pages are missing between 23 November & 21st December

THE

House of Assembly Debates

(OFFICIAL REPORT)

SESSION 1947—48

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, 6th January, 1948.

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

Present:

His Honour Mr. G. B. EVELYN (*Speaker*), His Honour Mr. J. E. T. BRANCKER, (*Deputy Speaker*), Dr. J. A. LEVI. WILSON, Dr. H. G. CUMMINS, Messrs. McD. SYMMONDS, L. E. SMITH, F. L. WALCOTT, M. E. COX, D. A. FOSTER, R. G. MAPP, A. E. S. LEWIS, C. E. TALMA, H. D. BLACKMAN, J. A. HAYNES, B.A. H. A. DOWDING, V. C. GALE, S. A. WALCOTT, J. H. WILKINSON, O.B.E., E. L. WARD, and D. D. GARNER.

Prayers are read.

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

MINUTES.

The Minutes of the meeting which was held on the 16th December, 1947, having been circulated are taken as read and confirmed.

DOCUMENT

Mr. SPEAKER. I have the honour to inform the House that I have received from the Commissioners of Highways of the parish of Christ Church a Statement of Accounts for the half year ended 30th September, 1947.

PAPER LAID

Dr. CUMMINS (On behalf of Mr. Adams): Mr. Speaker,—I have the honour to lay on the table of the House the following Paper :—

Despatch No. 125 from the Secretary of State for the Colonies dated the 4th December, 1947, on the subject of the Resolutions of the Conference on Closer Association of the B.W.I. Colonies held at Montego Bay, Jamaica, from the 11th to the 19th September, 1947.

NOTICES

Government Notices are given as follows :—

Mr. TALMA : Special Resolution under the provisions of section 3 of the Provost Marshal's (Amendment) Act, 1947 (1947—36).

Dr. CUMMINS : Resolution to place the sum of £31,000 at the disposal of the Governor-in-Executive Committee to meet the expenses incurred in connection with the Hospital from the date of the coming into operation of the Barbados General Hospital Act, 1947 (1947—28), until the 31st March, 1948.

Dr. CUMMINS : Bill to amend the Parish Constables Act, 1900 (1900—4).

Dr. CUMMINS : Of my intention to move the suspension of Rule 88 to deal to-day with the money Resolution of which I have just given notice.

PETITION

Mr. CRAWFORD : Mr. Speaker,—I beg to present a petition from the Barbados Sugar Industry Agricultural Bank praying the House to pass a Bill to enable them to grant a gratuity to the legal personal representative of the late Norman L. Roach. The petition is respectfully worded and I beg to move that it be taken as read.

The petition is taken as read.

NOTICE

Mr. CRAWFORD then gives notice of a Bill to authorize the Sugar Industry Agricultural Bank to pay a gratuity to the legal personal representative of the late Norman L. Roach.

BILLS READ A FIRST TIME

On the motion of Dr. CUMMINS, seconded by Mr. TALMA, a Bill to amend the Parish Constables Act 1900 (1900—4) is read a first time.

On the motion of Mr. CRAWFORD, seconded by Mr. BRANCKER, a Bill to authorize the Sugar Industry Agricultural Bank to pay a gratuity to the legal personal representative of Norman L. Roach is read a first time.

INCOME TAX (AMENDMENT) BILL

Mr. SPEAKER : The first Order stands in the name of the honourable senior member for St. Joseph, —Second reading of a Bill to amend the Income Tax Act, 1921 (1921—6).

Dr. CUMMINS : Mr. Speaker,—I ask leave to take charge of Order No. 1 and any other Orders standing in the name of the honourable senior member for St. Joseph that may be dealt with to-day.

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

Dr. CUMMINS : This is a Bill, Sir, to amend the Income Tax Act. 1921. It seeks to avoid double taxation and is the result of a Convention between the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the Government of the United States of America for the avoidance of double taxation and the prevention of fiscal evasion with respect to taxes on incomes. The Secretary of State for the Colonies invited this Government to conclude a similar agreement with the Government of the United Kingdom and to state whether it desires that the Convention should extend to this island and the Governor-in-Executive Committee has informed the Secretary of State for the Colonies that it has accepted his proposals for an agreement relating to double taxation on incomes and for extending the Convention to this island. I think that a Bill of this nature should commend itself to honourable members. Personally, I feel that the system of double taxation is wrong and a Bill which seeks to remedy a thing of that sort should certainly meet with the approval of this House. The Objects and Reasons are clearly set forth and it seems to me, Sir, that the House would do well to follow the example set by the United Kingdom in this matter. I beg to move that this Bill be now read a second time.

Mr. BLACKMAN : I beg to second that.

Mr. LEWIS: Mr. Speaker,—I must confess that I do not understand the principles of income tax that prompt such a Bill and make it so obvious to certain persons that double taxation — and without exemptions — is an inequitable thing to do. I have heard certain grievances about double taxation on pensions and dividends coming here from the United Kingdom and the recipients have certainly made out to me a case for consideration. But, Sir, without any special knowledge of the subject and not having had the time to go very fully into the Bill that is under consideration now I believe that it is worthy of further consideration before we extend this principle to places outside the British Empire. Whatever may be the reasons for it in the British Commonwealth of Nations I think it is still worthy of some serious consideration and, perhaps, a few examples of the hardships which double taxation works could be put before members of the House in such a way as to enable them to appreciate the provisions of this Bill. Perhaps the way that it strikes me is entirely wrong but I feel, Sir, that some American citizen in this country may be receiving, let us say, the sum of £1,000 or its equivalent by way of income, either from dividends or a pension, after having paid income tax in the United States of America and it is very difficelt for me to think that someone working in this island for a salary of £1,000 should have to pay income tax when another person to whom I have referred and who is in receipt of £1,000 from abroad is exempted. As I said, I really have not had time to discuss this matter with the Income Tax Commissioner who is the expert on it but if the example I have given is one that is amply covered, I sincerely hope that some honourable member will help me to get over my difficulty. If we keep this principle within the British Empire, all well and good because we know that if any calamity befalls us in this country we can look to the Mother Country for assistance; but when we undertake to extend this privilege outside what I may well call the family of Nations I, Sir, will have to get some further information and be given some stronger reason why I should vote for a Bill of this nature. I confess that it has intricacies that I may not understand but I may be able more readily to understand them if they were put before me by someone who has some experience in the matter. I absolve from blame the senior member for St. Thomas who was not originally in charge of the Bill and who in normal circumstances may not have any special knowledge of the subject but I am certainly not satisfied that if I cast my vote in favour of this Bill I shall be doing so, fully understanding its implications. If I vote against it I shall do so, simply because I do not understand, even though it may be an admirable Bill. I really think that we should know something about what we stand to lose by this Bill. I take it that the Income Tax Commissioner approves of it and feels that there is some reciprocity in it. At the same time I do hope that this privilege is not being extended merely because of the loan from the United States of America to Great Britain. I really do not know why this grand and glorious scheme has only reached Barbados in 1948 and I can only hope that the majority of honourable members, if they vote for this Bill, really and truly understand its full implication.

