THE

House of Assembly Debates

(OFFICIAL REPORT).

SESSION 1946—1948

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, 1st July, 1947.

Pursuant to adjournment, the House of Assembly met at 12 o'clock, noon, to-day.

Present :

His Honour Mr. G. B. EVELYN (*Speaker*), Mr. J. T. C. RAMSAY (*Chairman of Committees*), Dr. J. A. LE V. WILSON, Messrs. M. E. COX, D. A. FOSTER, R. G. MAPP, H. W. SPRINGER, M.A., G. H. ADAMS, B.A., H. D. BLACKMAN, D. D. GARNER, E. D. MOTTLEY, J. A. HAYNES, B.A., V. C. GALE, S. A. WALCOTT, and E. L. WARD.

PRAYERS AND MINUTES.

Prayers are read and the Minutes of the meeting which was held on the 24th June, 1947, having been circulated are taken as read and confirmed.

MESSAGES FROM THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

Mr. SPEAKER: I have the honour to inform the House that I have received from the Honourable the Legislative Council two Messages (1) returning the Bill intituled an Act to amend the Education (Amendment) Act, 1943 (1943-3) with amendments and (2) returning the Bill intituled an Act to establish a Department of Medical Services for this Island with amendments.

PAPERS LAID

Mr ADAMS: Mr. Speaker,—I have the honour to lay on the Table of the House the following Papers:—

Statement of advances to the Colonial Postmaster for the payment of Money Orders to the 31st of May, 1947.

Report by Dr. C. Y. Shephard, Ph.D., B.Sc. (Econ.) on the Sugar Industry of Barbados.

NOTICES.

Government Notices are given as follows:—

Mr. ADAMS: Resolution to place the sum of £5,000 at the disposal of the Governor-in-Executive Committee for the purpose of making a loan to the Barbados Cricket Association (Inc.), towards the rebuilding of the pavilions at Kensington Oval.

Mr. BLACKMAN (On behalf of Mr. Crawford): Resolution to place the sum of £3,000 at the disposal of the Governor-in-Executive Committee to meet the cost of a survey in connection with the construction of a deep water harbour.

Mr. BLACKMAN: Resolution to place the sum of £477 at the disposal of the Governor-in-Executive Committee for services required at the Rum Bond in the Public Market.

Mr. SMITH enters the House and takes his seat.

Mr. SPRINGER: Resolution to approve the the Regulations made by the Governor-in-Executive Committee under section 5 of the Fishing Industry Control Act, 1947 (1947-4).

Mr. BLACKMAN: Resolution to provide that from the 15th July, 1947, the airmail postage on postcards, not exceeding the maximum size of 6″ x 4″, addressed to any destination set out in Column one of the Schedule hereto shall be at the rate set out immediately opposite such destination in Column two thereof.

Mr. BLACKMAN: Resolution to provide that from the 15th July, 1947, the postage on the special air letter forms provided for that purpose addressed to any destination set out in Column one of the Schedule hereto shall be at the rate set out immediately opposite such destination in Column two thereof.

Mr. ADAMS: Bill to settle the rates of income tax for the year 1947 and to make provisions for certain other matters in connection with the levying of the said tax.

Mr. F. L. WALCOTT enters the House and takes his seat.

Mr. ADAMS: Of my intention to move the House into Committee of Supply at its next meeting to consider the money Resolutions of which notice has just been given.

Mr. COX gives notices of the following Address:—

The House of Assembly
To
His Excellency the Governor

In view of the grave dissatisfaction existing amongst the ratepayers of the Parish of St. Michael caused by the substantial increase in the rates for this year as a result of the over-expenditure by last year's Vestry, the House of Assembly respectfully request Your Excellency to take immediate steps to set up a Commission of enquiry to probe into the aforesaid over-expenditure and to consider and make

recommendations concerning the method of administering the finance of the Vestry and other Parochial Boards.

Messrs. WILKINSON and BRANCKER enter the House and take their seats.

QUESTIONS.

Mr. BRANCKER: To enquire of the senior member of the Executive Committee present at the next meeting of this House:—

Whether Government is aware of the absence of any modern sanitary conveniences available to persons summoned to attend the various Courts in this Island?

2. Whether Government without unnecessary delay will take adequate steps to remedy this inconvenience?

Mr. MOTTLEY: To enquire of the senior member of the Executive Committee present at the next meeting of the House of Assembly:—

1. Have any of the Government Pensioners for whom a Cost of Living Bonus was asked for by the House of Assembly a couple of months ago died since the Address on their behalf passed the House?

2. Will the Government take the necessary steps to ensure that Legislation to provide relief for the Government Pensioners be brought before the House of Assembly for its consideration without delay?

Messrs. LEWIS and CRAWFORD enter the House and take their seats.

BILL READ A FIRST TIME.

On the motion of Mr. ADAMS, seconded by Mr. SPRINGER, a Bill to settle the rates of income tax for the year 1947 and to make provision for certain other matters in connection with the levying of the said tax is read a first time.

SUSPENSION OF RULES 88 AND 89.

Mr. ADAMS: Mr. Speaker,—I ask leave to move the suspension of Rules 88 and 89 to enable the House to deal with Order No. 2 as the first Order of the Day.

There being no objection, the honourable member is granted leave to proceed.

Mr. ADAMS: I beg to mave that Rules 88 and 89 be suspended in order that the House my take Order No. 2 as the first Order of the Day.

Mr. SPRINGER: I beg to second that.

The question that Rules 88 and 89 be suspended is put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY.

Mr. ADAMS: I beg to move that Order No. 2 be taken as the first Order of the Day.

Mr. RAMSAY: I beg to second that.

The question that Order No. 2 be taken as the first Order of the Day is put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

Mr. SPEAKER: The first Order is to resume Committee of Supply to consider the grant of sums of money for the service of the Government.

Mr. SPEAKER leaves the Chair and the House resumes Committee of Supply, Mr. RAMSAY being in the Chair.

SUBSIDIZATION OF CERTAIN COMMODITIES

Mr. ADAMS: Mr. Chairman,—I propose to deal with Resolution No. 2 for the sum of £56,034 to be placed at the disposal of the Governor-in-Executive Committee (A) to supplement resolution No. 48 of the 30th April, 1947, by £815 to meet the cost of subsidizing the commodities mentioned in the Schedule to that resolution and (B) to provide for the subsidization of flour, salt fish and salt pork from the 1st July to the 30th September, 1947, at a cost of £55,219, in order that the prices of these commodities may be stabilized at such prices as may be fixed by the Competent Authority. There have been circulated among honourable members figures similar to those which were circulated in April and, before that, in January as to the implications of this resolution and there is not much I can say except to remind honourable members of the decision of the Government on the 30th April, 1947, when we passed Resolution No. 48 which was to provide £50,160 to subsidize the commodities mentioned in the schedule to that resolution. There is a deficit of £815 and this Resolution seeks to provide that sum of £815 to meet the cost of subsidizing the commodities set out in the schedule to the resolution of the 30th April this year. It is proposed also to continue the subsidization of flour, salt fish and salt pork from the 1st July to the 30th September at a cost of £55,219 in order that these commodities may be stabilized at such prices as may be fixed by the Competent Authority. Honourable members have what I may call Statement B showing how the amount is arrived at. The estimated quantities of flour to arrive is 83,200 half bags. The estimated subsidy per unit is $4.68 per half bag and the estimated amount is £81,120. Honourable members have the figures for the other commodities—salt fish and salt pork—which show a total of £110,458 for a period of six months. The Government's position is this. The House was assured three months ago that the whole question of subsidization would be considered by the 30th June in connection with the whole method—if I may use a general expression—of running our finances as far as the cost of living is concerned. The Government came to a decision to do that as speedily as possible but honourable members are aware that it takes time, especially if the Government wants to avoid even the possibility of seeming to have interested persons employed in a matter of so grave importance to the life of the community. Professor Beasley has already started, and honourable members have his interim report, with a fundamental beginning of the general fiscal survey of this colony. That is, so to speak, taking a long view of the situation; we have to await that fundamental financial investigation. But more than that. The House will remember that the Government pointed out that with the price of flour jumping about it was difficult to say until later in the year what the price of flour will be. The House agreed with the Government by passing the Resolution covering a period of three months only. The cost of flour has steadily risen and while it was hoped that as a result of the conference held in the United States, in reference to the West Indies some relief would have been obtained, there have been high prices still prevailing and it appears that as far as we are concerned no decision, at any rate, has been reached in the matter. We are still hopeful that when the new crop of spring wheat is harvested about next month or September, prices will drop but the House is well aware—whether we are merchants or not—that it is impossible to forecast with anything like accuracy. I know that within the last day or two there has been a drop but that, we are assured, is absolutely no indication that the price will not continue to be high or will not go back up. I refreshed my memory this morning by looking through all the telegrams that have been received in connection with flour prices from April this year and it is remarkable how these prices fluctuated. The Canadian price has varied

between $14.95 per Canadian barrel—which is two half bags—to $15.10. We had a cable on one day showing that the price had dropped 15 cents and the very next day, it increased 35 cents. In one instance we had two quotations on the same day. When one sees a drop of 15 cents in one day and an increase of 35 cents within 24 hours after, one can readily realize that it is only guesswork as to what the price is going to be until the next spring wheat crop is reaped in another month or two. For those reasons, the Government has decided to come to the House with this Resolution for the subsidization of these goods for only three months longer. It is unnecessary—and I hope it will be unnecessary on the part of other honourable members too—to rehash or even to refer to the reason which we gave for not including rice in the schedule. It is proposed, as honourable members will see, to remove charcoal, condensed milk and firewood from the schedule. Honourable members will see from Statement A which has been circulated among them, that the saving on those three items is not considerable but the prices will be maintained, it is stated in the addendum, as far as possible at their present level through the Equalization Fund. There is nothing more I can usefully add at the present stage. I am anxious to give honourable members any further information that they may ask for—if it is, of course, physically and humanly possible to do so but as to why the Canadians should sell us flour at x dollars per half-bag is a question to which I cannot possibly reply. I would like now, Mr. Chairman, to remind honourable members that this is a matter of the greatest urgency. There is a ship at present in the harbour with flour; there is a ship expected to-morrow with salt fish. The warehouses, I am informed, are already overcrowded and handling charges will have to be added if salt fish is taken from alongside and has to be brought in and put in the warehouses. That will certainly cause an increase in the price of salt fish and, as a result, we shall have to pay more by way of subsidization if the handling charges are added. There is a further danger that some of this salt fish will be dumped if we do not pass this Resolution to-day. I say that, not by way of a scare because I am sure that no honourable member would willingly want to hold up the Resolution. I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

Mr. SPRINGER: I beg to second that.

Mr. LEWIS: Mr. Chairman,—Before you put the question I would like to ask the senior member for St. Joseph a question in connection with the commodity, salt pork. I believe that these various grades of salt pork have already been explained to the House—I speak subject to correction—but I would like to know whether all these grades are bought by the poorer classes in this community.

Mr. ADAMS: According to my information, "Yes." Of course, the poorer classes generally buy neck bones and neck ribs which are priced at 12 cents per lb. respectively and as far as can be judged from the shopkeepers' reports, they buy more stomachs, feet, ears, neck bones and neck ribs, than tails, snouts and jowls.

Mr. LEWIS: I thank the honourable member for the information. There is one remark that strikes me in connection with the introduction of this Resolution and it is the admission that the warehouses are overcrowded. I accept that statement and am willing to agree to this Resolution but I should like the honourable member to understand that it is definitely the feeling among people who, I consider, should know something about the importation of goods that if we do not subsidize these items, the prices will automatically fall. The people on the other side have these goods to ship and they want to ship them to the West Indies. If the prices are going to jeopardize the acceptance of those goods, they are going to adjust them to suit and I hope that the Government, in extending the subsidization for a further period, has that in mind and is considering whether this subsidization is serving the purpose for which it is intended. I am willing, as I say, to agree to this Resolution because I have heard the reasons for it; the Government is expecting an alteration in the market, as far as supplies and prices are concerned, after the period covered by this Resolution but I think that in the interim the Government should make a statement to this House that it is considering whether this subsidization is serving the purpose for which it is intended. Some honourable members will say that we are helping the poor but I should like to say that taxes increase the cost of living and if the people have to pay taxes to subsidize these goods, they are merely paying for them in another way and the money we have in the Treasury should, I contend, be used for giving the people some of the amenities that they have been doing without for a long time.

Mr. TALMA enters the House and takes his seat.

Mr. S. A. WALCOTT: I consider that we have to continue subsidization but I think that the case I argued the last time when this matter was before this House, namely, that flour is over-subsidized, has been amply proved to-day. We have been told by the senior member for St. Joseph that the warehouses are full to overflowing with flour.

Mr. ADAMS: I said that I am informed that the warehouses are overflowing. For all I know they may be overflowing with beer, whisky or onions.

Mr. S. A. WALCOTT: I think it would be a peculiar thing for them to be overflowing with onions; it would take all the onions on the other side to overflow our warehouses. I have gone about and seen a lot of flour and I think that this Government should give a guarantee that more flour than is needed will not be imported. I see here that the estimated subsidy per unit is $4.68. Now, Sir, in May, it was $4.02, then it went to $4.70 and it is now $4.68. I do not think that the Government should allow the subsidy on flour to get any higher .Do not mind the handling charges in connection with salt fish; if the price of salt fish goes up, we should be satisfied to pay it but the Government should not allow the subsidy per unit on flour to go any higher. The whole world is suffering from a shortage of flour and I would like to know why it is that Barbados has an over-supply. It certainly looks to me as if we are patronizing some kind of black market to get this flour here. There has been a deficit of £815 owing to the over-subsidization of flour and I certainly do not think that the Government should allow the subsidy on flour to go any higher. If we are to meet another deficit at the end of the next three months, I would be quite satisfied if it is in connection with salt fish but not flour.

