions of Senator the Hon. Miss M.P.O. McCLEAN, the Bill was read a third time and passed and cited as the Income Tax (Amendment) Act, 2016.

ORDER NO. 6 – SECOND READING OF THE LAND TAX (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2016.

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: The Leader of Government Business.

Senator the Hon. Miss M.P.O. McCLEAN: Mr. Deputy President, as I indicated in my debating of the Income Tax (Amendment) Bill, 2016, I spoke in what we know as a cognate debate. The Land Tax (Amendment) Bill, 2016, would have been referred to in that debate and therefore I beg to move that this Land Tax (Amendment) Bill, 2016, which makes provisions for the waiver of penalties and accrued interest on arrears as provided for in the Financial Statement and Budgetary Proposals, 2016, be read a second time.

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

On the separate motion of Senator the Hon. Miss M.P.O. McCLEAN, the Senate resolved itself into Committee on the Bill. Senator Alwin A. ADAMS, Chairman of Committees, in the Chair.

COMMITTEE

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Senate is now in Committee.

Clauses 1 and 2, inclusive, were called and passed.

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

On the separate motions of Senator the Hon. Miss M.P.O. McCLEAN, the Bill was read a third time and passed and cited as the Land Tax (Amendment) Act, 2016.

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

ORDER NO. 10 – THE SECOND READING OF THE MUNICIPAL SOLID WASTE TAX (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2016.

Senator Hon. Ms. M.P.O. McCLEAN: Mr. Deputy President, this Municipal Solid Waste Tax (Amendment) Bill, 2016, is similar to others that we have debated, to the extent that there were some provisions made in the Budgetary Proposals for some adjustments. As we are aware, Mr. Deputy President, the Bill to introduce a Municipal Solid Waste Tax would have been passed previously, and subsequent to that, with the initial collection of that over a specified period, there would have been some changes which led to the replacement, for want of a better word -- let me speak in laypersons' terms -- of this piece of legislation. Given that, it was also necessary to look to the impact or the implications for certain people, and a decision was taken to amend the Act to make provision for the extension of time for full payment of the tax; and also in the case of pensioners who often benefit from exemptions, to allow for their remittance of the whole amounts of the Municipal Solid Waste Tax paid by pensioners. Where pensioners might have been allowed a refund, to put it in laypersons' terms, there also was consideration that for the revisiting of the amounts paid by persons in agriculture -- clearly the Government's commitment to encouraging agricultural pursuits and the greater production of agricultural produce -- part of that would benefit from a reduction in the payment of the Solid Waste Tax.

Mr. Deputy President, in addition to that I believe that there are certain organisations with which the Government has certain agreements. One broad category

which one can think of is the multilateral entities or international organisations, as some people would call them, which operate in Barbados, such as the organs of the United Nations including the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The European Union (EU) also has a delegation which is housed in Barbados and is servicing Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean. There are also entities like the Pan American Health Organisation (PAHO), et cetera, which normally are exempted, and specific provision would have to be made for such exemptions. Therefore, in the legislation there was provision made to do that. At the end of the day, the Bill seeks to amend its provisions to provide for the extension of time for full payment of the Solid Waste Tax, because some people, as we know, pay in instalments and may not have completed that process after adjustments were made for the remittance of payments by certain pensioners. It also made adjustments to the rates applicable to owners of land for agricultural purposes and to other institutions which normally would not pay tax.

This piece of legislation, like the two that went before it, is intended to ensure that the legislative framework is actually in place to ensure that actions in relation to these adjustments are within the walls of the law. With that, Mr. Deputy President, I beg to move that this Bill be read a second time.

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

On the motion of Senator Hon. Ms. M.P.O. McCLEAN, the Senate resolved itself into Committee. Mr. A.A. ADAMS in the Chair.

COMMITTEE

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Senate is now in Committee.

Clauses 1 -- 6, inclusive, were called and passed.

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

On the separate motion of Senator Hon. Ms. M.P.O. McCLEAN, the Bill was read a third time, passed and cited as the Municipal Solid Waste Tax (Amendment) Act, 2016.

ORDER NO. 3

THE PASSING OF A RESOLUTION THAT THE PUBLIC SERVICE GENERAL ORDER 2016, MADE BY THE MINISTER RESPONSIBLE FOR THE CIVIL

SERVICE ON THE 21ST DAY OF OCTOBER, 2016, UNDER SECTIONS 13 (1) AND 14 (3) OF THE PUBLIC SERVICE ACT, CHAPTER 29, BE APPROVED.

Mr. DEPUTY RESIDENT: Senator Todd.

Senator Hon. P.M.T. TODD: Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy President. I rise to move the passing of this Resolution that the Public Service General Order 2016, made by the Minister responsible for the Civil Service on the 21st day of October, 2016, under Sections 13 (1) and 14 (3) of the Public Service Act, CAP 29, be approved.

4.26 p.m.

INSERT S23 JULIETTE

Wednesday, December 14, 2016

Senator the Hon. P. M. T. TODD: ...the same salary scale and one post of Tourism Development Officer I/II was re-designated as Tourism Officer I/II, and within the Office of the Attorney-General, one post of Crown Counsel in the Z3-1 scale was re-designated as Legislative Crown Counsel in the same scale.

Mr. Deputy President, as I said, during the preparation of the draft Order the Minister responsible for the public service also gave approval for the salary scales of the post of Fire Officer and Constable within the Royal Barbados Police Force to be adjusted, and I will just go into more details in that regard. The salary scale for the post of Fire Officer and Constable within the Royal Barbados Police Force is P35:34-22:21 where that for the similar post of Prison Officer II is P36-22:21. The significance of the colon between the 35 and the 34 in the structure of the salary scale for the post of Fire Officer and Constable is that incumbents are required to serve five years at the lower point prior to the moving to P34, however, officers recruited to the S11 post of Prison Officer II are not subject to this condition, so given this anomaly in the structure of the salary scale of the entry level post of the three agencies the Minister responsible for the public service granted approval for the salary scale of the post of Fire Officer and Constable to be adjusted by removing the first symbol, that colon in the salary scale, so these are the sorts of issues that have been addressed within this Public Service (General) Order.

Of interest, I am sure to members of the public and the public service is as I said coming out of the work of the Minister responsible for the public service while the draft Public Service Order was being prepared was that the Minister responsible for the public service gave approval for the creation of supernumerary posts to facilitate the appointment of persons found eligible for appointment under Section 13(7) of the Public Service Act Cap. 29 but

were not appointed due to insufficient posts as I mentioned earlier. This has been addressed in terms of one of the Schedules, I think it is the Fourteenth Schedule, to the Public Service (General) Order before us where a number of these supernumerary posts are now created thereby paving the way for those persons who would have worked for at least three years satisfactorily within the civil service prior to the end of 2007, but no posts were available, to be able to be appointed in permanent positions. As I said, they are listed here in the Fourteenth Schedule on page 139. For example, about 87 clerical officers positions would be affected in this regard. We have positions such as Deputy Permanent Secretary, Chief Economists, Administrative Officer I, Coordinator Community Independence Celebrations Secretariat, Management Development Officers, three positions of Pharmacist II, four positions of Assistant Accountants, 87 positions of Clerical Officers, Environmental Health Assistants, four positions of Custom Officers III, two positions of Senior Clerks, three positions of Tax Officers; Youth project Coordinator and so on and so forth. All of this is being addressed in this new Public Service (General) Order, Mr. Deputy President.

In addition, three departments were renamed as follows: The Audio Visual Aids Department was renamed the Media Resource Department, the Taskforce on Crime Prevention was renamed the Criminal Justice Research and Planning Unit, and the Central Purchasing Department was renamed the Government Procurement Department, so these changes in the name of these departments approved by Cabinet would now be reflected in this Public Service (General) Order.

Mr. Deputy President, what would have occurred is that after these changes were made a new Public Service (General) Order would have been approved by Cabinet at a meeting back in 2015 and the necessary changes were made subsequently. What would have happened is that with the changes made, as I mentioned earlier, a stipulation was given by the Office of the Chief Parliamentary Counsel that another Public Service (General) Order should not be published before the making of a new Public Service Qualifications Order and so it was decided not to lay the Public Service (General) Order in Parliament but to address this so that as the Public Service (General) Order was being worked on simultaneously the Ministry of the Civil Service would have spearheaded the completion of the new Public Service Qualifications Order because as I mentioned earlier in terms of the powers of the Minister responsible for the public service, within the Public Service Act not only is a Public Service (General) Order required but a Qualifications Order which effectively, without going into too much details, outlines in detail the qualifications required for persons to fill the various established posts that are listed within the Public Service (General) Order, qualifications and experience as the case may be.

Mr. Deputy President, I must congratulate the staff within the Ministry of the Civil Service because they worked very professionally and assiduously to ensure that the specifics of these various Orders are very professionally prepared so that before a post is established even on a temporary basis things like full job descriptions have to be prepared as well as the determination of the particular salary scale to be assigned to a particular post within the civil service. The officers within the Ministry of the Civil Service are very detailed in terms of looking at that job description to determine the extent to which, be it dexterity, be it intellectual and be it manual effort is required in that position. A very scientific analysis is done by which then the particular salary scale is established and by liaising with the various ministries in terms of the requirements of the Human Resource Departments within those ministries then the particular qualifications would be established in terms of qualifications and experience thereby giving rise to the Qualifications Order mentioned earlier. The Qualifications Order is properly done and therefore we are in this position now to press ahead with the Public Service (General) Order.

Mr. Deputy President, I would not wish to go on for the full hour but I will just say that what has happened would be that a few other changes would have been made since the Order was prepared in 2015. For example, from the Mental Hospital the name was changed to the Psychiatric Hospital to reflect the current reality. There were some other changes, for example, the post of Director of Statistical Services was upgraded from S3 to S2. As I said, going through this detailed professional analysis of the requirement of the particular post to determine the particular qualification and salary scale to be assigned to that post.

Mr. Deputy President, I think I have covered the bases and without further ado, I would beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Senator McClean.

Senator the Hon. Miss M.P.O. McCLEAN: Mr. Deputy President, I rise to speak briefly on this Resolution, the Public Service General Order, 2016. We would have heard from the Honourable Member who would have presented the important details about the process but what I would perhaps want to do would be to share a little bit to the background to this and to some of the broad issues which inform the need for this General Order.

Mr. Deputy President, I would want perhaps to start by something that occurred in 2007 in what I would describe as the dying days of the last Administration. I would describe it as a historic piece of legislation because we had none before and it has proven to be very interesting and indeed challenging in some respects. Mr. Deputy

President, at the end of 2007, there was an Act passed, and I would quote from the legislation itself. It says:

“An Act to revise and consolidate the law relating to the administration of public service for the purpose of achieving greater efficiency and effectiveness in the management of that service and for matters relating thereto.”

Mr. Deputy President, that is what is used to describe the piece of legislation that was put in place. I think, if I remember correctly, it was proclaimed on the last day of 2007. That legislation was intended to do a number of things, as it said, to increase efficiency. Unfortunately it has proven to be somewhat challenging and I will give an example. The Act talks about the requirement that persons who would have been employed for a period, I think of about up to three years be appointed. That is the layperson's language. Basically what it is saying:

“Any person who at the commencement of this Act is not appointed to the Public Service, has been employed;

1. In a temporary office;
2. In an established office; or
3. In a combination of a temporary and established office for not less than three years immediately before the commencement of this Act; and

(C) Has the qualifications required by the Civil Establishment (Qualifications) Order for appointment to that office or to an office in a similar grade -- Shall be entitled to the appointment to that office or an office of a similar grade with effect from the date of the commencement of the Act.”