Mr. WILKINSON: Mr. Speaker,—I think that most honourable members will agree to the principle of this Bill, that is, that we should not have double taxation but like the honourable member who has just sat down I must confess that it is extraordinarily difficult to understand all the legal terms used in this Bill. As I understand it, people who come to this island to remain for 8 or 9 months will only have to pay income tax on the amount of money which they bring into the island and that seems to be fair and reasonable. But I am not in a position to discuss all these clauses which it really takes a legal man to understand and I should like the honourable member who introduces this Bill to tell us whether it has been scrutinized and approved by the Crown Law Officers and the Income Tax Commissioner.

Mr. MOTTLEY enters the House and takes his seat.

Mr. TALMA: Mr. Speaker,—The average member of this Chamber should be well aware that the principle of double taxation is entirely wrong. As regards the point raised by the junior member for the City, if he were to refer to the Objects and Reasons of this Bill he would see that on February 23rd, 1946, the Secretary of State for the Colonies invited the Government of this Island to conclude a similar agreement with the Government of the United Kingdom and to state whether it desires that the Convention between the United States and Great Britain should extend to this island. This has been pending since 1945. It was agreed to in 1945 and was actually brought to the notice of this Government in February, 1946. But, Sir, it was not until February, 1947, that the Governor-in-Executive Committee in this island dealt with it. As the junior member for St. James has explained—and his explanation should satisfy any member of this Chamber—it only applies to persons who come to this island for a short period and not the ones who have taken up permanent residence here. It is only fair and equitable that income which has been already taxed should not be doubly taxed but if a person is domiciled in this island, becomes a Barbadian and enjoys all the privileges which the Barbadians enjoy, then income which he receives from abroad should be taxed. I do not know if the loan made by the American Government to Great Britain forms the background of this arrangement but we should try and assist the Mother Country in every way possible. This is a matter which has been already dealt with by the experts and we as non-experts should help Great Britain in her hour of crisis and need.

Dr. CUMMINS: Mr. Speaker,—I rise to assure honourable members, as requested by the junior member for St. James, that this Bill has been scrutinized both by the Acting Attorney General and the Commissioner of Income Tax and Death Duties. I must confess that a legal brain is required to explain the Bill. The honourable member who introduced it is absent from the island and only this morning I was requested by the Acting Attorney General to try and secure its passage through the House to-day. As a matter of fact, it should have become law before the end of last year in order that it might have come into force on the 1st January this year and I repeat that only this morning I was asked by the Acting Attorney General to try and get it passed to-day so as not to hold up this arrangement in respect of the payment of double income tax. I do so with a certain amount of diffidence because I have not given the Bill sufficient study but I can assure the House that the Commissioner of Income Tax and Death Duties and the Acting Attorney General have gone into it most carefully.

Mr. BRANCKER: There is just one thing I am wondering in connection with this Bill and it is this. On three occasions — the latest was as recently as the 28th October last year — I made enquiry of the Government in respect of the payment of income tax by workers who have returned from the U.S.A. and who have already paid their tax in the U.S.A. during the period in which they were resident there. Workers whom we sent overseas have been billed for income tax on their return to this country because it has been the view of the legal advisers to the local Government that their income is also taxable here.

Mr. SPEAKER: Is the honourable member going to raise the point as to whether that is a question of double taxation?

Mr. BRANCKER: Really apropos to that and having regard to paragraph 6 of the Object and Reasons of the Bill—

Mr. SPEAKER: You can deal with that in Committee.

Mr. BRANCKER: Paragraph 6 of the Objects and Reasons states:— "The Bill empowers the Governor by Order to make arrangements with the Government of any territory with a view to affording relief from double taxation on incomes, which shall be effective in relation to income tax notwithstanding the provisions of any enactment." Whatever is the view of the legal advisers to the local Government—and I am not disputing it as being correct, that is, that the payment made by workers in the U.S.A. are also liable to the payment of income tax in this country—I am suggesting that in any alteration in the existing income tax law. that should be taken into consideration with a view of relieving workers when they return here from double taxation in respect of the incomes which they earn overseas. I feel that that is a hardship and I am wondering whether this Bill covers cases like those, in view of the advice of the legal advisers to the local Government.

Mr. SPEAKER: It is a pity that the honourable member did not raise that point before the honourable introducer of the Bill replied.

Mr. BRANCKER: I am sorry that I missed the opportunity. I really feel that in any event the Government should be able to make an authoritative statement on the point and I express the hope that that is one of the intentions of this Bill, namely, that the incomes earned by workers in the U.S.A., will be exempted from the payment of income tax in this island.

Mr. CRAWFORD: Before you put the question, Sir, I must say that up to now, the proceedings in connection with this matter have been eminently unsatisfactory. In dealing with a Bill of this importance the members of this Chamber as well as the general public are entitled to some specific statement, so that when it has been passed they will have some knowledge of what is to be done. Now, if we are going to have no further explanation than what we have been given to-day I think the correct thing to do is to postpone the further consideration of the Bill. It already has in it a retrospective clause which makes it applicable from the 1st January, 1948, so that no harm can be done if the Bill is not passed to-day. After all, considering that we get a very fair proportion of our revenue from income tax, anything which is going to affect this revenue in one way or another requires most careful consideration and we do not expect, when a Bill of this importance is before the House, merely to hear some twaddle about helping Great Britain in her hour of need. We want to be told precisely how the proposals contained in this Bill will affect the revenue of the colony, what are the existing rates of income tax and how they compare with the rates in given categories levied by other signatories to the Convention. At least, the mechanics of the whole thing should be explained to the House and the public. That is the sort of thing that the people who are responsible for doing Government's Business should explain. It would take less than half an hour to give that explanation to the members of this House—an explanation to which they are entitled — and bearing in mind that the Bill has a retroactive clause, if as the senior member for St. Thomas is willing to confess his lack of information on the question, I see no reason why the Bill should be rushed through to-day. People who live in British places, especially the colonies, have been getting away with almost murder — to use a commonplace expression — in respect to the taxation they pay on incomes made in the colonies. In the Windward Islands there are British people making money there on which they do not pay a single cent in taxation to local revenue. If we are now taking steps to equalize the situation and to see to it that we get our fair share from incomes made in this colony and that the British get their fair share, it is not a matter we can slur over and dismiss as lightly as certain honourable members seem to think. It is necssary, if people are going to assume the responsibility of government business in the House, that before they undertake to introduce measures in the House they at least should take the necessary steps to make themselves acquainted with all the details of any scheme to which the members of this House are going to be asked to give their support. This is not an ordinary question. It is a question which vitally affects our revenue and so far as I know, it is a belated attempt being made to see to it that colonial governments benefit, to the best possible extent, at the hands of non-colonials who are domiciled in the colonies and who make proportionately large incomes in the same colonies. Too long have the British got most of the fat, not only because our rates in the given categories have been below those of Great Britain but because there was no proper machinery for seeing to it that we get our pound of flesh. If we are going to do it now, let us do it in the right way. Let somebody who knows something about the matter come on the floor of the House and explain it for the benefit of both the members of the House and the public, and not attempt to railroad a Bill of such magnitude and importance in the manner in which it is suggested to-day.