MR. GARNER: Mr. Chairman,—To-day I shall be just as consistent as I was three months ago and I am asking that rice be included in this schedule. I am not going to deviate for one moment from that stand which I took last time because I think that every politician should be consistent if he is convinced that what he is thinking is right. I feel that the inclusion of rice is very necessary. We have thousands and thousands of people out of work who cannot get their daily bread; there are no opportunities for them to work and rice is their staple food; give them rice as cheaply as possible if we intend to subsidize at all. We must have a concrete policy if we are going to subsidize. Rice is the poor man's staple food. There

is plenty unemployment and if the ordinary man in the street can get a pint of rice to cook, his hunger will be satisfied to a much greater extent than by any other meal. I am going to move that rice be added to this schedule to-day for more than one reason. When you think of it, something is wrong somewhere. Not so very long ago we gave the merchants a chance to make a little money on sugar and what do we find to-day? We find that two big magnates are fleecing the people because they are selling sugar which they had in their warehouses two or three months ago at to-day's prices. I know what I am talking about. These magnates are making plenty money and if you want to do anything, put an excessive tax on them. This Government must wake up and do something. The cost of living is going up every minute and nobody is thinking about how these poor men are going to be helped. What are we going to do about it? Every month we are making the rich get richer. Two firms are making money out of this sugar question and we are sitting idly by and doing nothing to check it. I want to be consistent. I do not care whose corns I am stepping on. The Government must find the money to subsidize rice. There is plenty money in this place. You only got to seek for it. Ordinary commonsense tells you that if you make money you have money and there is plenty money in this island. If you are subsidizing, do not do it in this half-hearted manner. I beg to move that rice be included in this schedule to-day.

Mr. TALMA: I rise to second the motion of the junior member for St. Philip and, Sir, although I appreciate the scheme undertaken by government in respect of subsidization yet I feel that locally grown products—yams, potatoes, eddoes—which form the subject of an Address of which I gave notice long ago, should also be subsidized. I have been made to understand that most of these products are unavailable to the hawker to-day. When I say "unavailable" I do not mean that they cannot be obtained but they are not sold to the hawkers at prices which will enable them to make a little profit.

The CHAIRMAN: Does the honourable member suggest that provisions are being sold at prices not in accordance with the law?

Mr. TALMA: Not on that basis but at prices at which the hawkers cannot buy them and make a profit. I say that despite the fact that we are trying to feed the hungry ones,—the Government has done that during the war years—yet foodstuffs that are grown locally are not being subsidized and the hawkers are being squeezed out of existence entirely. In any subsidization scheme, we should subsidize rice, yams, potatoes, eddoes and other products that are grown locally. The hawkers have a right to live. Let the ones that grow these products sell them on a profitable basis, both to themselves and the hawkers. Order No. 27 under Private Members' Business which stands in my name deals with this question of subsidizing locally grown products but it may never see the light of day before the session ends. With your permission, Sir, I shall read that Address.

The CHAIRMAN: If the honourable member feels that locally grown foodstuffs should be subsidized he will be quite in order to make a motion to that effect but I am not going to allow the reading of the Address to which he refers.

Mr. TALMA: I gave notice of that Address and the Executive Committee has completely ignored the terms of it. This is my only opportunity to bring those terms to its notice.

The CHAIRMAN: I suggest to the honourable member that that Address will be dealt with in the ordinary course of business. The Chair will not allow it to be read at this stage.

Mr. TALMA: With your guidance, Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that the words "locally grown vegetables and ground products" be added to this resolution.

Mr. GARNER: I beg to second that.

Mr. LEWIS: I am going to issue an appeal to the senior member for Christ Church. I am going to call this to his attention and I hope that he will realize that I do so with the best intention. My knowledge as to the subsidization of locally grown foods is that you give the grower a remunerative price —

Mr. TALMA: If the honourable member had listened carefully he might have understood what I said or if he did not understand, he could have asked somebody else. I said that a profit should be made by the one who grows the products and that the ones who buy those products should be able to make a shilling as well.

Mr. LEWIS: I heard the honourable member say that but my point is that a remunerative price and not a subsidized price should be fixed for the grower. The honourable member is being inconsistent.

Mr. TALMA: Does the honourable member understand what "subsidization' means at all?

The CHAIRMAN: Would the senior member for Christ Church allow the junior member for the City to make his point?

Mr. LEWIS: I will sit and listen to him even as tedious as it is to do so. It is no use a member of this House saying that he is going to subsidize imported foodstuffs and locally grown food at the same time.

Mr. TALMA: Is it because the honourable member happens to be an agent?

The CHAIRMAN: I think the senior member for Christ Church is going beyond his bounds. Let the junior member for the City speak and then the honourable member can speak in reply.

Mr. LEWIS: I say that if a remunerative price is fixed for the grower, that will be an inducement for him to grow foodstuffs. Are you going to subsidize praedial larceny which, I understand, is the cause of more foodstuffs not being grown locally? In addition, we cannot merely tell the Government to go ahead and do these things without giving it some assistance by way of a suggestion or suggestions. If the honourable member is willing to support the non-subsidization of flour, then growers will be given the incentive to assist themselves and the public. I feel that we should be sensible in the proposals we make. The honourable member has certainly not given serious consideration to his proposal that the Government subsidize locally grown products and an unlimited importation of foreign goods at the same time.

Mr. TALMA: The honourable member who has just sat down seems to think that he is the only one who seriously considers anything at all. Let me tell him that flour is one of the essential foodstuffs; so are rice and vegetables—yams, potatoes, and eddoes. The Government does not consider these at all and I have an Address on the Order Paper dealing with them but it may never be considered before the session ends. The honourable member represents the City constituency and knows nothing about the growing of yams, eddoes and potatoes; all he does is to eat them. I am saying that the hawkers cannot buy these products on a basis whereby they can make a profit. I never for one moment thought that the person who grows them should not make a profit but the prices are such that the ones who want to buy cannot buy. The hawker is being squeezed out of existence; the shopkeeper is making a little more profit as the result of selling these locally grown products but the hawker is dying. The honourable member represents the City and does not know what I am talking about; probably he never will. I am saying that the subsidization of locally grown products will help the ones who grow them as well as the ones who

buy and distribute them to make a profit. The growers are selling to-day at prices at which the hawkers cannot buy. The food of the people of Barbados does not consist of only flour and rice; it includes yams, potatoes and eddoes. Help, therefore, the ones who grow these products and the ones who buy them to sell again make a profit by subsidizing them.

Mr. SPRINGER: There is only one point that attracted my attention during the speech of the senior member for Christ Church on which, I think in fairness to the parties concerned, I should make a few remarks. He said—if I understood him correctly—that the shopkeepers are selling the yams, potatoes and eddoes at a profit and that the hawkers are being squeezed out of existence. I have been going into this question in the last few weeks and this is what, I understand, has been happening. For some time the hawkers who are accustomed to lift the potatoes, yams and eddoes would not buy; they have no desire to lift these products. The Director of Agriculture realizing that the vegetables were ripe and should have been lifted and in order not to incur waste, sent around his auxiliary food inspectors to find a solution of the problem of distributing these foodstuffs to the people who wanted them but could not get them because they relied upon the hawkers to bring them to them. As soon as the inspectors began to sell the products to the shopkeepers, the hawkers went in and bought. In some districts it appears as though the hawkers were holding out until the growers drop their prices and then they would go in and buy and sell at their prices. I do not know if my statement has any bearing on the honourable member's argument but I think it appropriate for me to say what I have discovered.

Mr. S. A. WALCOTT: I would just like the House to know that my policy has not changed and that I shall support the motion of the junior member for St. Philip that rice be added to the schedule. But I cannot support the motion of the senior member for Christ Church for the subsidization of locally grown products. Just at present locally grown foodstuffs are scarce but if the honourable member will consider the matter carefully he will see that the subsidization of these products is unnecessary. In the next couple of months, if the rain falls, we will have a greater supply of these foodstuffs. We may have such a large crop of potatoes that we may have to get the Cassava Factory to turn some of them into flour in order to be able to get rid of them. My opinion is that if we get rain we will have potatoes in the next few months that we will not know what to do with. I cannot support the senior member for Christ Church but I shall certainly support the junior member for St. Philip's motion that rice be added to the schedule of this Resolution.

Mr. WARD: I do not see the sense in going on to flog a dead horse. I presume that the whole House would like to see rice subsidized but I feel that it is absolutely useless to subsidize a commodity which is in short supply. I have been told, and I know as a fact, that people cannot get rice to buy. If, as the junior member for St. Philip says, a man is hungry and rice is subsidized at one penny per pint, that man is no better off if there is no rice to be had in the shops; he still has to go hungry. If rice was available I would agree to its being subsidized but if rice is in short supply I do not see the sense in subsidizing a commodity that you cannot get. I have been told by my labourers that in order to get rice they have to buy from four different shops on Saturdays. To subsidize rice without rationing it will make the situation worse; the individuals that purchase early will get all the rice they want and those who do not buy early will have to go without rice. I would agree to the subsidization of rice if you are going to increase the cost of subsidization but as there is no hope of increasing the cost of subsidizataion I do not see the sense in subsidizing rice, a commodity which you cannot get.

Mr. GARNER: Mr. Chairman,—That happens to be the honourable member's opinion and I give him credit for his opinion. We have entered into a contract with British Guiana to supply us with a certain quantity of rice. We cannot get any more but we are getting up to now what the contract calls for. My contention is that the people should be given rice at 4 cents per pint. They have just had to pay more for their sugar and if the Government wants extra money, let it introduce an Excess Profits Tax and it will get all the money it wants. Somebody is going to make half-a-million out of sugar that is being sold at these new prices; that is my contention. It is a certainty that we have rice in the island; it is a fact also that if a person goes to a shop and it can be proved that he bought his quantity of rice from that shop, he cannot get a gill more from another shop. Rice is still being rationed to-day. A shopkeeper has his customers and knows how much rice each can get and that is being done. It is, so to speak, a gentleman's agreement in order to save the expense of having coupons printed and issued but people still get as much rice as can be given to them. I am not concerned about how much rice people can get. I am concerned about the price of the article. Sometime ago I said that people would be glad to buy rice at six cents per pint but at that time they could get the quantity they wanted and it cost more money to bring it into the island. But so long as they cannot buy as much rice as they want, give it to them at 4 cents per pint. The price of flour, I understand from the senior member for St. Joseph, is expected to drop sooner or later and some of that money can be used to subsidize rice. I am in favour of subsidizing rice because it is the staple food of the people and flour, as I see it to-day, is nothing but a racket. To use the words of the senior member for St. Joseph, a ship is in the harbour waiting to be unloaded and the warehouses are full. Every businessman has more flour than he can dispose of; it must be a racket. All the other countries cannot get flour and we get all and more than we want. Somebody is getting a rebate; something is wrong. Why bring in so much flour? Something is wrong somewhere. We do not need so much flour. Every week I am asked at the store how much flour I want. Why? Because they have more flour than they can get rid of. Only the other day I went into a small man's store and could not get around because he had a large quantity of flour in the store. It seems to me that a little rebate is being given somewhere. It is true that the Government is paying the piper but somebody else is calling the tune. We do not want so much flour in this island. Give the people rice and, perhaps, they may boycott the flour. Something, I repeat, is wrong somewhere. What is that ship doing there in the harbour with flour when we have so much flour in the island that we cannot get rid of it and people in Europe are starving for flour? We must be paying a very good price; we are not calling the tune but are paying the price. Something is wrong. They want flour in Belgium and Germany. We are able to get it because the Barbados Government is paying for it; that is the whole thing. We are all businessmen first and christians after. The biggest christians are the biggest robbers when it comes to business; they are using christianity as a blind. When you come to christianity and business do not mistake one for the other. Something is wrong in this matter of the supply of flour. We ought to cut out some of this flour and tell them to bring in only a certain quantity of it because we have too much of it in the island already. I would counsel honourable members to include rice in this schedule to

get this flour racket broken up. The Barbados Government is paying the bill. Nobody can tell me that a little extra cheque cannot be passed to make things good; these things are being done. I will counsel this House to-day not to have much to do with flour any longer. Limit the importation of flour; spend only a certain amount on flour but let rice come in and subsidize it, so that the extra penny will help to pay for the sugar which the people are buying to-day. As I said, certain people are becoming richer because they are selling sugar which they had two or three years ago at to-day's prices.

Mr. WARD: Mr. Chairman,—Before this debate is closed I would like to explain this point. Although the warehouses may be filled with flour yet it must be borne in mind that certain quantities of flour were ordered months before; that is what I have been told. What I feel about the whole matter is this. If rice comes regularly, automatically the price of flour will drop, but up to now the honourable member who has just spoken has not convinced me that rice can be obtained in sufficient quantities by the people. If an individual goes to a shop and cannot get rice, he has to buy flour and if the prices of these two commodities are not on par, so to speak, in my opinion a hardship will be created when an individual has to pay 12 cents for a pound of flour and 4 cents for a pint of rice. If, as I said, rice was as plentiful as flour I would say "subsidize both" but, Sir, one is plentiful and the other is rationed by the British Guiana Government. In my opinion, if this House does not go on subsidizing flour temporarily, it would be automatically creating a hardship on some people in the community who may not be in a position to get the quantity of rice which they need. As I have said already, the only way to control rice, if it is subsidized, is to ration it, so that every man gets his fair share and not one man getting 20 pints while another gets only 5 pints. I am not against the subsidization of rice. It would be a good thing to subsidize both rice and flour, but to do that we will have to increase the cost of subsidization. If we are not going to increase the cost of subsidization, then I feel that the prices of the two commodities should be on a par.