Mr. Deputy President, I believe that Senator Todd would have spoken to the challenges that this would have posed, when the Honourable Member mentioned about supernumerary posts, et cetera.

Mr. Deputy President, the reality is that in putting that into legislation at the end of 2007, a situation was created where a number of persons would have had the qualifications to appointment, the other reality was that there were no jobs to which they could have been appointed and that created a problem. Mr. Deputy President, you would have heard people arguing that they were entitled to an appointment but the question would be asked, to where would they be appointed while in the absence of a job. Mr. Deputy President, that is but one example and therefore it had to be addressed. To the extent possible, that has been addressed. I believe my colleague would have illustrated how that was done.

Mr. Deputy President, while it is important to have a piece of legislation like this, we also have to be clear that

as it seeks to be efficient that it does not create inefficiencies; that as it seeks to bring a level of objectivity to the process, that it does not create a whole set of bottlenecks, and I will illustrate. Mr. Deputy President, before illustrating, I think it is important to understand the implications of that legislation because it is a comprehensive piece of legislation which governs all aspect of the Civil Service and therefore whether we are talking about recruitment, selection, appointment, transfer, promotion, secondment, training, conditions of service i.e. pensions, retirement benefits, et cetera, the broad management of the Public Service as it relates to the functions of the Civil Service, of the various service commissions, i.e. the Police Service Commission, the Public Service Commission dealing with the broad Civil Service, all of those things are in there.

Mr. Deputy President, we now find ourselves challenges, for example, in terms of recruitment and selection. I will use my Ministry as an illustration. In the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade we would have the position of Foreign Service Officer II at the bottom of the scale, so to speak, becoming vacant. What happens is that any person having the qualifications and applies would have to be interviewed. They have, in essence, suggested that interviewing should be centralised under the Office of the Chief Personnel Officer. There is a lesser role for ministries and certainly there is 'no role' for ministers in that process of selection.

Mr. Deputy President, I can tell you that it has created not to improve efficiency but that it has created a whole set of inefficiencies. In fact, it has slowed down the pace, because what was implied or intended here was a process of enhancement but if you want to do something like that you have to make sure that you have the requisite persons. Mr. Deputy President, as we look at these issues of the General Order and looking to create posts, et cetera, this is something that we are looking to manage as well.

Mr. Deputy President, as we look at this, I would want to report that the Right Honourable Prime Minister and Cabinet has put to work a number of senior public officers, both present and retired, to review the Public Service Act because now that it has been put into operation the several limitations that are there have been identified. What has been done therefore is that we have put in place a mechanism to review this. I anticipate that in the very near future that Committee would be able to report to the Right Honourable Prime Minister in his capacity as Minister of the Civil Service, to him as Head of Cabinet and to us as Members of Cabinet so that we can make some decisions to improve the operations, because what you do not want is a bottlenecking.

Mr. Deputy President, I would also want to touch on another reality because when people look at this legislation,

one of the things that we have to appreciate is that the Public Service or the Government as an employer is the single largest employer in Barbados. Mr. Deputy President, in fact, in terms of size, in terms of the numbers of persons working in the Civil Service, in terms of the management of human resources it has within its wall, literally and figuratively, a cross-section of skills, competencies, experience, qualifications, responsibilities, et cetera. In other words, we are talking about the management of a very complex institution, one which necessitates, as far as I am concerned, a different approach to the running of it, then you would have even in the case of the largest conglomerate in Barbados, one of which I had the honour to serve on its Board for in excess of 13 years.

Mr. Deputy President, when I hear people talk about the Public Service, I tell them that they have no idea of the complexities of the process within which we are working. Therefore in looking at that, it is important that the kind of ongoing review which would have been described, as well as the fine-tuning and redesignating that would have been described by Senator Todd, is very much a part of the process. The other thing which we need to recognise -- because, as I said, my purpose for adding to the Debate is to put into context some of the specifics that would have been shared by Senator Todd -- is that as we speak of the Public Service, and more specifically the human resource element of it, along with the system, we need to understand that we are not only talking about a complex institution made up of several parts. We also need to recognise that beyond the physical and organisational complexity, we need to understand the complex role or roles of the Public Service. Imagine a Public Service which is not efficient; and I know people talk about inefficiencies, but that is part of a large organisation and we need to address those things. The reality is that in the absence of the Public Service, the kind of, what I would describe as, system of Government -- our system of democracy -- would not exist in the same way.

Mr. Deputy President, the beautiful thing about this country is that every five years or part thereof we have elections and every so often Governments change. What I can tell you is that, contrary to the concerns -- and I do not think I am giving anything away -- I have a Prime Minister who believes that we are given five years to serve and we should serve five years; so while my friends on the other side are busy campaigning, they will have to wait until the requisite time for that to happen, so you should enjoy your Christmas. The point I am making is that we in Barbados have seen an interesting phenomenon, because I know that in Gambia right now we have a situation where elections have taken place and somebody decides that they are not going to concede. Let us come a little closer. We have a system in our large neighbour up north where there is no immediate handover but we see an interesting scenario unfolding before our eyes. I say no more on that for several

reasons, but certainly it is an interesting case study to observe what is happening. People are making all kinds of predictions but that is not my purpose here. The point I am making is that we have a system that literally overnight, where there is a change of Government and a party wins and a party loses, Government continues. A Prime Minister is sworn in, his Attorney General is named very quickly, and civil servants go to work typically unless the new Government decides to have a public holiday, as happens sometimes here and elsewhere in the region; but Government continues and work continues. That is possible in the case of Barbados because of the kind of Public Service that we have.

Therefore, as it looks to regulate the operations -- whether it is the private sector in Barbados to regulate the whole question of infrastructural requirements, whether it is telecommunications, or whether our court systems are running -- all of these things give testimony to how important the Public Service is. We have, at the end of the day, to ensure citizens' welfare and citizens' security, so when we look at this we understand that in this Document and the piece of legislation which is captured in it, what we really have is a situation where Government is very complex. Government has a mix of very important responsibilities, and these things are necessary if we as a country are to ensure continuity. The point I am making is that the public sector is very important in ensuring continuity of Government and, as I illustrated, in ensuring that we recognise the responsibilities and so on.

Clearly, as Senator Todd pointed out, changes are inevitable. We are talking about a dynamic situation in which the country operates; whether in relation to its internal sectors or in relation to its partners within CARICOM. Again, we are a domestic Public Service, but one which also has to address the obligations of Barbados to its CARICOM partners, for example, at a regional level. It also has to participate in ensuring that we observe our obligations at the international level within the context of our participation in our multilateral arrangements, such as the United Nations. I think that at the end of the day, we cannot talk about the changes here unless we look at the complex nature of the Civil Service and appreciate that an exercise such as this is not something that is done in any haphazard manner but is done in order to ensure that we continue to be able to manage the complexities of Government. Therefore, this becomes a complex exercise. We also will have to make changes from time to time. As you would have heard, we would have had the Public Service General Order of 2008, but with the best of intentions, outside of the dynamic nature of what we are doing, there may have been certain errors or omissions which had to be corrected. In relation to the dynamic nature of changes, as we would have heard, there have been transfers of positions in Ministries, the reassignment or a realignment of Ministries, and so on. If I can illustrate that,

I would look at my own Ministry, for example. In 2008 when the allocations of ministerial responsibility were done, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade and International Business at the time had within that context a Minister and a Minister of State. Recognising the challenges faced by international business and the importance of it as a major contributor to the economy, that would have been taken out and added to related Ministries. Then you went back to what might have been an older configuration; that is foreign affairs and foreign trade with one Minister.

The interesting thing, though, is that in a previous Administration when it had that title, it also had in it a Minister of State as well, but it is important to recognise how these changes take place. Mr. Deputy President, I therefore felt that as we look at the piece of legislation, it was important to perhaps re-emphasise the background to all of these things in order to appreciate that we are talking about the management of a complex situation and a very large entity in relative terms, as we compare and contrast it with the private sector. Even the largest group of companies does not come close to the public sector in terms of diverse responsibility or the human resources.

One of the things I would want to say as we talk about this, which is to some extent tangential, is something, based on my background in management, which I anticipate will be given greater and greater attention by this Administration. I know much work is being done within the Ministry of the Civil Service and within the Training Division and so on. That has to do with the whole question of succession planning, because as we look at the structure and positions that would have been described, for example, succession planning becomes a very critical consideration. Like most institutions, what we have in institutions would be typically a cohort of people forming what I would call a band at certain levels, and it gives rise to certain phenomena such as retirement in waves. One of the things which we would have observed and which I certainly observed coming into Government at the time we did, was that we have had, have this year and will continue to have in the next couple of years, the retirement of a significant number of top-tier public officers.

5.05 p.m.

INSERT S27 JULIETTE

SEQ 28 BLANK

Wednesday, December 14, 2016

RESUMPTION

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: This Sitting is resumed.

ORDER No. 4

RESOLUTION TO APPROVE IN ACCORDANCE
WITH
SECTION 5 OF THE CROWN LANDS (VESTING
AND DISPOSAL) ACT, CAP. 225, THE SALE
TO THE BARBADOS NATIONAL TERMINAL
COMPANY LIMITED OF THE PARCEL OF
LAND, THE PROPERTY OF THE CROWN,
SITUATE AT COVERLEY IN THE PARISH
OF CHRIST CHURCH

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Senator Boyce, you have the Floor.

Senator the Hon. D. W. BOYCE: Madam President, this Resolution is the result of efforts that have been made over several years now to get the Ministry of Housing to convey by way of sale to the Barbados National Terminal Limited the parcel of land now occupied on the lease by the Barbados National Terminal Company Limited (BNTCL). The company BNTCL has leased this land since January 2004 on a long-term lease of 50 years with an option to renew for a further 25 years. The company under that lease currently pays an amount of almost \$500 000 per year in lease payments to the Government with reviews every five years.

The company has, of course, since 2004 had on that property the tanks in which the fuel for the country is stored and from which the fuel is dispensed to the marketers. That land of 14.2 hectares is approximately 35.2 acres of land and the company has spent over \$100 million in constructing those tanks. In accordance with what most commercial enterprises would want to have when you have invested that much money in improvements you would like to own the land on which you have made those improvements, and the company has for many years, as long as I have been responsible for the portfolio of energy which is since 2008, had been seeking to acquire those lands by way of purchase from the Government.

We have now come to the stage where the Ministry of Housing, Lands and Rural Development has agreed to the conveyance of the land to the Barbados National Terminal Company Limited. That land is being conveyed at what I understand to be full market value and so the Government will be able to get upfront the capitalised amount of the lease that we get. In other words, Mr. Deputy President, instead of getting \$488 000 per year the Government will now get upfront \$15.2 million for the property which is about 30 times the rental which means that the Government is getting a very substantial deal in this transaction. This will go through on the company's balance sheet which will clearly look a lot better because they will have the lands along with the buildings and the

terminals on it and it will be a much better position to stand on its own.

Mr. Deputy President, that is the background to this sale of the land to the company. As I say it has been a long time in getting the ministry to agree with it. We asked for \$488 000 per year in lease payments and that they could review it every five years so to persuade them that it was in the company's interest to convey the land, they have had a very considerable pickup. Thirty times the rental value is a very, very good deal for the Government, and so, Mr. Deputy President, I wish to move that this Resolution do now pass.

