

Leave of Absence

Tuesday, July 2, 1991

SENATE

Tuesday, July 02, 1991

The Senate met at 1.30 p.m.

PRAYERS

[MR. PRESIDENT *in the Chair*]

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Mr. President: Hon. Senators, I have granted leave of absence to Senators A. Lequay and Fr. Winston Joseph to be absent from today's sitting of the Senate.

I have also granted leave of absence to Sen. Leonard Bradshaw for the period June 26 to July 3; Sen. Kelvin Khan for the period June 28 to July 5; Sen. John Spence from June 29 to July 2; Sen. Michael Mansoor for the period June 30 to July 3.

Sen. Robert Amar has indicated that he may not be able to attend today's sitting and Sen. Amrika Tiwary indicated that she would arrive a bit late.

SENATORS' APPOINTMENT

Mr. President: Hon. Senators, I have been advised that his Excellency, the President has appointed Mr. Guy Hannays to be a temporary Senator during the absence from the Senate of Sen. Dr. Sahadeo Basdeo with effect from June 28, 1991.

His Excellency has also appointed Mr. Wilton Fitzroy Paul to be a temporary Senator with effect from July 1, 1991 during the absence of Sen. Kelvin Khan.

His Excellency the President has also appointed Mr. Abdul Wahab to be a temporary Senator during the absence from the Senate of Sen. Leonard Bradshaw with effect from July 2.

OATH OF ALLEGIANCE

The following Senators took and subscribed the Oath of Allegiance as required by law:

Guy Hannays, Wilton Fitzroy Paul, Abdul Wahab.

PAPER LAID

Report of the Supervisor of Insurance for the period ended December 31, 1990.
[Sen. Fyard Hosein]

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS**Foreign Exchange Earnings**

34. *The following question stood on the Order Paper in the name of Sen. Wade Mark:*

Could the honourable Minister of Finance state the precise factors used in determining the increase in foreign exchange earnings over average earnings between 1991 to 1997?

Sen. Fyard. Hosein: Mr. President, I could not have a word with Sen. Mark prior to the commencement of today's sitting, but I wish to inform the honourable House and, through you, Mr. President, Sen. Mark, that the hon. Minister would be unable to attend today's sitting because he is abroad. We ask respectfully that this question be deferred until the next sitting.

Question, by leave, deferred.

**Caribbean ISPAT
 (Training)**

37. Sen. Wade Mark asked the Minister of Industry, Enterprise and Tourism:

Could the Honourable Minister of Finance state:

- a) What has been the record of Caribbean ISPAT in training nationals?
- b) The number of nationals trained and their respective categories?

The Minister in the Ministry of Industry, Enterprise and Tourism (Sen. Dr. The Hon. Surujrattan Rambachan: Mr. President, nationals have benefited from training programmes, both in Trinidad and Tobago and abroad. These have been organized and/or sponsored by Caribbean ISPAT Limited. For the period May 1989 to March 1991, 64 training programmes were attended by nationals and the number of training hours amounted to 28,557 hours.

The company also provided assistance for the further education of 17 nationals during the same period May 1989 to March 1991.

In terms of in-house training, the number of nationals trained in management courses amounted to 32; the number of nationals trained in in-house programmes in supervisory and senior craft programmes amounted to 13 and the number of nationals trained in-house in terms of technician programmes amounted to 246.

In terms of other local training, 41 nationals were trained in management courses; 93 in supervisory and senior craft programmes and 81 in technician programmes.

In terms of overseas training and conferences, the number of nationals trained at management level programmes is 8 and at supervisory senior craft level, 7.

ISCOTT

(Sale of)

38. Sen. Wade Mark asked the Minister of Industry, Enterprise and Tourism:

Could the Honourable Minister state whether there is any intention on the part of the Government to sell ISCOTT to Caribbean ISPAT in the near future?

The Minister in the Ministry of Industry, Enterprise and Tourism: (Sen. Dr. The Hon. Surujrattan Rambachan): Mr. President, in March 1990, Cabinet took a policy decision to enter negotiations with Caribbean ISPAT Limited for the sale of ISCOTT following a request by ISPAT to purchase the ISCOTT steel plant. Cabinet also agreed that the sale of the steel plant would be subject to certain conditions and these included the following:

- (1) Equity participation of the local private sector.
- (2) Agreement on the specific configuration of ISPAT's proposed expansion of the plant and on a time frame for implementation.
- (3) Rationalization and integration of the steel industry in Trinidad and Tobago.

Cabinet took the above decisions after very careful consideration had been given to a proposal which was received from Caribbean ISPAT on July 21, 1989, that Government indicate its willingness to sell the ISCOTT plant assets to ISPAT before the five-year period expired, so that ISPAT could continue its planning for new investment and expansion.

In its proposal of July 21, 1989 ISPAT also advised of its plans which were as follows:

To invest in a new DRI plant to sell hot bricketed DRI on the world market. It was estimated that the plant would cost approximately US \$90 million and would have the capability to produce between 500,000—700,000 DRI for the export market. It was also then estimated that the potential export earnings for such sales were TT \$416 million annually or approximately US \$98.350 million.

In that proposal of July 21 1989 ISPAT also advised in terms of its plans to diversify ISCOTT's steel making capability to produce in addition to wire rods, flat roll products such as sheet as it is normally called. It was estimated that such modification would require additional investment of approximately US \$170 million and would produce 500,000 tons of hot roll strip coils.

In its decision to enter negotiations with ISPAT, Cabinet was guided by the recommendations of a committee appointed by Cabinet in October 1989 to examine the proposals made by ISPAT. In its terms of reference, the committee was requested to take account of a number of considerations to ensure that the interest of the country remain paramount in any decision on the future of ISCOTT. I repeat: In its terms of reference, the committee was requested to take account of a number of considerations to ensure that the interest of the country remain paramount in any decision on the future of ISCOTT. There were five major considerations:

- (1) Future profitability and the long term debts
- (2) Domestic downstream industries
- (3) Local equity participation
- (4) Implications for public sector investment
- (5) The cost of restructuring.

The committee's report and recommendations were submitted to Cabinet in March 1990 and they were accepted. In its recommendations the committee noted that the survival of ISCOTT's steel plant as a viable production facility demands an expansion, which will provide the capability to produce more sophisticated products. The committee also noted in its recommendations that the Government of Trinidad and Tobago/ISCOTT are not in a position to finance the required expansion of the steel plant.

In October, 1990 Cabinet appointed a team to negotiate with Caribbean ISPAT Limited, that firm's proposal for the acquisition of the ISCOTT steel plant. The Cabinet appointed team and Caribbean ISPAT have had three meetings to date and the negotiations are however at a very preliminary stage at the moment.

This Government of the National Alliance for Reconstruction and of Prime Minister Robinson, considers the development of the steel industry as a major vehicle in the country's industrial thrust. Therefore, the Government is willing to consider any worthwhile proposal which can assist in the furthering of this objective.

Sen. Mark: Could the Minister of Industry, Enterprise and Tourism indicate whether the Government plans, in the near future, to dispose of ISCOTT to ISPAT?

Secondly, could the Minister indicate what has taken place in relation to the struggle, the war of prices between the downstream industries on the one hand and ISPAT on the other? What is the present position in that arena?

Dr. Rambachan: With respect to the first question which the honourable Senator has posed once more, I have answered that. I have said the negotiations are at a very preliminary stage. Cabinet has, in fact, appointed a committee and the committee has had three meetings. I have also said that the Government is willing to consider any worthwhile proposal to further the development of the steel industry, as a major vehicle in the country's industrial thrust.

With respect to the second question that is an entirely new question which the honourable Senator has posed.

**NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL MARKETING AND
DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION BILL**

[SECOND DAY]

Order read for resuming adjourned debate on question [June 25, 1991].

That the bill be now read a second time.

Question again proposed.

Sen. Dr. Prakash Persad: Mr. President, let me welcome the hon. Minister to the Senate. I must say of all my former colleagues, he seems to be the most subdued. At the outset, let me state clearly that of all the bills which have arrived here during my presence, this bill seems to be the one which is most complete and seems to be reflective of a tremendous amount of work done. In this regard, one must compliment the Minister specifically. In his preamble he says that you can have secondment from the university to the corporation or *vice versa*. I think that is a very useful step. Nevertheless, although the bill is quite sound, I have some concerns, some doubts and some reservations which I must express.

1.50 p.m.

Firstly, if you go to clause 4 of the bill, it says that the corporation shall consist of nine members, and it goes on to list these members. Unfortunately, Mr. President, in this clause no representative from any farmers' organization has been included. I would think that the bill should seek to include such people in the corporation, and I hope that the Minister would take the appropriate action.

Now, what I also find strange in this regard, Mr. President, is that if we look at clauses 31(d) and 9(2)(d), 9(2)(d) states that the corporation shall:

"advise on policy formulation for the development and management of the retail marketing of agricultural produce and food products."

Clause 31(d) states:

"...fixing in respect of each category of agricultural produce wholesale and retail units."

So obviously the intent of the Minister is to have this new corporation have some sort of say or control in the retail marketing sector. Yet, no mention or no provision is made in the bill for proper management of such ideas because, Mr. President, the retail markets fall under the control of the local government bodies and there is no provision for anyone from any local government body to be there. I think that is a shortcoming in the bill and maybe the Minister should look seriously in this area.

Mr. President, I go to clause 4 again, and it says clearly that, "someone from the House of Assembly"—which is a good idea—and this further reinforces my point that maybe you need a representative from the local government body.

Mr. President, clause 9(1) states:

"The functions of the Corporation are to create, facilitate and maintain an environment conducive to the efficient marketing of agricultural produce and food products, through the provision of marketing services and the stimulation of business investment in the agro-industrial sector of Trinidad and Tobago."

Mr. President, maybe the Minister in his reply can say what is the link between the ADB, the IDC and the EDC with this corporation that he is seeking to create. One needs to know because, for instance, the stimulation of business investment in

the agro-industrial sector is stated clearly in the ADB's objectives and I am sure he does not mean to have duplication. Therefore, in his winding up, maybe he can give some comments with regard to that.

Also, in terms of marketing information, what is the relationship envisaged with this new corporation and the EDC? As I understood last time, Professor Spence said that NAMDEVCO presently obtains its marketing information from the EDC, and there is no point in duplication. If the EDC is doing this, then one wonders why the need for NAMDEVCO to do the same thing.

Mr. President, in terms of—"conducive to efficient marketing", I draw to the attention of the hon. Minister that presently the wholesale market run under the auspices of the CMA, is in absolute confusion, and one hopes that when this new corporation takes over, some sort of definitive steps will be taken to rectify this unfortunate situation.

Right now farmers face tremendous problems in terms of security. I will give you an example. One would hope that this bill, and the corporation it seeks to create, would make the life of the farmers themselves better. Just to give an example, Mr. President, recently about a month ago, one of my friends who was carrying his produce to the market—and I come from Aranguéz which is an agricultural area—and on the entrance to the market, the space is rather small for the sort of demand you have for space, so there is a traffic jam at the entry. So while my friend was in line on the Beetham Highway trying to get entry, people were stealing produce from the back of his pick-up, a gang of people, five, six fellows. Being a man not averse to defending his property, he came out and struck two of the fellows with a piece of wood. Before he could strike the third one, one struck him with a razor. Needless to say, he got a cut across his chin and he barely survived with his life. Probably one inch lower and he would have slit his throat. My question is, with this new NAMDEVCO, how is it going to solve that problem? What are you going to do to solve the problem of the wholesale people, people who sell wholesale goods, agricultural produce?

Also, Mr. President, once you get into the market itself there is a lot of stealing again there. From the time you turn your back, people grab your goods, people steal things. It is a very, very serious problem.

Another problem faced by the farmers in this CMA market, Mr. President, as you know this wholesale market adjoins the retail market run by the Port-of-Spain City Corporation, and there is a tendency of late for the retailers to move into the

wholesale section and it is creating problems for the wholesalers who are cramped for space. These wholesalers normally pay \$5.75 to occupy the spot. Having spoken to a few farmers, their impression is that the security guards in the market seem to be more interested in collecting the money and giving you tickets rather than defending and protecting you from the people who steal your produce. I hope that when this corporation is set up some steps will be taken in that direction, because Mr. President, in the final analysis, if such problems that are faced by the farmers are not solved, nothing would have been achieved.

Also, Mr. President, it was drawn to my attention—and there are various articles to indicate it, which I will not quote at this point—that there is a group of traders known as the Caricom traders. Now, mind you, I am not averse to trade with Caricom neighbours, but it was drawn to my attention that legitimate and bona fide farmers of Trinidad who pay their \$5.75 sometimes find the space occupied by these Caricom traders on Friday nights who do not pay anything to the Central Marketing Agency at all. To their minds, it is unfair. I think that definitely something should be done in that regard.

Mr. President, if the bill seeks, as it states, to promote business investment in the agro-industrial sector, I repeat the question posed by Sen. Mark. If this Government is serious about agriculture, why is the interest rate for loans obtained from the ADB still 12 per cent? I think something ought to be done about that, definitely.

Mr. President, now this bill essentially deals with marketing but one cannot look at marketing in isolation, because if you try to market the produce or product, then how the product is made or where the product comes from, how it is handled, all these things affect the final product. So whilst it is necessary to look at this bill and look at its provisions, that would not be a necessary and sufficient condition only. What we need to look at also is the impacting systems on this sort of marketing system. Therefore, one must look at the entire spectrum of agricultural production, ranging from the food production area to the marketing area, for the marketing of produce depends on other factors. I will give you some examples. Maybe 15 years ago large tomatoes were not available in Trinidad. Nobody wanted it. The use of large tomatoes for salads was unpopular and, therefore, there was not a ready market for it. Actually, what there was a ready market for was the very small tomatoes and of which we made a dish. You know, you would roast it and make a dish and eat it. Now, there is a bigger market for large tomatoes

and you cannot get small tomatoes even if you wanted. So your product is a function of the cultural factors among other things. Therefore one must look at this entire spectrum.

Also if you are going for the foreign markets, then it says that we have to produce products that the foreign market wants and, therefore, it means going into new varieties of old products that you have or go into new products. Therefore what you need is a whole range of services to enable the farmers to do so, to produce these products for the external markets.

So Mr. President, if this is the case and, indeed, this is the case, who is going to do this sort of education, in the first instance, for the farmers? I quote from the *Express* of October 2, 1990 where a UWI lecturer says, "Teach farmers about the business." If you want to go to the export market, then farmers must be taught that agriculture is a business. They must be educated in that regard.

I quote again from the *Express* of April 20, 1991, the headline says, "Wide gap seen between scientists and farmers". What this article indicates, Mr. President, is that for this bill to succeed, for us to have something to market, then we must have the agricultural produce to market, and they must be grown, and the farmers must be taught and given all the necessary information on how to do so. Because Mr. President, no matter how many marketing systems you may set up, if you do not have a regular supply of your produce, your marketing arrangements are going to fall through. To have a regular supply means the farmers must be competent and have all the technical know-how, all the financial backings and all the other infrastructure to produce these agricultural products on a regular basis.

So, Mr. President, there is a general perception that the extension officers do not quite fulfil the functions they are intended to do, and the Minister, I would think, being the Minister in charge of agriculture and food production, should look at this area a bit, because the success of this corporation also depends on that.

In terms of financial assistance and financial training for farmers—because most farmers are small farmers who have evolved from subsistence farming—there is need for the sort of financial provisions, the financial systems and the financial backers that they require to be different from other businesses, because you have to put in a lot of money initially. For instance, Mr. President, I was talking to some farmers and if you want to start a small family plot, say about 16 acres, I was told, you need to put in about \$60,000 in order to plant your crops, and you will not

receive anything until three months from that point when you start selling. Therefore, it calls for a different sort of arrangement.