Mr. TALMA: I feel very happy to speak at this juncture because the more one goes into this subsidization scheme the more one realizes that the subsidization of locally grown vegetables is definitely essential. The honourable member who has just sat down has told us that rice is unavailable; a member of the Executive Committee has said that already. Well, if rice is unavailable, what is more practical, along commonsense lines, than to include locally grown food—poatoes, eddoes, and things of that sort—in this schedule? We hear a great deal about the "Grow More Food Campaign". What does that mean? It means that you should try and induce the peasants and even the plantations to a reasonable extent to produce the essential commodities needed by the people; especially the peasants who are actually out of work to-day and who have no hope of going anywhere at all at present. The idea seems to be that while they are here they must starve. They cannot get rice; they do not use flour every day but you do not want to give them eddoes, potatoes and yams. You do not want to help them grow them at all, so as to enable the hawkers to live and the poorer classes of people to be able to buy these products at a reasonable price; that is the position. There is to be a Grow More Food Campaign and yet you do not want to help the plantation owners or the peasants to grow these foodstuffs and the other people to buy them at reasonable prices. Charity begins at home; does the Executive Committee remember that? I certainly do. I think they should help the ones that produce the yams, potatoes, eddoes and all other vegetable products. Help them first. All of this £56,000 should not be sent abroad; £28,000 of it should be kept in Barbados to enable everybody to get something to eat. That happens to be the purport of my Address and it happens to be contrary to the wishes of the Executive Committee; so, Sir, I am hoping that the Executive Committee in its wisdom, and especially in view of the experience which the Leader has to-day, will see fit to include locally grown commodities in this schedule. That is the subject of the Address of which I gave notice on the 26th November, 1946, and which may never see the light of day before this session ends. There is a number of hawkers in Christ Church and other parishes who are being squeezed out of existence; they are hungry now; they cannot buy yams, potatoes and things like that from plantation owners anywhere at all. This is the case not in Christ Church alone but in St. John and St. Philip. These products are being sold to the shopkeepers who are making the profit and you are having a class of people who are dying out now. The Executive Committee may not know that the hawkers are dying out but I know it. If you subsidize these products, the growers and the hawkers and other people who buy them will be able to live and a lot of the starvation which is about the island will disappear as a result.

Mr. CRAWFORD: Before the question is put, Mr. Chairman, I should like to make a few observations. I do not think this Committee appreciates to the fullest possible extent the exact significance of the motion proposed by the senior member for Christ Church. I am not suggesting that we can sit here to-day and without a great deal more consideration include in this schedule locally grown foodstuffs but I should like to say that the idea is not as fantastic as some honourable members seem to think, although I am flattering those who pooh-pooh the idea. I noticed that in British Guiana the Government paid a lot of attention to the question of subsidizing locally grown foodstuffs and the idea behind it all was that these commodities have been almost throughout the war in short supply, not only in British Guiana but here in Barbados as well. During the war years we had to compel the planters under the Emergency Powers Act to grow yams, potatoes, and other ground provisions, otherwise they would not have done it, for the simple reason that they had a guaranteed market for sugar. More money was being made out of sugar and, therefore, unless the planters were compelled to plant a certain portion of their lands in ground provisions, they would not plant them and even now that they plant yams, potatoes and eddoes they will not bother to manure them; they plant them because they are compelled to do so by law but they have no interest in the production of these foodstuffs. So long as these local foodstuffs remain short in supply, naturally we have to increase our importations of foodstuffs from abroad. If you encourage the production of locally grown foodstuffs by subsidizing them, you make the production of them more remunerative and you would have so much locally grown foodstuffs in the island that you will not have to import such large quantities of foreign foodstuffs. That, of course, is a very healthy thing for the economy of any country; it makes the country more self-supporting and money that would be sent abroad remains in the country and is distributed among the producers and distributors of those commodities. Throughout the war years, as I have said, and even

now, these commodities remained in short supply. Nobody who knows the facts can deny that if we had attempted to subsidize locally grown foodstuffs we might not now to-day have to be spending so much money on imported commodities. As a matter of fact, the British Guiana Government, as far as I recollect, is looking at the matter, not so much as an emergency created by the War but as a long range question calculated to make the country more self-supporting and is giving the matter due consideration with the expressed purpose of trying to keep in British Guiana millions of dollars which are sent abroad every year for foreign produced foodstuffs.

Mr. LEWIS: Before you put the question, Mr. Chairman, there is a point that was raised on the last occasion by the senior member for St. Joseph and I decided that on the next opportunity that is offered me I would make reference to it. On the last occasion, he said that there was a unit profit given on this flour that is imported and I do not think that the point was sufficiently appreciated. If you give a unit profit, it means that it is the volume of business that is going to be of primary concern to the importer but if you give a percentage profit on the price it might mean that you will only get as much as you need and no more because they will make sufficient money out of that. I do not think that that point was made clear on the last occasion.

The question that the words "locally grown vegetables and ground products" be added to the Resolution is put and resolved in the negative, the division being as follows:—

Ayes: Messrs. GARNER, TALMA, MOTTLEY, and HAYNES—4.

Noes: Mr. LEWIS, Dr. WILSON, Messrs. BRANCKER, SMITH, COX, FOSTER, MAPP, SPRINGER, F. L. WALCOTT, ADAMS, BLACKMAN, CRAWFORD, GALE, S. A. WALCOTT, WILKINSON, WARD, and Mr. SPEAKER.—17.

The question that the word "rice" be added to the Resolution is put and resolved in the negative, the division being as follows:—

Ayes: Dr. WILSON, Messrs. BRANCKER, GARNER, TALMA, MOTTLEY, S. A. WALCOTT, and WILKINSON—7.

Noes: Messrs. LEWIS, SMITH, COX, FOSTER, MAPP, SPRINGER, F. L. WALCOTT, ADAMS, BLACKMAN, CRAWFORD, HAYNES, GALE, WARD, and Mr. SPEAKER —14.

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

On the motion of Mr. ADAMS, seconded by Mr. COX, the CHAIRMAN reports the passing of this Resolution in Committee of Supply and asks leave to sit again.

The House resumes and on the motions of Mr. ADAMS, seconded by COX, the Resolution is read a first time.

Dr. CUMMINS enters the House and takes his seat.

Mr. ADAMS: I beg to move that the Resolution be now read a second time.

Mr. COX: I beg to second that.

Mr. WILKINSON: This Resolution is mainly to do with flour and I would like to ask the Government to be exceedingly careful in purchasing more flour at the present price. We all realize that a subsidy of 5 cents per lb. is pretty generous and it is a common experience that when an article is scarce and the price of that article is high, it will find a resting place where the highest price is being paid. I think that is happening in Barbados, so far as flour is concerned. It would be a very serious thing for this island if we could not get flour but I do feel that the cost of this article at the present time is very high.

Mr. GARNER: Mr. Speaker,—I wish to support those remarks made by the junior member for St. James because I think they are very strong. The Government will do well to take the advice of the junior member for St. James, a merchant of no mean standing in this island, a man of probity, a man who when he warns this Government to be careful in this matter of subsidizing flour should pay heed to his warning. To subsidize flour at 5 cents per lb. is ridiculous and I think this Government should take heed and amend its ways.

Mr. ADAMS: Mr. Speaker,—Whatever may be thought of the Control Board or the Government I think honourable members will agree that Dr. Saint, of all people in this island, is praised by every type of person and we have the advantage, at the present moment, of Dr. Saint's association with the Control Board, although he is no longer Controller of Supplies. The Government is as concerned about this flour situation as it possibly can be and Dr. Saint has assured me that all the headaches which resulted from the War cannot be compared with the headaches which he used to get from this flour situation. The Government is thankful to the junior member for St. James for the warning he has issued in this respect. I do not mean to be ungracious but the Government is aware of the difficulties and can only watch to see what is going to happen in the price of flour. The position is bound to be clarified in the next month or two and we are hoping that the present drop in price will continue and that we do not receive a cable to-morrow stating that the price has gone back up.

Mr. TALMA: Before you put the question—

Mr. SPEAKER: We cannot have a debate on that point at this stage. I can only hear the honourable member on the question whether the Resolution should be read a second time or not. Do you want to make a motion against the reading of the Resolution for the second time?

Mr. TALMA: I am saying that a subsidization scheme such as this—

Mr. SPEAKER: We cannot debate that at all at the present moment.

Mr. TALMA: I am merely throwing out a suggestion in support of what has been said by a previous speaker; that is all I am trying to do. I am saying that in a subsidization scheme, if you want to help the people—

Mr. SPEAKER: The honourable member is out of order.

The question that the Resolution be read a second time is put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

On the motion of Mr. ADAMS, seconded by Mr. Cox, the Resolution is agreed to.

THE BARBADOS GENERAL HOSPITAL BILL.

Mr. SPEAKER: The next Order is to resume Committee on a Bill to make provision in relation to the Barbados General Hospital.

Mr. SPEAKER leaves the Chair and the House resumes Committee on the Bill, Mr. RAMSAY being in the Chair.

The CHAIRMAN: On the last occasion, we were discussing clause 11 when the interruption took place and the junior member for the City was speaking.

Mr. LEWIS: Mr. Chairman,—I was stating that I saw no reason why I should not support the motion made by the senior member for St. Philip and I was referring to the proposal of the junior member

for St. James. I know that his opinions do carry some weight in this House and I would like to tell him, in view of the motion that he has before this Committee, that a look or a wink or a nod from him last year in the direction in which he is moving now, would have caused the Housing Bill to become law; also it would, perhaps, never have caused the provision for the £5 bond to be included in the Scheme of Government for the Secondary Schools. He makes it difficult for me to absolve him from blame for those things, seeing that when he was a member of the Government he refused point blank to accept the suggestion that the House should appoint some of the members of these Boards or that provision for the £5 bond should be excluded from the scheme of government of the secondary schools. Now he is asking this Committee to accept the principle from him that this House should appoint members to this Advisory Committee. He certainly places me in an awkward position to regard his proposal as a serious one. I am going to counsel the members of the Committee that it would not be a bad idea for them to agree to the proposal of the senior member for St. Philip. The Housing Bill, for instance,—

Mr. CRAWFORD: Mr. Chairman,—I am sorry to interrupt the honourable member but I shall appreciate very much if he would be kind enough to give me a summary of what he said before I came back into the Chamber. I am sorry I was not present at the beginning of his remarks.

Mr. LEWIS: My early remarks were not particularly addressed to the honourable member; the member to whom they were addressed was in his place. I am saying that the proposal of the senior member for St. Philip should be given some consideration because I know that legislation which is sent to these various islands for adoption has been put into effect by Crown Colonies along the lines suggested by the senior member for St. Philip, that is, that the Governments should appoint Boards but their members should be chosen from the Legislature and should include other people, I believe, like the Director of Public Works. I am willing to support the honourable member's proposal because by that method you will be assisting, let us say, the Minister for Medical Services by having at least two members of the House on the Board who will become acquainted with happenings and will be able to come to this House and make direct reports from their personal experiences. One honourable member remarks that they will be able to come here and defend the Board. Well, it seems to me that the fashion is to attack a Board because it has members of the House on it and that is a healthy sign. However, Sir, there is one point I wish to put now to this Committee and I am going to do so with real seriousness. It is this. Arising out of a debate in this House, a Commission has been appointed by the Head of the Administration to enquire into the spending of certain money by the Hospital Board and I feel, Sir, that it would be in keeping with justice and decency if this particular clause was postponed until the Commission's report is published and the Hospital Board, as a body not yet abolished, is given the opportunity to see that report. I understand that the report has been handed in and is only to be published and I cannot for the life of me see how members of this House, accepting their responsibility, can with justice and decency abolish the Board before hearing the results of the enquiry which they themselves asked for. I know very well that this Act is not to come into operation until the Head of the Administration says so but if you can get six or eight members of the Hospital Board coming here and agreeing to abolish themselves before the results of the enquiry are made known, then I do not think that the Head of the Administration should take the responsibility of safeguarding them if they cannot do it themselves. I do not think it is the right thing to do and if it is done by the House I refuse to let honourable members do it without drawing it to their notice. To pass this clause, you will be virtually abolishing the Hospital Board at a time when an enquiry is being made as regards the spending of money by that Board.That is not the thing for a responsible body like a Legislature to do and I am going to give the House the opportunity to consider the matter from that angle. If I am in order, Sir, I beg to move that the further consideration of Clause 11 be postponed for the reason I have just given.

Mr. CRAWFORD: I am glad, Sir, that the junior member for the City is willing to support the amendment which I proposed last week but I must say that I take strong exception to his observation that since I am a member of the Government I am muzzled.

Mr. LEWIS: Mr. Chairman,—Will the honourable member tell me exactly what time of the year or the day that I said such a thing?

Mr. CRAWFORD: I made that statement for two reasons. One is that I wanted to find out whether I was accurate. (Cries of Shame). I was told so; so I wanted to find out if I was accurately informed. I apologize to the honourable member.