The question that the Resolution do now pass was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

ORDER No. 7

RESOLUTION TO APPROVE IN ACCORDANCE
WITH
SECTION 5 OF THE LAND ACQUISITION ACT,
CAP. 228 THE COMPULSORY ACQUISITION BY
THE CROWN OF A PARCEL OF LAND THE
PROPERTY OF MILDRED
PRINCE-CUMBERBATCH SITUATE AT
PRINCE ROAD, UPPER COLLYMORE ROCK
IN THE PARISH OF ST. MICHAEL IN
THIS ISLAND FOR THE PUBLIC
PURPOSE OF THE CONSTRUCTION
OF A ROUNDABOUT AND PRINCE
ROAD IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Senator McClean.

Senator the Hon. Miss M. P. O. McCLEAN: Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy President. I rise to speak to this Resolution. It is pretty straightforward. It is a Resolution to approve in accordance with Section 5 of the Land Acquisition Act, Cap. 228 the compulsory acquisition by the Crown of a parcel of land the property of Mildred Prince-Cumberbatch situate at Prince Road, Upper Collymore Rock in the parish of St. Michael, and it is for a public purpose which is being the construction of a roundabout, what is called the Prince Road Improvement Project.

If you visualise Collymore Rock and Upper Collymore Rock in particular, Mr. Deputy President, on any given day between what we call the normal rush hours I would say probably between 7:30 in the morning and 7:30 at night you would find that it is a heavily traversed stretch of road. Highway 6, I think, is the correct title of that particular part of the road network of Barbados and it clearly leads to a level of gridlock, something that is becoming very much a phenomenon in parts of Barbados because of the large numbers of private vehicles on the

road, et cetera and therefore the Ministry of Transport and Works in addressing issues of the road networks has to be constantly monitoring traffic developments and identifying possible solutions, and therefore this is one.

The work of the Ministry of Transport and Works has to be one of constant planning and preparation. The acquisition of this piece of land is obviously a necessary step in the process of addressing this particular set of congestion and hopefully improving the flow of traffic along Collymore Rock in and out of Bridgetown, so as such it is the standard approach where Government proposes to use land owns by a private citizen to acquire and if necessary to compulsorily acquire such land. At the end of the day it addresses not only the flow of traffic but it should address the issue of pedestrian safety as well. While Collymore Rock is in the vicinity of some very heavily populated neighborhoods, in terms of residential properties but we also know that in recent years we have seen the expansion of commercial properties and activities in that general area. Mr. Deputy President, this is part of an ongoing process, as I said, to enhance our road network, to address the question of the increasing numbers of vehicles on the road and ultimately to address how we can relief that. Mr. Deputy President, in addition to the physical infrastructure, i.e. our roundabouts, highways, et cetera, I am sure that my colleague, the Minister with responsibility for Energy and also the Minister of Transport and Works would speak of other plans for addressing those things.

Mr. Deputy President, one thing that I would want to flag that is tangential in such a debate when we talk about traffic is something that I personally believe in but that it would call for a level of self-discipline, that is the whole question of flexible working hours. I think that is absolutely important and useful. I personally have introduced my own flexible hours. I happened to be often the last person to leave the Ministry, in terms of officers or employees. I can do that safely because we have 24-hour security. Mr. Deputy President, the point I am making is that it makes more sense for me to sit in my office between 4.30 p.m. and maybe 7:00 o'clock or even later, rather than to sit in heavy traffic just idling. Instead, I can sit in my office and have some very productive times.

Mr. Deputy President, in fact, as I look at the clock I think I might make an exception this evening but persons, including my boss, will tell you that they know where to find me usually at 8:00 o'clock on Wednesday and Thursday nights. If the Senate meets and certainly after Cabinet, those are the days when I am away from the office that I go and make up for the time spent elsewhere.

Mr. Deputy President, I think that as we look at traffic solutions we also have to look at the issue of productivity of our workers, our business owners, even our school children and that we still need to revisit tht kind of

arrangement. It is not the focus of this Resolution and therefore I will not spend a long time on it but I believe it is an issues that needs to be tackled. I think that if we are talking about addressing congestion on our road, if we are talking about relieving the stress of sitting in lines of traffic, et cetera, an important thing that we should contemplate is a holistic approach which also factors in working hours.

Mr. Deputy President, of course, that has to involve some discussion with our Social Partnership, particularly the representatives of the various workers unions, also the management of companies, et cetera. I believe that we can come to some creative ways of enhancing worker satisfaction, while at the same time addressing the issue of productivity.

Mr. Deputy President, with those words I simply want to support this Resolution for the compulsory acquisition for the land described in the legislation. I support purpose for which it is being compulsorily acquired. I anticipate that as the Ministry of Housing, Lands and Rural Development and the Ministry of Transport and Works continue to work together to collaborate, I believe there will be a time when other ministries, most specially the Ministry of Labour as it relates to workers across the country and even the Ministry of the Civil Service can get together to look at some of these issues.

Mr. Deputy President, I am sure mature enough. I know many people do it informally and in some organisations they do have formal arrangements. I have a niece who for many years has been going to work at 7:00 o'clock on mornings. Her organisation has a flexible arrangement where there is a co-period of time during which the staff should be there, then they either come before or after but there is that block of time when that falls into everybody's schedule, but people can start early or close to that time and can then adjust their arrival and departure.

Mr. Deputy President, I think that this is an important compulsory acquisition which is seeking to address a continuing problem that we face in Barbados at this time. With those few words, I beg to move that the Resolution do how pass.

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Senator Abrahams, you have the Floor.

Senator W. A. ABRAHAMS: Mr. Deputy President, I just want to weigh in very briefly. Normally I do not object to land acquisitions for public purpose. Normally I would not get up and speak on this but I believe that Government is about priorities. Most of what we have had today so far have been as a result of dealing with

borrowing or with money coming into the Government. The last Resolution put forward by Senator Boyce which sought to capitalise on a long-term lease -- bring it to an end and get the money up-front -- with the economic situation being what it is now, I can see the wisdom and the sense in that. I hope there is no oil on the land but provided that there was no oil and it was simply a leasehold for the purpose of buildings or tanks, then I can have no objection to that.

Mr. Deputy President, a lot is wrong in Barbados and there are a lot of things that need attending to. I believe that a lot of things have now passed the stage of being urgent and are now near catastrophic. Mr. Deputy President, I looked at this acquisition of land. I do not know how much money is for the land. I do not know what is the market value of the land, but I think of how many garbage trucks that can buy. Most of my thinking is now in terms of how many garbage trucks can that buy because we are passed the point where it is critical to get the fleet of the garbage trucks up to what it is supposed to be. Mr. Deputy President, if Government is minded to spend money, then let us spend money on that.

Mr. Deputy President, I look at this and I think maybe a roundabout might be useful but is it critical at this juncture? Is it not more critical to debush Barbados? We are completely overgrown to the point where it is disgusting. I am sure that if the original settlers of Barbados happened to sail by again would recognise Barbados in its current state. It probably has not been as heavily forested as it is now since we were originally settled. I am sorry that Professor Fraser is not here because the Honourable Member could give me the exact date and the exact persons but I think the point is made.

Mr. Deputy President, I look at this and I think, yes, we have some traffic situations in Collymore Road, yes, it would be ideal to have a traffic solution, but we have been putting up with traffic concerns for a little while, we can probably put up with them for a little bit longer, but we cannot delay cleaning the drains and having a serious drainage cleaning and drainage maintenance programme. To me that is more a priority than the acquisition of land at this stage.

Mr. Deputy President, I am happy for Mildred Cumberbatch because if she is not using her land, that she can get it sold. I hope that she actually does receive the money and we need to look once again at that, that the Government must not use people lands when it is compulsorily acquired unless they receive their due. There are too many people whose lands have been acquired by the successive Governments whose lands are being utilised for the public purpose for which acquired and the prior landowners has still not been compensated for their land, so all things being equal, I am happy for Mrs. Mildred

Cumberbatch if she gets her money but I think Mrs. Mildred Cumberbatch could wait a little bit longer until the issue with the South Coast Sewerage Project has been sorted out.

Mr. Deputy President, I mean, there are a lot of critical things wrong right now in Barbados. We cannot laugh at them because they are critical to the point of being dangerous. The bushes are a concern because that also leads to drainage issues. The waterways in Barbados are blocked. I am sure that had something to do with the heavy flooding that we had recently. The country is overgrown, a lot of the wells are blocked.

Mr. Deputy President, I was taking a trip through Christ Church East recently and was looking at wells. I even ventured into Christ Church South, to Enterprise where my parents live. There is a well on the corner of Enterprise Close that you cannot even tell it is a well anymore, the bushes and the 'river tamarind' are higher than the houses that are around it, and this is a common feature throughout Barbados. If we do not get the overgrowth of our country in hand, we will continue to have the flooding which we had on November 29. That amount of rain, all things being equal, should never have resulted in that amount of flooding. Something is wrong. We need to pay attention to the things that are critical. Fix them and maintain them before we look to spend any more money on things which are optional. Right now, the acquisition of land to put a roundabout, as far as I am concerned, is optional. It does not fall into the realm of the things which are critical; which affect life and limb. Really and truly, Sir, I have been following what has been happening on the South Coast. I had the misfortune yesterday of walking on the South Coast road and being splashed, and I anecdotally told it to some of my friends during the break. Sorry, I said friends; fellow Senators on the other side. Okay, we will use the collective term, "friends". I was walking on the South Coast road yesterday and it was smelling high, and I got splashed, and I dashed into the bar that has the two pool tables out there by Guang Dong Restaurant. I took off my shirt and I washed down myself with the soap from the tap, and I dried off with the tissues, put back on my shirt and went back outside. That is true. We have people who are facing this day-in and day-out.

The South Coast situation is critical. It is now well past time that the Government make a serious attempt to communicate with the public as to what is going on. Identify conclusively what the issues are and what is being done to correct them. The people need reassurance from their Government that the matter is being taken seriously and steps are being taken to correct it. The tourists need that reassurance too. It is not good enough to say, "We are looking at it." By now, the problem should have been identified to the point where somebody in authority can

come out and say, "This is what the problem is." From the time you can say, "This is what the problem is," or "These three things are where the problem lies," then we can go about addressing them and allocating funds to address them. The addressing of the sewerage situation on the South Coast should be Priority No. 1 for Barbados. I do not want to minimise the water issues that other people or other parishes are having, so that should also rank up there and they should both be Priority No. 1. If we are dealing with this one, the possibility for an even more serious health and environmental issue arising is something that we cannot ignore and Barbados cannot afford. You cannot have a situation with raw sewage in the streets; and for those who dispute it is raw sewage, anybody can check me afterwards. I have videos on my phone which show the actual proof that it is raw sewage floating in the streets. This cannot be tolerated. It cannot be condoned. It must be addressed as a matter of urgency. Every possible resource that can be spared in dealing with that should be applied in dealing with it. Lip service is not doing anybody any good. We need to see action on this and a conclusive statement from somebody in authority as to what is being done and when you expect it is going to be cleared up.

There is a man who only got attention today. His whole gap is flooded out, by Gentle Breeze Apartments where all of the lady's tourists left. That has been going on for two months. It is only because he took to Social Media and posted the photographs that the Barbados Water Authority went down there today. He went right up to the water and posted the photographs, so that you could not deny what it was you were seeing. He has been trying to pump off his gap with his own pump for the last two months. This is what I consider a priority. I am afraid that somebody or a collection of people may get sick as a result of this. That situation coupled with water shortages has potential for disaster; it is a recipe for disaster. I accept that things go wrong. I accept that with the best maintenance in the world -- which is not the case here -- things will break down. It is what the Government then does when things happen that counts. It is how the Government addresses and reassures the people that things are being done that matters.