Mr. F. L. WALCOTT : Mr. Speaker,—There are certain aspects of honourable members' speeches which I would agree with and there are others of which I take a different view. The junior member for the City has made some points that must strike one and the senior member for St. Philip have made some points that need to be considered. The honourable senior member for St. Philip was a member of the Executive Committee when this matter was dealt with by that body and I do not know what his position was then as compared with what it is to-day; perhaps he sees the matter to-day from a different angle——

Mr. CRAWFORD : I do not want to interrupt the honourable member but I should like to remind him that I did not ask for information on the matter I said that the House and the public are entitled to some specific statement on the matter.

Mr. F .L. WALCOTT : I only mentioned, Sir that I would like to know what was the honourable member's point of view in respect of this matter when it was discussed by the Executive Committee while he was a member of that body. However, it is the duty of any member of this House, if there is not sufficient information before him on a subject which is under discussion, to seek that information. I see in a general way that this Bill will help certain sections of this community but at the same time I look upon it with a critical eye. For this reason. I would not like to subscribe to a system that will enable people in this island to invest large sums of money in foreign countries and when income derived from that money invested is returned here we will not be able to get the appropriate taxation from it; because although the income would be earned technically in other countries, in the beginning, the workers in this island contributed to the money that was invested from this island. If we decide to exempt that income from the payment of income tax when it is returned here I feel that we may be travelling on dangerous ground so far as our finances are concerned. There is one other thing I would like to say and it is this. I should like to see a provision in this Bill which will exempt persons like workers who leave here and go to the U.S.A. from double taxation in respect of the incomes which they earn in the U.S.A. There is no question of those workers remaining in Barbados and receiving incomes from America; they went to America, lived, worked and fed themselves there and sent back portions of their incomes to Barbados—incomes which were already taxed in the U.S.A. When they return here their incomes are again taxed and I do not think it is fair and equitable that that should be done. I would like to see a system by which people who are living outside this country will be relieved of double taxation but if people are resident in Barbados and are investing their money outside Barbados, when their incomes are returned here, the appropriate tax should be paid on those incomes. I am not an expert on income tax matters but I do believe that if incomes which are earned abroad by people resident here were exempted from taxation, it would strike at the economic stability of this island, so far as the Income Tax Act is concerned. This Bill is small, as far as the wording is concerned, but it is large in importance and I am going to move that the further consideraion of it be postponed. I believe that it is of vital importance to the economy of this island. I do not know how many persons in this island have money invested outside. I do not know the amount of money that is invested outside by people in this island but I do not want to encourage people in this island to invest money outside and when their incomes are returned here, we do not get the necessary amount of revenue from them. For those reasons, Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that the further consderation of this Bill be postponed.

Mr. COX : I beg to second the motion made by the senior member for St. Peter. I too am not so well conversant with this Bill. As a matter of fact I did not think it would be discussed at all to-day, in view of the fact that the Leader of the House who introduced it is absent. I, like the senior member for St. Peter, feel that while on the one hand we may be granting some measure of relief to a few people who visit this island, on the other hand we may also be relieving persons who receive large dividends and incomes from outside. It is well known that large sums of money are invested outside by people in this island and when their incomes are returned here, those incomes will also be exempted from taxation if we pass this Bill as it stands to-day. I really cannot support it at this moment and, therefore, I am supporting the motion for the postponement of the further consideration of it.

The question that the further consideration of the Bill be postponed is put and resolved in a tie, the division being as follows:—

Ayes: Mr. RAMSAY, Dr. WILSON, Messrs. SYMMONDS, SMITH, COX, FOSTER, MAPP, LEWIS, F. L WALCOTT, and S. A. WALCOTT.—10.

Noes: Messrs. TALMA, BLACKMAN, Dr. CUMMINS, Messrs. BRANCKER, GARNER, MOTTLEY, DOWDING, GALE, WILKINSON, and WARD.—10.

Mr. SPEAKER : The division has resulted in a tie, ten honourable members voting "Aye" and ten honourable members voting "No". I shall cast my vote with the "Ayes", so as to give the opportunity for further discussion of the Bill (cheers). At the same time I would like to say that the principal remedy which is sought by the Bill is this. Quite a large number of people is coming to the West Indies in these days and under the Income Tax law they have to make returns of their incomes This is to encourage people to visit these islands without having to pay income tax on incomes which have already been taxed and similarly with persons who leave these parts on short visits to the United States and Canada.

PENSIONS (PENSIONABLE OFFICES) ORDER.

Mr. SPEAKER: The next Order stands in the name of the honourable senior member for Christ Church,—To move the pasing of a Resolution to approve the Order entitled the Pensions (Pensionable Office) Order, 1947, made by the Governor on the 3rd day of December, 1947, under the provisions of section 2 (1) (a) of the Pensions Act, 1947 (1947—20).

Mr. TALMA: Mr. Speaker.—The Pensions Act came into force in August, 1947. The provisions of that Act are well known to honourable members and bring the Pension Act of 1925 into line with modern conditions. Prior to the passing of the Pensions Act of 1947, pensions were awarded to government officers who attained the age of 65 years or who exercised the option of retiring at the age of 60 years but under the 1947 Act, optional retirement can now take place at 55 years and the compulsory retirement must take place at 60 years. Section 2 subsection (1) (a) of the new Pensions Act requires the Governor to make an Order setting out the pensionable offices and this Order which has been sent down by him includes offices which were not included in the original Pension Act. As a matter of fact there have been instances in which separate Pension Bills

for public officers have been passed by this House and the new Pensions Act, together with this Order, will obviate the necessity of doing that in the future. Only recently we had before us a Bill seeking to regulate the pension of Mr. L. A. Chase, the Social Welfare Officer, and if this Resolution and this Order which we are considering now had been passed before, it stands to reason that the "Chase Pension Bill" would have been unnecessary. The Governor has taken great pains to see that as many of the government's employees as possible are included in the schedule to this Order. He has attempted to clarify the whole situation and to remedy any wrongs or injustices that may have been done to public officers in the past. I do not know if honourable members want me to read the schedule word for word. It embraces all the Departments and their officers and it also includes the female searcher who is employed at the Baggage Warehouse. She has been working there since 1927 at great sacrifice, not receiving any overtime pay on many occasions and has been in the very doubtful position as to whether or not she would receive a pension.