Are there any steps being taken right now to educate farmers in financial management in terms of loan facilities, in terms of bookkeeping? These are the sort of things and skills that farmers require to be successful in agriculture. Maybe the Minister could give some indication as to what is happening in this area.

2.05 p.m.

Mr. President, if we want to market our produce, again we need infrastructure, and irrigation is an important point. When I was a small boy, I grew up in a situation where we had one crop per year. We planted in the dry season and we did not plant in the rainy season. As I got older and I went abroad, I saw people planting right through the year. For instance, in India you have four crops of rice per year; in Trinidad we have one crop. You begin to wonder why it is we have one crop. Why can we not have four? We have good sunshine, good rain, a lot of water. Why not? One of the simple problems—and I can talk about a specific area, for instance, like Aranguez—is the matter of irrigation. During the dry season you can plant both on the northern and southern sides of the Churchill Roosevelt Highway because there is no flooding. Once the rain starts to fall, planting on the southern side is impossible because it is flooded. This is a situation which prevails up to today, despite the fact that the Minister of Works is the representative for that area. He might say otherwise, but the fact is the situation obtains right now. You cannot plant on the southern side of the Churchill Roosevelt Highway during the rainy season.

There is a definite change in the weather. We either have too much rain or too little rain. In the dry season you need irrigation. There is a perennial problem of irrigation. Take, for example, Aranguez again, in which the principal channel for irrigation is the San Juan River. In the dry season it goes to a very, very low level and you have to take water from this channel to the various lands. So, it is one sort of irrigation canal that runs through many plots of land belonging to many owners. Many disputes have occurred and continue to occur because there is not a proper irrigation system. One man will come in the night and block the water so he can get it on his land; the other man comes five minutes later and frees the canal from the obstruction so he can get the water. This thing continues, and it has led to bloodshed in some instances. The problem is that if there was proper irrigation, this would not occur.

One would expect that if we are serious about agricultural production; if we are serious about selling agricultural produce to foreign markets; if we are serious about the food security in this country; if we are serious about agriculture *per se*, these problems must be solved. During the dry season, if you look at the San Juan River, the water level is about two inches above the ground, very, very low. Those who can afford pumps, pump water from the San Juan River unto their crops. This is a very dangerous thing because of the polluted state of the river.

Let me quote from a special report from Miss Ramai, a graduate of the Department of Chemical Engineering. She gives a list of major industries along the East/West Corridor which discharge organic waste into waterways that flow into the Caroni River. I shall enumerate the list of companies. They are:

West Indian Tobacco Company Limited

Caribbean Development Limited

Lever Brothers (West Indies) Limited

National Brewing Company Limited

Trinidad Food Products Limited

Tunapuna Slaughter House

Cannings Drinks

Turban Brand Products

Caroni Distillery

Gerizim Farms

National Canners

Eastern Foods Limited

Cannings Foods Limited

Santa Rosa Foods Limited

to name a few.

Mr. President, if you were to have the unfortunate experience of going down to the San Juan River during the dry season, the stench is unbearable. If you see the water! This is the same water that the farmers have no choice, but to pump

straight onto the crops that we use, with all this pollution flowing into it. How can we sell this? The developed countries to which we are trying to sell our agricultural produce would not accept agricultural produce with all sorts of chemical contents in it. They are a bit stricter. Maybe they care more about their citizens than we do.

I quote from the *Express* of December 31, 1990, from an article entitled, "Poison threat to the food industry". It warns about the quantity of chemicals in the food and that the US and the Pan-American Health Organization are worried about it. If the produce which we are going to sell abroad do not meet the requirements in terms of its chemical content, it would not be sold. Therefore, all this fancy corporation that we are going to build, will come to nothing if we do not do these sort of things. These sort of serious issues must be addressed. I agree that one must pass the legislation first, but one needs to set up these sort of support systems and serious action must be taken to correct these ills, otherwise we would not go anywhere.

The same applies to fishing in the Gulf of Paria. On a previous occasion in this same Chamber, I mentioned the levels of toxic chemicals found in organisms in the Gulf of Paria and in the water itself, and that this needs to be looked at. Something must be done. I know it does not fall within the present Minister's portfolio but there must be some linkage between the ministries. Control devices for the protection of the environment, especially the waterways and seaways, must be looked at seriously.

Also, in terms of farming in southern Trinidad, where we have land-production oil wells, there is a lot of seepage of oil into the areas, and nothing is being done about that. That must be looked at seriously, because once the land has been damaged, it is very difficult to restore it to a state acceptable for agricultural practices. This is of utmost importance because we do not have unlimited agricultural lands, and whatever we have we must use efficiently.

In terms of the infrastructure, despite claims to the contrary, the roads are in a horrible state. If one were to drive around—and one need not go very far; one need go to what someone might term the suburbs of Port-of-Spain—go to Aranguez, the roads are in a horrible condition. If you are to transport your agricultural produce, and if you are to keep your vehicle in some state of decent repair, the roads must be maintained; the riverways must be maintained; the bridges must be maintained. I hope that something would be done in that area.

Why up to today—and the previous Government knew it; this Government knows it—praedial larceny is a serious problem. Farmers face serious problems, not only from thieves, but also from people of a generally malicious nature. The stealing of crops and cattle is a serious problem. When would there be patrols? When would people be safe to engage in agricultural practice? Agriculture is a very, very difficult practice. Agriculture is a back-breaking practice.

2.15 p.m.

Imagine you plant from 6:00 to 6:00 and you are about to reap your crop, and then what do you have to do? You have to sit for the whole night waiting to chase people from stealing your produce. Something must be done about it, otherwise as soon as people can afford it, or the situation arises, they are going to leave agriculture. Sometimes you plant watermelons and people would steal the ripe ones and chop all the green ones. Something must be done to have some sort of patrol. Some serious action must be taken in this area so that people who are caught in this practice must be put away for a long time as a deterrent.

Mr. President, why is there no crop insurance? There has been calls for crop insurance way back. People continue to lose hard-earned money from flooding and praedial larceny and there is no insurance; there is no way you can recoup your losses. Maybe the Minister, in his reply, can state whether the Government is looking at this, or whether there is anything in the pipeline, because something must be done about this. It is a very, very serious problem. Many families who plant do not charge themselves for labour, so besides the money you may have lost, all that time, three or four months, whatever you spend planting, that is labour you have also lost. It is a serious problem and something must be done there.

In terms of the harvesting, processing and grading of agricultural produce, so essential for proper marketing, what is this envisaged role of NAMDEVCO? I see no provision in the bill for implementing any such things. I understand, presently, that the Central Marketing Agency has sold out all its cold storage facilities. When are you going to do processing and grading? Who is going to provide these facilities? Is NAMDEVCO, in co-operation with some other private company, going to do the grading? Some definite word on this matter ought to be given because the bill would have no impact if this is not done.

In terms of grading and standards, this is an important point. I was speaking to some dairy farmers recently and these people are having many problems, as articles pointed out also with the tobacco farmers in terms of grading. Specifically in terms

of dairy farmers, when people go into dairy farming, they want to sell milk to Nestlé. You have to give your milk to the depot in the area for testing. Apparently, this takes an inordinately long time. Nobody could figure why it takes this long to get the results of the testing to see whether the milk is acceptable to Nestlé. It was also brought to my attention that even when people have been told that their milk is acceptable, there is a continuous monitoring. When people carry milk sometimes to the depot—I understand this has been happening for the past two to three months; I speak specifically for the people in the Cumuto area because I spoke to some farmers there—officials there refuse to accept the milk stating that it is too watery. So what is the farmer faced with? Either drink all the milk himself—which is difficult to do—or throw it away. What is happening in this area?

One agrees that Nestlé or any buyer would not want to buy a sub-grade product. But is there some sort of continued advice to the farmers on steps to take if their milk is too watery? Because people would have invested a lot of money. I hope that this situation that is prevailing now is not meant to drive small farmers out of business; because this is the impression that they have: if they cannot sell their milk, then they have no option but to sell the stock to the butcher. Something should be said and done in this regard.

The bill also purports to set the environment for agro-industry. If it were not so sad, it would have been amusing. I quote from page 14 of the *Express* of Friday, May 11, 1990, headlined: “Coconut Industry, A Pillar For Agri-Business”. They were stating that you can plant and produce your coconuts and they are going to produce some kind of charcoal and activated carbon for industrial usage. Apparently, there is a good market for it, approximately \$500,000.00 worth per year for an initial investment of about \$61,000.00. The ADB is telling people, “Look, this is a good business to go into.” They keep on saying it is a great business; you have a lot of resources there. I will not quote any more headlines, but the Minister knows fully well what is happening in the copra industry at present. One wonders what is really happening. Here you have an industry, on the one hand they are telling people, “we want to develop the agri-industrial area; this particular industry has a lot of potential,” and the next thing you hear, nobody wants to buy the copra. The farmers are begging; they are on the breadline. What is happening?

One wonders whether this Government is really serious about agriculture. The previous Government was not, and this Government—I am not saying that this

particular Minister is not, because I get the impression that he is quite serious about agriculture. But as my colleague says, he is a prisoner. There is not much he can do. There is a tremendous potential for the development of agriculture and the development of agricultural produce in this country, but we must go about it in the right way. Farmers must be given incentives. You must have proper infrastructure facilities. There must be proper financial backing. This is not the case. There is much talk about agriculture and agri-business but nothing is being done. For instance, let us look at the land tenure issue. This is a serious problem with farmers.

Right now the Aranguéz Estates Limited, which is in voluntary liquidation, have told farmers who have been there since they were born that, "if you do not buy the land now, we are free to sell it to whomever we want." What are these people to do? They were born into agriculture; their parents were born and died in agriculture. They are the ones who developed the land and now they have been asked for some ridiculous figure of \$40,000 per acre for agricultural lands. What is the Government doing about the land tenure issue? Are they going to provide loans for the people to be able to buy the land easier? Certainly, I hope not loans at 12 per cent interest. Because one understands that agricultural lands normally sell at a price around \$5,000.00 an acre. They are being asked to pay \$40,000.00. Something must be done about that. That is a very, very serious problem the farmers in Aranguéz are facing. They have another month before the deadline. Aranguéz was once known as the "Food Basket" of the nation until the previous regime took over much of the land for housing. Maybe this is what is going to happen now, all lands would be sold and all the prime agricultural lands would be converted into lands for housing.

Mr. President, the Minister, in his opening address, stated nothing about Caroni's role in all of this. This was a point mentioned by Sen. Prof Spence. One would like to hear from him what is the role of Caroni in all this. In terms of the local market, one heard nothing about storage facilities for food security. One of the stated aims of this Government is that this nation will be self-sufficient in food. It goes without saying that self-sufficiency in food means storage facilities somewhere. I heard nothing about it. Are we any better off, or are we worse off? Maybe the Minister should answer this. Because while it is great to reduce our import food bill, which is over \$700 million at present, one would treat food security as a matter of national security. I hope that the Minister does not come

and tell me, as the Minister of National Security told me after giving the figures, that as a matter of National Security he cannot give the figures.

2.25 p.m.

Again, in terms of the application of indigenous technology or technology that has been developed locally in the post-harvesting, processing and grading areas, one would hope that the Ministry of Agriculture and this corporation, through its linkage with the university, will look at that area seriously. Because in the area of crop drying, a lot of work can be done on hydro-systems, solar and gas systems, in terms of production of equipment for the harvesting and processing. At present, there is a lot of work that is being done and has been done at the university that lies idle. Indeed, one is forced to form the opinion that this Government not only pays lip-service to agriculture but pays lip-service to science and technology also. There is only talk, talk. That is all they do.

One hopes, and must remain hopeful because when one loses hope, there is no point in living again. So one must be hopeful that eventually, something will be done for agriculture. I hope that this will be a starting point, because the Minister certainly has indicated some seriousness of intent that I hope we can see fruition.

In his opening remarks he mentioned that one of the problems in the CMA was that they tried to do too many things. I get the impression here that this present bill also seeks to do too many things. Maybe in the setting up of the Corporation and in the setting up of the rules and getting the organization going, the Minister should be a bit more careful as to define specifically what areas this corporation should get into to ensure its success. We do not want to have another CMA so that 17 years hence, some Senator would come and repeat what Sen. Mark said happened 17 years ago in the previous regime; the very same intents and nothing happened. I would hope sincerely that this is not the case. I thank you.

Sen. Louise Horne: Mr. President, the bill before the Senate is to provide for the establishment of a National Agricultural Marketing and Development Corporation and I think it is important to say something about its genesis.

There was in existence in 1949, an agency known as the Marketing Board of Trinidad and Tobago which was the result of the merger of three separate marketing units—the Ground Provision Board, the Banana Board and the Marketing Department. I am listing the functions of the Marketing Board because I propose to compare them with the functions of the Central Marketing Agency.

The functions of the Marketing Board were: To purchase marketable produce under government guarantee; to manufacture and sell livestock feed; the sale of good quality vegetable seeds and other planting material; the sale of fertilizers, insecticides and veterinary medicine; export of Gros Michel bananas; wholesale and retail sales of produce to the public and government health institutions. The board operated depots, mobile collection and distribution units and a mixing plant for the manufacture of feeds.

At first, the board enjoyed popularity because of the reliable service it offered in the marketing of imported vegetable seeds and planting material, as well as for its livestock feeds. However, by 1956, it was criticized for its inability to maintain its competitiveness. It happened that in 1961, when we were on the threshold of becoming independent, realizing that a healthy population was the principal asset of the country, the Government sought and obtained assistance from the United States of America to conduct a nutrition survey, which supplied information with respect to the national and nutritional status of the population and the nutritional requirements of the country. This information was considered and reflected in the *Draft Five-Year Development Plan 1964—1968*, when it was proposed to replace the Marketing Board of Trinidad and Tobago by the Central Marketing Agency.

The bill providing for its establishment was debated in the House of Representatives on Friday, July 1, 1966. The functions of the Central Marketing Agency were as follows:

1. Setting minimum wholesale prices for commodities which it will be obliged to purchase at the minimum price;
2. Trading and dealing in foodstuffs for livestock, seeds, fertilizers, insecticides and other agricultural supplies;
3. Collecting and distributing information on commodity prices;
4. Encouraging research into and disseminating information on the optimum use of goods;
5. Providing market intelligence to farmers with respect to prices for various parts of the country so that middle-men would not take advantage of farmers;
6. Serving as a link between agriculture and industry;

7. Stimulating the production of a surplus for use in food processing, and buying at a fixed price for resale to the processing plant;
8. Operating the Central Market in Port-of-Spain to undertake the grading of produce in order to establish and encourage the production of quality products.

Mr. President, the enabling legislation which was assigned to the various marketing agencies at different periods of time, outlined the Government's reasoning for their establishment. The reasons which led to the establishment of these institutions have resulted mainly from Government's desire to correct the existing undesirable state of affairs in the marketing of agricultural products, as well as to make provision for adequate food supplies to the nation.

The comparative analysis of the provisions of the Act of 1949 and the Act of 1966 is intended to show the degree of inadequacy of the various provisions made to achieve the results that the Government intended to accomplish.

2.35 p.m.

The Marketing Board failed to accomplish the functions for which it was created. It was forced to limit its scope and functions owing to the lack of physical facilities for the handling of certain crops and livestock products. There was the lack of adequate cool and cold storage facilities of its own and the uncertainty of obtaining such facilities at all material times from private operators of cold storage. So the board tended to go easy on the handling of those crops. There was no provision for the Marketing Board to be in a position to give farmers up-to-date and adequate information concerning the movement of prices of commodities.

The problem was that Government created a board to perform certain services, then neglected to supply the necessary equipment and other facilities to enable it to function successfully. The Act establishing the board was repealed.