Yes, I am happy for Mildred Cumberbatch, especially since she wanted to sell her piece of land. I am happy for her that she can get a couple dollars in her hand, but if we are looking at spending money at this point in time, I believe there are things which are a lot more critical than dealing with a compulsory acquisition of land for the purpose of building a roundabout. We are about to go on vacation now, but I would happily come back from my vacation to deal or debate with anything that relates to the resolution of the sewerage situation on the South Coast. I would happily come back next week or in the lull between Christmas and the New Year because it is that critical. I am a Barbadian first and foremost, and my concern is for the

people who live in Barbados and the people who visit Barbados. This has gone on long enough. The silence of the Government, or the lack of direction of the Government on this issue, can no longer be condoned. It has to stop. Somebody has to say something. The lack of attendance by Government officials at the town hall meeting yesterday was almost a slap in the face for the people who bothered to put it on. People wanted answers. People wanted to ask questions, but it makes no sense directing questions to people who cannot answer them. That was the head time and the perfect time for Government to deal with its people who bothered to put on a meeting, to state what their concerns were and to try hopefully to get some direction, some plan, something they could take back and digest, or even lend their support or advice to.

It is Christmas and we are taking this into Christmas; let us not take this into the New Year. Even if it cannot be fixed before the turn of the year, let there at least be a conclusive plan that Barbadians and the users of the South Coast can see that there is a light at the end of the tunnel in the New Year. For a Government official to come forward and say, "It is not affecting the whole country. There are other beaches tourists can use. Do not mind that tourists have left the South Coast. They have found other places to go, and perhaps that is a good thing," is insulting. It is disgraceful and it trivialises the problem on the South Coast. I am urging and I am asking that somebody be listening and that the Leader of Government Business would take back the seriousness of this to whom she answers. Whatever it costs, there has to be a quick fix and there has to be a permanent fix. Right now, I would even take a quick fix because I am now not going to walk on that road again, and that is me; somebody who loves Barbados and who has a vested interest in Barbados. Imagine if it were a visitor who did not have the same love for Barbados as I do. He would not have come back.

I am happy for Mildred, but I believe that any money being spent now should be spent to address the water issues in most of Barbados and definitely to address the South Coast sewerage issues. I thank you, Sir.

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Senator Worrell.

Senator A.R. WORRELL: Thank you, Mr. Deputy President. I rise to support the Resolution for the acquisition of the land for the purpose of the road and traffic improvements in the Collymore Rock area. I will say that this is indeed possibly necessary at this time, because for those of us who would traverse that area, Collymore Rock is a high-traffic area and there are quite a number of businesses there, and we do know on a daily basis the difficulty you would have with the traffic. That in itself impacts on productivity, and any road solutions that would help to improve the traffic flow in that area and the productivity of persons who utilise that area should be

commended. There are quite a number of businesses within the Collymore Rock area. We have recently built a new headquarters for the Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC) within that area. You have insurance companies which operate within that area.

6.12 p.m.

INSERT S32 JULIETTE

Wednesday, December 14, 2016

Senator A. R. WORRELL: ...you want to talk about implications and utterances, you need to think about that. Think about the message you are sending. I am saying today that the Members of the Opposition are sending the wrong message. You do not have the solution to any of the problems but you are making the situation far worse for Barbadians. Why do you not sit back for a little bit and listen and try to understand? I would advise that they sit back for a little bit and listen and try to understand and stop trying to feed fear and doubts into the minds of the people of Barbados. I have recognised that the biggest problem we have in Barbados happens to be the miscommunication and confusion which is often started from Senators on the other side of this Chamber. Many of the misconceptions and the confusion have started in the offices of the Opposition and they have no justification for what they are saying. Right now they know that no one holds them to account for anything that they say, at least they think so, and they just mouth off everything without facts and without any basis which is similar to what Senator Abrahams did. He would have talked about the flooding and the rainfall and I would have him know that Barbados was not the only country that was impacted by that weather system on the 29th. St. Vincent had it worse than us and Trinidad and Tobago had it just as bad as us. We cannot control the weather system. As much as you all think that you are omnipotent and you want to take the place of God, you cannot do it. We do not control the weather system. To give people the impression that nothing is being done...

It does not come to this Chamber to be discussed because it was a money Bill, but a few days ago in the Other Place the matter in terms of a de-bushing programme was discussed, a programme which started in earnest I believe in November. We spoke about it in the Budget that a de-bushing programme would be done to clean up and beautify Barbados and that programme has already started. The money has already been allocated and persons are working, so for Senator Abrahams to give the impression that nothing is being done is absolutely wrong. I would say that if you want to show if you have any influence in the areas that you are hoping to represent why not bring together a gathering of people to go and clean up the areas. Those are the things that we need to do. Everything does not have to come from Government. You are talking about bush that

is on somebody's property and next to someone's house. Why do we need to wait for someone to come from the Ministry of Health to clean a well that is right next to our house when we know that if that well is blocked and the rains falls our backyard would be flooded out? Do you not think that you should take on some personal responsibility to clean it? That is what being a patriotic citizen and someone who is interested in community building should be suggesting and preaching to the people that you intend to represent. You cannot develop this mendicant society where people think that everything must come from the Government and that they cannot do anything to help themselves. After 50 years of independence you mean to tell me that we must still preach that in Barbados. I think that is the backward step of the Opposition and that is where we need to rise from. We need to move beyond that and recognise that we have to take and accept some sort of social responsibility.

I admonish Senator Abrahams to go and look up social responsibility and put it into his vocabulary and into his next contribution in here because when you come into this place Senator Abrahams and you try to give the impression that a Government that is working hard to meet the needs of the people under economic hardship that is doing the best with very little resources that we are not doing a good job, it would be struck down and it would not go unnoticed so I would want to say that we need to get away from this histrionic form of politics and stop spreading fear among the people. We have to accept when things are going well and when people are doing the best in their situation.

This debate does not concern the South Coast Sewerage Project. This concerns a traffic solution in the area of Collymore Rock and that is what I will put it on. You cannot give people the impression that you are going to develop a Government that every single stump toe that you get that you are going to rush and deal with it, it cannot work so. You cannot manage your business so or you cannot manage your family so, you have to prioritise and work through situations. You cannot give the people the impression that by stopping this measly \$200 000 initiative will bring a solution to a multimillion dollar problem. Do not do it. It is unfair. It is not right so do not give people that impression. If you come to this Chamber make sure that you come with the facts and that you come to argue points that are relevant and that can stand up to scrutiny because what was just done by Senator Abrahams cannot stand up to scrutiny. You cannot compare a \$200 000 solution that would help to improve traffic flow in an area that is burdened with a problem that did not just start overnight and would probably take a good while in order to be fixed... You cannot give people the impression that nothing is being done when you know for certain that the technocrats have been dealing with the issue.

None of us as politicians in this place or in the Other Place does not have the technical expertise to solve that problem, we have to wait on the advice of the technocrats and I am certain that those technocrats know very well what they are doing and it has already been said that the resources have already been allocated to fix that problem. The problem became worse because of the heavy rainfall but I guess that we are supposed to be blamed for that. We should not allow the rain to fall so heavily in Barbados at this time.

Sir, I would urge that Senator Abrahams think carefully about what he is bringing and try to set himself apart and not just be led like a lamb to the slaughter because if he does that he will be slaughtered.

Asides.

Senator A. R. WORRELL: You are just saying that you want to be slaughtered.

Mr. Deputy President, I would just want to urge that we get away from this dramatic form of politics and start talking facts and start preaching solutions about things that would help to turn this country around.

I support this particular Resolution and this very simple solution that will possibly ease traffic congestion in an area that is pivotal to Barbados. It is so pivotal that you cannot even find time to close off the road to properly fix the potholes and in the road because it is a vital artery and this simple solution would go a long way in terms of improving the quality of life for persons who utilise it on a daily basis.

I thank you, Mr. Deputy President.

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Senator Sir Roy.

Senator Sir Roy TROTMAN: Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy President. I did promise myself that I would not have entered into discussions this afternoon because I felt there were some things which were controversial in nature but which could be dealt with at some other more propitious occasion, but I do wish to make some comments regarding this particular Resolution which is before us, and I would wish to make the point up-front that it is important to improve travel provisions wherever we are in this country and that I am all for any arrangement which will help to improve travel.

Mr. Deputy President, I cannot be so naïve, however, as to suggest to you Mr. Deputy President, that because somebody raises questions regarding the level of prioritization that there is in a set of initiatives, that it follows that that person is either unpatriotic or unsensible or indeed insensible. I have had the honour and the

pleasure to sit perhaps in this very place for several years now, since 1994, and I have seen Governments come and Governments go and I recognised that whoever constitutes the body that forms the minor two in this Honourable Chamber has to subject himself or herself sometimes to a level of harassment that sometimes goes beyond the point of reason because it would seem as though there is no room in the Opposition politics that we preach in this country for any position other than the position of the party that forms the Government, and that is unfortunate.

Mr. Deputy President, I think that this discussion which the Leader of Government Business very kindly opened to allow for expansive debate. This discussion permits for us to discuss matters such as opening hours, working hours, questions of cost efficiencies, questions of prioritization and indeed many others that have to do with work and with building a community. Mr. Deputy President, but if it has been opened in that way then clearly other people are going to raise other measures of their expectations and push the lines of their own interests.

Mr. Deputy President, if I were taking a particular side in this debate, I would express my unhappiness with the daily slants in the media that border on hysteria and endeavour to suggest that by the time Christmas comes there is not going to be a Barbados to manage. I got worried about that because I wonder what pride we take I holding up our own nation, not to ridicule, but to the level of ridicule which becomes the daily diet on the front page of some of our media.

Mr. Deputy President, I think that is equally as bad as an arrangement which says thou shall not say anything negative or challenged anything that I do or say when I am the Government, and I have been experiencing that.

Asides.

Senator Sir ROY TROTMAN: Mr. Deputy President, I am hearing asides and I am not supposed to be hearing them, Mr. Deputy President, but I know my experience as a Member of this Honourable Chamber and I know my own experiences as Chairman of UCAL, so do not let me go there. Mr. Deputy President, I am merely saying that we have to recognise that this country belongs to all of us and that neither side has a blank cheque on how far we could pull it down, how far we could destroy it because it is better to be a one-eyed king in the land of the blind. All I am saying to either person who wants to challenge what I say, that I believe that it is also important and also relevant for us to bear in mind that we also serve when we stand in line and that we do not have to be waiving the broomstick to be serving the country.

Mr. Deputy President, the truth in this particular subject from my perspective lies in the question that was

raised by Senator Abrahams. I saw it as a question which may have been carried further because naturally Senator Abrahams has an interest beyond that question itself. The question as I understood it is where is the level of priority in the initiative that is being taken? Sir, if nothing else had been said, it would have been a fore question that I would are anybody to challenge because it is a fore question and I do not accept any argument that says it is only \$2 000 or \$200 000 incurring because it is a mere little roundabout. I do not think so but I do not know because I have not been given any information that gives me the details. I am merely saying that it is a question which all of us in this Honourable Chamber have a responsibility to raise on the behalf of those persons who cannot be here and who expect us to raise those questions on their behalf.

Mr. Deputy President, we do not have constituents per se, except for those Independence who may speak and who know that they may have been chosen because they have a particular body of interest for which they are expect to speak. For those others who may have constituencies in the grooming, who may or may not be here, they may also have an interest, but when I speak I know that I have a large body of people who will expect me in this Honourable Chamber to raise the plights of the vulnerable working man or working woman. Indeed, I consider that the only reason I am here is for that because somebody has to speak from that perspective.