Mr. SPEAKER: I suggest to the honourable member to read the section under which the Order has been made.

Mr. TALMA: Section 2 (1) (a) of the Act states:—

"2.—(1) In this Act, unless the context otherwise requires, the following expressions have the meaning hereby respectively assigned to them, that is to say:—

"pensionable office"

(a) means in respect of service in this Island an office which, by virtue of provision for the time being in force in an Order made by the Governor and approved by the Houses of the Legislature is declared to be a pensionable office, and shall be deemed to include any office, not so declared to be a pensionable office, in respect of service in which an officer would have been eligible for pension or gratuity under the Pension Act, 1925, or any Act amending the same. Any Order so made and approved may from time to time be amended, added to, or revoked by an Order so made and approved; but where by virtue of any such amendment or revocation any office ceases to be a pensionable office, then so long as any person holding that office at the time of the amendment or revocation continues therein, the office shall, as respects that person, continue to be a pensionable office."

There is only one further remark I should like to make and it is this: Any officer who wants to come under the new Pensions Act, 1947, must exercise that option—provided he is of the age of 54 years—immediately or he loses his right to do so. I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

Mr. BLACKMAN: I beg to second that motion. I should like to say that the position has been put very clearly by the senior member for Christ Church. It is simply this: Every individual who draws money from the Treasury will be entitled to a pension.

Mr. S. A. WALCOTT: I would just like to enquire why the Pension Inquiry Officers are not included under the Head, Old Age Pensions, in the schedule to the Order.

Mr. RAMSAY: I want to make a further enquiry. I think that the junior member for St. John made it quite clear—at least to me—that this Act seeks to put every receiver of money from the Treasury on a pensionable basis. Well, I am very sorry that the Governor has not gone farther afield in the schedule to this Order. What about the porters at the General Hospital? What about the workers of the Highways and Transport Department—those people who are out in the sun all day working? What about the watchmen at the various Departments? Is the Government thinking of its casual labourers? And what about the people who are employed at the Waterworks and who when there is a burst pipe have to work knee deep in water? I am not voting for this Resolution because I do not think it is fair. If this Government sets about to pay all its employees pensions I cannot see why its casual labourers, the people who are employed at the Waterworks, and the porters at the Hospital should not be included in this schedule. This Government must be careful. Why is it setting about to put all these big people who receive large salaries on a proper pensionable basis and leaving out employees like the porters at the Hospital? (A MEMBER: The Hospital is not a Government Department) An honourable member says that the Hospital is not a Government Department. What about the Waterworks? What about the Department of Highways and Transport? I say that all Government employees should be included. I am here to represent all sections of the community. Do not vote for this Order unless it includes those humble people whom we are looking after. I am not talking about the poor only. I represent rich and poor alike and want to see justice done to both sections. We ought to include all casual labourers whether they work for one month or two years. What about the Market Constables? I ask honourable members not to vote for this Order; it seems to be a law for one and not a law for all; it seems to savour of discrimination and in a day like this every Government employee should be included. We will not be faithful to our trust if we pass this Order. I see included in this schedule the Colonial Secretary, the Financial Secretary, the Assistant Colonial Secretary, the Assistant Secretary — all officers who work for sufficient money to be able to put aside enough for a rainy day; they do not need a pension at all. If the Colonial Secretary can be included in this schedule, why not also the labourers at the Waterworks? I say all or none should be pensioned and I shall adhere to that if I stand alone.

Mr. LEWIS: I tried to assist the junior member for St. Peter by telling him the information that was given to me about the Hospital employees, that is, that the Hospital has not yet become a Government Department (Mr. RAMSAY: What about the Waterworks?) I am not talking about the Waterworks. Every provision is made under the Act for the officers of the various Departments, so that there may be good reason for leaving out a Department that has not yet been taken over by the Government. But, Sir, what I would suggest to the Government is this. The Government should cause this schedule to be published in the local Press; perhaps it has been published and I have not seen it. Honourable members can get up here to-day and say that So and So has been left out but there may be another So and So who has been left out and whom nobody has considered to-day. I am throwing out the suggestion that this schedule be published in the local Press and we can be sure that every employee is going to look to see if he is included under the Department by which he is employed. I think that is the only way we are going to be able to give satisfaction to everybody. I see under Head, Legal Departments, in the schedule the offices, Chief Deputy Marshal and Deputy Marshal. In the Estimates we vote money for people who are merely designated Marshals. There may

be a Chief and a Deputy but they are under the same designation and we might be leaving some body out. I would like to see them put under the same designation or, as some honourable members would say, the same nomenclature. I am going to suggest to the introducer of this Resolution to accept a motion for the postponement of the further consideration of it because I feel sure that he could not give due consideration to-day to every grievance that is voiced in the matter. There may be a reason for compiling this list as it is and if there is a good reason for it, the only way to give satisfaction to everybody is to publish the list in the daily and weekly newspapers, so that every class of employee of the Government can read it and see whether the Department by which he is employed has been omitted and if it has been omitted he can go to his representatives and discuss the omission with them; otherwise we will be having people coming the moment the Order is passed and saying that they have not been included. A member of the Government has gone to fetch some information in the matter and in view of that, I shall sit and await the information.

Mr. MOTTLEY: There are a few omissions in this schedule about which I would like to enquire. I refer principally to the Head, Public Market. Under the Head, General, there are included Principal Clerks, Senior Clerks and Clerks appointed under the Clerical Service Act, 1944-27, Stenographer and Typist, Messengers and Assistant Messengers. That can only be construed to mean what it says but if honourable members would refer to the Head, Public Market, for instance, they will observe that there are certain omissions. This House cannot add to this list, although it may delete but in this Order, Market Constables are not provided for.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Order has already been made.

Mr. MOTTLEY: If the honourable introducer of this Resolution can assure me, Sir, that these Market Constables come under the Police Act, as far as pensions are concerned, I am perfectly willing to agree to the passing of the Order to-day. But there is something in what the junior member for St. Peter has said and we should go very carefully into this matter, although no matter how much sympathy we may have for casual employees they cannot come under this Order. If that is the only reason for postponing the further consideration of the Resolution I cannot agree to it. However, if I can be assured that the legal definition will include the Market Constables under the Police Act as far as pensions are concerned, then I am prepared to vote for the passing of this Order.

Mr. F. L. WALCOTT: As my colleague has said —and his argument cannot be resisted—it does seem somewhat peculiar that certain employees are not mentioned in this schedule and it would be well for us to have a clear statement on it before we pass this Resolution because if we pass this Resolution and the list is made public, we may be faced with the difficulty of having passed something which leaves a large number of public employees non-pensionable. This is another matter we should postpone, especially when it is considered that it is not a matter of urgency. I have no desire to block the passage of this Resolution but I do think that the postponement of it for a week at least will serve some useful purpose. I beg therefore to move that the further consideration of this Resolution be postponed.