The Central Marketing Agency's functions included purchasing of commodities, trading, dealings in feeds for livestock, seeds and other agricultural supplies. In short, operating the Central Marketing Agency. Now it was envisaged that there would be five sections, each headed by a supervisor with direct responsibility to a sub-committee of the agency. The five sections would be as follows: a supply section; a banana section; a vegetable and root-crop section; a poultry and egg section; and a pig and cattle section; each to have its own accounting system and cover its own expenses.

In his contribution, the hon. Minister made mention of the appreciable funds which were used to subsidize the agency over a number of years. In my humble opinion, it was not all subsidy. If there was an attempt to break down the figures, it would be found that a percentage was really subsidy but inefficiency was responsible for another part and the remainder was because of the weakness in the financial accounting. For example, in the *Trinidad Guardian* of November 1, 1972 under the heading "Police probe fraud at CMA" one reads as follows:

"Fraud Squad detectives have been called to investigate a \$20,900 fraud involving the Central Marketing Agency, Beetham Highway, Port-of-Spain sometime between February and December, 1971.

It was reported that several cheques were tendered and cashed at Barclays Bank, Independence Square, Port-of-Spain from time to time for sums of money totalling \$20,900.

Investigations revealed that the cheques were based on requisitions issued for the purchase of ground provision which never reached the marketing depots for which they were ordered.

Enquiries are continuing."

In the *Trinidad Guardian* of April 17, 1970, page 1, the headline is: "Central Market stall rentals cut by half". In the *Trinidad Guardian* of May 3, 1970, page 9, the headline is: "CMA dumps 5,000 pounds of cabbage—farmers saved by guaranteed price of 14 cents". In the *Express* of July 11, 1975, there is a headline "Ministry studies feed crisis".

Moreover, the political directorate issued instructions to the CMA, that it was supposed to buy items on the guaranteed price list whether the market wanted these items or not. Obviously, the CMA had acute money problems. But then it does not have adequate staffing to prevent many of the problems. I am to understand that at the present time, there is one economist and a plethora of clerks who do not have the experience necessary to manage such an agency efficiently. It can be compared to the present staffing criteria for pre-schools, the appointing of people who have gone to school to teach pre-school children instead of trained teachers who specialize in teaching pre-school children.

The Central Marketing Agency has powers to act as a licensing authority with regards to the export of produce; to engage in international trade; to be the sole importer of produce and to establish and operate facilities which would initiate

efficient performance of the marketing functions. But marketing arrangements for the crops produced locally for domestic consumption are inadequate.

There are other problems listed in the White Paper of 1975. Mention is made of the perishable nature of certain products; the seasonal production; limited size of farm units; the geographic distribution. All these problems are beyond the control of the CMA. The CMA is supposed to stimulate the production of a surplus for use in food processing. But in his book entitled *The Essentials of Economic Policy*, the late Professor Arthur Lewis, noted:

"Setting the scene for higher productivity requires a variety of measures, such as public investment in physical facilities, for example, roads, water conservation, reclamation, drainage and irrigation, public and private investment in warehouses, processing plants, agricultural credit facilities, research into crops, pests, diseases, fertilizers, rotations; agricultural education programmes, land reform, *etc.*"

Concerning land reform, very little has been done. At the present time, the LIDP workers are engaged in resuscitating abandoned estates and those which are privately owned will be returned to their owners after a period of time—five years upwards—according to the acreage to be worked. I would like to know if the owners of the privately owned estates are contributing any part of the cost of the resuscitation programme. Is the produce taken to the CMA for sale? What happens to the money derived from sales?

To resuscitate an estate and hand it back to the owner after five years or more without the owner having to make payments of any kind, is a gift which the taxpayers can ill-afford, especially as it is likely that the sale from the produce cannot meet the labour costs which Government pays.

I would also like to know whether any development work is done in our forests. There is much talk about tourism and the making of handicraft. For example, a certain plant which yields handicraft material, terite, is a forest plant. There is need to cut mature trees, supply seedlings and increase the quantity of that material for handicraft purposes. This can be performed by the the Labour Intensive Development Programme workers. Are they doing any such tasks?

2.45 p.m.

In accordance with the functions proposed for the CMA it was promised during the introduction of the bill, that provision for a market intelligence service to the

public will be central to the operations of the new agency. The provision has not really been realized in accordance with present requirements.

The point I have endeavoured to make is that in the case of both the Marketing Board and the Central Marketing Agency, Government set out functions which they were unable to fulfil, because of the number of constraints which I have identified. Moreover, since the functions were generally similar, it was noted in the 1966 debate when the bill was introduced, that there was really no need to repeal the Marketing Board but rather provisions ought to have been made to provide the necessary facilities and equipment, to enable it to function adequately. I am of the opinion that the same viewpoint applies today. Instead of repealing the Act of 1966 which provided for the establishment of the Central Marketing Agency, there is need to streamline the organizational structure, provide equipment and facilities which are needed to execute the functions and appoint relevant and adequate staff to ensure the performance of the required activities.

When the bill was introduced in the Senate in 1966, it was said:

"The *Draft Five-year Development Plan* which was approved by the whole country at a National Convention at Queen's Hall pointed out that economic progress in agriculture, cannot proceed on the basis of a single change but on a multiplicity of factors. Among the factors which were pointed out as necessary for progress of the agricultural sector, it was suggested that the Central Marketing Agency was absolutely necessary. The bill as a whole met with approval of all speakers."

Yet, the agency was never supplied with adequate staffing expertise, including administrative and accounting skills as well as facilities to ensure such success. The ways of Government, all of them, are often incomprehensible.

The National Agricultural Marketing and Development Corporation as is proposed will require, among other things, appropriate resources, technical and administrative expertise and other facilities. Now, is there any empirical evidence of its practicability at this time? The National Agricultural Marketing and Development Corporation Bill is advocating a new philosophy whereas, the Central Marketing Agency provides that Government actively participates in the importing, exporting and marketing of commodities. The Minister wants it to be replaced by the National Agricultural Marketing and Development Corporation Bill in which circumstance, the Government will no longer participate but rather support and facilitate. The concept is rational but for a number of reasons it would

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be unwise to implement it at this time in our country. Let me state the reasons. Because of our economic plight, the Government's recourse is to international lending agencies. From the *American Journal of Economics and Sociology*, July 1988, I wish to read a few excerpts from an article entitled, "The World Bank and Poverty:"

"When Robert McNamara retired from the World Bank in 1981 the International Development Lending Agency lost its most prominent advocate for the poor; there has been concern in some quarters that since his departure the World Bank has reduced its emphasis on poverty alleviation.

In 1980, in his final address to a bank annual meeting, McNamara warned against the temptation to shelve the anti-poverty effort in order to focus on the immediate economic crisis".

One has read that the International Monetary Fund is satisfied with Trinidad and Tobago's adherence to their stipulated economic programme. That is one side of the coin. The other side is the resulting poverty of an appreciable section of the population and all the undesirable factors which are manifested because of poverty.

I make special reference to malnutrition in all age groups of the society. We now have street children; there is unemployment; there is under-employment. This is the situation that McNamara was concerned about when he warned against shelving anti-poverty measures, in order to focus on the immediate economic crisis. This is what we have done.

There will be the incidence of escalating unemployment by the end of this week, about 20,000 school leavers will be wanting employment. Government has been encouraging people, with special reference to young people, to go to the land. Many who have heeded this advice and were fortunate enough to get an appreciable area to cultivate do not have the necessary capital. It is one thing to say that the Agricultural Development Bank is there to assist farmers; it is another thing for those who have no collateral to get loans. Moreover, no one wants to use the precious bit of land, all that he or she has as, collateral, especially as the financial returns from farming are not constant. Such farmers—and there are thousands of them—need to be able to take their produce to an agency, sell wholesale and return home. This is a form of poverty alleviation necessary because of the economic climate. There is need for guaranteed prices for certain crops to

assist them in forecasting the quantum of returns for which they can budget. They need certain subsidies to assist their efforts.

The poultry farmers are better off. Many of them have contracts with private enterprise. The new corporation envisages that private enterprise would be the wholesale agents, but even the chicken farmers experience problems, when, for economic reasons, the wholesalers cannot dispose of their stocks in a normal way.

I am sure that honourable Members have read the present plight of the coconut growers and their families. It is no longer viable to collect the dry nuts. The outcome will be that more families will be on the breadline because the Government's flour mill is processing soya oil.

We advise thousands of our children to go into agriculture. As I said, many of them will be empty-handed. By replacing the CMA with another institution with a less generous *modus operandi* the number of obstacles they would need to surmount, if they heed the advice, will be increased.

It is difficult to believe that the Government is truly concerned. There is insufficient disposable income in an appreciable sector of the community to make it possible for the YTEPP students to sell enough of their handicraft and skills to earn a living. When the tourists arrive much of what they are offering, they already have; they would have purchased them in other Caribbean islands.

The Government has failed and has ignored the possibility of introducing new crafts from India. Instead of that, they want to assist the carnival people who already have their business in hand. Jamaica has gone ahead getting what help it can from China. It would appear that the initiative to assist must come from the party members to gain recognition. It is seven months since I made the announcement of certain assistance from India but nothing has happened.

Every day in this country, thousands of people make supplication to the supreme being to assist our people who are unemployed, to find work, by which they can earn their daily bread, but prayer without action is sterile. Therefore, when someone comes up with a plan of action, it ought to be investigated and perhaps varied somewhat, rather than shelved by the very people who promised on oath to do their best.

2.55 p.m.

Mr. President, at the present time the Government subsidizes plantation crops: cocoa, coffee, sugar, as well as milk and rice. Therefore, why discriminate against the vegetable and root crop farmers? Is the coming into being of the new

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corporation a signal that the present subsidies on plantation crops will be withdrawn? Is the Government proposing to remove the subsidy from milk, rice and pigs? The plantation crops provide foreign currency, and the domestic production of food crops and meat, reduce the expenditure of foreign currency on food. In the bill, clause 19 deals with sources of funds for the corporation. According to (e), one source will be from all fees derived from services or facilities owned by the corporation.

Mr. President, in the face of all the problems which our farmers have, the price of inputs, flooding, drought, praedial larceny, with special reference to those novices in the business, are you proposing to have them pay fees for services and the use of facilities which are now free? The countries belonging to the European Common Market are talking about reducing the quantum of subsidies to their farmers, but not the removal of subsidies. Of course not. The United States of America provides subsidies to its farmers. The Government warehouses in the United States and many European Common Market countries are bulging with food, more than their people require, because the farmers must be kept in business. When the political directorate instructed the CMA to purchase whatever was offered by the farmers, it was in the interest of keeping local farmers in the business.

Mr. President, the International Monetary Fund has expressed concern over the fact that the country is still very dependent upon oil, the price of which fluctuates according to the dictates of OPEC. Therefore, Government needs to continue participating in the marketing and other requirements of the farmers, and thereby encourage more people to look to farming for a livelihood; also demonstrate to those who are making efforts of farming that it is a worthwhile task. Self-sufficiency in food is important, especially as it is forecast that oil is a decreasing asset.

In the *Trinidad Guardian* of Saturday, June 29, 1991, the Chairman of the Workers' Bank 1989 Limited said:

"I subscribe to the point of view that the economy has bottomed out. There are visible signs that turnaround has, in fact, started. However, the country will have to await for the information to make more definite pronouncements."

Mr. President, I am of the opinion that the Government ought to hold the bill until it is widely recognized and understood that the economy has turned around. Thank you.

Sen. Wilton Paul: Mr. President, I am quite pleased that I am in attendance at this honourable Senate today when the debate on the bill to provide for the establishment of the National Agricultural Marketing and Development Corporation is in progress.

As the bill states, Mr. President, it provides the Central Marketing Agency with a new mechanism by which to perform, I assume more efficiently, as usually—and I say usually—this is the purpose of changes of this nature. Again, Mr. President, I express my particular good fortune to be offering a contribution to the debate because for sometime now I have had in my mind an issue concerning the application of certain chemical substances that are applied to agricultural products. That particular issue I will detail as I go along.

The bill itself, Mr. President, seems to be presented, in my opinion, at an opportune time, as it is plainly displayed by the many private markets and stalls along the sidelines of our highways and byways, that produce of this nature has increased tremendously—this is just my opinion—both in quantity and in quality and choice as well. I refer, of course, Mr. President, to vegetables, fruits, tuberous ground provisions and salad material. If this is an indication of things to come, just by observation, and I believe the bill is in preparation for greater things to come—it is being structured not a bit too soon. This, of course, again is just my opinion.

I cannot, by casual observation, gauge the increase or the improved quality or quantity of livestock, however, these farms are off the highways and byways and it is only by a special visit one is able to make some kind of comparison of increased and progressive improvement with the livestock. But having visited a pig farm not too long ago, by casual observation it seems to me that technology has been put to work and is showing the result in the health of the animals. Also, one notices that the habitat of the animals has considerably changed from years ago, when cleanliness now seems to be the accent rather than the pig-sty habitat. It is my hope, Mr. President, that the Hon. Minister of Food Production will enlighten the House on the improved qualities and quantities of livestock.

The bill being addressed here, Mr. President, cannot in this state, detail all the hopes and aspirations of the Development Corporation, but I am of the hope that incentives to produce will be given high priority. At the same time, I do not expect compromises and large rewards for inferior products to be acceptable, but incentives in the form of land allocations at low lease rates for expansion—I am

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sure will be appreciated—or special loan arrangements, low interest rates, any kind of incentive, maybe special prizes for sizes of agriculture, sizes of products, *et cetera*. Anything like that, I would imagine, would encourage the farmers to put in even more energy than I see has already been put in.

I, like Sen. Persad, am extremely sympathetic towards the producers, Mr. President, as agriculture to my mind, is an extremely difficult, time-consuming, and frustrating occupation in which, in many instances, to repeat Sen. Persad's sentiments, lead to nought. Fortunately in this country, the good Lord has spared us so far—so far, I say—of many of the natural disasters that are experienced in other countries, but often enough there is not enough rain, to repeat Sen. Persad's sentiments. There is too little rain, there are some fires, there is flood, and several other drawbacks that sometimes are very frustrating and traumatic to the producers. Of course, I have not mentioned labour disagreements. All these things throw spanners in the works. They frustrate and annoy the producers because they cannot get their work done.

On the other side of the fence, or looking at it from a different angle, naturally, Mr. President, human behaviour being what it is, we are going to find unscrupulous producers who will want to take advantage of certain compensatory factors. So I trust that the corporation will have a department which will deal with that sort of behaviour or attitude.

One hazard to the occupation, Mr. President, not mentioned, is that of controlling pests and all kinds of destructive insects, *et cetera*. This, incidentally, brings me to my special interest in the development corporation. This is in the hope, Mr. President, that these chemical-based applications in the form of insecticides, weedicides, pesticides, are going to be monitored and very carefully issued. Of course, once they get into the hands of every and any one, no one knows what is going to happen.

I will give you an example of what I read published by an international scientific publication. Well, what struck me and annoyed me most, Mr. President, is the fact that not only was Trinidad mentioned, but San Fernando, my hometown. We were completely insulted. We were exposed to the world as being, well, ignorant if you wish. To my mind, it did not have to be published in that particular scientific, or any magazine for that matter. But it went that way. It was drawn to my attention because I had one of my domestic animals that had been affected by a pesticide supposedly in a remotely placed position so that the animal could not get

to it. It was affected. It did not die. But a friend told me from the behaviour of the animal, that a particular pesticide was the cause.