Mr. Deputy President, I too would ask a question. In the scheme of things, where does this particular initiative stand? If it stands in a situation where there are costs of any significance to be met, are there not the possibilities that there are other more important, more critical, more urgent issues that might bring greater levels of satisfaction, particularly at this time?

Mr. Deputy President, I am not going to get hypersensitive or paranoid and refer to any roads where one-third is covered by debris and where it is required for us to have corrective action, nor am I going to speak about holes near where I live or anywhere else because these are all things we see and we know and we understand. Sir, I agree with Senator Worrell that any Government that needs to have itself returned to office wants to be able to bring the greatest levels of satisfaction to as many of those problems as they are possible, but that is not to say that anybody who shares a different view, or anybody who has a mutual view may not be within his rights to say that they do not like the sound of the silence that from time to time there is regarding answers that are required by the public.

However, that is not to say that anybody who shares a different view or anybody who has a neutral view may not be within his rights to say that they do not like the lack of voice, the sound of the silence that there is from time to time regarding answers that are required by the public. I do

not know the occasion that Senator Abrahams is referring to, where he said there were not people around to give the public answers through public meetings, but I do share the view that I am concerned that very frequently there are not enough public statements being made so that the public can understand and relate to the difficulties which the Government and any government in the Caribbean is facing and would be facing in the scenarios that present themselves to Third World developing countries in our region. Very often people will understand and will sympathise with what is happening. Their problems lie in that they do not always hear; and the worst thing you can do is to feed people on benign neglect. You say to them, "I love you," and demonstrate a neglect that makes them feel that love is not spelt in the way we always understand it. I would argue with anybody that if we have a problem, it may not always be that the problem lies in any Government inactivity; it lies in Government's failure to take into its confidence the masses of the people who are experiencing problems and want answers to their problems.

When it comes to this roundabout, I agree with Senator Worrell that we do not need to put an unfortunate person's name in the public domain over an issue where she may be suffering like everybody else. I think that is most unfortunate, but that aside, it is not improper for us to raise the question regarding the prioritisation of this issue, and regarding the need that there is and there must be a debate about working hours, a debate about opening hours, a debate about efficiencies and how we utilise our time. People must stop believing that the trade union movement stands opposed to those forms of changes. I, for one, have said many times now over many years that I find it clearly as an example completely beyond my comprehension that we can in our country have a hospital service at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital (QEH) where we are hoping to give the best kind of hospital service in the Caribbean; 24 hours a day, seven days a week but where we have Monday to Friday service of labour. I said publicly that does not make sense, and there are other areas where it does not make sense. I do not believe that there can be any group of workers who would want to press that as an argument. They may want to say that there should be dialogue where people can enter into meaningful discussion regarding how we are going to transition into a meaningful 24-hour by seven-day service to satisfy our movement towards becoming a world power and a First World power. All I am saying here, Mr. President, is that we have to leave more of the tribalism out of our politics and bring more of the statesmanlike position into our debates, because at the end of the day it is not about stealing apples and going into a corner and eating those; it is about building a country and trying to share the fruit of what we grow and build together. I still would wish to know about the prioritisation. I still would feel that the Debate would be properly centred if we saw the whole thing within that framework. I am obliged to you for entertaining me.

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Senator Todd.

Senator Hon. P.M.T. TODD: Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy President. I rise to support this Resolution before this august Chamber and to state that I make no excuses for the Government pressing ahead with this very important initiative. As I have said before, Mr. Deputy President, I am trained in mathematics. We would have studied set theory where we talk about the concept of sets being mutually exclusive, where there is no intersection; and I would relate that concept to what we are dealing with to say that we go through the annual Estimates exercise where the Government outlines its various programmes Ministry by Ministry. The problem I have with arguments presented by the Opposition this evening is that we do not have to choose one or the other. Because we are addressing the issue of the sewerage concerns along the South Coast, does that mean we shut down the rest of Government? Clearly not, Mr. Deputy President. This is what Senator Andre Worrell is essentially saying; that both are priorities. They are not mutually exclusive nor in fact mutually exhaustive. There are several other priorities that we would not be referring to this evening besides these two. A responsible Government has to ensure that all the various priorities within the country at a given time are addressed simultaneously and not one or the other, Mr. Deputy President; so we make no apologies for pressing ahead with this because this is a priority and it does not mean that we are not able to address in a speedy manner the Resolution to be issued in relation to the South Coast sewerage system, Mr. Deputy President.

I would laud this Administration, since regaining office in 2008, for addressing the issue of public safety on our highways in terms of the construction of roundabouts. We had two roundabouts to which I can refer there by Boarded Hall and by Coral Ridge, and other areas such as Orange Hill, where pedestrians and motorists would have lost their lives or sustained serious injury because of the unsafe junctions there. This Administration made these roundabouts a priority to save lives, Mr. Deputy President. There is nothing more urgent than the saving of lives, Mr. Deputy President. I myself have traversed this corridor of our land space on many occasions - that is the Collymore Rock-Wildey area - and on occasions the gridlock which Senator Worrell mentioned, I do not need to repeat, is apparent at peak periods and rush hours in the morning and evening. On some of these occasions, with traffic from Wildey, even up as high as Sargeants Village right down to Lower Collymore Rock and River Road, we have had emergency vehicles having challenges, be they ambulance, police or fire vehicles, again responding to emergencies. They find it difficult to negotiate those roads, and traffic on both sides have to actually ride the sidewalks and sometimes break the concrete slabs, which were not made for this, in the process.

6.51 p.m.

INSERTS36 JULIETTE

Wednesday, December 14, 2016

Senator H. A. HUSBANDS: I did not want to participate in this debate but I am forced to and I will tell you why. There is a serious problem on the South Coast of Barbados involving the Sewerage System. I have not gone up there, I was not splashed by anybody but I know that there is a serious problem, but to come to this Chamber to argue or to imply that the subject of this acquisition should not even be discussed because there is a serious problem on the South Coast with sewerage is such a false argument.

This week I had in my office parents from the Combermere School who were concerned about legitimate issues facing their children, so I should have said to them go from me there is an issue on the South Coast with sewerage, when I deal with that I will come back to you. That is the kind of argument that Senators come to present. Outside of these Chambers, I just pass in the corridor, are Christmas trees. There is a serious problem of sewerage on the South Coast of Barbados so we should suspend Christmas. This is how ridiculous these arguments are.

I knew that the Honourable Senator who is not here was up to this because he hung around all day dodging and ducking, the calypsonian sings the song "I ducking", and that at the last minute he would do this, so I waited. I said in this Chambers before that we summoned a meeting of the Social Partnership and that Item 1 on the Agenda was the issue of the challenges with sewerage on the South Coast. At that meeting the management of the Barbados Water Authority was present. The meeting was chaired by Senator Boyce. The unions were there.

Asides.

Senator H. A. HUSBANDS: Some unions chose not to come. Senator Boyce actually launched an enquiry at the start of the meeting as to why the unions were not there. The National Union of Public Workers was not there. The Congress of Trade Unions and Staff Associations of Barbados (CTUSAB) was represented. I was there and in one of my several hats I know I could speak on behalf other Barbados Workers' Union, but the Barbados Chambers of Commerce was there and the Barbados Hotel and Tourism Authority was there represented by their current outgoing Executive Director and the incoming Director and Item 1 on the Agenda was the issue of the challenges with sewerage on the South Coast and the media reported on it, so when the Honourable Senator comes to this Chamber and says nothing is being done nobody told me...

Senator W. A. ABRAHAMS: On a point of order. The Honourable Senator is misleading the Chamber. I did not say that nothing was being done, Sir. How many times must I repeat this? I did not say nothing was being done.

Senator H. A. HUSBANDS: I accept that he did not say that, Mr. Deputy President, but I am telling him what was done. I am going to speak loudly. We had a presentation following about industrial relations but the entire meeting explored... and I reported on it in this Chamber so this idea... The people at the Barbados Water Authority, the Manager and the Chief Engineer, reported what it would cost not only to fix for the South Coast Sewerage Project but what it will cost to rebuild the entire water system that was allowed to fall into disrepair under the Barbados Labour Party. They said it will cost about \$1 billion, and the meeting was astounded that they could have served this country for all of those years and allowed the Barbados water system to collapse in good days and he comes in here this evening ducking and dodging. Well, I am telling you what is going on and I am telling you in addition to the 15 years.

Asides.

Senator H. A. HUSBANDS: I am speaking to you.

Asides.

Senator H. A. HUSBANDS: Mr. Deputy President, the Honourable Senator spoke about de-bushing. This Honourable Senator does not read the newspaper, he does not listen to the news and he does not come to the Chamber regularly to be educated and to hear what is going on. The de-bushing programme was discussed and the money was allocated in the Other Place and the concern in the Other Place by the Opposition was that the Democratic Labour Party was getting Christmas jobs, they were not concerned about de-bushing. One Honourable Member was heard to say he wants a fair de-bushing programme. The Honourable Senator walks in here ducking and dodging today talking about de-bushing. The money is allocated. People have started working. The programme that they called for for the longest while is en train and their only concern is who is working and wanting a fair de-bushing programme, and that is what we have to be confronted with so these false arguments... It is regrettable that the lady whose land is being acquired Christian name is being used in this way.

I want to say that we had at the level of the Social Partnership full discussion on this issue of sewerage on the South Coast and even on the West Coast. The meeting was that far and the members of the private sector organisations, the Barbados Chambers of Commerce, asked very detailed and pointed questions to the representatives of the Barbados Water Authority some of which were

difficult to answer. Some of them had the fellows stunned. That happened in this country under this Democratic Labour Party Government in relation to this problem.

There is this talk about priorities and prioritising. I understand that our priority is to rebuild this economy with special emphasis on areas like tourism and that is why Sam Lord's Castle is a priority. At the meeting I was actually annoyed with a member of the private sector because he seemed to be suggesting that the work to be done at the airport was not a priority, but it is work that is to be done at Sam Lord's Castle and at the airport, as Senator Worrell said, that are paying the bills right now, that are investments. We could get a new hospital depending on how successful we are in generating revenues in tourism. Mr. Deputy President, as we set about these priorities in the economy, in tourism, in International Business, etcetera, emergencies and urgent issues arise, that is the nature of life and this water situation is one that has arisen before. We could foresee part of it but the other part that has accentuated the problem, as we have said here before, the drought meant that we had to divert resources from one area in order to be able to do that and the work is not yet complete. Mr. Deputy President, it is estimated that it is going to cost in excess of \$1 billion to rebuild the entire system, inclusive of what we need to do in relation to the Sewerage Treatment Plant.

Mr. Deputy President, let me assure this Honourable Chamber that as a result of those discussions at the Social Partnership, the resources have been mobilised to deal with this issue on the south coast of Barbados. I am confident that the Government has taken the correct approach in dealing with this matter. As I said, we have summoned the Social Partnership together and have discussed it with them. The Social Partnership, including Trade Union Movement and private sector had a number of solutions. All of these things have been taken on board and we have set about to get the corrective work done.

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: The Honourable Member has five minutes left in which to conclude.

Senator H. A. HUSBANDS: Mr. Deputy President, that is the important bottom line, so let us do away with these false arguments about this roundabout, about this thing or about that thing, all of that is irrelevant. I am confident that we are on the right path in this area and in many other areas in this country. I thank you.

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Senator Ince, you have the Floor.

Senator J. INCE: Mr. Deputy President, I rise in support of this Resolution that is before this Honourable Chamber. It is a Resolution that speaks to the compulsory acquisition of land for the construction of a roundabout. It

is a Resolution that clearly demonstrates that this Democratic Labour Party Government is proactive when it comes to dealing with the issues of security as well as the travelling public safety.