The question that the words which the junior member for St. James proposed to be deleted, namely, "all of whom shall be appointed by the Governor-in-Executive Committee." stand part of Clause 11 is put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

The question that the words which the senior member for St. Philip proposed, namely, "one of whom shall be a member of the Legislative Council and two members of the House of Assembly" to be inserted after the word "Committee" occurring in line 6 of clause 11 is next put and resolved in a tie, the division being as follows:—

Ayes: Mr. LEWIS, Dr. WILSON, Messrs. BRANCKER, CRAWFORD, GARNER, TALMA, MOTTLEY, HAYNES, S. A. WALCOTT, WILKINSON, and WARD—11.

Noes: Messrs. SMITH, F. L. WALCOTT, COX, FOSTER, MAPP, Dr. CUMMINS, Messrs. SPRINGER, ADAMS, BLACKMAN, GALE, and Mr. SPEAKER.—11

The CHAIRIMAN: The question that the words proposed by the senior member for St. Philip be inserted in clause 11 has been resolved in a tie. The Chair, after taking into consideration all the submissions, begs to vote with the *"Noes"*. I declare that the *"Noes"* have it.

The question that the words which the senior member for St. George proposed to be deleted, namely, "Each of such members shall hold office for a period of two years from the date of appointment" stand part of clause 11 is next put and resolved in the negative without division.

The question that the words proposed by the senior member for St. George, namely, "immediately after the coming into operation of this Act and thereafter within one month after the opening of each Legislative Session. They shall hold office until the expiration of one month after the commencement of the ensuing Legislative Session," be inserted in the blank is then put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

The question that Clause 11, as amended, stand part of the Bill is put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

At this stage, 2 p.m., Mr. SPEAKER resumes the Chair and adjourns the House until 2.45 p.m. in accordance with Rule 40 (a).

REPLIES LAID

On re-assembling,

Mr. SPRINGER: Mr. Speaker,—I beg to lay on the Table of the House the replies to questions No. 45 standing in the name of the honourable junior member for St. Lucy.

Mr. CRAWFORD: I beg to lay the replies to questions No. 43 also standing in the name of the honourable junior member for St. Lucy.

Mr. BLACKMAN: I beg to lay the replies to questions No. 47 standing in the name of the honourable senior member for St. John.

SUSPENSION OF RULE 61 (A)

Mr. ADAMS: I ask leave to move for the suspension of Rule 61 (a) in order to resume Government Business.

There being no objection, the honourable member was granted leave to make the motion.

Mr. ADAMS: I beg to move that Rule 61 (a) be now suspended.

Mr. RAMSAY: I beg to second that.

The question that Rule 61 (a) be now suspended was put and resolved in the affirmative.

A division was taken as follows:—

Ayes: Dr. CUMMINS, Messrs. RAMSAY, LEWIS, F. L. WALCOTT, COX, FOSTER, MAPP, SPRINGER, ADAMS, BLACKMAN and GALE.—11.

Noes: Dr. WILSON, Messrs. BRANCKER, CRAWFORD, GARNER, MOTTLEY, S. A. WALCOTT, WILKINSON and WARD.—8.

Mr. SPEAKER: The question has been decided in the affirmative, eleven honourable members voting "Aye", and eight honourable members voting "No". The Rule cannot be suspended, however, because twelve honourable members must vote for the suspension of a Rule.

DISSATISFACTION AMONGST COUNTRY SHOPKEEPERS OVER MARGIN OF PROFIT ALLOWED

Mr. SPEAKER: At Question Time on the last occasion the House was discussing the replies to questions No. 19 put by the honourable junior member for St. Joseph relative to country shopkeepers and the honourable junior member for St. Lucy was speaking.

Mr. BRANCKER: We will recall that the Government were asked whether they are aware that the country shopkeepers are dissatisfied with the margin of profit allowed them by the Competent Authority, especially in view of the high cost of freight and the increase in their staffs made necessary by the 42-hour week imposed by the Shops Order. They replied in rather ironical vein that they are aware that some country shopkeepers are dissatisfied with the margin of profits allowed. Of course, strictly speaking, that may be correct; because if there are 100 shopkeepers and 98 of them are dissatisfied, it is perfectly accurate to say that some are dissatisfied with the margin of profits allowed. They go on to point out in the same ironical vein that "it is not, however, feasible to differentiate between the profits permitted in and outside the City; and the number of applicants for quotas on record from shopkeepers who have started new shops within the past two years indicate that the total number of shops is increasing, and suggests that the existing arrangements provide little discouragement to the retail trade". That suggests that there is nobody concerned with the drafting of these replies to the honourable member's questions who is the least bit familiar with the country shopkeeper or the predicament in which he finds himself; it suggests a complete ignorance of the position of the country shopkeeper in Barbados today. It is true that in places where it is so difficult, if not impossible, for the average person to secure a little plot of land for himself—it is true that in a number of instances the workers who have returned from the United States of America with a little capital to invest are unable to obtain a suitable car for the purposes of trade, and they have gone into the business of keeping shops To suggest however that the existing arrangements provide little discouragement to the retail trade is to show an abysmal ignorance of the position of the country shopkeeper today. There are some people who have opened small shops with a view to getting some commodities for the use of their households; I know many a person who, during the war, was running a shop simply with a view of getting something for the members of his or her family to eat. There are many reasons why a certain number of new shops have been springing up and the Government should appreciate the fact that the number of shops having increased recently is no indication that everything is well with the country shopkeepers. We have to consider that the people who are going into the business today are absolute novices to it in many instances; they do not realise before the business begins to drop how much credit the country shopkeeper has to give, they do not realise the burden which the country shopkeeper has been carrying. Many of them who have gone into the business full of optimism perhaps, soon find out that it is a terrible yoke to bear in the country districts. When the crop is finished many of the shopkeepers have to console themselves that they are carrying a burden until the next crop starts. The question of some type of subsidy for the country shopkeeper is one which the Government should investigate; something should be done to assist these shopkeepers in keeping their heads above the water in view of the absolute necessity of the business which they carry on for the welfare of the districts in which they are situated. If all the country shopkeepers were to yield to the temptation to close down, the Government would find themselves faced with the very big problem of feeding the people in the country districts. These shopkeepers cannot come to Bridgetown because there is the difficulty of getting transport and they have no telephones or means of ordering their goods like the well-to-do people. With our present set-up the country shopkeeper is absolutely indispensable; if he went out of business the Government would have a very difficult problem to solve in connection with providing food and the necessities of life for the country people. The food which is in Bridgetown has to be distributed and the country shopkeeper has a very heavy burden to bear. I must deprecate what I cannot help regarding as ironical in these replies; it is that some country shopkeepers are dissatisfied with the margin of profits allowed, and that the existing arrangements provide little discouragement to the retail trade. That is not fair, Mr. Speaker. Of course, the Government go on to say that "the Controller of Food Supplies and Prices has the matter constantly under review", they have left off their ironical strain and have gone back to the stereotyped, official reply, "and from time to time when attention has been drawn to items on which profits allowed were maladjusted, the matter has been corrected by the Controller of Food Supplies and Prices in consultation with his Advisory Committee". I do not know when last these prices have been reviewed or even discussed. As far as the advisers to the Controller of Food Supplies and Prices are concerned, I gather that a move has been on foot, if it has not taken place already, to put another shop-

keeper on that Board. Obviously I commend to the Government the putting on that Board of a shopkeeper like the honourable junior member for St. Philip or the honourable junior member for St. Joseph. We want men of that type on the Board—men with some substance, men who are not afraid to stand up to the big autocrats who are the other members of that Board. I must say that the replies to these questions disclose a woeful lack of knowledge of the position of the country shopkeeper on the part of those who should know. I advise the Government that when they want information in connection with such an essential group of persons in this community as the country shopkeepers, they take into their confidence people like the honourable junior member for St. Philip and the honourable junior member for St. Joseph so that we will not have a repetition of these really unhappy replies as we have received to these questions which were put in January this year. Out of the crop season the position of the country shopkeeper is an almost hopeless one, and we cannot too greatly stress that the point of view of the Government that the country shopkeeper is not doing so badly because new shops are springing up, is absolutely wrong and without any foundation in fact. What the Government should be interested in is to find out how long these new shops remain open. You will find that a shop is opened to-day and within four or five months it is closed; the Government do not seem to consider that aspect of the matter at all. As far as the old shopkepers are concerned, they have been bearing the burden manfully for a long time and they are now too far involved and they have to die in the business. I have emphasized the point of view of the country shopkeepers from a close knowledge of and association with many of them and I very much regret that the Government are not fully apprised of the plight of these shopkeepers. I cannot for one minute imagine that they would otherwise have sent down replies such as these.

Dr. CUMMINS: The replies to these questions are, to my mind, quite unsatisfactory. Sir, the Government admit that they are aware of the dissatisfaction over the profits allowed to country shopkeepers and they did absolutely nothing to improve the condition of these shopkeepers. The honourable junior member for St. Lucy has said that the Government have shown lack of knowledge of the position of these shopkeepers; I say that it is not a lack of knowledge, but a palpable lack of interest in the shopkeepers. (MEMBERS: Shame!) The advisers to the Government saw to it that the wholesalers and the commission merchants were well protected; they saw to it that their profits were guaranteed and they knew quite well that the people who really have to bear the heat and burden of the day as far as retailing the provisions is concerned, got nothing out of it. Since this debate began, I saw some figures as to profits made by shopkeepers up to 1939 as compared with the profits allowed them to-day, and if those figures are correct— and I have no reason to believe that they are other than correct— I cannot speak in too strong a term or use language strong enough to express my feelings in the matter. The increased cost of living has affected the shopkeeper just as it has affected everybody else and the shopkeeper is allowed to make a profit smaller than what he was allowed to make in 1939! That is because the members of the Price Control Board are, for the most part, people of this community who do not have to pass through the struggles which the poor shopkeeper has to pass through. Now that this matter has been brought to the attention of the Government, I hope that they will take great care in future to appoint as members of the Board those who are more sympathetic towards the poor shopkeeper who is, after all, the backbone of the country as far as feeding the people is concerned. Until a few months ago I was a member of the St. Michael's Vestry and I happened to be a member of the Tax Relief Committee; year after year from 1940 I saw that the big wholesalers returned handsome profits, and every year those profits were increased. I do not know what the position is this year because I am not a member of the Vestry now; but at that time an increasing number of shopkeepers approached the Tax Relief Committee and asked to be relieved either in part or in full of their taxes. That state of affairs should not be allowed to continue any longer in this community; I repeat that now that the matter has been most forcefully brought to the attention of the Government they will take steps to appoint on the Price Control Board men of the community who are more sympathetic with the aspirations of the country shopkeeper.

Mr. CRAWFORD: The honourable member who has made this motion and who is not in the Chamber now, made special reference to me during the course of his remarks in support of the motion. The honourable member claims that last year I appeared to be quite in sympathy with the plight of the shopkeeper and he was wondering how I sat as a member of the Executive Committee and allowed these replies to be sent down. I am sorry that the honourable member is not here to-day. The position is this: my interest and sympathy in the shopkeepers of this country remain the same to-day as they have always been. I will admit that I paid little if any attention to these replies because I did not agree with the way in which the questions were asked. Every shopkeeper in this colony knows without my telling him that if there is a single member of this Chamber who is interested in him, who is anxious to see his economic position improved and who will do everything that lies in his power to ensure that he makes a satisfactory return on the money he has to invest, that member is myself. During last year I spent considerable time and gave considerable attention to the general position of the shopkeepers with the result that quite a few important grievances from which they were suffering were remedied. When the wholesalers were denying them the quotas of rice to which they were entitled, I took the steps to have the administration permit the shopkeepers themselves to make returns of the rice that they were receiving to the Competent Authority so that a check could be kept on the wholesalers who were abusing their position. In other ways for which I was responsible the lot of the shopkeeper was made a little easier. When the honourable junior member for St. Joseph tabled these questions, I repeat that I paid little, if any attention at all to the replies because I did not agree with the questions. To my mind, the honourable member who put them had no right to differentiate between the shopkeepers in the country and those in Bridgetown; he had no right to imply that only the country shopkeepers were suffering as a result of the margin of profit allowed by the Competent Authority. If the honourable member had asked the questions in respect of the shopkeepers all over the island, I would have devoted some attention to the matter and exerted any influence I possessed in seeing that the replies given were satisfactory. As a matter of fact, the honourable junior member for St. Joseph anticipated the honourable junior member for St. Philip because before the honourable junior for St. Joseph tabled these questions the honourable junior member for St. Philip informed me