He brought to me the very article I am speaking about that described San Fernando, the location. It described carelessly labelled insecticides, pesticides, fumes that are detrimental and destructive to human life being exposed; it spoke of a young man administering chemicals, badly clothed, hardly any wear but a pair of trunks, soaking from his head to toe in a pesticide that could have been lethal to 100 men. We cannot have that particular kind of thing publicized for the world anymore. It is sometime ago, and I know that we do have organizations right now which are scheduled and are committed to analyze and distribute and deal with these things. However, people are still worried that this kind of thing is happening. It is all well and good to write to the agricultural department from somewhere and say that this is going on because of a lack of knowledge, but to publish it for the world to see, it is an insult.

3.10 p.m.

That, Mr. President, is one of the things we need to look at. People are still looking at it. People are saying, "there is beautiful salad material; beautiful lettuce; beautiful cabbages, but I am afraid to use it." I have heard it myself. This is one thing that I am particularly glad that I am able to air here, because it is in the interest of everyone.

Imagine, the medical profession nowadays finds that medication, prepared for human consumption with the idea of curing various diseases, have side-effects; much less these things that are not prepared for human consumption. One does not know what is happening. We get ill, we go to the doctor—Dr. Sampath will probably tell you—something appears we do not know from whence it has come. It may not appear today; it may not appear tomorrow, but look out, sooner or later it is going to appear. We talk also of chemicals used for the acceleration of growth of animals or agricultural produce. I have known people to be ill within 12 hours of having partaken of a chicken that was fed with hormones for the sake of accelerating its growth.

I am very glad that I had the opportunity to air that particular view, as it is a very serious element of the agricultural sector. In spite of the fact that I feel that produce generally has increased, looks generally better, we still have to be careful for our health from that angle. I do hope that the Agricultural Corporation would include that in one of the serious paragraphs of its legislation and administration.

I thank you, Sir.

Sen. Fyard Hosein: Mr. President, I am grateful to you for the opportunity to intervene in this debate to add my contribution to what has already been said. I would like, if I may, to focus my contribution on one issue, and that issue arose as a consequence of the otherwise very fine contribution which Sen. Spence made last week in respect of this bill. The portion of the debate on which I propose to focus attention is that portion dealing with the approach of the Labour Intensive Development Programme to agricultural development in Trinidad and Tobago.

In my respectful view, the approach of the LIDP people in respect of agriculture is a very unique approach indeed. It is an approach which hitherto may not have been attempted in Trinidad and Tobago having regard to a number of factors, having regard to the fact that some of the principal persons who are charged with the responsibility of discharging the programme are persons who reside in otherwise urban areas, who may not have had access to agricultural lands and, therefore, who would not have been in a position to either participate in, or derive benefits, as a consequence of the programme. It is an extremely unique programme and I propose to share with this honourable Senate some of the main features of the programme, as we see it, and to perhaps provide some detail.

The programme has been extremely effective not only in terms of its economic viability but in terms of its contribution to the development of the human resources of this country, much maligned as it is. It is a programme that has to be explained to the population who I am sure are understanding more and more what the programme is all about.

The Labour Intensive Development approach to agriculture has substantially four features. The first feature is what I call a land feature, that is, the feature in respect of how you apportion lands that are comprised in the initiative by the LIDP administration. I begin by indicating that more than one-half of the lands which constitute this programme are lands that are either state-owned, owned by some state enterprise, or alternatively owned by some kind of charitable or church body. The other component, of course, is the private component.

The second aspect that needs to be emphasized is the fact that when this initiative was launched, several advertisements were placed in daily newspapers circulated in this country, indicating to everyone at large in the entire country that they were free to apply, to have their proposals considered and some kind of agreement arrived at with the LIDP administration, and that every single citizen in

this country was eligible to be considered under the programme. That was publicly advertised and it was made known to all and sundry in the country.

The third feature is that lands that are constituted under the LID Programme are lands for which absolutely no rents are paid whatsoever. So, when reference was made in this Senate last week to a certain acreage in respect of certain people, one has to indicate that those persons who are in the programme have contributed their lands for periods ranging from three years to 20 years; they are not collecting any rents in respect of those lands; you have all kinds of rights and obligations in respect of developing those lands under the programme for the duration of the lease, as the case may be, and you take whatever profit that is going to be derived as a consequence of that programme.

The fourth component is one which I mentioned before. That is, a substantially large body of persons who reside in the urban areas and who have been marginalized by the last administration and who would have never had an opportunity at all to either develop their agricultural skills or to have any kind of leanings towards agriculture, are being given an opportunity to engage in this productive enterprise. I would like to develop all of those four points for the benefit of this Senate.

3.20 p.m.

The first point I would like to develop is the one about this idea that has permeated the minds of some people—it is not the population, it is the politicians who want to make mileage out of it—that this is a programme designed, in some kind of way, whether by subterfuge or otherwise, to vest the patrimony of this country (Sen. Mark), once more, into the hands of big business.

I would like to take Senators through a document which was laid before this Senate, and which was in fact circulated to all Senators—I rather suspect that my good friend, Sen. Spence obtained a copy as well—providing details as to how this programme came about. I want to pause to indicate that the fact that the LIDP administration was able to lay a document in this Senate, does not only account for the work that it has done during the past four and a half years, but it sets that task in some kind of conceptual framework as to the reason it approached it in this way; what are the consequential results; what are the aims and objectives, and what is the methodology applied in terms of effecting those proposals. That in itself speaks a lot in terms of the viability of LIDP and in terms of where it has

come from, as against the discredited programme that existed under the last Government, which was totally unproductive, as far as we are concerned.

This document sets out, in some kind of detail, the acreage, location and owners or people whose lands have been accepted under the Labour Intensive Development Programme. I can probably take this Senate very briefly through, but my calculations indicate that some 364 acres of state lands are involved in this programme.

Sen. Atwell: So much?

Sen. Hosein: Mr. President, I want to indicate also that it does not include 100 acres of land from the Chaguaramas Development Authority, or 150 acres of land from the Caribbean Union College, 50 acres from the South Caribbean Conference of Seventh Day Adventist Church, a charitable and religious body. All of these people—I wonder whether it includes Eugene Rose from Blanchisseuse who contributed her seven acres of land, rent free, so that persons who reside on the East/West corridor, who are not employed otherwise, and who are given opportunity to participate in agriculture, whether in fact it involves big business as well. I want to know whether people like Indra, Tara and Madoo Santokee from Mundo Nuevo, Brian M. Besson from Mayaro, Mikey P. and Leila Badal of Cumuto are big business, and whether they ought not to be commended for making their lands available in respect of this programme.

I want to put to rest the argument that this is a programme designed to assist a certain ethnic group, as some other politicians said, or friends, as the same politicians said. I want to state clearly and unequivocally that the National Alliance for Reconstruction Government, and by extension, the Labour Intensive Development Programme administration are concerned about the population of this country. We are concerned about maximizing our returns; we are concerned about employing people and we are concerned about putting all the resources of the country to work. This is a fine effort in that regard.

The second point I want to make is the fact that lurking surreptitiously in the minds of many of our friends who are inclined otherwise in terms of ideology, is an idea that massive rents have been paid in respect of these lands. This document makes it abundantly clear that no rents are being paid by the Government, whatsoever, or the LIDP administration, for the purposes of developing these lands. So when people make their lands available, it is free of charge. You enter into a

programme of work; there is a mutually agreed programme in respect of what work has to be done; it is agreed before-hand; negotiated as any good business enterprise is negotiated, and work begins in respect of effecting remedial measures in respect of that particular piece of land. So absolutely no rents are paid, whatsoever.

Of course, I want to say that this is an indication that other people who may have access to labour, who purports otherwise to represent labour, and who otherwise may not have been engaged in any productive activity to assist the development of labour, should be proud of the National Alliance for Reconstruction's position in this programme.

Sen. Atwell: Looking after the workers.

Sen. Hosein: The other point I want to make is that the impression is being conveyed, as well, that this Government went about its business like a thief in the night, surreptitiously making handouts to its friends and, therefore, entered in some kind of sweetheart arrangement behind closed doors, in the dead of night, paying massive rents to these people. I want to indicate that advertisements were placed in the press; the matter was made known to the farming community; persons who were eligible were invited to apply; persons did apply; negotiations took place; mutually compatible agreements were arrived at by all parties, and there was consensus in respect of all issues with respect to those persons who wanted to participate. Therefore, the point I want to make is that there was an offer to the world at large to come and participate. Persons did participate. People, for example, like Eugene Rose from Blanchisseuse, did participate in this scheme and assisted herself and also the people of this country. So therefore, it was no sweetheart arrangement.

I make reference to this programme as well, because I want to state that this programme is not a unique programme in terms of the Labour Intensive Development Programme administration, because it is one of a series of programmes that has been taking place in this country and it has quietly turned, and it is rapidly changing the attitude to work in Trinidad and Tobago in respect of so many people.

The last administration—and I rather suspect that those people who are now offering themselves as candidates in the next election feel that the object of any exercise with respect to labour development is to develop people into a

dependency situation, have them depend upon you, occasionally give them a hand-out and, therefore, they are going to vote for you. But I want to say that the evidence that I have—and it is very clear from what is taking place on the East/West Corridor—is that people do not want that. People want a sense of self-worth, participation, training, skills to be imparted to them, to be respected for what they are, and they want a stake in the economy of this country.

So when we go, for example, and say, "Look here, we are going to have a White Paper in respect of public sector emoluments," what we are doing is replacing the state as a monolith in terms of ownership, and restoring ownership to the population of Trinidad and Tobago, every single citizen of this country who now has a right to participate in a share-holding scheme in Trinidad and Tobago.

The second approach is the LIDP approach. If you drive along the East/West Corridor—for those of us who drive there occasionally—you would see malls being constructed at convenient locations. *[Interruption]* I see Sen. Mark is making some noises. I think he perhaps wants to impress upon his political leader that he wants a safe seat in the next election. There are no safe seats. In fact, there are no seats at all, if I may say so myself. The LIDP administration along the East/West Corridor, has constructed a series of terminal malls in San Juan, Curepe, Tunapuna and Arima. These malls are designed so as to assist in the distribution of goods produced, not only in the LIDP estates, but goods produced in the 13 cottages that have been built throughout the length and breadth of this country by the NAR Government. There is living proof; as one person said, solid, liquid, living proof of the fact that the NAR Government is engaged in productive endeavours, and not engaged in the task of ranting and raving throughout the length and breadth of this country. The population understands it and I hope the seven per cent Opposition also understands that we are engaged in this enterprise. This initiative in respect of the LID Programme, is one that complements the initiative in respect of industrial cottages, malls at various spots along the East/West Corridor where the PTSC depots are located. It also complements our initiative in respect of settlements throughout the country. It complements our initiative with respect to divestment, and it is an attempt to have the empowerment of the people, and the people's people participation in the economy of Trinidad and Tobago. We have done all of these things.

3.30 p.m.

I want to indicate that the people involved in this programme are very ambitious. The people who man these programmes are essentially young

people. They are young, bold, brave and nationalistic and most of all, patriotic to this country. These people spend days, nights and weekends—

Sen. Alexander: Mr. President, on a point of information. The Senator says that Government pays no rent. Can he tell us whether the owners of the resuscitated estates would be paying for the resuscitation of those estates after the five to 20-year period? Could he give us a figure as to the average sum of money spent monthly on these privately-owned estates?

Sen. Hosein: Mr. President, I want to indicate that I do not propose to give details. Sen. Alexander is free to ask the question to the relevant Minister if he so wishes. But what I want to indicate is that you are allowed onto an estate for a period, in some cases, of three years, in some cases of 20 years. In fact, in respect to the estate that Sen. Spence mentioned on the last occasion, I want to indicate to this honourable Senate that this estate is already showing a profit in terms of its administration. What happens is that you are allowed to utilize the estates; you are allowed to plant crops; and you are allowed to reap the benefits of those crops for the period. I am not in a position now to provide details because I did not come here to provide accounts in respect of various estates and balance sheets and that kind of thing. I am here to give a conceptual approach; I am here to give a macro-economic framework as to how these estates are structured and how the programme restructured.

Sen. Furness-Smith: While we are on that problem of these shopping malls along the East/West Corridor—I have noticed them—are they used at all? They look like white elephants to me but I may be quite wrong. I have not stopped to get out to see them.

Sen. Hosein: Mr. President, some of those malls were opened one month ago. There are persons there who are selling handicraft and so on and it is an incremental area of development. The 13 cottages that have been built along the East/West Corridor are engaged in leather craft, food preparation, wine-making and various other endeavours which are productive, and are going to serve as a vehicle for the disposal of those produce. There are applications in; some of the malls have been tenanted; all of the malls are not completely full. But having regard to the time-frame within which they were put down, I think they are doing very well indeed in terms of their organization because not only do they serve the purpose of being a bus terminal, but they also serve as an economic centre in

respect of the disposal of produce, produced on the estates and produced in the cottages. That is the concept behind it. So it is a living, dynamic kind of concept.

I want to suggest also that the young people are behind this—I said so before—people who are bold, people who have taken an—

Sen. Moonan: Mr. President, I would like the hon. Senator to say if taxes are paid on these lands. I do not know if he is playing politics by not calling the big business names. He called all the small people to indicate that he is playing politics. I would like him to call the big names of the private people.

Sen. Hosein: Mr. President, I am not in the business of calling names. Probably Sen. Moonan is and perhaps he can assist us in that regard. I think he has a copy of this document. The first page, for example: Chaguaramas Development Authority—100 acres; Evelyn Nurse—20 acres; Caribbean Union College—150 acres; South American Conference of Seventh Day Adventists—50 acres; Sandra Harduar—48 acres; Dianan Chandool—32 acres; state lands—80 acres; state lands—84 acres; Indra, Tara, Madoo Santokee—14 acres; state lands—100 acres. Shall I go on again? Karl, Anthony, Wendy, Dale and Violet Soulette—15 acres; Eugene Rose—7 acres. Shall I go on again?

Sen. Moonan has a copy and when he is finished collecting his \$5 million, perhaps he can look at the copy and read it. The information is there.

This programme is being run by persons who are young and bold and persons who spend all their time—and when I say all their time, I mean literally all their time—on weekends, at nights, during the week, setting out the task of ensuring that this programme is successful. The plan down the line is to have some 5,000 acres under this kind of programme. The plan also is not only to produce goods and services or to produce goods for purposes of sale, but the purpose is to train a large reservoir of people, as I have indicated before, who, hitherto, would not have had access to lands because the East/West Corridor is almost entirely for housing industry, and who would get an opportunity to be sensitized, to be trained and to have an avenue open for them for their own economic development.

Comparisons are odious but, if for example, you compare the productivity of the Labour Intensive Development Programme with the Developmental and Environmental Works Division Programme, you would see that they are oceans apart in terms of productivity, in terms of commitment, in terms of achievement and in terms of morale.

In this situation here, as in respect of the malls, as in respect of LIDP generally, persons go to work at 7 o'clock in the morning and leave at 3 o'clock in the afternoon. No longer do we have the 7.00 to 7.30 syndrome. This Government should be complimented because we are injecting in this country, by virtue of this programme, a new approach in terms of work. We have started off in the area where there was the greatest difficulty.

For example, in the Ministry of Works, we could have sorted out one particular area which was half-way all right and say, "well look here, we are going to augment and we are going to organize that particular area where there is some talent and where there is some productivity." But the hon. Minister focused his attention on the area of activity which was responsible, to a large extent, and which militated against productivity in this country. He focused his attention on the area that needed to be cleaned up initially. He spent his time there, he organized it, he had a plan, he had a concept and he implemented change in the area where change was most need. If Trinidad and Tobago can take DEWD and make LIDP, it can do anything, in my respectful submission.

We are about providing a decent, honest living for people who now, in some cases, travel to work everyday. They go into the estates, they learn their skills and we are tying that programme into another concept, also examined in this document and also having some kind of relation to agriculture, and that is urban agriculture.