Dr. CUMMINS: I want to assure the junior member for St. Peter and those who feel, as he feels, that certain employees have been overlooked in this scheme that they are not the only people who are interested in the casual labourers, cantoneers and people of that sort. But, as has always been pointed out, casual labourers do not come under the Pensions Act. If honourable members will remember, only a few weeks ago this House passed a Resolution granting a gratuity to a woman who had been a casual labour at Codrington for 20 years. That is only one case that comes to my memory at the present moment but I want to assure honourable members that every person who draws money from the Public Treasury will be considered; nobody will be left out, only in certain cases special Resolutions will have to be passed for the benefit of the people concerned. This Government, constituted as it is today, does not intend that anybody who draws money from the public Treasury and who may be proved to have been employed for a certain number of weeks or years should suffer when the time comes for him to retire. The House, therefore, need have no fear on that score; everybody who draws money from the Treasury, whether they be casual labourers or otherwise will be considered for gratuities or pensions when they retire. As far as the Hospital employees are concerned, the Hospital is not yet a government Department. We hope that in the not too distant future the hospital employees will become government employees and provision has been made in the Act for adding to this Schedule when the occasion arises. The hospital employees can be automatically included when the Hospital becomes a Governmental Department.

Mr. COX: I want to say at the outset that it is always my desire to do everything that lies in my power to assist the Government in carrying out its programme and I want the senior member for Christ Church to take with good grace what I am going to say, even though I know he is very anxious to get this Resolution passed. I, Sir, am not at all convinced by the statements which have been made in reply to the remarks about the exclusion of persons who have been mentioned by the junior and senior members for St. Peter from this schedule. If we are going to have a Pensions Act or an Order such as this, I think that each and every individual or group of individuals employed by the Government should be included. I notice that in the case of the Head, Police, the list does not go farther than the Bandmaster. Why not the whole Police Force? I am told that there is a special Pension Act for the Police. At any rate, under the Public Employees Pension Act I notice that the schedule to the Act includes artisans, caretakers, cleaners, crews of Harbour craft, district foremen, gardeners, labourers, lorry drivers, meter inspectors, porters, range wardens, scrubbers, turn-cocks and watchmen and I feel that all those should be included in the schedule to this Order. For that reason I am going to second the motion by the senior member for St. Peter that the further consideration of this Resolution be postponed. I say again that I regret that I cannot support the senior member for Christ Church now and while it may appear as though we have done nothing so far for the day, at the same time we have to make sure that all those whom we want to help in this respect receive that help.

Mr. TALMA: It seems to me that certain honourable members could not have understood me when I was attempting to explain the points at issue and without attempting to delay either the passing or the postponement of this Resolution I shall read again section 2 (1) (a) of the Act under which this Order has been made. Before I do so, however, I should

like to say that all the people in the Government Service who are entitled to pensions or gratuities will fall under this section, whether the employee be a cantoneer, watchman, market constable, policeman; as long as he has been previously included he will be included now. Nobody is excluded; instead of excluding anybody, more have been added to the list. The section states:—"2.—(1) In this Act, unless the context otherwise requires the following expressions have the meaning hereby respectively assigned to them that is to say:—

'Pensionable office'

(a) means in respect of service in this Island an office which, by virtue of provision for the time being in force in an Order made by the Governor and approved by the Houses of the Legislature is declared to be a pensionable office, and shall be deemed to include any office, not so declared to be a pensionable office, in respect of service in which an officer would have been eligible for pension or gratuity . . . . " So that all employees who were entitled to gratuities and pensions in the past will get them in the future. The section goes on to state:—"Under the Pension Act, 1925, or any Act amending the same. Any Order so made and approved may from time to time be amended, added to, or revoked by an Order so made and approved . . . . " Well, that should explain the matter. I repeat that any officer in the service of the Government to-day who is entitled to a pension under the 1925 Act or anyone who is entitled to a gratuity under the same Act will also be entitled to a pension or a gratuity under the 1947 Act. As far as the Pension Inquiry Officers are concerned, they are part-time officers. Casual labourers are also part-time employees but if they put in a certain number of years' service they get gratuities. All are included. As far as the point raised by the junior member for the City about the designation of the Marshals is concerned, only the status is given. For example, the Assistant Colonial Secretary is mentioned in the schedule but we know that there are two Assistant Colonial Secretaries; similarly when "messenger" is mentioned, all the messengers are meant. In the Provost Marshal's Department, there are four Deputy Marshals—a Chief and three under him—but because "Deputy Marshall" is mentioned that does not necessarily mean only one; the term includes all the Deputy Marshals in the Provost Marshal's Department. What is the object of postponing the Resolution I cannot understand. I should like honourable members to tell me the reason for the postponement of the Resolution.

Mr. F. L. WALCOTT: In view of the honourable member's explanation, Mr. Speaker, I beg to withdraw my motion.

Mr. RAMSAY: I object.

The question that the further consideration of the Resolution be postponed is put and resolved in the negative, the division being as follows:—

Ayes: Messrs. RAMSAY, SYMMONDS, BRANCKER, FOSTER, CRAWFORD, GARNER, HAYNES, DOWDING, S. A WALCOTT and DR. WILSON—10.

Noes: Messrs. COX, F. L. WALCOTT, MAPP, LEWIS, TALMA, BLACKMAN, MOTTLEY, GALE, WILKINSON, WARD and DR. CUMMINS—11.

Mr. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker,—This is a very amazing debate in some respects but what I do want to say in passing is that I think the time has come when we should pass legislation which would bring government employees whom we now classify as casual labourers under some statute which will entitle them to a pension as of right.

Mr. SPEAKER: I do not think that this is the proper time to discuss that.

Mr. CRAWFORD: There has been a great deal of discussion about the pensioning of casual labourers and the senior member for St. Thomas quoted the case of a woman who had served the Government for 20 years in the Department of Agriculture and in connection with whom we recently had to pass a special Resolution to give her some assistance. In my opinion, after twenty years' service it is not correct to say that the person who rendered those years of service is a casual employee and there should be some definition stating the number of years or the number of weeks in a year after which a government employee can no longer be regarded as a casual labourer.

Mr. SPEAKER: That will necessitate an amendment to the Act.

Mr. CRAWFORD: What I am saying is that there should be some definition stating when a casual labourer ceases to be a casual labourer. I have heard the junior member for the City say some strange things but I think that he has excelled himself to-day. He said that what should be done is to publish this schedule in the Press and that people who find that they are omitted would bring to the attention of somebody that they are omitted. Most remarkable! Perhaps sometimes the Government does not know whom it employs until somebody comes and states that he is employed by the Government. After all, there must be a list now on record of the people who receive money, whether weekly or monthly, from the Treasury and to claim that in order that the Government may know whom it employs is to publish this schedule in the Press is the most remarkable thing I have heard in all my life.