Mr. Deputy President, while listening to the presentation of Senator Abrahams, I was led to believe that the construction process of a roundabout has already started. I was led to believe that we had moved the houses from the area and as a result of the start of the construction of the roundabout, then you had a right to ask about planning and priorities. I heard the Minister of Transport and Works mentioned that as a result of the risk at the junction of Windsor and Brighton that a roundabout going to be constructed there. Mr. Deputy President, it has not as yet started, but that is what you call proactive planning, you identify the risk, you identify the exposure, you identify the risk to public safety and you start putting a plan in place. Is it wrong to do that?

Mr. Deputy President, again the Minister mentioned that the junction at Carmichael that abut-and-around Buckley, the Old Works Hill, and Constant, St. George, is a dangerous junction. The Minister said that it was a death trap and that the Government was going to put a roundabout there. Mr. Deputy President, is it wrong to plan for that? Therefore I am listening to the utterances of the Opposition about this whole ideas about the Resolution and what we are planning and using

Mr. Deputy President, a couple of months ago there was a lot of talk about the water situation, I am not hearing that now. They were saying the same thing, that the priorities of Government were wrong, that Government must get them right. Mr. Deputy President, we were experiencing drought, now with the rains we are having unprecedented showers. Do you expect that you are not going to have bush and grass? Sir, all that the Opposition has to do is to pray and ask the Lord that when He is sending the rains to also send it with Roundup, so that the mixture of rain and Roundup would dry up the grass.

Mr. Deputy President, I have never heard so much nonsense in my life, that when you are getting rain you complain about bush. Mr. Deputy President, my grandmother has always said to me that people like the rain but that they are not prepared to deal with the mud, so that the Opposition likes the rain but complain about the bush. Mr. Deputy President, it was stated clearly that as a result of the heavy rains Government knew that we would have had excessive grass and we decided that we would put a debushing programme in place. The Opposition called that debushing programme political tricks, that we were hiring for election.

Mr. Deputy President, the problem with the Opposition is that they remind me of the Book of James,

Chapter 4:8. It says that a double-minded man is unstable in his ways and that is the problem with the Opposition. what happened is that they are confused as to the planning of Government, so that as far as this Administration is concerned, whenever we attempt to bring a solution to a problem they are so double-minded in their ways that they cannot spot a solution nor can they see when we are taking the right action.

Mr. Deputy President, I am saying to the Opposition not to be in a hurry, an election is going to be called, wait. Sir, when you see all of these complaints, one would get the impression that nothing right is happening in this country. Sir, one would get the impression that the entire economy of Barbados has fallen apart; that people in Barbados are wondering all over the place; that there are no houses; that there is no public transportation and that there is no healthcare system. That is the kind of argument that you get on a daily basis.

Mr. Deputy President, I want to speak to the people of Barbados and say to them that they are in good hands; that the Democratic Labour Party is managing the affairs of this country in an effective and efficient manner; that we are managing financial, social, as well as the economic affairs of this country and that the Opposition is not going to dictate to us the direction in which we should go.

Mr. Deputy President, let me say thanks to all Barbadians. We have just concluded a wonderful 50th Anniversary of Independence. Mr. Deputy President, the Opposition said there was nothing to celebrate about, that we had water problems, sewerage problems on the south coast, problems with bus transportation, but on the day of the chain link you can see Members of the same Opposition wanting to hop onto the bandwagon with the Broken Trident that was supposed to be kicked over and knocked down. They were taking pictures of the Broken Trident. When they realised that the country was going ahead and leaving them, they said, "No, let us hop on." Bajans have this term, "hop on" and "hop the bus." We are managing. I am not going to sit idly by. I was looking forward to a quiet evening but after I heard the presentation from Senator Abrahams where he waited until the end and said, "No, I am not coming at the beginning. I am going to come at the end and I am going to do it in a diplomatic way and put a lash on you that, even after the Christmas holiday, you are still going to feel the burning in the skin," I said it is not going to work with this Senator Ince in this Senate. It would have to be another time because I, this Senator, am not going to allow the Barbados Labour Party to spread vicious rumour and malicious gossip, Mr. Deputy President. That is what it is. Vicious rumour and malicious gossip to the people of Barbados, trying to create the impression that there is mismanagement.

Mr. Deputy President, things which you say may come back to haunt you if you are not careful. I read in the Nation newspaper statements being made about the Public Accounts Committee that should not have been made. These were things that were said in the Public Accounts Committee, Mr. Deputy President. They should not be in the public domain; that is one of the rules of the Public Accounts Committee. There are Members of this Senate who sit on that Committee creating impressions in the minds of Barbadians.

POINT OF ORDER

Senator W.A. ABRAHAMS: I rise on a Point of Order, Mr. Deputy President. The Honourable Senator is misleading this Chamber and casting aspersions on me. I waited patiently to see where he was going with that. Unless the Honourable Senator can point to any statement which I have made or was reported to have been made by me with respect to the goings-on in the Public Accounts Committee or the conduct thereof, then the Honourable Senator is out of place with that comment, and I would ask that he withdraw that, Sir. I have not said anything in the Press or to anybody about the conduct or the goings-on or the affairs of the Public Accounts Committee, so when the Honourable Senator points at me and says, "The Honourable Senator in this Chamber," and then proceeds to talk about misleading people, then I have a problem with that, Sir. Unless he can point to or quote something said by me related to the Public Accounts Committee, then he is going down the wrong line and I am asking you to control him, Sir.

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Thank you. Senator Ince, just be careful....

Senator J. INCE: Mr. Deputy President, I am going to repeat what I said; statements were made about the Public Accounts Committee. I never mentioned Senator Abrahams' name. When I speak, my hands go in different directions. If he is guilty, then say to the....

Senator W.A. ABRAHAMS: With respect, Sir, he is misleading the Chamber again. He said, "And the Honourable Senator in this Chamber," and then spoke about misleading the public. That was when I got up. I did not interject when he started to talk about people's statements because statements were made. It was when he referred to me and then continued speaking about misleading the public, which I have an issue with, Sir. I did not make any statements in the Press about anything that happened with respect to the Public Accounts Committee. I want to make that perfectly clear.

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Senator Ince.

Senator J. INCE: Mr. Deputy President, when we speak of priority -- I am going to repeat it -- the years between 2000 and 2005 were the richest years in this country, and the Barbados Labour Party did nothing to any of the agencies. They allowed the Barbados Water Authority and Transport Board.... We came to office and found the Transport Board running on a bank overdraft of \$10 million a month with an interest rate of 8.75 per cent. Mr. Deputy President, they collected Value Added Tax (VAT) \$3.2 billion, and they collected Excise Tax \$872 million. This is between 2000 and 2005; the times of Spartacus and Rome. Import duties collected were \$998 million. Mr. Deputy President, the total collected was \$5.2 billion.

Aside.

Senator J. INCE: They collected \$5.2 billion in the years 2000 to 2005; not a cent spent on the water system of Barbados, not a cent on Transport Board, not a cent to pay United Commercial Autoworkers Limited (UCAL). We are going to deal with the UCAL problem; this Administration is going to deal with it.

Mr. Deputy President, we must pay attention when we hear these speeches that would want us to believe that a brown cow must look black at night. A brown cow during the day is supposed to look black at night when we hear these types of statements coming from the Opposition. With those words, I am obliged, Mr. Deputy President.

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Senator Hunte.

Senator R.A. HUNTE: Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy President. I rise to support this Resolution, which is the acquisition by the Crown of the parcel of land, the property of Mildred Prince Cumberbatch, situate at Prince Road in Saint Michael for the construction of a roundabout. Mr. Deputy President, this is the plan survey drawn here. This was recorded on December 10, 2015, and certified December 11, 2015, signed by Brandford Howell, land surveyor. Mr. Deputy President, it is clear that this is not anything being brought to the Chamber from yesterday or overnight. The Planning Committee in the Ministry would have planned, knowing the situation in Collymore Rock and at that junction, and would have made the proposal to the Ministry to give priority some time in the future -- and the future is all like now so -- to the building of this roundabout. Mr. Deputy Speaker, all elected or selected Members to this Chamber within the Rules are free to speak, ask questions on matters which they consider important to them or important to us, depending on the capacity in which we are speaking.

7.30 p.m.

INSERT S40 JUIETTE

Wednesday, December 14, 2016

Senator R. A. HUNTE: Mr. Deputy President, you mean they missed that photo op. I read a newspaper every day - it cost me \$50 a month for my newspapers - and I did not see one Member of the Barbados Labour Party handing anybody in this country a bottle of water.

Asides.

Senator R. A. HUNTE: You all do not miss those opportunities at all. That was around the same occasion when they accused this Government of causing jellyfishes to bite people in the sea. This is distress politics. You imagine that the Government got accused of causing jellyfishes to bite people in the sea. I mean some of the most ridiculous things. I do not even remember seeing Crawford, Mencea Cox and those old-time politicians with that kind of behaviour, but it does not surprise me what the Barbados Labour Party do or say. A lot of things have changed over the years with these people.

There is a problem on the South Coast, I do not have to duck away from that and we do not have to go into all of the historical details about that: not well built, not well constructed, that was discussed in here last week. There are problems up there with it and they have to be solved but you do not press a button and get things done. It does not work that way. That is primary politics. You do not come to a Chamber with that. Everything you see here being done today is a priority in this country, so do not pay the nurses at the end of the month, do not pay the policemen, do not pay the civil servants, take all of the money and start to work on the South Coast because that is a priority. That is not how life goes. These are people who say how intelligent they are. Mr. Deputy President, I recognise, not sympathise, very clearly what are the priorities of the Barbados Labour Party. It does not surprise me. It is like déjà vu all over again.

Mr. Deputy President, I am very pleased to be part of today's proceedings. I thought that this Chamber has done it work today. Everybody spoke on the matters they thought needed to be spoken on and I wish to congratulate every Honourable Senator of this Chamber including Senator Abrahams who would one day learn what priorities really are.

Mr. Deputy President, I am obliged.

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Senator McClean.

Senator the Hon. Miss M. P. O. McCLEAN: Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy President. I rise to wrap up this debate, and I believe that before I go to Senator Abrahams I need to speak to some of the matters raised by our

colleague, Senator Trotman because he spoke about prioritisation.

Mr. Deputy President, in speaking about prioritisation I want to revisit the purpose of Parliament. We come here to debate legislation in several forms: Resolutions, land acquisitions, new legislation where necessary and we speak to amendments and in the Other Place they debate matters relating to the voting of money, so to suggest that we have to look at the question of prioritisation where we are speaking to a Resolution to start a process, in this case of road reconstruction by the insertion of a roundabout, at a time when other things are happening would suggest to me that we perhaps do not seem to be clear as to what we do here.

The other point I want to emphasize - and I want like to use vary basic terms - is that like the individual who can multitask so does Parliament and the Government. I know women do that better than men do, and I am reminded of that all of the time. I have a son who is a young man who does not like me to speak...

Asides.

Senator the Hon. Miss M. P. O. McCLEAN: My son always says to me: "Mom, you always confused me because you are talking with me and dealing with about six other things simultaneously. The truth is as the individual multitasks so does Parliament and so does Government, so we have ministries with agendas dealing with routine matters, with crises and with short, medium and long term matters and solutions, and all of these things have to happen simultaneously.