during the morning that he had in mind asking the Government to take steps to deal with the entire question of the profits earned by shopkeepers. After these questions had been tabled by the honourable junior member for St. Joseph, the honourable junior member for St. Philip could not take any action on the same line but he decided that after the questions had been dealt with he would table a general question dealing with shopkeepers all over the island. Your Honour will presumably find that the honourable member is quite in order to do that. I say now that these questions have been tabled, the honourable junior member for St. Joseph as well as all other shopkeepers can rest assured that I will do everything that lies in my power to see to it that the position of all shopkeepers—not merely the country shopkeepers—will receive the attention which it merits. I did not know that we would have discussed this matter to-day because I have spent some time in getting facts and figures from shopkeepers in the rural parishes as well as in the urban districts and I have not got those facts and figures to-day. I am sorry for that, but I remember very distinctly that in the parish of St. Peter about six months ago a shopkeeper held me up for over an hour explaining to me the severe hardships under which he and people like him have to exist. When that shopkeeper was finished I remember very distinctly being even more convinced that if there was in this community any section of people who deserve some assistance from the Government, it was the people who engage in the retail trade. I repeat, I am very sorry that I have not got those facts and figures here to-day, but I am sure that honourable members like myself would be completely surprised at the state of affairs which they reveal. Not only would they be surprised, but they would be driven to the conclusion that something should be done to assist this deserving section of taxpapers in this colony. These people make their contribution to the general revenue, they perform a very useful service to the community by assisting the working classes from week to week, from month to month and in some cases from year to year and the policy under which they are operating to-day is calculated in the very near future to drive them almost completely out of existence as a class. It was due to the efforts of my colleagues and myself that the wholesalers who are engaged in the retail trade and who were increasing the burdens of the small retailers were stopped from doing so last year. We took up the matter with the administration and got the Government to prohibit the wholesalers from opening more retail shops in the country districts so long as the present Emergency existed, so long as the commodities which they import remained in short supply. We have pledged ourselves to see to it not only that this unfairness is not carried on while goods remain in short, supply, but even after conditions have improved and commodities are more easily available, that the wholesalers in Roebuck Street are not allowed to monopolise both the wholesale and the retail trade. I submit that it is manifestly unfair to allow one section of the people who are already receiving handsome returns on their investments through engaging in the wholesale trade, to go outside in the country districts and establish shops alongside those of small retailers; to stock these shops with goods which they import and can therefore afford to sell those goods much cheaper than the retailers and so collar both the wholesale and retail trade for themselves. The Government has under consideration now the advisability of enforcing by statute a prohibition against this state of affairs. If that has been found advisable or essential in other parts of the West Indies, I submit that it is more imperative and necessary here because here the wholesale trade is even more closely concentrated in the hands of a few people than it is in the majority of the neighbouring colonies. If you pursue the position to its real source, you will find that about four people control the whole thing. They are importers and wholesalers and if we do not stop them, they will be retail distributors. They get a commission on selling these goods wholesale; they sell wholesale through the commission houses which they control and now their final step is to try to collar every single cent of profit to be made from the importation of foodstuffs and other commodities in this colony. They almost want to control the Control Board. If we are the representatives of the people among whom there are those of the shopkeeper class, we will see to it that steps are taken to frustrate these evil intentions; we will see to it that without delay legislation is placed on the Statute Book which will prohibit, not temporarily, but permanently a handful of wholesalers who are also importers from assuming complete control of the retail trade. Mr. Speaker, there are several other aspects of the situation which are deserving of early remedial attention; it is not necessary to dilate on them to-day, but I suggest with all due deference to the honourable junior member for St. Joseph that he should have done a far greater service to the people who occupy a similarly important positions in this colony to himself, if he had not differentiated as between the position of the urban shopkeepers and the rural shopkeepers. They are all feeling the pinch of the shoe; both the urban and the rural shopkeepers deserve attention being paid to them, and attention will be paid to them if there is no attempt made to discriminate between them but the matter is presented as a whole.

Mr. LEWIS: I have listened very carefully to the debate on the replies given to these questions and it seems to me as if honourable members are afraid of the situation which the questions and the replies have created. If we want the shopkeeper to get a greater profit than what he is getting, let us tell the administration how that must be done. Do we wish the shopkeeper to charge the purchaser more money for goods or do we wish the Controller of Prices to regulate the position so that the wholesaler will get less profit and the shopkeeper will get more? (Mr. GARNER: I said that). That is what we want to be made clear. Let us decide that the shopkeeper must be given a greater measure of profit, and the only people out of whom that will come are the consumers. Can we advocate an increase in the cost of the people's food at this time? The shopkeepers have gone to the head of the spring; they have gone to His Excellency the Governor and do you mean to say that the question has not been satisfactorily settled yet? Have they not been able to work out a reasonable scheme to put before the Head of the Administration? I am not enamoured with this discussion; we are not getting anywhere with it. We are afraid to say who are getting too much and we are afraid to tell people that they should buy at a higher price. I would like to have a reasonable proposal to put before the Government otherwise I do not know where I am.

Mr. COX: I am in wholehearted agreement with many of the statements made by various honourable members in connection with this question. For a long time I have noticed that many shopkeepers have been approaching me in respect of this matter. I regret that it is now almost half-past three because I have many facts to put before the House to prove that the position in which the shopkeepers are now placed

is very much worse than before the War. As the honourable junior member for the City has suggested——

At this point, it now being 3.30 p.m., Mr. SPEAKER stated that it was now time for the consideration of Private Members' Business.

ST. MICHAEL'S PARISH LOAN BILL.

Mr. SPEAKER: The first Order of the Day under Private Members' Business is to resume debate on the second reading of a Bill to authorise the Vestry of the parish of Saint Michael in this Island to raise a loan to enable them to purchase a property which adjoins the Parochial Buildings, Cheapside, Bridgetown, for parochial purposes.

On the last occasion when the second reading of this Bill was being discussed, a motion for the adjournment of the House was made by the honourable senior member for St. Peter and this was seconded by the honourable junior member for St. Lucy. Since then I have considered the matter and I think that the debate at that time went somewhat wider than it should have gone. The Bill only asks for permission to raise a sum of money to purchase a property, but during the debate honourable members raised the question of the Vestry having spent more money than they were authorised to spend during the last year. I think that I can make the position clear by reading from *May's Parliamentary Practice* in connection with Private Bills. This is what "May" says:—

"The second reading of a private bill corresponds with the same stage in other bills, and in agreeing to it the House affirms the general principle, or expediency, of the measure. There is however a distinction between the second reading of a public and a private bill, which should not be overlooked. A public bill being founded on reasons of state policy, the House, in agreeing to its second reading, accepts and affirms those reasons; but the expediency of a private bill being mainly founded upon allegations of fact which have not yet been proved, the House, in agreeing to its second reading, affirms the principle of the Bill conditionally and subject to the proof of such allegations before the Committee."

On the last occasion I think that certain allegations were made which were outside the principle of the Bill. The Bill is asking for permission to raise a loan to purchase a property, and while it may be said that the expenditure had gone over what the Vestry had budgeted for in the previous year, yet the matter of raising a loan for the purpose of purchasing a property is brought by the Vestry in the ordinary way. Therefore the question before the House is only one as to whether the Vestry should be given permission to borrow this money to purchase this property or not. I suggest to honourable members that they should accept the second reading of the Bill, and if they wish to do so, refer it to a Select Committee to go into the question of the expediency of purchasing this property at all or as to whether the price to be paid for the property is a reasonable price or not. I think that in fairness to the honourable introducer of the Bill, I should allow him to reply to the speeches which were made against the second reading of the Bill at the last meeting of the House; but beyond that I think that any other speeches on the lines of those of the last meeting are strictly out of order.

Mr. CRAWFORD: Does Your Honour mean that only the honourable introducer of the Bill will be permitted to reply to the allegations which have been made?

Mr. SPEAKER: I think so. I have suggested to the House that information as to the expediency or otherwise of borrowing this money can be obtained by the reference of the Bill to a Select Committee.

Mr. CRAWFORD: I do not think that there is any question about wanting information; people who are in a position to reply have the information already. Apart from the honourable introducer of the Bill, one or two honourable members have been singled out and asked to lend their weight and influence in pressing for an investigation even before the honourable mover of the second reading of the Bill has replied to the allegations.

Mr. SPEAKER: I do not think that there is anything to be gained by any further argument; I think that any investigation can better be done by referring the Bill to a Select Committee than by the House.

Mr. CRAWFORD: It may be difficult to speak on the principle of the Bill in Committee. The Committee will deal with the sections of the Bill as they come up one after the other.

Mr. SPEAKER: I think that the Committee will make an investigation as to the expenditure, and I cannot see how that investigation can be gone into by the House.

Mr. TALMA: I fully appreciate Your Honour's ruling and I know that you will grant the members of this Chamber full latitude now as you have done on previous occasions so that allegations which have been unfounded and untrue——

Mr. SPEAKER: Are you carrying on the debate on the lines such as on the last occasion?

Mr. TALMA: Not on those lines.

Mr. SPEAKER: I think that the honourable senior member for St. Peter has the right to speak first to-day.

Mr. F. L. WALCOTT: I should like to draw two points to Your Honour's attention. Firstly, am I to understand that you cannot discuss any reason for not voting for the second reading of this Bill to give the Vestry the authority to raise this loan? If you feel that taxes have been raised——

Mr. SPEAKER: What I think is this: while that may influence this House in saying whether they will give permission to the Vestry to raise this loan or not, it would be better investigated by a Committee of this House than by the House.

Mr. F. L. WALCOTT: Suppose I am inclined to vote for the second reading of the Bill and state my reasons for it, am I in order?

Mr. SPEAKER: If you think that the principle of the Bill is wrong, that the Vestry should not be authorised to raise a loan to purchase this property, you can speak on that.

Mr. F. L. WALCOTT: Owing to the fact that the taxes have been raised already and this Bill will be a greater imposition on the taxpayers, I feel that it is my duty and my right to make investigations whenever the permission of this House is sought to raise a loan; investigations as to whether they are entitled to have this loan for whatever purpose it may be required.

Mr. SPEAKER: What I am suggesting is that if a Committee is appointed, that Committee will go into the whole matter and better results will be obtained than by this House.

Mr. F. L. WALCOTT: There is no evidence to prove that if the Bill is given its second reading a Select Committee will be appointed. If this were a matter of certainty beyond doubt then you could go to that stage. Speaking for myself, I prefer to state my reasons. If you agree to the principle of the Bill I think that you should state your reasons for so doing. Even if the House vote in favour of the Bill, I would like to say here and now that in connection with a matter of such great importance and thinking of what it entails, I feel that reasons should be given for the decision which you make. This is not merely a question of providing a home and feeding children; no

honourable member would be against providing somewhere to feed children, but before honourable members can give the Vestry permission to raise funds for any purpose, they must give their reasons for doing so. I feel that all is not well here, and before we make a step such as this we should have our eyes wide open to protect the taxpayers. I am not questioning Your Honour's ruling by any means, but I feel that reasons should be given in this matter. I have heard that there are those who have some information to give; I am prepared to receive any information which any honourable member has to give because this is a matter upon which you need a lot of information. I therefore reserve any further remarks which I feel will be more appropriately made when the information has been given. I am sure that in the public interest there is a lot which must be shown and known in a matter such as this.

Mr. BRANCKER: I do not propose to speak at any very great length on the second reading of this Bill. I am a vestryman myself—I am a member of one of the few well-run Vestries in this island (Cheers)—and it appears to me that unless a very strong case is made out against the Vestry of St. Michael in respect of this over-expenditure, it is our ineluctable duty as members of this Chamber to authorise them to raise this loan for the purpose as has been set out in the Bill. The Vestry want to purchase a property to make provision for a Food Centre and further accommodation for the staff of the Commissioners of Health of the parish of St. Michael, and I say that unless we can actually prove that there has been some fraud or some gross negligence on the part of this responsible body, we must accede to their request. We must all appreciate that in a year like that which has passed it was quite a difficult matter to avoid over-spending. The amount of $50,000 sounds like a big amount to over-spend but we have to consider that amount in relation to the total expenditure of the Vestry for the past year. In the case of some Vestries, $50,000 is more than what they spend for the whole year; but the money which the Vestry of St. Michael expend for a year runs into considerable figures. When we recall that the Vestry made increases in respect of their servants during the past year, when we hear of the extraordinarily good things which they did such as providing cod liver oil for destitute people, it does seem that they were working on right lines. It is difficult to think of anything the price of which had not gone up during the past year—as a matter of fact it is difficult to think of anything the price of which did not go up from day to day and from month to month, and that is why we are dealing with a matter of this sort, something which is laudable, and I do not think that we should show any disapproval of the matter which is before us——

Mr. SPEAKER: I think that the House have a perfect right to investigate this matter and see whether they should approve or disapprove of this loan, but that cannot be satisfactorily done in the House. It can be satisfactorily done by a Select Committee and I am suggesting to the House that the Committee can go into the question as to whether this object is a proper object and other matters connected with the Vestry which should lead them to see whether they would feel justified or not in approving of this loan. If they found that what has been done is perfectly justifiable then there would not be anything against approving of this loan. I think the House should accept that suggestion.

Mr. BRANCKER: I think that it would be appreciated if that Committee can be appointed, but we are in this difficulty that it is doubtful whether such a Committee can be appointed at this juncture. I take it that when charges are made, the onus is on those who make the charges to prove them. I submit that the only way in which we will decide to give this Bill its second reading or not is when those who have made charges of negligence and corruption suggesting a new Tammany Hall racket in this colony, prove the charges which they have made. In my submission they must establish certain facts and the honourable introducer of the Bill or the members of the Vestry of St. Michael in this House will have to satisfy us by disproving the charges so that this Bill should be given its second reading. Unless the charges can be adequately substantiated, the express purpose of this Bill is so extremely worthy that it is our duty to accede to the wishes of the Vestry and grant them permission to raise this loan for this purpose. I do not know if this matter was carried on the casting vote of the Chairman at the particular meeting of the Vestry or if it was agreed to unanimously; I would be glad if one of the vestrymen would tell us. I see that there are two ex-members of the Vestry and two of the present members here; and we will get the expert assistance of the honourable senior member for St. Joseph who is an ex-member of the Vestry as to how this Vestry manages its business. I feel that there is little that I can usefully add at this juncture and I will leave it to those who are attacking to prove the force of their attack. If they cannot prove their charges then their attack fails; the question is whether they can prove those charges or not. If they cannot prove them, then of course our position should be to accede to the request of the Vestry and give them permission to raise this loan.