Mr. BRANCKER: Mr. Speaker,—Mention has been made of casual labourers and the senior member for Christ Church, I think it was, reminded members of the House that they are no persons who are in the regular employment of the Government that are not included but there are labourers who are not casual labourers. I refer to those persons who, as you know, are regularly employed by the Government and who have undergone a medical examination—

Mr. SPEAKER: We have reached the stage at which we are not going to postpone the further consideration of the Resolution. We cannot add to the list of offices in the schedule of the Order; therefore, it does seem to me that if anything like what the honourable member is referring to is needed, he might introduce an Address asking that certain people should be added to the schedule. I do not see that anything can be gained by debating that point to-day.

Mr. BRANCKER: It remains to be seen whether we will pass or reject the particular Order which is before us. While I certainly would not counsel anybody to reject the Order I still feel, although I am not going to support the rejection of it, that it would be wise to include those labourers who are required to be medically examined, who are given regular employment and who are, in effect, public employees. I am thinking particularly of employees like supervisors, watchmen, chauffeurs, roller drivers of the Highways and Transport Department. With respect to the list under the Head, Legal Departments, the junior member for the City seemed to be somewhat perplexed about it, but he must realize that the singular can include the plural and the plural implies the singular, so that when he sees the term Deputy Marshal, that may mean fifty. There are four Deputy Marshals, one of whom is the Chief, and they are the same persons who are referred to as

being marshals of the Court of Grand Sessions. The Order, as has been pointed out, may be amended, added to, or revoked and that is why I am suggesting the addition of certain persons who are not part-time employees.

Mr. SPEAKER: I am trying to point out to the honourable member that the schedule cannot be added to to-day.

Mr. BRANCKER: I take it that as the motion for the postponement of the further consideration of the Resolution has been lost I can make a motion that this Resolution be now postponed.

Mr. SPEAKER: I shall not accept another motion for the postponement of the Resolution.

Mr. BRANCKER: I am not questioning Your Honour's ruling but I am trying in my humble way to assist. If a motion is made that this Resolution be now postponed will Your Honour accept it?

Mr. SPEAKER: I have already ruled on the point.

Mr. BRANCKER: It has just been brought to my attention that a responsible authority in connection with public employees would be glad if we postpone this Resolution. You see, Sir, a long period of time elapses before these ex gratia Resolutions come before this House; the individuals with whom they are concerned have to wait for Government to go into the merits of their cases, even though they are obviously notorious cases. Take the case of that labourer who rendered 22 years' service at Codrington Experimental Station and how long she had to suffer while the Government was going into the matter with meticulous care.

Mr. SPEAKER: Surely the Act would have to be amended to meet cases of the sort to which the honourable member is referring.

Mr. BRANCKER: I must counsel the Government to bear in mind what has been suggested and to come to us, if not at the next meeting, very soon with an amendment to this Order for the approval of this House and so relieve the worry and anxiety of persons whose offices do not appear in this schedule. I endorse the point which has been made by the senior member for St. Philip, namely, that it is time we amend the Pensions Act so that it will be completely comprehensive and that all deserving public employees would not have to depend on the vagaries of a particular House or a particular Government for just rewards for their services when they have reached the stage when they are not able to carry on.

Mr. SYMMONDS: Before the question is put I want to move that this Resolution be rejected.

Mr. SPEAKER: There is no need to make that motion. You can vote against the Resolution.

Mr. SYMMONDS: My reason is this and I crave your indulgence, Mr. Speaker, to express my views on the matter. I would like to say that in an age like this, when the majority of the members of this House are elected by the common people of this island, an Order should be so prepared as to omit so-called casual labourers—

Mr. TALMA: On a point of explanation. I have attempted to explain that a casual labourer is entitled to a gratuity. Anyone who is entitled to gratuity under the old Act is entitled to it under the new Pensions Act. The honourable member's statement is misleading.

Mr. SYMMONDS: Mr. Speaker,—In spite of what the honourable member has just said, it is clear to me that it is unfair for any man who has laboured for 20 years or any smaller period on behalf of this government, whether he be designated casual labourer or not, to have to go—

Mr. SPEAKER: I want to explain to the honourable member that in order to get what he is driving at done, he will have to amend the Pensions Act and there is no amendment to that Act under discussion at the present time.

Mr. SYMMONDS: I agree, Mr. Speaker, but I still want to make the point that in an age such as this, when the man in the street expects consideration from the Acts which we pass in this Assembly, it is a definite disgrace that an Order of this kind should be so prepared as to fail to represent the point of view of the majority of the underprivileged of this colony. I have listened carefully to the explanations given by the senior member for Christ Church. Only a week ago we sat here and a person who had laboured faithfully for 22 years—

Mr. TALMA: I really must interrupt the honourable member to point out that the Pensions Act does not include casual labourers; therefore, any Order that is made under the Act cannot include them. The honourable member can, if he likes, introduce an Address asking the Governor-in-Executive Committee to amend the Order but what I am trying to point out is that the time of the House is being wasted in discussing a matter which cannot be included in the Order to-day.

Mr. SYMMONDS: Mr. Speaker,—I represent a good many poor people in the constituency of St. George and it is their point of view that I am trying to put before this House. I feel——

Mr. TALMA: I appreciate what the honourable member is saying and the House appreciates it too. But what I am trying to show him is that this cannot include those people because there is no authority under the Act to enable it to be done.

Mr. SYMMONDS: I agree that this Order cannot include those people but at the same time we should register our protest against the continued enactment of laws which deliberately show a system of discrimination,—a system by which the middle and upper classes are thought of and cared for and the lower classes are excluded. This is, I repeat, Mr. Speaker, the age of the common man and we will be failing in our duty as representatives of the common man if we assisted in the enactment of an Order such as this. The point which I want to make is this.

Mr. SPEAKER: Is the honourable member likely to finish his remarks in ten minutes' time.

Mr. SYMMONDS: Certainly not, Mr. Speaker. I feel very strong on this matter.

Mr. SPEAKER: That being the case we will adjourn. It being after 2 o'clock, this House stands adjourned until 2.45 p.m. in according with Rule 40 (a).