Sen. Hosein: Sen. Alexander, you will have a chance to speak.

Sen. Alexander: Mr. President, I want to understand what the Senator is saying. Could he tell me whether the LIDP administration is on private lands by virtue of a lease or what are the rights of occupation and the terms of the occupation? I can only understand what you are saying if I have those bits of information. That is all.

Sen. Hosein: Mr. President, that information is contained in this document which was circulated to all Senators and the information was also given at the initial stages of my contribution.

I indicated that what happened was that an invitation was extended to the country at large. Persons applied; there were negotiations and a mutually acceptable lease arrangement was entered into between the LIDP administration and the persons who owned land. These negotiations took place and a mutually convenient programme was worked out and that programme is in respect of

estates ranging from seven acres to 148 acres in the case of private persons for a period between three years and 20 years. Each lease has certain common characteristics; they may vary in certain respects and, therefore, it is not possible to come to this Parliament and deal in detail with every single lease in terms of their economic and legal arrangements. What I did was give a broad overview as is contained in this document as to the arrangement between the parties. That is in this document.

3.40 p.m.

Sen. Furness-Smith: I share Sen. Alexander's concern. When I looked at that document, as I remember, to the best of my recollection, there were no details given in that document. It does not tell you what happens when estate-owners get back the land. It is vague. Now, probably you can direct me to the page in which details are given of any of these arrangements. Just one of them. Whether it is Messrs Seereram or somebody else, or the good lady in Toco or wherever, it would certainly assist us in assessing the position.

Sen. Hosein: Mr. President, I want to refer Sen. Furness-Smith to page 20 of the document.

"All privately owned lands currently under the programme are required to be leased to Government for periods ranging from three (3) years for the smallest acres to twenty (20) years for the largest.

During this period no premium, lease rental or other financial transfer is to be made by the Government to the owner, and the consideration is that the lands are to be returned at the expiration of the lease period after having been developed in accordance with farm plans agreed on.

Government has full access to the lands and all produce, therefrom, during the lease period, and will make the fullest use of the land to create employment, expand food production in the country for domestic and export markets, and develop a sound base for the expansion of the agro-industrial sector."

Now, it is difficult, you would appreciate, in a document of this sort, to give the details in respect of every single lease, because there are some 20 people or more, who are mentioned in this document. Therefore, what this document seeks to do is to put a macro approach to the programme. In other cases, this Parliament would have been provided with no information at all. The document serves to put

Senators in the know, in respect of what are the broad aims and objects of the programme.

If you require further details, those details can be obtained—I do not need to advise Senators about it—by way of questions or alternatively, from the Ministry as the case may be. It is not the intention of this document, nor should I think a Parliament of this country at this stage, in this kind of debate, to be involved in giving details in respect of every single lease arrangements between the parties.

Sen. Furness-Smith: I am very grateful to my friend. What he has read is precisely my recollection and it answers Sen. Alexander's question. As I read it, and as he tells it, it answers it, and it says that nothing will be paid by the owners. Even if, for instance, the programme is planting up the estate in fruit trees—I do not know if there is such a programme—or if they are just cultivating it and growing crops then I accept the Government's point of view. If they are planting fruit trees, for instance, or coconut trees or whatever, then one would expect some payment back and we do not know.

Sen. Hosein: Mr. President, I want to continue further. Now, Sen. Spence, on the last occasion, raised the idea that you must go onto state lands and do forestry, for example. But people cannot learn agriculture if you go onto state lands and plant trees for purposes of forestry.

The object of the programme is to train them in agriculture and so, to give them an opportunity later on, perhaps, to participate in agriculture on their own. I was about to make the point, that there is also a pilot programme in place now in respect of urban agriculture in many areas. I think there are four areas which have been selected and they are involved in urban agriculture. That is, the utilization of what we call in Central Trinidad, “machans”, or fences, and other areas to grow things like, for example, cantaloup, bodi, beans and other kinds of products. That is also an object of the programme. For example, persons who live along the East/West Corridor where land is limited, would be allowed to grow food from pots and pans and there is an entire methodology in respect of that.

In addition to which, I know that this honourable Minister is also engaged—not as part of this programme—in a programme which facilitates or encourages the growing of high quality products which require a small capital expenditure and a small amount of space. My mind immediately goes to mushrooms. Because what is taking place in this country now is that persons are growing mushrooms which require a small capital investment—I think you need a dark house and an air-

condition unit—and I know that courses are being conducted throughout the entire country for the growing of mushrooms.

Relatives of mine who have been retrenched, as the case may be, have participated in the project. Friends of mine, neighbours, people who I know, I encourage them to participate in the mushroom programme because it does not require a large capital development. We import mushrooms into this country and, therefore, persons are able to be provided with some sort of employment.

The other programme is one designed—I do not want to go into all the programmes now—for animal husbandry. I want to share with this Senate, a story which I think Senators ought to know about. In 1988, a gentleman who lives in the village from which I come, Charlieville, who took voluntary retirement—he was a little bit upset, as the case may be, because his prospects were not good down the line and he decided to take voluntary retirement and he came home—and he started a small animal husbandry rearing project, utilizing bagasse, molasses, urea, cornmeal and various other local products. From time to time, I visit that person and I want to tell Sen. Prakesh Persad, that person now supports the National Alliance for Reconstruction because he understands more than he does, the policies of this Government.

That person now has two pens in which these goats and sheep are being reared purely out of local produce: bagasse, molasses, some urea, cornmeal mixed together, and those goats are not fed any grass whatsoever and they grow to be strong healthy goats.

I can go ahead and talk about agriculture from time to time and at length. I do not want to do that because I want to tell my friends on the other side who purport to represent sugar that none of them—and I do not want to be personal—have come from a sugar, environment. None of them in the past know what sugar cultivation is all about. My family will be in this country next year, for 125 years; 114 of which was spent in the sugar cultivation. We stopped planting sugar in 1980. I still live in Caroni and I know about sugar cultivation.

The point is that persons in large numbers, throughout the length and breadth of this country, are now engaged in all kinds of small scale agriculture, rearing sheep, goats, as the case may be, growing mushrooms and all kinds of activities which not only generate income but which provide valuable food for the population, reduces the incidence of foreign exchange. In some cases the export industry is open to them and those persons are surviving.

I want to wind up by saying that we must be extremely careful how we go about making allegations and calling names from a document as the case may be. One needs to research the matter very carefully. I think that one has to understand that we are about a holistic development. We have made a start; we have put our first initiatives into place; we are embracing every single sector in this country because the National Alliance for Reconstruction is the only party that is able to embrace every single facet of life in Trinidad and Tobago. We are bringing the people together; we are engaging in productive activity; the population is supportive of us; we know where we are going; we have made a change in terms of the face of Trinidad and Tobago; the tide has turned; the resting giant is now awake and the National Alliance for Reconstruction Government is going to improve the lot of the population of Trinidad and Tobago, from the year 1991. Thank you very much.

Sen. Prof. Kenneth Ramchand: Mr. President, the Minister has presented his bill with exemplary clarity and courtesy, qualities I associate with his scholarly work and with his oratorical performances, ever since the days when we had our debates and orating encounters at Naparima College, when we together ran a newspaper and a radio station called "The Blue Circle Network".

It is because of the Minister's clarity that I have been able to see what I do not like about this bill. If I express my reservations strongly, I do not wish it to be taken that I am attacking the Minister or attacking the Government.

I am nevertheless concerned with issues and ideas and while I do not presume to expect to change policy, I hope I would be given a hearing and have some influence on thought and feelings.

The bill before us seeks to repeal and replace the Central Marketing Agency Act for the purpose of transforming the agency into the National Agricultural Marketing and Development Corporation. So, the agency is to be replaced by the corporation. From the contributions of the honourable Minister and Sen. Sampath, we can deduce two sets of reasons for this move.

Firstly, the ineffectiveness, inefficiency and possible corruptions of the agency, and secondly, the deletion or de-emphasizing of some of the functions of the agency and the inclusion of new ones to be carried out by the corporation.

3.50 p.m.

With respect to the first set of reasons, it is to be noticed that the corporation is expected to absorb nearly all of the officers and employees of the agency. This

is a most worthy and humane resolve, but it is not one which is likely to improve efficiency or effectiveness, since we have to presume that the people being retained are the very officers and employees who are presumably responsible for the malfunctioning of the agency.

Indeed, after listening to the Minister and Sen. Sampath you would expect dismissals, induced retirements and a few jail sentences. After listening to Sen. Horne, you feel that there is a very good case that can be made for hanging. If there are so many knaves in the CMA and in the other bodies associated with previous—

Sen. Sampath: I am not sure that Sen. Ramchand was here when I made my contribution. Perhaps he was, but I did make it clear that we have found there were people in the Central Marketing Agency who were not pulling their weight and it was over-staffed. In fact, those people had been retrenched and had been paid their severance pay. Steps have already been taken to weed out those elements which contributed to the inefficiency and corruption in the CMA.

Sen. Ramchand: Thank you. I am glad to hear it. I was going to say if there are so many knaves in the CMA and in other bodies associated with the previous grievous Government, how come nobody has been put in jail as yet? When we were children we used to get a lot of licks to the tune “the upholder is worse than the thief”. If we do not put these people in jail we will be upholders of corruption and will be encouraging further corruption in the various enterprises in the country. *[Interruption]*

If Sen. Rampersad will listen to me he will see that I am really on his side and he will not interrupt me. What I really mean to say is that if the agency is malfunctioning, it ought to be possible to repair the defects. If you have to do an engine job, you do not spend your time and money cosmetically renewing the body and leaving the defective engine in the new body. The real reasons for replacing the agency have to be sought in a comparison of the functions of the agency with the functions of the corporation. The functions not the functioning. As far as I can make out, all the functions of the CMA have been retained, at least nominally.

Clause 9(2)(h) of the bill speaks of taking over relevant activities or functions previously discharged by the agency. I do not care to speculate at this time on which of the activities or functions will be deemed relevant and on what criteria, nor can anyone presume to write upon the *carte blanche* provided by the word “relevant” and determine on any rational principle what activities will be de-

emphasized or ignored. It seems unnecessary to do so, because it is the imparting of new emphases and the inclusion of new functions, that account for the difference between the agency and the corporation.

As I do not propose to argue out what seems to me to be obvious, let me at this point state how things strike me. A *tabula rasa*, a slate wiped clean, is a convenience, but I take comfort from agreeing with Sen. Spence that there is nothing the proposed corporation can do that might not be done under the Central Marketing Agency Act. Sen. Spence has argued the point sufficiently, in my opinion, and I do not think it even needed arguing at all, but I would like the Minister in his winding up to show in a reasoned way that we are mistaken. I wait for the illumination.

In the meantime, I want to look at one small example, one small illustration of how the present bill represents a major shift in philosophy. One function of the CMA includes—to stimulate surplus which is to be sold at a fixed price or to be used in the processing plant. “To stimulate surplus” contains a certain concept, that we are producing for our use, first, and what is left will be sold for export or processing. So the notion of surplus, contains an idea of what you are doing with your agricultural production and that is, you are producing, first of all for use. “To be sold at a fixed price” contains an attitude that I find the bill as first submitted by the Minister was not very careful about. Sen. Spence was quick to table his amendment asking that there should be a fixed price and I am happy to state that the Minister has agreed to include Sen. Spence's amendment about a fixed price.

4.00 p.m.

Mr. President, I note from the Minister's silence that I do not misinterpret his reaction.

Mr. President, we do not see the word "agro-industry", we do not see the word "agri-business", but "processing plant" referred to suggests a possibility of processing agricultural produce, and it seems to me implicit in that, that we can process for our own use out of season, and if we have anything left over, we can export.

I find, Mr. President, that the functions of the CMA clearly imply a policy of producing for local use, producing for self-sufficiency, and thinking of exporting our agricultural products only after we have satisfied our own requirements. For

National Agricultural Corporation Bill
[SEN. RAMCHAND]

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many reasons, I am a believer in this sort of attitude to agriculture. We are not marketing raw material overseas, as the corporation has been given the power to do. We have had this for 300 years, the marketing of raw material overseas and our purchasing of rubbish from overseas as consumers in return. Mr. President, we were simpler then; we were not in the clutch of agri-business. What was wrong with the CMA, in my opinion, was not its philosophy, its orientations and its functions, but its functioning. I hold to the view that we do not need the corporation; we need to revitalize the agency and retain the aims for which it has been set up.

Mr. President, I have some anxieties about our economic policies and about the attitude to agricultural development. My position is not a very fashionable one, but I say it here for what it is worth because this is a place where you can throw up your ideas and people will listen in a gentlemanly way. You cannot be a great exporting nation unless you produce things that people have to buy and want to buy. You cannot be a great exporting nation if the thing you have to sell is something for which the need or demand is brief or intermittent or spurious. An individual and the advertisers may create an appetite, and the individual may make a killing before the appetite or fashion fails, but nations cannot play that kind of game. For a nation to win as a trading nation, it has to produce things that are necessary to other people. If it satisfies this condition, it does not have to look for markets; markets come looking for it. This is an extreme way of putting it, Mr. President, but it is not as an exercise in restricting oneself to monosyllables that the saying, "Good wine needs no bush" was invented. We do need to identify markets.

Who, except Trinidad and Tobago, will sell on credit to a country that cannot afford to pay and then take payment back in weevils and broken grains of rice? We do need to present our products in the marketplace, but really, Mr. President, there is little point in a country spending its money on marketing if it has not spent even more time, money and thought on productivity, and if it does not show sufficient care for those who actually do the producing.

For a nation or people, in my opinion, Mr. President, productivity means many things. It is, of course, the production of commodities, but it is also the production of the sense of the dignity of the producer, the production of a sense of achievement, the production of a sense of being appreciated, the production of a sense of well-being, the production of a sense of having a place, the production of

a sense of doing something meaningful as a member of a community. I do not know if this is what the Japanese mean by "productivity", or if this is what the West Germans and the Americans mean by "productivity", but I submit, Mr. President, that the people who want to be whole and happy cannot accept a definition of "productivity" that is restricted to the production of commodities for the export market.

Of course, we have to produce, Mr. President, and we have to export. We have to produce because we have to try to be as self-sufficient as possible and, especially, we have to try and be able to feed ourselves, but we cannot achieve complete self-sufficiency, and so we have to import the things we need as well as some of the things that make life more comfortable and enjoyable. We have to export then because we need the money to pay for imports. That is why we have—or do we still have—an Export Development Corporation. And now we are going to get, what is virtually, an Agricultural Export Development Corporation. But I am not about to offer my services as a referee in a territorial dispute. Instead, Mr. President, I want to offer a piece of logic I hope you will understand. Since we import more than we export, should we not have an "import undevelopment corporation"?

Mr. President, one of the functions of the CMA had been to be a sole importer, and I take that to mean that the Government was drifting in the direction of a state trading corporation, the kind of body which would say, "I am not giving you foreign exchange to import red beans to make a profit on the population. We, the Government, are importing red beans; we will choose the markets; we will not make deals; we will make sure that the population gets red beans at the cheapest possible price. We are cutting out the profiteering middle-man."

I think that was implicit, Mr. President, in the functions of the CMA, and I would be very sorry to see that function disappear. We stand a better chance of balancing our budget if we could direct our agricultural policy towards cutting the import bill and giving people the opportunity to form a relationship to their work and to the landscape, rather than attempting to produce, as in the old days, for shipment overseas and for the profit of a small business class middle-manning the operations.

We are a most fortunate country, Mr. President, in that we can bank on our oil exports—and I have no worries about banking on oil exports—to bring in money,

to purchase, to import the things we need, and we can concentrate and develop our agriculture in the direction of self-sufficiency and cutting the import bill.