Mr. TALMA: I rise not as defence counsel in this issue, but to be granted the right to make a few remarks. A newspaper appears to make accusations against the former Churchwarden of this parish, accusations which are unfounded and cannot be supported. Is it because the Progressive League have never succeeded in landing a majority of members in the Vestry of St. Michael——

Mr. SPEAKER: I draw the honourable member's attention to Rule 122.

Mr. TALMA: Is it because the honourable senior member for the City has been the most outstanding Churchwarden in this parish for the last 20 years? Is not this a question of jealousy? The honourable senior member for St. Michael, and the Leader of the House backed him up, and another satellite——

Mr. SPEAKER: The honourable member is out of order; the expenditure or over-expenditure has nothing to do with the second reading of this Bill.

Mr. TALMA: I am only asking to be granted the opportunity of saying something in connection with these allegations which are unfounded and untrue. You, Sir, in fairness to the honourable senior member for the City will allow others——

Mr SPEAKER: I will give the honourable senior member for the City an opportunity to reply to those statements, but I do not think that it is in order for other honourable members to speak on that point.

Mr. F. L. WALCOTT: Nobody has accused the honourable senior member for the City of anything.

Mr. SPEAKER: If the honourable member wants to say that there has been over-expenditure or not he is quite in order to say so, but he cannot go beyond that.

Mr. TALMA: There is such a thing as innuendo, something said inferentially.The honourable senior member for St. Michael has landed an attack——

Mr. SPEAKER: The honourable member must confine himself to the principle of the Bill and not worry about innuendos.

Mr. TALMA: The honourable senior member for the City has presented this Bill on behalf of the Vestry of St. Michael. They happen to be hard-headed businessmen—men with ability and experience——

Mr. SPEAKER: I do not think that that has anything to do with the merits of the Bill.

Mr. TALMA: The Vestry, which is composed of a body of hard-headed businessmen, has seen fit to apply for permission to raise a loan in order to purchase a building in which the poor people will be fed more easily—something which this Coalition Labour Government is supposed to be fighting for—and they are trying to prevent the Vestry from purchasing the building. They are trying to throw blame on a certain member whom they despise, and they have no ground to stand upon. The Progressive League has always failed to secure seats in the Vestry. As far as the Vestry is concerned, it is not a question of appointing any Commission of Enquiry; if they thought that a Commission of Enquiry were necessary, they would have appointed one to go into the matter. They have proper people trained for that job. It happens that the Churchwarden of the parish in the past year is a member of this House, the honourable senior member for the City, the person to whom this Bill has been handed to be looked after in this House, and a lot of allegations have been made. This is not a question of bringing a case in the Law Courts; I should like to say that unless and until I am satisfied that the allegations which have been made are correct, I am willing to vote in favour of the passing of this Bill whereby this loan can be raised to purchase this building in order that the poor people can be fed more conveniently—something which this Coalition Labour Government is supposed to be fighting for.

Mr. MOTTLEY: Mr. Speaker.—I promise you that thoughout this debate I will maintain that ancient tradition which is worthy of this House, despite the depths to which honourable members have gone. I owe a debt of gratitude to those honourable members on that side of the Table, those honourable members who were so reckless in their remarks last Tuesday. I owe them a debt of gratitude because they did not think that I would be given this opportunity to make a statement publicly, and be able to give the taxpayers of this parish the real truth surrounding these accusations which have been thrown in this House at the Vestry of St. Michael and their 1947 administration by persons who are supposed to be responsible and who should have known better, but they have reasons which, I suppose, are ulterior. I am going to deal just briefly with the Bill. As I said last Tuesday, this Bill merely seeks authority from the Legislature of this colony, according to the present set-up, to be able during this year, to buy additional property for the reasons which I gave. If I am permitted to remind honourable members of those reasons, they are not only to provide accommodation for the sanitary and clerical staff of St. Michael, but also to erect and equip a Centre for feeding the poor people of this parish, people who have not yet in the majority of cases, reached the age for receiving Old Age Pensions and who, on the recommendation of the medical practitioners employed by the parish, are ailing and cannot work; and it is found that the best relief for them would be to give them a daily meal. In addition to that, there are a number of underfed, underprivileged children in this parish who cannot be accommodated by the Children's Goodwill League and who wend their way to this Centre every day for a hot meal. You, Mr. Speaker, have rightly pointed out that this debate has strayed from the point, and some honourable members have appreciated the fact that this Bill has nothing to do with the present taxation. It is a question as to whether what has been proposed is really desirable or not, and the Vestry have agreed on it and if any information on that point is necessary, I can only say that the honourable senior member for St. Thomas, who was a member of the Committee which made the selection of this site, and other members of this House who were members of the Vestry can testify that the matter has been gone into very carefully. During the term of office of the honourable senior member for St. Thomas as Churchwarden of St. Michael it was agreed to purchase this building for £950 and to remodel and equip it. If there is anything which is worrying honourable members, I shall be only too pleased to give them information on it. Mr. Speaker, I must thank you for this opportunity, despite your ruling, to reply to some of the statements which have been made in this House in connection with this Bill. For the benefit of those honourable members who have not really had anything to do with parochial administration more than reading what they see in the Press, I should just like to state a few facts. Accusations have been hurled at the St. Michael's Vestry and their administration of last year by the honourable senior member for St. Michael who has said this: "It appears as if there has been a lot of squandering of the taxpayers' money. Everybody will have read quite recently in the Press that something like $54,000 of the taxpayers' money has been squandered." That in truth and in fact is a very strong statement, and any honourable member of this House who listens to such a statement from another honourable member is bound to ask for an explanation. What honourable members after hearing that statement would not question whether it was correct or not? Before I became a member of this House, I always thought and understood that statements from responsible members (A MEMBER: Who are supposed to be responsible) carry a lot of weight. The honourable senior member for St. Michael says that this money has been overspent and God knows what the Vestry can show the taxpayers for it. Well, with the 80,000 inhabitants of this parish that statement is even stronger as coming from the honourable member, the senior representative of the parish. Fortunately for the honourable member, this is not a court of law, and it would appear that the honourable member has taken refuge behind the fact that he is a member of the House and made that statement, I throw out this challenge to the honourable member; let him make statements of this sort outside this House. (A MEMBER: You can make it in Queen's Park). The honourable member says in another statement that something is definitely wrong. For the edification of honourable members who are willing to know something of the facts, I shall give them briefly a summary of the working of the Vestry last year. Before I proceed to do that, I should just like to say this: no one knows better than the honourable senior member for St. Joseph, the Leader of the House, that when statements of this sort are made in connection with a Bill of this nature, if documentary evidence is produced, the books or documents will become documents of the House. Such evidence as I have today I presume, Mr. Speaker, that you will grant me the right to place before the House in view of the headlines which have appeared in nearly every section of the Press last week. I take it that there are some honourable members who are willing to see that evidence and weigh it for what it is worth.

Mr. SPEAKER: What are you proposing to do?

Mr. MOTTLEY: At a later stage I shall crave Your Honour's direction. In 1945-46 estimates for

work were obtained by the then Churchwarden of the parish, the honourable senior member for St. Thomas and, in turn, they were handed over to me. In many instances, in his capacity as a contractor, the honourable junior member for St. Peter was responsible for estimates. I say that for this reason; there could hardly be any honourable member on that side of the Table who would be courageous enough to say anything against the integrity of the honourable junior member for St. Peter in giving such estimates to the honourable senior member for St. Thomas as Churchwarden. The most of the work was done by contract with the exception of the remodelling of the kitchen at the St. Michael's Almshouse and the erection of the office at the Cemetery. The honourable senior member for St. Michael says that a few schutes and swings cost the parish $1,000; he goes further and is as strong as this: "The people of this parish have been blackmailed." That is a very strong statement indeed and it would be impossible, in my opinion, even if documentary evidence were to be produced at this stage to convince some honourable members otherwise. The honourable member also says that the increase in taxation this year is as a result of this over-expenditure. During the course of his remarks, the honourable senior member for St. Joseph said that no one will be in better position to give this House an explanation as to this over-expenditure than the honourable senior member for the City, and I appreciate that very much. Again the honourable senior member for St. Michael says that we purchased an old house with nothing but wood ants from people in Black Rock; there again that is a very strong statement. May I be permitted to allow this House to know that the decision to acquire these premises was arrived at after consideration by a Committee comprising such people as His Lordship the Bishop, the Dean of St. Michael, the Churchwarden of St. James, Rev. Dowlen, Messrs. D. G. Leacock, Jnr., H. A. Tudor, C. C. Browne. The present Churchwarden of St. Michael, the honourable junior member for St. Philip, the honourable junior member for St. Michael and the honourable senior member for St. Thomas who was Chairman of the Committee? This site was recommended by the Dean of St. Michael. I only mention that in passing owing to the innuendos which have been made. The expenditure of the parish for the year 1946-47 was estimated by the Vestry at over $500,000; to be accurate, it was estimated at $519,662.83. We have heard very strong statements about money having been over-expended, but let me say this; even if you admit that the honourable senior member for St. Michael is ignorant as to his whereabouts—I am challenging him to bring facts to prove that the Vestry of St. Michael have overspent $54,000—the honourable senior member for St. Joseph would know that before you can make such a statement you have the right as a parishioner to inspect every book. When therefore the Leader of the House, one who is looked upon by people as being in a responsible position, agrees with the statement of the honourable senior member for St. Michael when he cannot bring any proof of it. I say that that is going too far. I am proving beyond the shadow of doubt, Mr. Speaker, I am craving your permission to put in a document signed by the Auditor of the Vestry. Of course there are those who will look at this with a jaundiced eye which can only see yellow, and I suppose that somebody will say that the Auditor, Mr. Pile, has signed a false statement. I am reading this document which can be made a document of the House. It shows that only $4,000 has been overspent. The document states:—

"The amount of expenditure which was estimated for the year 1946-47 was $519,662.83. The amount actually spent was $523,758.36, which shows that the amount of expenditure in excess of the estimated amount was $4,095.53. I would like to draw your attention to this fact; the amount of expenditure under the head 'Poor Relief', exceeded the estimated amount by $29,672.13 but there were amounts saved under various heads, which off-set to a certain extent this over-expenditure and give the final results as stated above."

The honourable senior member for St. Joseph has associated himself with these malicious statements made by the honourable senior member for St. Michael but here is a statement signed by the Auditor of the Vestry which must be advertised in the *Official Gazette* in a few days. I have much pleasure in putting in this document which has been signed by the Auditor of the Vestry, and I shall not be surprised to hear that these figures have been concocted by him. The Auditor has made it quite clear that the sum of $4,000 was spent in excess of the estimated amount, but I was mindful of the condition of the people and overspent $29,000 on poor relief. It was a question of less coffins more food; I saved on coffins and spent more on food. (Cheers) Honourable members have launched serious attacks in connection with the rates having gone up and the honourable junior member for the City does not realise that free opinions from lawyers are never considered to be worth while. It has been said that it is illegal to do this and it is illegal to do that and that the rates for this year have been increased as a result of this over-expenditure. In order to prove that it is not true to say that the taxes in this parish have gone up as a result of any over-expenditure, I should like to point out that a few weeks ago this House unanimously agreed to allow the Vestry of St. Michael to pay a cost of living bonus retrospectively. Well, the Vestry employ over 400 people from the Parochial Treasurer down to the grave-digger and the payment of this bonus and retrospective pay cost the parish $66,783.07. The difference between the estimated expenditure for 1946-47 and 1947-48 is approximately $140,000. The honourable senior member for St. Peter has said that no statement can convince him that there can be any justification for this over-expenditure but I take it that he will have the integrity to say that if only $4,000 has been over-expended in a parish which spends over half a million dollars, that cannot be considered reckless. Let the honourable member tell me the parish in this island which did not over-spend during the year 1946-47. I ask your Honour's permission to read this.

Mr. SPEAKER: What is the honourable member reading from?

Mr. MOTTLEY: I am reading from the Auditor's statement. He says this:

"The estimated expenditure for the parish of St. Michael for the current parochial year, that is 1947-48, is $663,520.24. It is to be noted that this amount includes retrospective pay and also cost of living bonus."

He makes the total amount $66,783.07. Now the honourable senior member for St. Michael says that the trade tax in respect of people who own motor cars has gone up and that seems to be the only statement of fact that was made throughout the debate. That tax has gone up and I crave the permission of the House to point out how it has gone up. This was a personal statement which affected the honourable member. No returns are sent with regard to hired cars and from 1936 until 1940 the Vestry decided to rate those who owned hired cars at $10 per month or $120 a year profit. When the War came down no types or gasolene could be obtained and a petition was presented to the Vestry—this can be backed up by the honourable senior member for St. Thomas who has left his seat—and from 1941 to 1943 the rate was

reduced to $5 a month or $60 a year profit. In 1944 the Vestry felt that the owners of these cars could make a profit of $6 per month profit and rated them accordingly. This year the Vestry considered that tyres and gasolene can be obtained and they decided to put back the rate at $10 per month profit. The honourable senior member for St. Michael once said that he can get $80 per month out of this business, and he now bully rags and says that the tax has gone up twice as much as it was last year. There is no truth in that; let the honourable member use his judgment if he has any. The increase in taxes for this year is 19% and everybody's taxes have been increased—not the honourable member's taxes alone. The honourable member should have calculated—it would be impossible for his taxes to be doubled this year. Will not the honourable member use his own commonsense and stop having to play second fiddle to people?