Mr. Deputy President, what I infer from the reference to prioritisation after Senator Abrahams started by speaking of choices and priorities echoing the position of his colleagues in public - I do not normally refer to what goes on in the Other Place but he was echoing those and that is the position -- is that you need to come into Parliament and criticise the Government for failing to prioritise an issue. Failure to prioritise is what I infer that in debating a matter of the nature of this Resolution, which comes at the end of a year, which suggests that perhaps we have put at the end of the Order Paper some outstanding matters and so on - but I am not going to spend a long time on that -- which is intended to start a process rolling, a process which, as you would have heard from Senator Hunte when he mentioned the time on the plan for the plot of the land, is the beginning of a process. I can almost hazard a guess that this will not be finished in the next year or two.

What I want to say also is that as a person multitasks, as we talk about this, things are going on. If we are talking about prioritisation, I asked my two colleagues

Senators what legislation should we have prioritised in relation to the issue on the South Coast which is operational at this point in time. I believe that when people make those references, it is to my mind some kind of false dichotomy.

I know a little bit about management and I hope that people understand that it is not an either/or, Government does not work like that. We have to be dealing with multiple issues in multiple ministries at multiple levels on a daily basis and so to give the impression that this thing is not important, which is what the Honourable Leader of the Opposition, for example, has been running from pillar to post trying to suggest to the nation...

The other thing that was suggested, which is a nice mantra because we like to say failure to communicate... I know a little bit about communications. That is another course that I taught when I was a youngster before some people were probably born. The point is when it comes to communicating you have to choose the audience, you have to choose the occasion and you have to ensure that as you deal with an issue you do not create more problems than you thought.

Senator Husbands spoke of communication on what is a very critical matter in a forum of the Social Partnership. The Social Partnership brings together critical stakeholders, trade unions, Government and the private sector. I heard Senator Husbands say, and I confirmed it with my colleague Senator Boyce who chaired that meeting, that representatives of a very critical industry, tourism, was represented. Now, do we go out there and trumpet some of the things that we have seen happened where on TripAdvisor and other international social media we can hear all kinds of comments made about Barbados. Yes, we have a problem, and I will get to part of the immediate problem because it is tied up in some of what was said.

Mr. Deputy President, it is nice to say that this Government does not communicate but you have to choose your media, the message and the audience, depending on the issues. Sir, there was communication.

Mr. Deputy President, the expectation therefore is that when you speak to representative bodies on matters of critical importance, they in turn will communicate with their membership. Therefore, for example, having communicated to the Barbados Hotel and Tourism Association, I would expect that given all that they have heard -- and I believe it was made very clear by Senator Husbands -- the nature of the problem, the short-term, medium-term and all of these, that the people who stand as representatives of that critical industry that they are trying to protect would have gathered their members together,

shared that information and would have worked on a solution.

Mr. Deputy President, also tied into there in terms of the question of priorities was the whole question of flooding in Barbados. Mr. Deputy President, on Tuesday 29th November, for my 60 years on this earth, I have never seen six to 7½ inches of rain falling in Barbados in less than 24 hours, between a 12 and 15-hour period. For those people who do not know, we had 7.5 inches in as short as a three-hour space. Tell me, in any of our lifetimes have we seen that kind of rain absorbed without flooding.

Mr. Deputy President, I am going to tie that to something else that was said by Senator Trotman. We like to make this thing "it should not have happened". There are certain parts in Barbados that if you were to literally spit you would flood the place, because it is the nature of what we are dealing with. Sir, that rain came after what had been a fairly sustained level of rainfall. Between January 1st and the end of October, we had less than 800 m.m. of rain. Between November 1st and now, we have had at least close to 300 m.m. of rainfall, if my numbers are correct because I monitor these things on a day-to-day basis. I like to listen to the weather for a number of reasons, but that is the kind of thing that we have.

Mr. Deputy President, I can tell you what the predictions are - and I have raised this with my colleagues as we discussed a whole set of issues, including the south coast situation - that we can anticipate in the dry season to come we will have unseasonal heavy rains. Mr. Deputy President, when we begin to talk about the fact that "something should not happen" we should not say that if we do not know what we are talking about.

Mr. Deputy President, we on this side are not opposed to the Opposition taking a contrary view, and people will become animated. Mr. Deputy President, people tune in to these proceedings via the Internet, via local radio stations and they listen to us because they expect...

Mr. Deputy President, I certainly behave in here. What I say I take very seriously because I know that we influence people's thinking and more importantly we influence people's actions, so to suggest that the drains were all clogged up, some might have been but the reality is -- and I have seen it because I watched for weeks prior to this and said to myself that I was happy to see the well at the bottom of my street was cleaned. I saw that happening. I also saw some debushing.

Mr. Deputy President, I can use my property as an example. I have observed in less than a month the rapid growth of some of the plants that are around my house, because of the sheer level of rainfall that we had. Therefore

to suggest that nothing has happened, again is to mislead. We have had unseasonal drought. We also saw the foliage and so on growing exponentially and that is being taken care of. As soon as I trim my bougainvillea hedges, it is out of order again and has to be done within a day or two. If the rain continues, it would then probably have to be done twice or three the times the pace that it was being done.

Mr. Deputy President, the point I am making is that when we sit and listen to information that is not correct but also which can inflame the passions of Barbadians in a very negative way, then we must become concerned because the impression is given that somehow we seem to have it all wrong, that our priorities are wrong because we are dealing with a piece of legislation... Mr. Deputy President, we are not required to debate any legislation relating to the South Coast Sewerage Project here, at least certainly not now, until I do not know when that would. When it has to come it certainly would come.

Mr. Deputy President, I would therefore want to say that in looking at this Resolution we must not engage in false dichotomies. We recognise the purpose for which we are here. We also need to recognise that things do not happen in sequential order, that things are done simultaneously, as has been before said. Mr. Deputy President, it is not about Government making a choice or about Government spending. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I do not even want to get into a discussion about the spending because Ministries have budgets. This is not immediate spending, as I said before, but even if it were, that does not impair doing the short-term or remedial work that has to be done in Graeme Hall and on the south coast. It does not impair the plans that are being discussed to deal with medium and long-term strategies.

To that end, I want to say something as well. As Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade I know something about negotiations with our bilateral partners. I have heard repeated on multiple occasions by the Leader of the Opposition that this Administration has refused to accept funds from the Chinese Government. Mr. Deputy President, let me say this categorically, the Government of Barbados, through its arrangements, bilateral at the level of country to country and country to region, in the case of CARICOM or SALAC is part of an arrangement to access resources, whether grant funding, special loans or loans at special concessionary rates.

Mr. Deputy President, in respect of capital projects in this country, it was agreed between the two countries to submit a set of proposals for funding. We submitted a set of them, including the issue of sewerage in those projects. The Government of China, through its various agencies, would have looked at that and they also identified their priorities for funding, so that the Leader of the Opposition is out of place and is also incorrect. I know that the Leader of the

Opposition has access to all kinds of information for which the Honourable Member should not have because the Honourable Member makes it very clear when these things are put out there but again to say those kinds of things is misleading.

Mr. Deputy President, therefore, persons would look at you and ask how come that the Government has refused these things when they are not true and so we have to become worked up in here. It is not that we do not want to hear the Opposition speak. I know it is not easy to sit and face 11 persons on this side but it happens as things rotate, today is for the Opposition but in the fullness of time, down the road we will find ourselves in that position, unless somebody decides to change the numbers, but to suggest that we do not want to hear you is not true.

Mr. Deputy President, what hurts, what bothers and more importantly what angers are when the impression is given that these issues are not dealt with and are not dealt with properly. The problem is that we do not have the media on our side, certainly one particular media house because nothing positive is being reported. Mr. Deputy President, I will digress and give an example. One of my former officers who now works with an international agency, who thought that they would do what is called an "ops-ed" which is positive and congratulatory of this country, that officer had approached a certain media house in Barbados to have it printed. Mr. Deputy President, do you know what? It is positive, it is congratulatory of this country, and the former officer who now works for that institution sent me an email saying, "Minister, I cannot seem to get any response from this entity." I said, "Good luck trying. Here are the numbers in case you do not have them all." This is what I told him, and I do not have to hide it: "I would be pleasantly surprised if they carry that article." Why? I can do a content analysis and bring the proof back, because if you check the Front and Back Pages and the stories, very few complimentary stories are carried. However, they will carry a photograph of a former Prime Minister in a coffin with an article in a commemorative magazine, so when we start to get angry, there is a reason; because the kind of information that needs to be carried is not carried, but we would advertise to the world every story on the radio, every story on certain media houses here on the Front Page, and so on. In fact the reality is, as we look at this Resolution, the Minister of Health has spoken as one of the key people responsible, the technicians have been there, and the Government has used a mechanism for which we are recognised and lauded internationally -- the Social Partnership -- to speak to these matters. The representatives who should be speaking I do not know if they did so or not. I would have to ask, but the point is that if we speak to representative bodies, we would expect that those persons who sit in the position as representatives of those bodies would take the message back to their membership because of the nature of the issues which you are communicating.

Therefore, when those things happen we have to get animated. That is one of the things I want to point out. I do not believe in tribalism either, and I see it creeping in. I agree with Senator Trotman that there is no need for it. My approach to this is that we, my colleagues and I, approach this in this way, and I will use the words of a retired member of the Barbados Labour Party in a conversation we had at a funeral when he had to point out something to one of his colleagues when they were in Government. "Persons on the other side (in this case, the other side of this table) are not my enemies in the case of the Opposition; they are my opponents," because oftentimes we may not see the world the same way but at the end of the day I certainly feel, and I believe that as Leader of Government Business on this side I can speak on behalf of my colleagues, that when we speak we assume that we would be willing to take criticism and opposing views. However, what we find very hard to swallow are things that are not correct, that are not factual, that are intended to inflame the minds and the passions of Barbadians, to paint a picture of this country that is not correct and that ultimately will do nothing for this country.

Mr. Deputy President, as we prepare to end this Sitting, because I am going to wrap up on this, I would say that this Resolution is one of many that will come. It relates to an issue of traffic but it is not an issue that has to be parked, no pun intended, because we are dealing with crises that come up. That is a fact of life. I will never trivialise any problem before us. I will never play games with the lives, the jobs or anything of the people of this country, and I do not believe that anybody will come to power by doing that. I heard in a conversation here a couple years ago that people must wait their turn. I heard it said that Opposition politics is hard. I heard from my late leader, the Honourable Prime Minister David Thompson, that he learnt, having spent 14 years in Opposition, that he could -- what did he say? -- "do not panic". That was a favourite phrase of his. He said he had to deal with the challenge of being in Opposition for 14 years, and he waited his turn and he got to serve this country and do what he had to do before God took another decision. At the end of the day, all I ask as I end, and I support the Resolution, is that we put Barbados first.

Aside.

Senator Hon. Ms. M.P.O. McCLEAN: I certainly do because at the end of the day, some of us, some of you all, because I am not going anywhere; I would travel anywhere in the world but I am going to live here. Some of them, not us, have the resources -- I have the intellectual capacity hopefully to work anywhere in the world -- to get up and run when we do damage, but the average Barbadian who has toiled and sweated to keep this country alive has no choice but to stay here. This is a beautiful country and we have a lot to be proud of. I am going to wrap up in a

second, but I presided, as I have said multiple times now, over an exercise which allowed this country - Barbadians at home and abroad -- and the world to look on and watch us celebrate what we have been able to achieve as a 166-square-mile little island over the last 50 years. We have battled; several Governments have. I spoke about it in a previous piece of legislation where I talked about continuity and all of that. We have done that, but I am seeing a level of dishonesty -- I am not talking about people in this Chamber -- which does not do this country good. I trust that in 2017 we will put this country first, Mr. Deputy President. Our ambitions can be secondary. At the end of the day, it is Li'l Rick's song that talks about "mash up and buy back" but we cannot buy back this nation when do the kind of damage that is possible and highly probable with the kinds of mouthings that I see going abroad in this country.