Sometimes I wonder, Mr. President, on this question of oil: why every house in Trinidad does not get its lights from solar energy, its hot water from solar energy, its clothes dried from solar energy. This is surely a way to increase our productivity of oil or oil for the market. We keep on using up our oil for local uses, when we have scientists at the University of the West Indies who have shown all the different ways in which solar energy can be used, domestically and in industry, in our country, and they are not doing it. I think it is because we do not have a philosophy of what we are trying to do with our economy. *[Interruption]*

Mr. President, I do not want to know anything about marketing. Nothing I have is for sale, especially myself.

This is a peanut-eating country, Mr. President. Some people eat it because it is an aphrodisiac; some people eat it while watching movies at the cinema; some people have nothing else to do; some like peanut punch. The manufacturers of chocolates stuff chocolates with peanuts instead of giving us those nice hazel nuts. This is a peanut-eating country, and we do not grow one grain of peanuts.

Can you imagine how much foreign exchange would be saved and how many jobs would be created if the Government embarked upon a programme to locate suitable soils and conditions and, where necessary, create them with science, assist in the establishment of peanut farms and phase out the importation of peanuts? But of course, any government that tries to do that will run up against the monopolists who control the importation of peanuts and who probably contribute to the funds of all the political parties.

4.15 p.m.

Mr. President, the hon. Minister spoke about the high quality of debate in this Senate and the serenity of the atmosphere.

Dr. Rambachan: You are just degenerating it.

Sen. Ramchand: Mr. President, I am being heckled. I never knew the word "jackass" was offensive.

Dr. Rambachan: There he goes again.

Sen. Ramchand: I really wish, Mr. President, that if people wish to say anything about me, they would not sully the good name of the university. I know I educate many of the people in there, but I am not the university.

Mr. President: There are two hon. Senators on their feet, are you giving way?

Sen. Ramchand: Yes.

Dr. Sampath: Thank you very much, Mr. President. I just want to bring back the debate to the subject. I want to correct Sen. Ramchand on one point. We do, in fact, grow peanuts in this country. Indeed, Caroni Limited is at present growing peanuts at Orange Grove. I am growing peanuts in my backyard. There are difficulties but this Government is facing up to the difficulty of growing peanuts and we are, in fact, going to grow a lot more peanuts in Trinidad and Tobago.

Sen. Ramchand: Thank you very much, Senator. I am glad to know that steps are being taken. I wish that the Government would publicize this and let people know that this is the direction in which we are moving. I do not share in many small nations' fantasies. I do not share in those fantasies of being a great trading nation, nor do I believe that as far as agriculture is concerned, we must export or perish. I believe very much in changing our lifestyle and controlling our imports. I believe in cutting out the middle-man who takes from both sides. I believe that the first function of our agricultural policy ought to be to create an independent food supply, our exports in this area being only the excess from what we are producing for our own use, anyway.

For these reasons, I consider the present bill an irrelevance. I want it to be understood—I have to repeat what I began with—that I say these things out of conviction and not in opposition to any political party. I do not hold a brief for any political party. As a matter of fact, I do not think any of the political parties would agree with the non-economistic attitudes I take to economic matters.

I have great difficulty with the term "agri-business". You notice it is not "agricultureness", it is "agri-business". It is the word "agriculture" that is broken in this partnership, and I am afraid that agri-business, as described in this bill, is more business than agriculture. I would like to show what happens or can happen when business gets a hold of agriculture, by referring to the conflict between soya bean oil and to some of the difficulties of the coconut industry. I would like to sharpen my remarks on agri-business by referring to, and reading from, an article written in June, 1987, entitled, "The Great Cooking Oil War". In that article I spoke about the beginnings of the soya oil plant.

Sen. H. Charles: Can you identify the publication?

Sen. Ramchand: You mean you do not know it? It is "Matters Arising", dated June 17, 1987:

"Last week, the CGA served notice that as from June 15, 1987, it would be unable to purchase copra from the island's coconut growers."

A similar announcement was made recently.

"The reason given was that a soya bean oil plant run by National Flour Mills was producing for the retail trade a soya bean oil which the CGA's coconut-derived cooking oil was unable to compete with.

At the moment, the consumer pays a little less for the soya bean oil, but a health argument is usually given in its favour.

It should be noted that neither of these oils has or causes cholesterol."

In fact, it is as a result of the arguments of the overseas lobbyist defending soya bean oil and peanut oil, that coconut oil is so despised, even by ourselves. I have a kind of impressionistic thing that people evolve to deal with things in their environment. I grew up in Cedros rubbing my head, my limbs, my foot, all over my body, with coconut oil; eating my fish, fried in coconut oil; my plantain, fried in coconut oil, and I do not have any cholesterol; I am not getting any heart-attacks. So I do not see that Caribbean people need to worry with what the American lobbyists tell us about the harmfulness of coconut oil. I continue about the soya bean factory, because it helps to show what happens when business is in charge of agriculture. I quote:

"The soya bean plant was one of the schemes of the late John O'Halloran and according to involved sources, it was pursued after his death under the aegis of the PNM. The plant cost the country \$41 million and some informants find that price controversial.

The CGA, (Coconut Growers Association), opposed the soya bean plant on the ground that soya bean oil would drive coconut-derived oil from the domestic edible market.

It was also argued, quite correctly, that the importation of the bean for the extraction of edible oil would be in breach of Schedule IX of the Caricom Agreement on Oils and Fats.

Several meetings were held in 1986 culminating in a written assurance from Mr. W. Mottley, a government Minister at that time, that National Flour Mills would not compete against the CGA on the retail market in respect of edible oil."

So a promise was given by the Minister.

"The CGA points out that the ministerial guarantee was disregarded by National Flour Mills. It is clear to this writer that the previous Government allowed the soya bean plant to be imported and installed without considering its possible effects on the coconut industry and without working out an accommodation.

When interviewed, the Chairman of National Flour Mills, Mr. Mervyn Assam, said that an accommodation of a sort did exist. He charges that the CGA refused to honour an agreement to buy bulk soya oil from National Flour Mills."

So the deal was that National Flour Mills will not bottle soya oil but they would sell it to the CGA who, instead of importing soya oil, would themselves bottle the soya oil and put it on the market, the CGA forgetting that their responsibility is coconut industry.

"Mr. Assam charged that the CGA refused to honour its agreement to purchase. The CGA claimed that the asking price of \$2,310 per metric tonne was higher than the world market price of \$1,960. Mr. Assam insisted that \$2,310 was below the world market price."

The CGA declared, "no, we are right," and it went on like that—

"When the previous Government of Trinidad and Tobago contracted with a German firm to deliver and install a bottling plant, the CGA saw this as a declaration of war. It protested, and it had the strong support of another Minister, Mr. Ronnie Williams, who is reported to have called for the bottling plant arrangement to be stopped."

Dr. Rambachan: Did he also have a bottling plant?

Sen. Ramchand: I do not know.

Dr. Rambachan: Was he in the bottling business? Would it have threatened his business? He sells soft drinks.

4.25 p.m.

Sen. Ramchand: I continue:

"But information was given that the plant had already been paid for. The CGA then offered to buy the plant, although they did not want it, since they had only recently upgraded their bottling and packaging arrangements."

They have been told to do this by Minister Marilyn Gordon. So you have three Ministers each giving different kinds of advice, and poor agriculture languishing—

"The offer was not answered, it seems, and the talk of the bottling plant died. But not everybody was sleeping.

The Germans must have come as thieves in the night and set up the bottling plant. The CGA did not know. When the CGA refused to buy oil at the price Mr. Assam asked, the NFM decided to bottle."

Mr. President, I think that this battle between these two agri-business corporations did have at the time, and has continued to have, a harmful effect on the coconut industry. In this particular battle it looks as if the CGA was the champion of the coconut industry, but it is worse than that. They were not. They were businessmen trying to defend their business interests. The squabble over the edible oil market would not have occurred if the CGA had developed more downstream industries, instead of depending solely upon edible oil.

"It can be argued that the CGA preferred to take advantage of Schedule IX to import 50 per cent of its oils, fats or substitutes instead of stimulating local coconut production."

It is easier, more convenient to import the oil rather than buying the copra and making the oil, and having to depend on these unstable labourers, apparently.

"Some have alleged that the CGA turned the coconut industry in the buyer's favour by using its licence to import oil. The coconut grower was then, and still is now, at the mercy of the CGA. More crucially..."

Sen. Furness-Smith: On a point of information. I wonder if the hon. Member is aware that the CGA is—I think it is a co-operative—comprised of coconut growers. It is a coconut growers' co-operative, it is not a big business.

Sen. Ramchand: I did address that point, hon. Senator. It is clear that although the CGA is recognized and registered as a co-operative, it has not

operated as a co-operative. Not all growers can be members. The co-operative can refuse to purchase its members' coconuts. I investigated it and found that the CGA had fallen into the hands of the people with large estates. All the small coconut growers were not members of the CGA. Well, there may be one or two who might have scraped in because they had friends, but I think we can say that the CGA was largely a grouping of the large estate owners.

Sen. Furness-Smith: Could the hon. Member tell us, when it comes to growing coconuts, what is the difference between a small grower and a big grower? Unless you are totally against large growers of any kind.

Sen. Ramchand: I am not against large or small. What I am saying is, if there is a co-operative, all those who are growing coconuts should be members of the co-operative, and it should be run in the interest of coconut growers. But if you have a Coconut Growers' Association which also fancies itself as importers and bottlers of oil, and makers of margarine and they are trying to sell and to make a profit through this kind of agri-business, then that association may prefer to import oil, rather than to buy copra. This, it seems to me, is exactly what is happening all the time with the CGA.

Sen. Weekes: I wonder if the goodly Senator could inform me about the position in respect of the Singh's estate? Is that estate a member of the CGA?

Sen. Ramchand: It was not. There is only one estate in the whole of Cedros that has become a member of the co-operative. This is a new estate by a man who has purchased some two or three and combined them. He was wooed by the CGA because they needed a black man, an Indian man, as a member of the CGA.

In this article I called for an investigation into the workings of the CGA because another of the charges that I made against it, is that the CGA, not only did not purchase copra—

Sen. Rampersad: I thank you for giving way. Based on what you have said, are you saying, therefore, that the CGA is or was run by one ethnic group in this country?

Sen. Ramchand: I would say it is run by a certain economic class. We could talk about it afterwards. I do not feel that it is necessary to go into that at this point.

The point I am trying to illustrate is that when you put agriculture and agri-business in the hands of businessmen, the perspective of the businessmen is not the development of agriculture, but the development of business. As part of the indictment of how this agri-business was running, I want to say that they found it more suitable to their interests to keep our coconut industry away from the way in which all modern coconut industries operate—the wet-processing method.

There is one process by which you dry the coconut and it becomes copra, and you use that copra to make the oil. The oil that you produce has a bad smell, and you have to refine it to get that copra smell away from the oil. With the wet-processing method, the oil comes out clear and almost with a neutral smell. It lasts longer. It does not go rancid. The by-products of the wet-processing method provide animal feeds, material for chutney and all kinds of things. The wet-processing method produces a better oil; it is the method that we use at home. As you cut the coconut, without putting it in the sun to turn it into copra, you grate it and you produce a beautiful coconut oil. The wet-processing method permits maximum utilization of all kinds of downstream possibilities in the coconut.

One of the indictments of the CGA, as businessmen, who prefer to import 50 per cent of their oils and fats, is that they refuse to spend Government's money or their money on the introduction of the wet-processing method.

The burden of my contribution is that there is nothing that the corporation wants to do that cannot be done through the existing agency, if that agency is purged and made more efficient; that the export orientation of the bill is based upon a premise that it is better to export agricultural produce than to produce for self-sufficiency. I do not agree with that premise.

The bill does not propose to do anything for the men and women who toil in sun and rain, in flood and drought, to bring forth fruit from the bowels of the earth. The bill does not recognize the way in which agriculture can play a crucial part in reducing the bill for drugs and medicine through the development of research into bush and herb medicines. The bill, not only favours owners of large estates—as Prof. Spence pointed out, and I am still in agreement with him, in spite of Sen. Hosein's very persuasive attempts—but it puts businessmen in a position to exploit farmers.

Mr. President, I think it would be disastrous to put businessmen in charge of the marketing of agricultural produce, since our history has shown that the interest of the capitalist, entrepreneur, businessman—call him what you like—always takes

precedence over the interest of the farmer or worker; always takes precedence over development plans that may lead the country towards self-sufficiency and self-respect.

I cannot give my support to a bill in which agri-business threatens, once again, to turn the man who works on the land into a factory-hand or a supplier of raw material for other people's profit. I urge the Government to wait until it gets the new mandate it is sure about, before imposing the privatization of agriculture upon this population.

I thank you.

Mr. President: The sitting will be suspended for approximately 30 minutes.

4.35 p.m.: *Sitting suspended.*

5.05 p.m.: *Sitting resumed.*

Sen. Gerald Furness-Smith: Mr. President, this has been a very educational experience for me, no less for the reason that we have so many distinguished people from the university speaking in this debate. Unfortunately, the more the debate is continued, the more difficulty I have with this bill.

First of all, I agree heartily with Sen. Persad and other Senators who have mentioned the hardships of working the land that it is not an easy life, it is hard work. Your back is bent most of the time and the sun is hot, in addition to the little difficulties that we all have nowadays with life in Trinidad and Tobago which have been mentioned—roads and pot-holes, crime, outages. Two weeks ago, practically every night we had outages, but then of course, that was for a very good reason, the goodly gentlemen who work in the place had a little problem with their medical pension plan. So naturally, they were not so enthusiastic for a week or two. Fortunately, that seems to have got better. It is those sort of little difficulties—difficulties with import licences or getting refunds on this, that or the other, which are common to all businesses.

But people in agriculture have other things to contend with. Every day, they are faced with attacks from all kind of insects, pests: white flies, moles, crickets, slugs, wilt thripes locusts, leaf miner, bachacs. And when I say bachacs, of course I speak of the insects. But there is a very prevalent two-legged bachac which overnight can take out your whole crop—praedial larceny.

Every 10 years or so, the Government of the day introduces a new Praedial Larceny Bill. There is a big headline in the newspaper—"We are dealing with praedial larceny, draconian penalties against people caught" and so forth. And nothing happens at all. A couple of years ago, it was encouraging to see, for the first time that a magistrate actually exercised powers under the Praedial Larceny Act and impounded a truck which was caught conveying stolen produce and had it sold.

Of course, people in agriculture cannot expect any special treatment. We are all living in jails now. Why should they be different? But for most of us, we work in more pleasant surroundings, in air-conditioning which is more comfortable and I feel for those people. It is not only the peasant proprietors, it is also the overseers, the owners, people who put some money into agriculture to try and get something going. Of course, if you can make it, it is very rewarding, but it is extremely hard work at whatever level.

So, it is from that point of view when agriculture is raised, that I am addressing my mind. What is this bill doing for those people? Is it going to help them, or is it not? As I say, Mr. President, I am afraid, I am not in the least bit clear whether this bill will help or not.

The first point which has been brilliantly made by Sen. Ramchand as to the analysis of the bill, is the comparison between what the functions of the new corporation and the functions of the CMA are. Really, when you examine the two bills, there is very little to choose between them, except that this bill appears to exclude, specifically, the buying and selling of produce, and as the Minister confirmed, that is really the basic objective. Sen. Ramchand has analyzed that and I would not add anything to his analysis. But I am adding a further question. Not just, why do we not keep the CMA and try to make it work better, but if we are satisfied—as the Minister clearly is, with some justification—that the CMA should be abolished, why do we need a new body at all? Every week, we are starting new statutory corporations in Parliament and I have grave misgivings and I want to examine each one sceptically with the question: What is it going to achieve?