I will now deal with the honourable senior member for St. Joseph; I do not want to misquote him and I will therefore refer to my notes. The honourable member said that on receiving his tax bill, the amount of which had increased, he became a bit worried and he knew how people in the lower income brackets took it. When the value of the honourable member's house went down, the taxes were lowered. I am not making statements in this House just for the purpose of getting publicity and notoriety. (Cheers). In 1946 the honourable member's parochial tax was $48 and this year it was $37 the reason being that the valuation of his house went down. The honourable member as Leader of the House must not merely get on the floor of the House and try to bully people. Honourable members will know from experience that the fixing of taxes is a matter for the assessor, and the honourable senior member for St. Joseph will know that an increase of 1.9% or even 2% could not cause the taxes to be so much greater. The honourable junior member for the City has said that he cannot pay his taxes; it is true that the amount of his bill has gone up. As a result of the assessment made, the value of the honourable member's house has gone up, and if the assessor has given an increased valuation the Vestry have no alternative than to increase the rate. Another point is this: no one could pass over lightly the statement that $1,000 was paid for a few schutes and swings without letting this House know something of the facts. I happened to be the chief Executive Officer of the Vestry in 1946-47, and what could point more to reckless spending during my administration than that statement? If you will permit me, Sir, to explain further, any work which was done by the Vestry was done after estimates have been submitted to them. I have in my hand a statement signed by the Clerk of the Vestry and I am happy to say that it disproves those vicious, worthless, reckless and malicious statements which have been made from the floor of this House. I say, fully conscious of my responsibility, that reckless and malicious misstatements have been made just to hold certain people up to ridicule. Despite what honourable members on that side of the Table have to say, I will continue to be popular with the people of the parish. (Cheers).

Mr. SPEAKER: I ask the honourable member to confine his remarks to this question of over-expenditure.

Mr. MOTTLEY: I have here a copy of the Minutes of the meeting of the Queen's Park Committee when it was agreed to provide these schutes and swings. There is a vicious rumour going around and the honourable senior member for St. Michael has got confused as to what he has been told to say and what he dare not refuse to say. The honourable senior member for St. Joseph said that as long as there is no secret commission being paid he would be satisfied to listen to an explanation —let me ask: at my age and with the honourable member's experience and opportunity who should know more about paying secret commissions? I have heard something outside———

Mr. SPEAKER: I am afraid that I cannot let the honourable member make that statement.

Mr. MOTTLEY: I submit to Your Honour's ruling but this is a statement of the honourable senior member for St. Joseph—

Mr. ADAMS: I was very careful not to make any reference to the honourable member. I do not know whether he carried any responsibility for what seems to be over-expenditure and I was very careful not to say anything that would point to him. When the honourable member makes a statement like that, I must object to it.

Mr. SPEAKER: I ask the honourable member to withdraw that statement.

Mr. MOTTLEY: If I am not quoting the honourable member correctly it is a matter for the Official reporter. The honourable member said that there may be very good reasons for this over-expenidture and as long as he was satisfied that there was no secret commission being paid—

Mr. ADAMS: How is that an accusation against you?

Mr. MOTTLEY: I am saying that any accusations against the Vestry includes me, and as an Ex-Vestrymen and in his position the honourable senior for St. Joseph would know more about the payment of secret commissions than I would.

Mr. SPEAKER: The honourable member has no right to make a statement such as that which he has made and I ask him to withdraw it.

Mr. MOTTLEY: If that is your ruling, I will most respectfully withdraw it. With regard to the building at the Cemetery, the honourable senior member for St. Michael says that a little 2 x 4 building at the Cemetery cost the parish a lot of money. (Mr. Cox: It cost $3,400). I should like to let this House know that this building is 24 x 17½ ft. with a concrete porch 12 x 9 ft. The building is constructed of solid stone with all the necessary sanitary equipment and furniture and the cost is $3,400, which is $200 less than the estimate. Merely making a statement about this building without having entered it to measure it or put the facts before the House is not the duty of a responsible member. Besides the $66,000 for the payment of Cost of Living Bonus and retrospective pay, there are several other items to which I could draw the attention of this House, are partly responsible for the increase in taxes before we actually come to vote on the matter. Mr. Speaker, there are many other things which have caused an increase in taxation for the year 1947-48.

Mr. SPEAKER: I rule that that does not come into the matter at all. There could not be any over-expenditure in the year ahead.

Mr. MOTTLEY: Every honourable member who spoke on this matter attributed the increased taxation to the over-expenditure, and it is my duty to show on the part of the Vestry just reasons why this Bill should be passed. Again it is not true to say that this increased estimated expenditure of $140,000 approximately for this year is in any way connected with the over-expenditure last year. Therefore I am bound to satisfy honourable members that this increase is due to certain other reasons.

Mr. SPEAKER: I think that you have already said that the over-expenditure is only $4,000 there-

fore any question of increased expenditure this year could not affect that at all.

Mr. MOTTLEY: I think that honourable members should know that owing to the increase by the Vestry of parochial pensions from 7s. to 10s. per month, the increase in the number of scholarships—

Mr. SPEAKER: I do not think that the honourable member should speak on that point. The over-expenditure is only $4,000, not $54,000.

Mr. MOTTLEY: I should like to say that those honourable members who spoke so strongly against this Bill gave as their reasons that there has been this over-expenditure. At the office of the Board of Guardians they are bound by statute to be given a copy of the Estimates for 1947—48. That will show that the amount estimated to be spent under Poor Relief is over $50,000 in excess of last year's. The honourable senior member for St. Joseph says that he does not know if this house which was purchased in Black Rock was rotten or not, but the parish of St. Michael could have saved that money by applying to the Government for the land. I should like to clear up that point because no one in this colony should have more interest in this matter than the honourable member and if he knew that the Government were willing to give this land, he could have seen about that. Let me say for the information of the honourable member that the Vestry of St. Michael have not bought this place; an anonymous benefactor has purchased it and given it to the parish. It is a fact that in this vicinity—the honourable member as a member of the Housing Board and he knows that £200 per acre was paid for land there. There are people who know everything and I must make the facts clear. Before the War £200 per acre was paid for this land, and the Vestry agreed to take eight acres of the land together with the house for the sum of £5,000. I feel that I have been able by the Auditor's statement, which I do not believe anybody would challenge, to prove the falsity of the statement, that $54,000 has been over-spent. There is one newspaper——

Mr. SPEAKER: I do not think that this has anything to do with the debate.

Mr. MOTTLEY: The newspaper reports, especially those which seem to be taken from——

Mr. SPEAKER: You are not now dealing with newspaper reports: you are dealing with whether the House agree to the second reading of this Bill or not.

Mr .MOTTLEY: But the various speakers actually mentioned that this amount of over-expenditure was published in the newspapers and that is why I mentioned the newspaper reports.

Mr. SPEAKER: That was a question of saying that there had been over-expenditure or careless expenditure.

Mr. MOTTLEY: I do not think that I have much more to say in this matter, but there is nothing which has been done behind closed doors. It has struck me that there is a statement which has been made in connection with the Vestry of St. Michael and which will do much harm if it is not corrected; it is the statement of the honourable senior member for St. Michael that the parish is in a state of bankruptcy. At the end——

Mr. SPEAKER: You can only debate what the honourable member has said if that is sufficient ground to refuse the second reading of this Bill. What the honourable member said has nothing to do with the matter before the House.

Mr. MOTTLEY: The honourable member has made statements in this House to the effect that the conditions at the Vestry are so bad, that they are actually in a state of bankruptcy and that the Vestry have to go around to get people to pay their taxes so as to raise money to pay salaries. Well, it must be presumed that at the end of the financial year there was no money and the Legislature gave permission to the Vestry to borrow £9,000 to pay salaries and other expenses of the parish. When you take that money at the end of March and pay salaries in April, how else can you pay salaries in the month of May if you do not ask people whose taxes are due to pay them within 21 days? That must happen until steps are taken to allow the Vestry to borrow more than £9,000. There is one last statement which I should like to put in; it is a statement which must in one way or another carry some weight as to the voting on the second reading of this Bill. This statement has been signed by the Inspector of Poor and it has been taken from the statistics relating to Poor Relief and it is a statement which is annually given to the Chief Medical Officer of this colony for the benefit of the Government. I am putting in these statements to show if there was any mismanagement or not because one honourable member, the honourable senior member for St. Michael, says that God only knows what the Vestry has to show for this money. I observe for the benefit of this House that the number of persons relieved is shown in the statement—a statement which honourable members can see if they want to do so. The expenditure on Poor Relief for 1945—46 as against that for 1946—47 is shown and I have much pleasure in putting in this documentary evidence. There has been a tremendous increase in the number of persons who are given relief from time to time, and an administrative body such as the Vestry can do no better, more especially in these days, than to follow in some instances the policy of this Labour Government in handling the poor. People who draw pensions have been increased by 50% or 100%; the poor people receive 3s. and 4s. a week and children 1/6 a week. No fault can be attributed either to the Vestry or the Board of Guardians; during the year the prices of commodities like milk and rice went up. Milk went from 9c. to 11c. per pint and rice went to 6c. per pint. We hear it stressed so often that you should not overspend; let me tell this House that there were 500 people in an institution—this happened during my term of office—and you could not get one iota from the merchants in Bridgetown and representations had to be made to the Control Board so as to be able to feed the people. The honourable senior member for St. Joseph knows this; it is no fault of mine. Under the present set-up you are allowed to lay a a special rate if you find that you have exceeded your estimates for Poor Relief. The Vestry knew well enough that they were exceeding their estimates for Poor Relief and they had the right to lay a fresh rate as in the case of sanitation; but to send out tax bills to 17,000 people the amount of stationery, etc., required would have cost about $2,000 in order to raise $4,095.53 which has been over-expended. If you look at the general expenditure you are bound to make up for it. What would be the point, because you are over-spending, of laying a special rate and taxing the people of this parish to make up for the over-expenditure when you have the money there under other Heads? As regards the question of unpaid vouchers, of course you must have unpaid vouchers. If at the 24th of March, Mr. "A" goes out of office as Churchwarden and hands over to Mr. "B" and there is an amount of about $20,000 which has not been paid, you must have unpaid vouchers which the in-coming Church- these matters, not merely to get up with the usual

members to be honest and to take some interest in claptrap———

Mr. SPEAKER: The honourable member must stick to the point.

Mr. MOTTLEY: I take it that I have exhausted the patience of honourable members and that they are feeling that it is now late and they want to decide one way or the other in this matter. Your Honour has suggested that this Bill should be referred to a Select Committee but I say with all due deference to you and to this House that no useful purpose can be served by doing that. You can have a Commission of Enquiry if you like to do so. Sometimes I wonder what would really happen to those honourable members who have the temerity to offer opposition—I really wonder what would happen if absolute power is given to those honourable members on that side of the Table. What will really happen if they can get down so low as to oppose people because they do not agree to be "yes-men" for them? There are some people whose bodies are being elevated but it seems difficult for them to keep their minds from the mud and mire.

Mr. SPEAKER: I do not think that the honourable member is using any arguments as to the merits of the Bill.

Mr. MOTTLEY: In order to defend the cause of the Vestry, I have to defend my own cause. I am wondering now if, despite all that was said, honourable members will agree that the facts are as I have presented them. I have taken time off to get the Auditor's statement in order to present those facts. This Bill has been on the Order Paper since the time of the late honourable junior member for the City, Mr. Peirce. I view with apprehension the fact that the honourable senior member for St. Thomas, who knows as much about this matter as I do, has absented himself from the House now that the matter is being discussed. A man should either stand or fall by his convictions. Why has the honourable member left the House? He dare not vote against his Party. I have his Report which he has signed. I say: let honourable members vote as they like to-day on the merits of this Bill and not against an individual. You hear that the Vestry have squandered money and you see to-day that the position is not as you have heard. This falsity that $54,000 has been over-spent has been hatched in the mind of some wicked person. It is a question for honourable members to decide as to whether or not it is necessary to have this Food Centre; whether these people should be allowed to stay out in the weather or whether they should be placed in a proper dining hall with proper tables, etc., where children from the various schools in the parish can get a hot meal. If honourable members have the courage to vote against this Bill now that all the facts have been put before them, it is only because they want to do something that will hold one man up to ridicule. I conclude by saying that I am mindful of the words of a great author: "Since right is right and God is God, then right the day must win." I challenge any honourable member to vote against this Bill. (Loud and prolonged cheers.)

Mr. MAPP: I have heard much clever talk on this motion but certain honourable members seem to want to hear more, and I will add something to the debate. I have heard many personal allegations made this afternoon and I have heard a big defence. I do not know how much these schutes and swings cost. I do not know whether after I have concluded my remarks it can be hurled at me that I have been personal. On more than one occasion I have criticised the present parochial administration of this island. I say that it is obsolete; I say that the expenditure by parochial bodies on social measures should be 300 per cent. over-expenditure if justice is to be done. None of us would be against over-expenditure such as that for the simple reason that there is too much under-expenditure by these parochial Bodies; but the gist of our contention is that the position here reveals gross mismanagement and inefficiency. The honourable member who has just sat down has said that in order to defend the Vestry he has to defend himself. The honourable member from his sick bed enquired whether no one could defend him on this occasion——

Mr. SPEAKER: Is the honourable member showing that there has been over-expenditure?

Mr. MAPP: Yes, Sir; I will show that in this Vestry there has been gross mismanagement. With regard to the property which was bought for the Children's Home, I am asking if it is not a fact that the Vestry appointed three appraisers. I will name them —Messrs. Herbert Williams, C. R. Armstrong and H. W. Clarke. They recommended that the property should be bought for £2,800 and it is worth £2,800. The honourable senior member for the City has said that the Vestry did not buy the property for £5,000 but a benefactor has bought it.