PROTEST AGAINST PRESENTATION OF REPORT OF MONTEGO BAY CONFERENCE

On re-assembling,

Mr. RAMSAY: Mr. Speaker,—I beg to move the adjournment of the House for five minutes in order to discuss a matter which I think is of vital importance. I do not ask the entire House to agree with me; I make this motion because I am a historian. I am one of those people who believe in history. While I was in my seat earlier to-day I was presented with this document which purports to be a Report of the Montego Bay Conference. I have taken exception to the way in which the Report has been presented. This Report is of vital importance from a historical point of view; within the next ten, twenty, thirty or fifty years it will be all important in commemorating the inauguration of the federa-

tion of the West Indies. Hence I say that whoever has been responsible for the presentation of this Report ought to have paid greater interest in having it properly prepared with a hard cover so that this paper should fulfil the purpose for which it was supplied. If the House feel that I am wrong they can say so: but as a member of this House I, personally, take exception to the way which this Report has been sent to us. If honourable members do not think that this motion is worth while making they can say so.

Mr. WARD: I rise to second the motion. I feel that a document of this type should have been presented in book form so that it could be better kept for future reference. I quite agree with the honourable member; it is no more than the Government could have done. I say nothing more about it.

Mr. RAMSAY: I ask leave to withdraw my motion. It is only a protest which I have made seriously and genuinely from the bottom of my soul. (A MEMBER: Do not withdraw the motion yet.) An honourable member has hinted that I do not withdraw the motion and therefore I do not withdraw it.

The question that this House do now adjourn for five minutes was put and resolved in the affirmative.

A division was taken as follows:—

Ayes: Messrs. RAMSAY, SYMMONDS, GARNER, HAYNES, DOWDING, GALE, S. A. WALCOTT, WILKINSON and WARD—9.

Noes: Messrs BRANCKER, SMITH, F. L. WALCOTT, COX, MAPP, TALMA, BLACKMAN and Dr. CUMMINS—8.

Mr. SPEAKER: The question has been decided in the affirmative, nine honourable members voting "Aye", and eight honourable members voting "No". This House stands adjourned for five minutes. (*Cheers*).

REPLIES LAID

On re-assembling,

Dr. CUMMINS: Mr. Speaker—I beg to lay on the Table of the House the replies to questions No. 17, 24 and 30 all standing in the name of the honourable junior member for St. Lucy.

Mr. TALMA: I beg to lay the replies to questions No. 29 also standing in the name of the honourable junior member for St. Lucy.

SUSPENSION OF RULE 61(A)

Dr. CUMMINS : I ask leave to move the suspension of Rule 61(a) in order to resume Government Business. I should like to say that I also desire to deal with the Resolution of which notice was given earlier to-day. It is an important Resolution the object of which is to provide the estimated amount required for the administration to the 31st March, 1948, of the General Hospital which it is proposed to bring under Government control at an early date.

Mr. WILKINSON : I will agree to the suspension of the Rule if the hon. member assures us that he will deal with that Resolution only.

Dr. CUMMINS : I give that assurance.

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

Dr. CUMMINS : I beg to move that Rule 61(a) be now suspended.

Mr. BLACKMAN seconded the motion which was agreed to.

ORDER POSTPONED

Mr. SPEAKER : On the adjournment for lunch the House were discussing the Resolution to approve the Order entitled the Pensions (Pensionable Offices) Order, 1947, made by the Governor on the 3rd day of December, 1947, under the provisions of section 2 (1) (a) of the Pensions Act, 1947 (1947-20).

Mr. TALMA : The various offices which are set out in the Schedule to the Order are not included in the Pensions Act and in view of the points made by honourable members, I ask leave that the further consideration of this Order be now postponed.

There being no objection, the hon. member was granted leave to postpone the Order.

SUSPENSION OF RULES 88 AND 89

Dr. CUMMINS: I ask leave to move for the suspension of Rules 88 and 89 in order to proceed with the Resolution of which I gave notice earlier to-day

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

Dr. CUMMINS: I beg to move that Rules 88 and 89 be now suspended.

Mr. BLACKMAN seconded the motion which was agreed to.

Mr. SPEAKER: The next Order of the Day therefore is to move the House into Committee of Supply to consider the Resolution of which notice was given earlier today.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

Dr. CUMMINS: I beg to move that Your Honour do now leave the Chair and the House go into Committee of Supply.

Mr. BLACKMAN seconded the motion which was agreed to.

Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair and the House went in Committee of Supply, Mr. RAMSAY being in the Chair.

COST OF RUNNING THE GENERAL HOSPITAL AS A GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENT.

Dr. CUMMINS : This Resolution, Mr. Chairman, is for the sum of £31,000 to be placed at the disposal of the Governor-in-Executive Committee to meet expenses so that the Barbados General Hospital may, in the very near future, be declared a Government Department. The object of the Resolution is not to provide any new amount of money; this money has already been provided in the Estimates. This money is required in order that the Governor-in-Executive Committee may have it in their hands to run the Hospital when that Institution is declared a Government Department. This money represents the difference between what has been spent up to date and the balance that has been voted up to the 31st of March, 1948. This is therefore just a transference of the money which has been already voted. I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

Mr. BLACKMAN: I beg to second that. I should like to explain that a similar amount which is now in the hands of the Hospital Board will be paid into the Treasury .

Mr. WILKINSON : We on this side of the Table always deplore hurried legislation. Notice of this Resolution was given to-day and the Resolution is to be passed this afternoon ! I see no reason why notice of this Resolution could not have been given some weeks ago. The Bill enabling the Government to take over administration of the Hospital as a Government Department was passed some months ago and the Government knew that this Resolution would have been sent down. This appears to me as if there has been some negligence on the part of somebody connected with the Government. Possibly the delay may have been in the Colonial Secretary's Office. We take the honourable introducer's

words that this money has already been made available in the Estimates and therefore this is only a transfer being made in order to meet expenses; but I want to warn the Government that they must not go on doing this sort of thing. We are not satisfied to have these papers put into our hands earlier in the day and then have the Rules suspended in order to pass Resolutions. On this occasion, however, the honourable senior member for St. Thomas has assured us that this money has already been voted in the Estimates and I think that that is correct. Therefore I think that we all intend to vote for the Resolution; but I again issue the warning that this sort of thing must not be done.

Dr. CUMMINS: The hon. member who has just spoken was at one time a member of the Government and he knows that there are occasions when matters come to you in a hurry, so to speak, and you have to resort to procedure of this sort. As far as the General Hospital being taken over by the Government is concerned, it is true that the enabling Bill was passed some months ago but it is only within the last two or three weeks that the Governor-in-Executive Committee decided to take over the Institution as a Government Department sometime this month. That was done for the very good reason that the Resident Surgeon Specialist who is to re organize the surgical side of the Hospital has recently come to the island and the Government did not wish to declare the Hospital a Government Department until he arrived. As hon. members know the Resident Surgeon Specialist arrived here just few days ago. Hon members must remember that we had a Christmas vacation and I am not saying how well the hon. member who has just spoken may have spent it which may have caused him to forget it, but the fact remains that the Government wants to declare the Hospital a Government Department as soon as this Resolution is passed—hence the need for this hurry.