Now, when it comes to marketing, there are two aspects of marketing—marketing internally and marketing externally. As to internal marketing, following the tremendous progress which has been noted in food production since 1987—and I think the Government really needs to be congratulated because progress does seem to have been made. Many, many more people seem to be producing and the

quality is better as other speakers have noted. At the same time, from my observation, an extraordinary new marketing system has arisen. Every public road in the country, every street, has joined in this marketing effort. People put up a little stall, maybe just a table, and they are selling something—Independence Square, St. James, everywhere. Our main national thoroughfare, the Churchill Roosevelt Highway was for about five years or so, a leading market; a most remarkable achievement and extremely convenient. The only trouble was of course, it is not in consort with having a Town and Country Planning Division and a big Ministry of Planning and Development, if your main arterial road is going to be turned into a public market. There is a slight inconsistency there. But, obviously many people were being employed, people were getting what they wanted. They could stop and buy the ground provisions, fruit, *etc.*

5.15 p.m.

So that is the whole principle of private enterprise, in theory anyway. Because there was an excess of food, people found a way of selling and buying it. Private enterprise working at its best. If there was a need it fills the need.

Marketing: The Government eventually—after three or four years and these people are well established on the Churchill Roosevelt Highway—feel it necessary to move them off because it was, for the obvious reason, an affront to Government for all the laws to be infringed. So Government provided a new market out in Macoya and made a nice set of roads and stalls—at God knows what expense—which nobody wants to go to. Who is turning off, when you are driving on the main road? Who wants to turn off and stop and not be sure what you would find in the market? Great expense. Why build fancy pavilions for these people to sell under, when for donkey's ears they have put up their own protection, in the open? Why does the state have to spend all those millions of dollars?

What I am not sure is, whether now we have enough markets; whether the producer—the small man particularly, who is producing ground crops and vegetables—is getting a living out of his work, or whether the profit is being taken by the middle-man. Now with due respect to Sen. Ramchand, the middle-man is very important. He has got to stand up in a shop all day to sell his produce; time has to be spent if he is in a certain class of business. If he is renting his premises, he has to pay his rent and get a living out of it. The middle-man is important and he has got to be paid for what he does. The only safeguard for the producer is that there are sufficient middle-men to give him a fair price so that he can bargain from one to the other. Certainly, the middle-men, like the farmer—they are not

foolish—the farmer is going to sell at the highest price he can and the middle-man is going to buy at the lowest price he can, and a free market is the only protection you have.

Now what is worrying me—and I do not know whether the Minister has any information on it, he should have—is whether all these people who went into agriculture in 1987 are making a living or, as stated by Sen. Persad, whether they are beginning to get out of it because they cannot make a decent living.

Certainly, as far as internal markets go, they are under the jurisdiction of the local municipalities; or, in the case of country areas, under the Marketing Act, which is Chap. 68:02 which gives statutory authority for the Minister in question to authorize markets anywhere in the country and they would be run under the aegis of the new municipalities. The CMA or the new corporation would not have authority to run those markets.

Now as to exports, I do not know enough, as to whether a big marketing effort is needed. Certainly, an immense amount of effort by private people is going on in marketing produce at every level, a most extraordinary change in the last four years, all of which is very good.

As far as exports go, the Export Development Corporation, I understand, is doing and has been doing, excellent work in promoting exports; helping producers of fruit and vegetables to find markets overseas. So why do we need another body? What is the point of having this corporation doing work and spending money promoting exports and the Export Development Corporation is spending more money doing the same thing? Then there will be lines crossed and there will be all kinds of quarrels and confusion.

I can understand that useful work could be done to provide information as to the crops to grow and the prices the people would be likely to get, but that is very difficult work to do. It would depend, I would have thought, on the extension officers of the ministry. Hopefully, this corporation would not be setting up its own organization when it already has an elaborate and very expensive structure of extension officers who were meant to cover the whole country. Sen. Persad put a question mark as to how many of them actually do their work—which, according to my information, and which I am sure some of them are excellent—but how many are good and how many do two or three hours of work and then push off?

5.20 p.m

I think somebody made the point concerning the multitude of bodies which are engaging in these very functions. The Ministry of Food Production, the Ministry of

Environment, which I understand deals with horticulture, I think it is, with a rather obscure demarcation line. I know the growing of flowers used to be under the honourable Minister's Ministry, now it is under the Ministry of Environment. The ADB has an immense organization, again really many extension officers going all over the country duplicating the work of the Ministry's extension officers.

In 1988, when funds were a bit short, I saw the figures, the cost of running the ADB was about \$12 million and the turnover for the year was about \$9 million. That is all the money they were administering. The ADB has this problem that it is a bank and they have to apply banking principles, which now, for the first time in its whole existence, it is doing and very properly so. At the same time, it is the vehicle for Government financing for agricultural projects. It has no flexibility.

Sen. Spence said they are doing a good job. I believe they are but they do it in a very bureaucratic way. If it is agro-business, it would be the EDC, or the IDC the (Industrial Development Corporation). Then of course, there is the university which one would hope was doing some noticeable research and the two things would not be duplicated. I am sceptical whether any assistance is coming from the Ministry or any such corporation or any one of these ministries or government bodies, or from the university.

For 30 years the Government, the honourable Minister's predecessors, were in their heart of hearts totally opposed to agriculture. They did not have the slightest interest in agriculture. I remember sitting here and listening to Sen. Bovell, who throughout his life has worked in agriculture and he knows about it. Every budget speech and on other occasions he would make an excellent presentation asking all sorts of questions and raising all sorts of points. I listened to Minister Kamaluddin Mohammed's reply. He obviously did not have the slightest interest in answering any of those points which were made. Occasionally, I interrupted him and I would say, "would the hon. Minister interrupt his extremely interesting discourse to answer the point? And he would say, "well of course Senator" and then he would set off again. Talk! Wonderful talk! Those people were not the least interested in agriculture.

When Independence came and we had an Independent Government, the first thing what they should have done was to do what Minister Myers did at the start of the crop in 1987; go out and do a day's work to show that there is nothing wrong with working in the land. He went out and took his cutlass and did his time. That was an example. That is something which should have been done in 1962, if

not in 1956, with the whole Cabinet in attendance to support agriculture and the idea of working on the land.

I take my hat off to Minister Myers. I also take my hat off to Dr. Elton Richardson who was mentioned during the debate and, who I understand, has made a success—I am a little surprised that he would be making money out of planting mahogany trees. I am delighted to hear he is. I plant mahogany trees when I have a chance, but I do not think you would make money out of it, because you have to keep the land clear for two or three years to let the young trees grow. Then, it takes about 30 years before you could cut it down. I am sure that Dr. Richardson is not making money out of mahogany but he has set an example to the nation, that if one is going to be independent and throw out what you euphemistically call the colonialists: the planters, the French creoles and all that lot—who I gather are still the bugbears today in certain quarters—the people who want to throw them out must get on to the land and do the work which they did. Do something with the land. So I applaud Minister Myers and Dr. Richardson.

For most people, even when they get degrees in agriculture, the idea is to go to the Ministry or go to the ADB where they can either continue to write essays, memoranda or minutes, or advise people on what to do, but they are protected from any idea of having to actually stand in the hot sun and get their hands dirty. Those who go into Caroni, of course, work on the land, but then Caroni is a rather different case because you get fancy Government salaries at the expense of the taxpayer, because Caroni continues to make an enormous loss.

It is only people like Sen. Amar who have a lot of money who can finance some new agricultural venture and pay graduates the kind of salary, that, having an important degree, they are entitled to expect. I wonder just how many graduates of the Faculty of Agriculture at UWI are actually working the land. I know of two or three graduates of Canadian universities who are in Trinidad working the land. There must be some at Caroni. I know Sen. Amar has two or three. Nowadays, even if you are lucky enough to get a young graduate, you will find that he or she can get a job in the Ministry of Education teaching agriculture at schools for half a day. Something is really wrong.

5.35 p.m.

With due respect to Sen. Spence, although I agree with many of his ideas, I do not agree with this food campaign which he repeated last week and he told us about three years ago. He is talking about war-time when either Trinidad and

Tobago had to grow their own food, or they got no food at all. So, things were very different. Personally, I do not think that kind of programme would work. If everybody started to grow food in their back-yards where would all the new farmers be able to sell their food? It would be just like Caroni growing vast fields of yam and other crops in competition with the small man, so the price is pushed right down to a price, I should imagine, cheaper than can make it worthwhile. The sad thing is that if you are working on your own plot of 10 acres, or whatever, you do not have any economist to tell you just what it is costing you or any cost accountant to tell you that you do not have that facility. That is something the university or the ministry should be doing for them, give monthly or yearly, a statement as to what is the profitability of every kind of crop that they might have in mind to grow. You have to put so many of your own hours in, and you should get so much; so much for pesticides, so much for a tractor, and so forth. But the small man just lives. He gets what price he can, and he just hopes and keeps his fingers crossed that he will make ends meet; he will be able to feed his family; maybe save a little. What I want to know is, how is he making out?

In that respect, although I agree with the remarks made about herbicides, if you have a crop and it is suddenly being attacked by aphids or a leaf miner, or whatever it is, if you do not find an answer to that, you lose your crop; the whole thing is gone. So how will you feed your family? If you are maybe in a little more elaborate way of agricultural business—if you have a bigger thing—you still cannot afford to lose your crop. You have to find a solution, so you use the weedicide or pesticide, or whichever it is, which comes to hand, and you hope that you could get some advice from the extension officer or whoever as to how to do it. It is not so easy, though, not so easy. If you write to some of these organizations, by the time you get a reply or they come up to look, your crop would have gone.

So although the point made is very important, I do not think there is a practical answer to it except the extension officers in the Ministry and the UWI are doing some proper research on this to educate the people who are growing, as to what they actually have to do; not just to theorize about it, but to say what will work.

Now, I have already mentioned Sen. Persad and I wish to mention on this occasion how very pleased I was at his contribution because I have, in the past, been modestly critical of his contributions, and I was delighted to hear his very practical approach to this particular debate without any political gallerying, and I do recommend him to try and follow his own example on future occasions, to

concentrate on matters which he knows about because most clearly, coming from the university as he does, he has a lot to contribute.

Sen. Professor Ramchand too, I was delighted with his contribution until he found it necessary to demonstrate his basic socialist sympathies which he shares in common with Prof. Spence. Now, I am not drawing any inferences as to the prevalence of such symptoms at the university, but this attitude of seeing businessmen as bogeymen—I suppose what they want is to have an organization like the CMA or the Government or National Flour Mills, which is a Government-owned business, running things in the best interest of the people.

In theory, it is an excellent idea. I read all the books when I was 19 or so. I remember reading John Strachey's yellow-backed editions—extremely inspiring—and it has taken 40 years with the Russian and Eastern European experience for, I think, all sensible people to now understand that whatever the attractions of those socialist ideals, they just are not practical because human beings are not all like Sen. Ramchand. If we could have 50 or so like him who have had the benefit, of course, of copra at an early age in his upbringing and we could put them in the Government and in charge of the Civil Service, and so forth, I am sure it would be possible to have a utopia, even in Trinidad and Tobago. We could get rid of all these problems. The CMA would no longer be corrupt or inefficient; it would work well. Everything would be organized. Instead of putting up fancy markets at Macoya, and so forth, he would do it in a sensible way. He would put a side-road along the Churchill Roosevelt Highway and let you drive off along the side-road with markets on either side and then out again. So that it would provide what both parties to the contract want. But unfortunately, and I am sure he will be the first to admit, he is really quite unique. We will not find many more like him and we certainly will not find them in the Civil Service or even in the Government, though we are fortunate having a few like him in this Government.

So I was saddened to find him, in my view, spoiling what I thought was an excellent presentation by his prejudice against business and profits—I do not think they are the best solutions, but they are the only practical solutions—and particularly when he took a turn at these miserable people called the Coconut Growers' Association, who I happen to know quite well because I have acted for them for many years. Now, what he was speaking about—and I congratulate him for raising it here and for his excellent article in 1987; that was an absolute scandal and it remains a scandal. I am here and now asking the hon. Minister to give us an

assurance in his winding-up to the debate, that he will deal with it, if necessary, by ensuring that his brother Minister, who I think is here, who is responsible for the National Flour Mills, will see to it that either they cure this problem so that the Copra we are producing can continue to be produced and sold and used usefully as before, or he tells them to close down that soyabean plant, which should never have been installed. If \$40 million has to go down the drain, then so be it, but do not let us put a whole industry out of commission.

As to the Coconut Growers' Association, I do not think Sen. Ramchand did his research far enough. I was not consulted on this matter, I do not think. Maybe the only thing they could have done was to bring an action on Minister Mottley's letter. But you know, businessmen do not all want to go to law, quite rightly. They would not be advised by their lawyers to go to law. That kind of action is very difficult and businessmen are conservative in that way. It seems to me, from what he told us, that they were in a catch 22 situation. They had somehow to make the best of it, and I agree with him. I do not think they made the right decision. I would have gone to law, particularly, of course, if they had to give me some work. But maybe they should have done, I do not know.

But the thing about them is that even if most of them are bigger growers, they are still growers. The view I take is that Trinidad and Tobago needs people to grow things. It really does not matter whether they are big growers or small growers. If they can produce successfully, that is for the good of everybody, unless, of course, one is so biased against French Creoles, or whatever the thing is, as I know some people are.

Sen. Ramchand: The burden of the argument really was that the CGA could have developed the coconut industry further by introducing the wet-processing method and by making use of the downstream possibilities.

Sen. Furness-Smith: That is a very good point, but I do not know. Presumably he is criticizing their business acumen, because from what he says, it would have been a better process than the one they have. Now, from what I know of the people running it, if it was a better process and would make them run their business more efficiently, they would have adopted it. Now, I know nothing about the wet process, so that I do not think I can discuss that with the Senator.

Prof. Ramchand: Again, I can take the opportunity to remind the House of a long debate that went on over a changeover to the wet-processing method. It was an inventor in Cedros who had designed a machine that could do the wet-

processing, and in this very Senate I described the machinations of ex-Minister Francis and his cronies who knew that wet-processing was more profitable and who were trying to source that kind of machinery in Brazil to counteract the efforts of the inventor in Cedros. I may say that we were very grateful that the ADB listened to the argument and came to the assistance of the inventor.

Sen. Furness-Smith: I remember the contribution. That is a technical question, a practical question, which should have been addressed. I would be sorry to think that those businessmen or any of them dealt with it in a prejudiced way. If so, they were wrong, and I would not support them.

Prof. Ramchand: They did in fact get an expert out of London to advise them on wet-processing.

Sen. Furness-Smith: But the point I am making is that because a businessman makes a mistake, because even if he is prejudiced in some way, you do not wipe him out nor do you say, as the learned Senator did, that you want to cut him out, and that you damn all agri-business. Because it seems to me that agri-business, if it makes sense, we need it. If it is going to be like the National Flour Mills' Soyabean Project which makes no sense at all, then we do not need it. But, you see, that is not agri-business by capitalists. That was agri-business by Government. And what happened? The National Flour Mills was one of these innumerable Government enterprises which was set up in the 1970s or before.

5.50 p.m.

Prof. Ramchand: I assure the Senator that I have the flexibility—

Mr. President: The speaking time of the hon. Senator has expired. Before anybody moves the extension, could I ask Sen. Furness-Smith, anticipating his additional 15 minutes, to continue, as he started, addressing the Chair and leave the discussion between Sen. Ramchand and himself for after or at some other time.

Motion made, That the hon. Senator's speaking time be extended by 15 minutes. [Sen. L. Horne]

Question put and agreed to.