Mr. MOTTLEY: I said that and I can clarify it. The anonymous benefactor was present, saw this place and carried his own valuers there.

Mr. MAPP: That explanation is a remarkable one. Here it is that the Vestry appointed three appraisers; they are spending money to the best of the people's interest, they appointed these appraisers who recommended that the property be bought for £2,800 and they are saying that this benefactor carried his own appraisers to value it behind them. The honourable member has not yet told us what the benefactor's appraisers recommended. I am saying that the position reveals gross mismanagement, a state of affairs which is extremely bad. I do not think that we should be called upon to give authority to the Vestry to raise further loans until matters have been cleared up. All the explanations which have been made may sound extremely good and lucid, and there may be a personal appeal in them but they do not satisfy us. I repeat that none of us would be against any over-expenditure by the Vestries in connection with social measures, but it must be done properly. They spend too little on social measures. One hears that the persons whom the honourable member is now defending say that they did not know how the over-expenditure was caused and that the honourable member had to come out of bed and say, "You know how it was caused and you did not defend me. You agree to the rates and when the Churchwarden is absent you make these attacks." The whole position reveals mismanagement on the part of the Vestry, not the honourable senior member for the City. We have not indulged in any personal allegations. I say that matters in connection with the Vestry will have to be made clear before I can agree to give them the authority to raise this loan.

Mr. FOSTER: Advantage is being taken of this Bill. This is a petition from a responsible body—the Vestry of St. Michael—elected by the taxpayers, and whether my Party votes for this Bill or not, I am prepared to vote for it. (Cheers.) Although my Party wants a Commission of Enquiry I am supporting this Bill. I am a Vestryman of 25 years' standing and I would rather resign my seat before I turn down this Bill.

Mr. GALE: Very often out of evil cometh good. I should like to say that several honourable members have a habit of getting to their feet and making reckless and unfair statements about men, matters and institutions. I am very pleased to see to-day that the accusations which have been hurled

at the Vestry of St. Michael last Tuesday have been answered by the honourable senior member for the City. Everyone of them has been answered in a masterly manner and to the satisfaction of any fair-minded person. If we had a jury sitting here to-day and they heard the answers which the honourable senior member for the City gave to the accusations about over-expenditure and waste of money—if they were fair-minded men they could only return one verdict and that is that the accusations were absolutely unjustified and unfounded. The honourable senior member for the City has given a full and unqualified explanation of everything. As far as the question of taxes going up is concerned, we have people in this colony who go around and say: "Pay people more money, pay everybody more money" and how can you pay people more money if you do not tax people more? "The Government is paying more and the Vestry should pay more" is the cry on every side, but how are the Vestry to pay more if they do not increase the rates? If expenditure goes up you have to pay higher wages. You will find that people will preach that this thing should be done and that thing should be done, but when hey have to pull their pockets they raise objections.

Mr. RAMSAY: I should like to approach this question in a calm attitude and I am saying what my mind tells me to say. Quite a lot has been said in connection with this matter and it has done a lot of good. It is said that if you want to catch bees, you have to clear the atmosphere and I hope that things have been said which will clear the atmosphere. I think that the honourable junior member for St. Andrew has struck the correct chord. A responsible Body such as the Vestry have sent this petition to this House. The over-expenditure is nothing to do with this Bill. What we have to decide is whether or not we are going to allow the Vestry to raise this loan to do what they have set out to do. They say that they want to purchase this building for a certain amount of money; they want to provide for a Food Centre so as to feed the poor people of the parish and, it looks to me, the poor people of the island because I know that they feed people from all over the island in Bridgetown. I know that people come from all over the island and live and pilfer in Bridgetown. We have to feed them because they are in dire need. I say these things because when we start to get hot we leave out the salient points. As regards the contention between the honourable senior member for St. Michael and the honourable senior member for the City, that is nothing to do with this Bill. You know, Mr. Speaker, that the price of everything has gone up and the only people who do not overspend are those who do not intend to spend. Every Churchwarden who is progressive-minded and progressive in outlook has to overspend (Cheers). Sometimes a Churchwarden thinks that he is saving money but he only multiplies by three the work of the next Churchwarden.

Mr. SPEAKER: I do not think that that has anything to do with this Bill.

Mr. RAMSAY: I see that, Mr. Speaker; that is by the way. I do not think that we should do anything to prevent this Bill from being passed and we should do everything possible to have a full enquiry made into the state of affairs. His Excellency the Governor should be called upon to institute such a Commission of Enquiry as has never existed and if necessary lock up some people. I shall vote for this Bill because we want to accommodate the Sanitary Board. We have the nurses and the inspectors who go around and look after the health of the people. There are those who see that good milk is obtained for the school children. We cannot be progressive in outlook on one side and not on the other. Wherever there is much smoke there must be some fire. Do not let anybody believe that the Vestry are, like Caesar's wife, above suspicion. I have been associated with Vestries and I know that very often a Churchwarden may have to correct somebody who is working for him and if he smells the fire he has to run from it so as to save his face. I say: let the Commission of Enquiry be set up but vote for this Bill today. If you put it off for six months you are only withholding these amenities from the people. I am a taxpayer and I never pay as much taxation as I would like to pay. I know that certain assessors lower the rates in certain cases; that is politics. However, I want to admonish honourable members to leave out this personal atmosphere; we are human beings and certain honourable members will have something to say about certain other honourable members. I am inducing and admonishing you gentlemen to leave out the personal atmosphere, leave out the political end of it and vote for this Bill and allow the Vestry to raise this money.

Mr. CRAWFORD rose to speak.

Mr. SPEAKER: The honourable member has already spoken; I draw your attention to Rule 142.

Mr. CRAWFORD: I spoke on the motion for adjournment of the House. I did not make or second the motion.

Mr. SPEAKER: What are you going to speak on now?

Mr. CRAWFORD: I am speaking on the motion for the second reading of the Bill.

Mr. SPEAKER: The honourable member may go on; I thought that you had moved the adjournment of the House.

Mr. CRAWFORD: Despite the able manner in which the honourable senior member for the City has vindicated himself, no one would be bold enough as to claim that everything is well with the St. Michael's Vestry. My particular complaint against this Vestry which is asking us to give them permission to raise this money is that, for the greater part, the people who are its members are some of the most reactionary people in this colony, and as such they cannot always be expected to sympathise with the needs of the working classes of this colony.

Mr. SPEAKER: Is that any reason for not giving them permission to raise this loan to purchase this property?

Mr. CRAWFORD: I have never said that. Apart from the fact that they are reactionary in outlook, they are always very rich people. Probably because they are reactionary they are rich or *vice versa.* therefore it is all the more amazing that people who are both rich and reactionary should be asking us today to allow them to raise money to provide this Food Centre for the poor people, and people who profess to represent the working classes are opposing this request. Sir, if the rich, reactionary people who comprise the St. Michael's Vestry allow themselves to be so completely in sympathy with the working classes, there is all the more reason why the people who profess to be the representatives of the working classes should be more than willing to support a motion such as this which has as its object the protection of the interests of the poor classes in this community. It seems to me that for reasons which are absolutely nothing at all to do with the principle of the Bill, the time of this House has been taken up for the last two meetings by people who are only desirous of casting aspersions at other people.

Mr. SPEAKER: I have tried to stop honourable members when they got personal. The question of personality has been underlying this whole debate and I again ask honourable members to stop being personal.

Mr. CRAWFORD: I am only giving gratuitous advice which, if followed, would be of benefit for the future. If we keep to the principle involved

and leave out personalities we will get on. If the honourable senior member for St. Michael tried to get in the Vestry and failed to do so, his grievance is against the ratepayers of St. Michael, not against the Vestry. His grievance is to accuse the ratepayers of not seeing what is best in a man, not to accuse the Vestry of inefficiency or misconduct in this House. We have devoted no less than six hours to the consideration of this Bill, and most of the time has been spent in making allegations which have been proved to be unfounded. What really brought me to my feet is this; on the last occasion the honourable junior member for the City said and emphasized in the course of his remarks that he hoped that I would exert my influence and weight to see that this Commission of Enquiry is appointed. Frankly, I was amazed at the attitude of the honourable member. I had previously associated him in my mind with the sort of impartial person who is willing to hear both sides of the story —both the prosecution and the defence—before he jumps to any conclusion. I was amazed to see him—

Mr. LEWIS: Members of this very Vestry, including the honourable junior member for St. Michael, took part in a recent debate in connection with the Hospital and accused the Board of reckless expenditure without having full knowledge of the facts.

Mr. GALE: I object to that statement; I never did anything of the kind.

Mr. CRAWFORD: I am not a member of the Vestry, and even if such statements were made, I do not see why I should be singled out and asked to exert my influence in getting this Commission of Enquiry set up. There is no reason why people should allow their passion to warp their judgment. What we have heard in this Chamber to-day is such as to make the accusers hang their heads in shame if they have any sense of what is principle and what is not. Perhaps the honourable senior member for the City might be well advised to make his defence to a wider audience. I should like to say this; it is most unsatisfactory that the senior members of this Chamber—people who by reason of the length of time they were in this Chamber are entitled in some respects to be regarded as elder statesmen—will associate themselves with ill-founded accusations which are made by people who ought to know better. If that continues, we will never get anything done. The honourable senior member for the City has shown that the over-expenditure is only $4,000; the honourable senior member for St. Michael says that it is $40,000—

Mr. COX: The honourable member cannot speak the truth even sometimes. I never said that.

Mr. CRAWFORD: He said $54,000. When people like the honourable senior member for St. Michael come up against so many figures they get lost; they cannot follow them and 5,000 and 500,000 look the same way to them. It is only a waste of time to put certain figures before certain people when they are incapable of dealing with them.

Mr. SPEAKER: The honourable senior member for the City gave some reasons for having the Bill passed, but you are not now giving any reasons at all.

Mr. CRAWFORD: I am supporting this Bill and I am voicing my protest against having been kept here until this late hour unnecessarily. The people to whom this chastisement has been administered by the honourable senior member for the City should see to it that they never again hold themselves up to such ridicule, and that in future they will try to justify any allegations before they make them.

Mr. GARNER: I was loath to say anything on this matter because I can see from what I read in the Press that from start to finish it is only a political issue. I am voting for this Bill because the principle is a good one. We have a so-called Labour Government in power and what do we find? We find that the Leader of the House has allowed himself to be swayed by somebody who has no knowledge of what is going on in this island.

Mr SPEAKER: The honourable member must not be personal.

Mr. GARNER: I am not being personal; I am saying that it would have been a laudable thing if the Labour Government had commended the Vestry on having brought forward this Bill.

Mr. SPEAKER: What has that got to do with the principle of the Bill?

Mr. GARNER: It is the desire of the Vestry of St. Michael to acquire this property so that the poor people can be fed there and that is a very laudable object indeed. There are those who are putting whatever interpretation they like on it. I think that when the people are sending their representatives to this House, they should see whether they are getting the shadow or the substance. When this Bill was brought here by the late honourable junior member for the City, Mr Peirce, it was a very laudable Bill and now because it is in the name of the honourable senior member for the City, it is not laudable. It was very laudable then but because of personal prejudice it is not laudable to-day. I feel very elated to see how the honourable senior member for the City has vindicated his character to-day. The honourable member has been returned at the head of the poll on many occasions, and this will entitle him to be returned in even larger numbers in the future.

MEMBERS: Question?

Mr. SPEAKER: A motion has been made that this Bill be now read a second time. An amendment has been moved that this Bill be read this day six months. The question is that the words proposed to be deleted stand part of the motion. Honourable members in favour of that will please say *"Aye"*, those against will please say *"No"*. I think the *"Ayes"* have it.

A division was taken as follows:—

Ayes: Dr. WILSON, Messrs. RAMSAY, BRANCKER, FOSTER, BLACKMAN, CRAWFORD, GARNER, TALMA, MOTTLEY, HAYNES, GALE, S. A. WALCOTT, WILKINSON, and WARD.—14.

Noes: Messrs LEWIS, F. L. WALCOTT, COX, MAPP, and ADAMS—5.

Mr. SPEAKER: The question has been resolved in the affirmative, fourteen honourable members voting *"Aye"* and five honourable members voting *"No"*.

The second reading was passed.

THE ADJOURNMENT

Mr. ADAMS: In view of the lateness of the hour, I think that we should adjourn at this stage. I have other legislative business to do and I have an appointment for six o'clock. I hope that when honourable members are placed in a position similar to that in which I am placed this afternoon, they will not expect me to agree to an early adjournment as I have had to do this session. If honourable members are in agreement I suggest that the Order Paper remain as it is. I beg to move that this House do now adjourn to this day week, the 8th day of July, 1947, at twelve o'clock noon.

Mr. COX: I beg to second that.

Mr. LEWIS: Speaking on the motion of the adjournment of the House, I should like to know whether the documents which have been put in to-

day in connection with this Bill which we were just considering will be printed and circulated.

Mr. SPEAKER: They are documents which belong to the House.

Mr. LEWIS: In view of the interest displayed in these documents, if there is no law against doing it, I am suggesting that it would be a good thing to have them printed and circulated.

The question that this House do now adjourn to this day week, the 8th day of July, 1947, at twelve o'clock noon was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

Mr. SPEAKER accordingly adjourned the House to Tuesday next, the 8th day of July, 1947, at twelve o'clock noon.