Mr. Deputy President, this Resolution concerning the acquisition of approximately 1 557.1 square metres of land at Prince Road, Upper Collymore Rock, St. Michael, for the construction of a roundabout and the Prince Road Improvement Project is an important one. It is one that I trust I will see come to fruition at the earliest opportunity. It will do so as we pursue the business of this country across the several Ministries dealing with crises as they arise and we take all of those things seriously. Mr. Deputy President, with those words I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

The motion that the Resolution do now pass was put to the Honourable Senate, and was resolved in the affirmative without division.

ADJOURNMENT

Senator Hon. Ms. M.P.O. McCLEAN: Mr. Deputy President, I beg to move that this Sitting be now adjourned sine die. As I stand to move the Resolution, I extended in the last Sitting all the best wishes and so on for Christmas because of uncertainty as to whether we were going to meet again. I simply echo the words I did say last week, and I wish everybody a blessed Christmas and I wish you a restful period until we resume in the next year, 2017.

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Senator Abrahams.

Senator W.A. ABRAHAMS: Mr. Deputy President, on behalf of the Opposition and those on this side of the table, I just want to wish a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to everybody. May 2017 bring you all the joys which 2016 did not. Christmas is usually a time for children but may Christmas this year ignite the child in all of us. I also wish to thank the support staff and everybody else who works with the Senate and the Parliament of Barbados, the police who protect us, the staff who feed us, the clerks who take care of us, and everybody connected

with the business of the Senate. I wish to thank them and wish them all and their families a happy and safe Christmas and a prosperous New Year.

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Senator Sir Roy Trotman.

8.09 p.m.

INSERT S44 JULIETTE

CONTENTS

INSERT S7 JULIETTE

SENATOR Sir Dr. Henry Fraser.....6

Senator the Hon. D. W. Boyce, 7; Senator Alwin A. Adams, 8.

INSERT S11 JULIETTE

Senator the Hon. Miss M. P. O. McCLEAN.....10

Senator J. A. Watson, 11, 13.

INSERT S15 JULIETTE

RESUMPTION

Senator Mrs. V. I. Sandiford-Garner, 13, 16; Senator R.A. Hunte, 16.

INSERT S19 JULIETTE

ORDER NO. 9.....17

Senator J. Ince, 17.

INCOME TAX (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2016

Senator the Hon. Miss M. P. O. McCLEAN.....17**ORDER NO. 6 – SECOND READING OF THE LAND TAX (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2016.....18**

Senator the Hon. Miss M. P. O. McCLEAN, 18.

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

ORDER NO. 10 – THE SECOND READING OF THE MUNICIPAL SOLID WASTE TAX (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2016.....19

Senator the Hon. Miss M. P. O. McCLEAN, 19.

ORDER NO. 3.....19

Mr. Deputy Resident, 20; Senator Hon. P.M.T. Todd, 20.

INSERT S23 JULIETTE

Senator Hon. P.M.T. TODD.....20

Senator the Hon. Miss M. P. O. McCLEAN, 21.

INSERT S27 JULIETTE

SEQ 28 BLANK

RESUMPTION

ORDER NO. 3 (resumed)

RESOLUTION TO APPROVE IN ACCORDANCE
WITH
SECTION 5 OF THE CROWN LANDS (VESTING
AND DISPOSAL) ACT, CAP. 225, THE SALE
TO THE BARBADOS NATIONAL TERMINAL
COMPANY LIMITED OF THE PARCEL OF
LAND, THE PROPERTY OF THE CROWN,
SITUATE AT COVERLEY IN THE PARISH
OF CHRIST CHURCH

Senator the Hon. D. W. BOYCE.....24

RESOLUTION TO APPROVE IN ACCORDANCE
WITH
SECTION 5 OF THE LAND ACQUISITION ACT,
CAP. 228 THE COMPULSORY ACQUISITION BY
THE CROWN OF A PARCEL OF LAND THE
PROPERTY OF MILDRED
PRINCE-CUMBERBATCH SITUATE AT
PRINCE ROAD, UPPER COLLYMORE ROCK
IN THE PARISH OF ST. MICHAEL IN
THIS ISLAND FOR THE PUBLIC
PURPOSE OF THE CONSTRUCTION
OF A ROUNDABOUT AND PRINCE
ROAD IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

Senator the Hon. Miss M. P. O. McCLEAN.....24

Senator W.A. Abrahams, 25; Senator A. R. Worrell, 27.

INSERT S32 JULIETTE

Senator A. R. WORRELL.....28

Senator Sir Roy Trotman, 29; Senator Hon. P.M.T. Todd, 31.

INSERTS36 JULIETTE

Senator H. A. HUSBANDS.....31

Senator W.A. Abrahams, 32; Senator J. Ince, 32.

POINT OF ORDER

Senator W.A. ABRAHAMAS.....34

Senator J. Ince, 34; Senator R.A. Hunte, 34.

INSERT S40 JULIETTE

Senator R.A. HUNTE.....35

Senator the Hon. Miss M. P. O. McCLEAN, 35, 38.

ADJOURNMENT.....38

Senator the Hon. Miss M. P. O. McCLEAN, 38; Senator W.A. Abrahams, 38.

INSERT S44 JULIETTE

SPEAKERS IN THIS ISSUE

ABRAHAMS, Senator W.A.
ADAMS, Senator Alwin A.
BOYCE, Senator the Hon. D. W.
Fraser, Senator Sir Dr. Henry
HUNTE, Senator R.A.
HUSBANDS, Senator H. A.
INCE, Senator J.
McCLEAN, Senator the Hon. Miss M. P. O.
RESIDENT, Mr. DEPUTY
SANDIFORD-GARNER, Senator Mrs. V. I.
TODD, Senator Hon. P.M.T.
TROTMAN, Senator Sir Roy
WATSON, Senator J. A.
WORRELL, Senator A. R.

DISCLAIMER. *This transcript was prepared with the assistance of artificial intelligence tools and is provided for reference only. It has not been reviewed, verified or approved by the Hansard Department of the Parliament of Barbados and does not constitute an official parliamentary record. It may contain errors or omissions, including inaccuracies in wording or speaker identification. For authoritative quotations or confirmation of proceedings, consult the official Hansard record when available.*

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 source begins in the middle of a speech by Senator J. Ince ('...from the aspect of world prices'). There is no PRESENT list, prayers, papers or other opening business, and no heading or Order number for the first item, a Resolution on a \$73 million bond issued by the Barbados Agricultural Management Company Limited and guaranteed by the Government. Printed as in the source.

Q3. Take-slips throughout. Headings such as 'INSERT S7 JULIETTE', 'INSERT S11 JULIETTE' and so on to 'INSERT S44 JULIETTE', and 'SEQ 28 BLANK', stand at about ten take-slips; they appear to be placeholders for takes that were never inserted, and text may be missing at each. As a result no decision is recorded on the BAMC Resolution, on Order No. 1 (the Hilton guarantee) or on Order No. 3 (the Public Service General Order, 2016). Printed as in the source.

Q4. Adjournment. The record ends after the Deputy President calls 'Senator Sir Roy Trotman' on the motion to adjourn sine die, followed only by a take-slip (8.09 p.m.) and 'INSERT S44 JULIETTE'. Sir Roy's remarks and the question on the adjournment are not recorded. Printed as in the source.

Q5. Chair. The Chair's label is spelt 'Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT' several times and once 'Mr. DEPUTY RESIDENT'. Senators Ince, McClean and Boyce each address 'Madam President' at one point, although the Deputy President was presiding. Printed as in the source.

Q6. Morning Resolution, Senator J. Ince. The Senator speaks of challenges going back 'as far as 1649' and then of the transition 'in 1640', and gives the basis of calculating interest as '3360' before explaining '30/360'. Printed as in the source.

Q7. Order No. 7. The landowner is named 'MILDRED PRINCE-CUMBERBATCH' in the Order, 'Mildred Cumberbatch' by Senator Abrahams and 'Mildred Prince Cumberbatch' by Senator Hunte. Printed as in the source.

DEBATE SUMMARY

(Editorial summary — not part of the record.)

The Senate sat on Wednesday, 14th December, 2016, with the Deputy President in the Chair. The record opens in the middle of the debate on a Resolution on a \$73 million bond to be issued by the Barbados Agricultural Management Company Limited (BAMC) and guaranteed by the Government, to fund the BAMC's expenses and the Barbados Cane Industry Support Project. Senator J. Ince traced the sugar industry from the 1640s and went through the term sheet: a fixed rate, non-callable three-year bond with some series at 6.75 per cent and some at 6.50 per cent. Senator Prof. Emeritus Sir Henry Fraser asked for the business plan behind the loan. Senator the Hon. D. W. Boyce explained the Government's annual servicing of the BAMC's debt; Senator Alwin A. Adams asked whether the country would abandon or support the industry; Senator the Hon. Miss M. P. O. McClean, as Minister of Foreign Trade, described the EU support measures that followed the end of trade preferences and the funds for the West Indies Rum and Spirit Producers Association; and Senator J. A. Watson urged cane breeding and the marketing of by-products such as falernum. The outcome is not recorded.

After the resumption Senator Mrs. V. I. Sandiford-Garner moved Order No. 1, the Resolution to approve a Government guarantee of BDD \$12.0 million to be borrowed by Needham's Point Holdings Limited from First Citizens Bank (Barbados) Limited for renovations to the Hilton Barbados. She said the hotel earned BDS\$63 million for the year ending March 2016, \$2.4 million more than in 2015, and that the loan ran for ten years at 6.5 per cent. Senator R. A. Hunte, who had seen the old hotel built and imploded, supported it.

Senator Ince moved Order No. 9, approving the borrowing of US\$15 million from First Citizens Bank Limited in Trinidad and Tobago as a revolving credit line for approved projects, and it was agreed to. Senator McClean then took the Income Tax (Amendment) Bill, 2016 and the Land Tax (Amendment) Bill, 2016 in a cognate debate, explaining that they gave effect to the 2016 Budgetary Proposals to waive penalties and accrued interest on arrears; both passed all stages, with Senator Alwin A. Adams in the Chair in Committee. The Municipal Solid Waste Tax (Amendment) Bill, 2016 (Order No. 10) also passed. Senator the Hon. P. M. T. Todd moved Order No. 3, approving the Public Service General Order, 2016, describing re-designated posts and salary adjustments, and Senator McClean recalled the Public Service Act of 2007; again the outcome is not recorded.

After a further resumption Senator Boyce moved Order No. 4, the sale of 14.2 hectares of Crown land at Coverley, Christ Church to the Barbados National Terminal Company Limited, which had stored the country's fuel there since 2004 and spent over \$100 million on the site; it was agreed to. Senator McClean moved Order No. 7, the compulsory acquisition of land at Prince Road, Upper Collymore Rock for a roundabout. Senator W. A. Abrahams questioned whether this was a priority when the country needed de-bushing, and was answered by Senators A. R. Worrell, Todd, H. A. Husbands, Ince and Hunte;

Senator Sir Roy Trotman also spoke, and Senator Abrahams rose on points of order against Senators Husbands and Ince. Senator Ince said \$5.2 billion had been collected between 2000 and 2005 with nothing spent on the water system. Senator McClean replied and the Resolution was agreed to.

Senator McClean moved that the Senate adjourn sine die and Senator Abrahams offered Christmas greetings for the Opposition; the record ends as the Deputy President calls Senator Sir Roy Trotman.