Sen. Furness-Smith: Mr. President, I am much obliged. On the subject of the National Flour Mills, that is a Government-owned body, and I think we ought to learn a lesson from what happened with that. It was founded, and the Senator mentioned the name of that distinguished Trinidadian, by John O'Halloran, who was the Chairman of it for many years, I think, in the initial stages. As I understand it, they fixed up a nice deal. He had an intermediary company that bought grain for them at a somewhat inflated price—nothing much, maybe a cent or two per pound or whatever—and of course, with millions and millions of pounds that built up nicely. That eventually was brought to an end. I think it was Prime Minister Chambers' Government that brought that to an end.

Then, the price of grain on the world market dropped. The result was that the National Flour Mills started to make enormous profits because they had cut out this little percentage—in the trade it is called a little shrinkage—and they were able to continue selling at the same price to the bakers because no patriotic national company would reduce the price to the bakers. They continued at the same price even though the world price of grain had dropped significantly. So, in the course of two or three years they made massive profits. Then, of course, they conceived the idea of the soya bean project, and they went for it. They were able to brush aside the growers of copra and the CGA. There was obviously a little interplay between ministries. As minister Mottley wrote his letter, another Minister tore it up, and it just went ahead. What I do not understand is why that could not have been put to an end when the present Government came into power, instead of leaving it to go on for five years.

Another practical illustration of the heartlessness of the Government body—when I say, the Government, I do not mean the people sitting here, but the whole Government machine—is marketing. It was Sen. Persad who mentioned the Central Market on the Beetham Highway. Early in the morning when the growers come in large numbers with their vans and trucks bringing produce, the place is complete confusion; complete confusion on the Beetham Highway which remains the arterial road to the country. The east-bound lane is left to one vehicle to pass. When there is rain there is one big lake there, just outside the market—more confusion. Over all these years, nobody could have set out proper parking for the wholesalers who want to park their trucks and sell their produce. There is enough land around there with the big fly-over where Mr. Kirpalani lost his life. On each side, there is enough spare land. The Ministry of Planning and Mobilization, the Town and Country Planning Division, the police service, the Ministry of

Agriculture, the city council, could all get together and make some practical decisions as to what to do about that problem to help farmers. It is as if farmers do not really matter. All the people I am talking about are all sitting in nice air-conditioned offices. The farmers do not matter. They have had the incredible stupidity to remain getting their hands dirty and sweating it out eight hours per day in the hot sun. All that should change.

Mr. President, I know the hon. Minister has his heart in the right place. I am absolutely convinced of that. But I would ask him to look again at this bill and see, really, whether the money which is going to be spent on this new statutory body could not be better spent in streamlining all these people who are pretending, at the moment, to be helping agriculture. There is not even a proper plant pathology laboratory. At Centeno you can get certain work done; they are very good and helpful, but they do not have the equipment. The university has the equipment. Some foreign people who were running a thing there, whether it was CARDI or some other group, gave up and left their equipment with the university, but the university has not got the money or the staff to run it. With all this enormous activity in agriculture and horticulture, when we get a little leaf mould, or a problem on the leaf of a plant, we have to send it to Miami. Instead of spending millions of dollars on all these people—extension officers, ADB, CMA, and so forth—let us have it all re-organized and find out what exactly the Government could do properly to help agriculture, and cut out the rest; cut it right out.

Thank you.

Sen. Haji Ralph Khan: Mr. President, I wish to take this opportunity to extend a warm and appreciative welcome to the Minister of Food Production and Marine Exploitation, since it is the first time, in my short tenure in this Senate, he has been privileged to present a bill here.

Notwithstanding however, the honourable intentions which this affable and industrious Minister may have, I feel it incumbent upon me to state at the very outset that I am really indeed somewhat disappointed with the provisions of this bill, since a cursory glance at its implications would clearly indicate that the more crucial areas of concern on matters relative to the development of agriculture on a more scientific and productive scale to satisfy our national needs, have either been hastily overlooked or possibly and probably deliberately side-stepped or precluded from this bill.

6.00 p.m.

This Government, during its tenure, has always strongly advocated, at least on paper, for the equitable distribution of the country's resources. I have absolutely no argument with that. But when taken against the back-drop of its forerunner, the Central Marketing Agency Act, Chap. 68:01, this bill, in my view, can possibly only succeed in achieving exactly the opposite to this Government's intended objective. To be more precise, with the passage of this bill in its present form, such a deeply contrasting scenario will only achieve the net result of making the rich richer, and the already poor, but willing, poorer indeed. A classic example is the poultry industry, but I shall deal with that in more detail at a later stage.

In like manner that our previous Prime Minister completely disregarded all developmental plans and programmes with gay abandon during his latter years in office, similarly, the presentation of this bill in its present state, when taken against the backdrop of the governing party's policy on agriculture, according to its manifesto, relegates the small planter, the small farmer and the small upcoming agriculturists, to a state of abject poverty and absolute oblivion. This bill would now spell eternal doom for them, in its present state.

The bill also seems to place special emphasis and accentuates the marketing aspect of agriculture which, to my mind, brings up some very fundamental areas of concern.

Firstly, since the area of marketing is a very specialized field which requires personnel with a certain degree of initiative, self-motivation, skill and the expertise in order to compete successfully with big business such as conglomerates, are our marketing strategies and capabilities compatible with those of the conglomerates with their highly specialized marketing enclaves which are specially oriented and designed to suit the needs of the clientele, both locally and internationally?

Secondly, in their minds, that is, the minds of the people in the administration, given the past experiences of the Central Marketing Agency and other pseudo-Governmental agencies, coupled with the general public service attitude pervading the society today, is this Government satisfied that such a scenario would adequately equip us to provide any meaningful measure of success in this area of stiff competition? Are we really satisfied, or is this an indirect relegation of responsibility by the state?

Thirdly, what shall we be marketing if there are no products to market, and no real incentives provided for production? Mass production is what we need if we can even think of self-sufficiency in agricultural food production, far less agricultural exports. How can this Government, may I ask, be so myopic then in re-drafting an agricultural policy, a policy so vital to our physical sustenance, and a policy so vital to the nation's economic well-being without placing greater emphasis in the areas of cultivation, increased production and husbandry? Since agriculture is not only vital to our personal, physical existence, but also second in line after oil, among our larger industries, as well as a prime earner of foreign exchange, it therefore stands to reason that a good agricultural policy can either make us or break us, moreso particularly in times of international crises involving our food import beneficiaries, as our past experiences have indicated to us.

I, therefore, make bold to state at this point that not only had the previous Government completely destroyed our agricultural policy, form of social welfare into the urban areas of this country, but this present Government has also been somewhat culpable, to some extent, displaying a greater measure of reluctance at times, as shown in the bill, to create an attractive atmosphere and the kind of environment that is necessary and conducive to the fostering, promotion and growth of agriculture to any worthwhile degree.

Now that Sen. Fyard Hosein has blown the lid on DEWD—with what is now known as LIDP—I am eagerly looking to better results from this Government. This small cadre of workers, to my mind, only touch the surface of the unemployment problem. I would have thought that in bringing such legislation before this Senate, greater emphasis would have been placed on the strategic areas of land-ownership, Government's policy on land-distribution, the purposes of leases and land allocation by Government, land-use, divestment, subsidies, acquisition, surveys and so on.

Policy on land distribution. To my knowledge, Mr. President, this Government has absolutely no national policy on the distribution of lands. Whatever decision is taken by Government on this broad spectrum, inclusive of leases, varies in objectives, duration, royalties and rentals, between and within various Government ministries, state enterprises and others, which we may choose to classify as pseudo-governmental agencies. Since there is no clearly defined criteria for the leasing of lands, it is precisely the lack of such programmes which fosters and promotes political patronage—that horrible monster which some accept as a

necessary evil. Herein lies the inherent problems of an environmental and ecological disaster and the continuing disgraceful problem of squatting. Quantitative analysis so necessary to serve either directional planning or for use in comparative social, welfare and economic studies, are not available.

6.10 p.m.

A study conducted by professionals and personnel involved in this area of activity has led to the conclusion that in light of the original intent, most of the land distribution programmes are failures, whereas others have been only marginally successful in relation to the inputs of labour and capital. Land capability in the past has been underestimated, causing many of the country's ecological problems. Hence there is every need for planners to match development with land capability side by side.

A classical example of such ecological problems can be sighted at the agricultural holdings and dairy farms located both at Carlsen Field and at Wallerfield respectfully, which are being over-exploited for land-quarrying capability rather than for housing, industrial and common usage for which these areas are now better suited.

Diametrically opposed to this development are the housing estates in areas like Diamond Vale and in Curepe along the Southern Main Road, especially south of the St. Augustine Nursery Station. In both these instances it has been found that some of the most productive and fertile lands in the country have been largely removed from agriculture. In this scenario, such lands are not only being used below inherent capacities, but have almost been ruined and rendered sterile, with the end result being that the production of much needed local food and fibre is being sacrificed by the low levels of husbandry by beneficiaries of state land distribution.

To substantiate my argument, I wish to quote from the report on the distribution of state lands for agricultural production of 1977 which states as follows:-

"It is obvious therefore, that in general a large proportion of the State lands distributed in the various countries is having very little impact on the current drive for increased food production."

Between then and now, the situation has further deteriorated. Land leased for quarrying is another example of land capability being ignored. While there have

been some immediate economic benefits, by and large most of the lands are now worse off.

In the absence of proper surveys, the lands have been ruthlessly stripped of the vegetation and the surface mined on a trial-and-error basis, leaving behind a very eerie looking unproductive and disfigured landscape, diverted water courses, altered surface and sub-surface drainage patterns, the pollution of streams and reservoirs, gaping hillside homes and shoreline destruction.

The derelict lands are aesthetically improvised. Many are littered with used plants and equipment, dilapidated structures and lubricant cans and drums. Many are now used as sites for refuse dump. The very characterless appearance has engendered a derelict mentality amongst our citizens.

As we all recognize, dereliction indeed breeds a wicked and brutish kind of insensibility bordering on a positive antagonism to the life and liveliness of the natural landscape it has supplanted. It debases as well as it displaces, what I will say, what is left of our civilization.

Housing estates: Many of the housing estates in this country portray very poor land use. In many instances, land which is suitable for agriculture have been permanently shifted for housing purposes. While shelter is provided, the land *per se* in many instances has not been used to foster the development of the whole personality. The sameness of the type of buildings, of the occupants and of the income and education level reflect a certain kind of dullness in this world and in this country particularly, which is so rich in variety. Sameness, the in-breeding of thoughts, ideas and concepts that demotivate and degenerate the level of aspiration.

Sen. Rampersad: Mr. President, I need to ask a question, please. I am failing to see the relevance of the contribution in the last 15 minutes with regards to the bill.

Mr. President: I was just about to ask the Senator whether he would need more than 10 minutes to conclude his contribution. If so, someone will have to move a procedural motion.

6.20 p.m.

Sen. Haji Khan: Most likely, I would be through by then. I may go over by two or three minutes possibly, I cannot say for sure. It is difficult to predict, but I will try my best to conclude my deliberation within the stipulated time.

Sameness the in-breeding of thoughts, ideas and concepts that demotivate and degenerate levels of aspirations. Do we need any further evidence than that which we already have in this community for me to prove this point?

I had alluded earlier on to the question of the poultry industry. A proper survey of this industry would obviously indicate that at present, we have in this country, approximately 100 medium-sized poultry farmers. With the passage of this bill, the size of these small entrepreneurs would not only diminish, but sooner or later, with the passage of time, they would have only been transient in this area of business, since their fate in the industry would have been completely sealed soon afterwards. The small businesses would now be swallowed up wholesale by large businesses with easy access to capital and would inevitably lead to continuing monopoly until the small man is completely wiped out.

To my mind, I do not believe that this is one of the objectives of this bill. I do not believe that this bill is intended to encourage or condone the take-over of small businesses by conglomerates or big business. Time alone will tell whether that is so or not. But in the Minister's reply, I would greatly appreciate if he could, at some stage, reply to the situation.

I would like to touch briefly on the Oropouche Lagoon. The vast expanse of land known as the Oropouche Lagoon, some years ago, was regarded as one of the main food baskets of the country. Since its destruction, however, by the previous Government, nothing really significant has been done to transform the area into its former glory. Under the Government of the People's National Movement, dredging works were haphazardly carried out to the Oropouche River, allowing salt water from the sea to flow inwards into the land, creating a very serious unnatural setback to this largely agricultural community for agricultural production, since it has been reduced to a mere trickle. The economy of this largely agriculturally oriented community, as a result, has been wrecked, if not eternally destroyed.

Since I am convinced that this honourable Minister is a keen proponent of agriculture and agricultural development, I would like him to state in his reply, the Government's present programme on the Oropouche Basin.

Caroni Limited: Caroni Limited has been a recurring decimal in the economic development of the country. This has attracted many commissions of enquiries and there has been, what is commonly known as the "rationalization of the sugar industry".

One of the important aspects which I would like to bring forward here is the question of land distribution, which I alluded to earlier on. Here is a situation where you have people who have grown up on the land; they have lived their lives on the land; they have built-up the agricultural industry of the country and these are the people who can make a positive contribution to agriculture and agricultural production in this country. But for some unknown reason, the lands are not being distributed to the people who have the know-how and expertise to cultivate the land.

Caroni Limited suffers acutely from poor, inept and inefficient management right from the top ranging from the Human Resource Department, down. I have been saying this for the benefit of the knowledge of those who may not know. Who needs further information, I can provide it for them when we are through. Management is either totally unaware or completely ignores the several forms of malpractices and the gross white collar crimes and corruption which exist there, with the Human Resource Department confirming temporary workers with relatively short stints of employment in preference to workers with longer service and proven ability, all because of either personal family connections or some other prejudices.

Matters like these need to be looked into for the viability of the company which is what we all have in mind for the benefit of the nation and country. When we are talking about the management structure of Caroni Limited, or any other company for that matter, but moreso with a company like Caroni that can be turned around; a company that has such potential with the growth and the vast human and physical resources—

Sen. Rampersad: Can I ask a question please?

Sen. Haji Khan: In the interest of time, do you not want to allow me to continue? You should realize, with all due respect, that my time is limited.

I was talking about the management structure of companies that lack efficient capable managers and I will give you an example—of which almost everyone of us in this Senate is aware—where there has been a complete turnaround because of that same management situation. We can take as that example the Co-operative Bank of Trinidad and Tobago Limited. It was a dying entity but because of the dynamism and the kind of management that was put into the business, today that

operation has been an entirely different story. It has become a great success story of the last couple of decades.

6.30 p.m.

I am not condemning this Government. I am trying to indicate certain deficiencies in the system so that the powers that be can address these problems so that the whole nation on the whole can benefit. Because of our economic problems, we can find employment and we can do so much more in order to improve the condition of our people.

I shall be closing in probably just a minute. Caroni has a redundancy policy. I believe that it is ludicrous even to think that positions which have been declared redundant, even relatively recently, when full benefits are being paid out to these persons, others have not only been appointed soon after, but quite shockingly, been confirmed in these positions, to say the least.

I therefore, recommend that this Government should set up forthwith, an independent commission of enquiry whether this commission of enquiry comprises a one-man team or many persons, but it must be an independent, impartial commission to enquire into the day-to-day operations of this company, with the objective of turning around the fortunes of this company, so that in time to come we would not have the need and the cause to be talking over and over about the problems of Caroni (1975) Limited.

Thank you very much.

Motion made and question proposed, That the Senate do now adjourn to Tuesday, July 9, 1991 at 1.30 p.m. [*Sen A. Tiwary*]

Question put and agreed to.

Senate adjourned accordingly.

Adjourned at 6.32 p.m.