Mr. MOTTLEY: While I am voting for this Resolution to-day I should like to say that the excuse which has just been given by the hon. senior member for St. Thomas is a rather lame one. I must agree with the hon. junior member for St. James that if this sort of thing is going on, those of us on this side of the House and those who think for themselves must call a halt. For the purpose of expediency we are agreeing to the passing of this Resolution having accepted every word which the hon. senior member for St. Thomas has told us. But in keeping with tradition we should not have matters thrust upon us during the first part of the day's sitting and then asked to pass them later in the day. I am wholeheartedly in agreement with the Resolution; I do not attribute all the blame to the hon. member who has introduced it but you must attribute blame somewhere in the Government. When the first Resolution came before the House everybody knew that the job would have been accepted. I associate myself with the remarks of the hon. junior member for St. James and I repeat that for the purpose of expediency we will pass this Resolution this afternoon.

Mr. WILKINSON: I would like to say that the hon. senior member for St. Thomas must have spent a better Christmas than I spent. (Laughter).

Mr. TALMA: In reply to the remarks of the hon. senior member for the City about tradition, I should like to say that although I dislike measures being passed in this manner, this is only pursuing the old tradition. The hon. junior member for St. James is an experienced member of this House and he knows that this was a weekly affair with past Governments. We are hoping to depart from this old method, but it has become so ingrained in us by past Governments that we are finding it difficult to depart from this bad method in which we have been involved. We all feel very unhappy to see that this bad system is being pursued and for the information of the hon. senior member for the City I should like to say that we shall try to depart from it. Without causing any disunity or trying to appear to be attacking anybody, I must say that I appreciate the assistance which the members of the Opposition intend to give in this matter which is of vital importance.

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

The Resolution was passed.

On the motion of Dr. CUMMINS, seconded by Mr. BLACKMAN, the CHAIRMAN reported the passing of the Resolution in Committee.

Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

On the motion of Dr. CUMMINS, seconded by Mr. BLACKMAN in each case, the Resolution passed in Committee was read a first and second time and agreed to.

OMISSION OF BREAD FROM DIETARY AT THE GOVERNMENT INDUSTRIAL SCHOOLS.

Mr. SPEAKER: The special business for which the Rules were suspended having been disposed of, the House will now revert to Question Time. On the last occasion of Question Time the House were debating the replies given to Questions No. 6 relative to the diet of the inmates of the Government Industrial Schools and the hon. junior member for St. Peter was speaking.

Mr. RAMSAY: I had really finished speaking Mr. Speaker.

Mr. MAPP: There are just a few remarks which I want to make. I do not want to say much on the question of supplying the inmates at the Government Industrial Schools with bread. Our individual tastes in this respect differ and if the inmates desire bread as a change from biscuits they should be given some bread, although I believe that if they were being supplied with bread and not with biscuits some hon. members would say that they should be supplied with biscuits as well. There is one aspect of this debate which is very deplorable and any responsible member of this House should take serious note of it. The hon. member who made the motion openly criticised the Superintendent of the Government Industrial Schools and remarked that much of the trouble caused at the Boys' Institution results from the fact that this Officer does not treat the boys properly, and in general the honourable member tried to maintain that the Officer is not suited for the job. Now I consider that this is very unfair treatment to be meted out to a public officer by any member of this House. The hon. member did not give any facts at all to support his contention.

Mr. SPEAKER: I think I ruled that any debate relative to the Superintendent was not relevant to the question.

Mr. MAPP: I do not want to question Your Honour's statement but I———

Mr. SPEAKER: I speak from memory but I think I ruled such discussion out of order.

Mr. MAPP: It is unfortunate that there was no record of that in the report of the proceedings in the Press.

Mr. SPEAKER: We are not guided by them.

Mr. MAPP: It has gone out to the general public that this Officer has been charged by a mem-

ber of this House who maintains that all troubles up there are brought to him, and this Officer is a most responsible one.

Mr. SPEAKER: I rule that that has nothing at all to with this debate. This debate concerns the diet supplied at these Schools.

Mr. MAPP: I feel that a criticism such as that which has been made of a public Officer should not go unchallenged. I am sorry that a member of the Government did not during the debate——

Mr. SPEAKER: I am not allowing any debate relative to the Superintendent of the Government Industrial Schools when the only question which has been raised is the question of the diet supplied at these schools.

Mr. MAPP: I am just saying that no attention was paid by the Government member at the time of the criticism of the public Officer. I have been a public Officer myself and when any charge is brought in responsible quarters against a public Officer it is very embarrassing for him.

Mr. SPEAKER: I rule that that part of the debate is out of order.

Mr. MAPP: I still consider that it is my duty to bring to the notice of the House that the criticism of this public Officer is unjustifiable, and I thank Your Honour for your indulgence although I am sorry that you will not allow me to go into the matter.

Mr. GARNER: I ask leave to withdraw my motion.

There being no objection, the hon. member was granted leave to withdraw the motion.

WEIGHING OF PEASANTS' CANES AT SUGAR FACTORIES

Mr. BRANCKER: Mr. Speaker,—I beg to move the adjournment of the House for five minutes in order that I may comment on the replies given by the Government to question No. 10 standing in my name. This question was: "What steps is Government proposing to take in connection with scale beams at sugar factories throughout this Island for the protection of the interest of peasants, who sell their canes to such factories, in view of the proven error in the weighing of a load of canes this year at Spring Hall Factory, St. Lucy; an error which was in favour of the purchaser of the canes?" Now Sir, hon. members have in their hands the Government's reply to this question and I must say that I have rarely been so perturbed in my mind over matters during the ten years that I have been a member of this House as when I read the replies which the Government saw fit to give to questions on two or three occasions. Their present reply which I have no hesitation in characterising as unsympathetic and indicating a tremendous amount of indifference to that large number of peasants who send their canes to the sugar factories and have them weighed at the scale beams, as well as other land-owners in whom I have not got that same amount of interest but who are also affected, is as follows: "All sugar factory scales are tested prior to the commencement of the crop and several times during the crop." The Government has sent down that reply in the light of what was proved to have happened during the last crop and in my submission it is a reply which shows an almost callous indifference to the people for whom there is no weigh-bridge available, but who have to send their canes to sugar factories owned by private capitalists and who have no guarantee at all that their canes are accurately weighed. There are in this island one or two sugar factories about which I have not have heard any doubts expressed as to the weighing of canes; those factories have to depend almost exclusively upon peasants' canes in order to keep their machinery working and they have to see that the peasants get a square deal particularly when there are other factories nearby. But when there is a remote place like St. Lucy (A MEMBER: Is that a remote place?) we find that year by year complaints have been made not only with regard to the price paid for canes but also with regard to the accuracy of the weights recorded. Time after time when I brought up the matter in this House I have always been told that idle accusations were being made against the sugar factories. In other words I have been asked: "Could you imagine a sugar factory owner wanting to rob a poor peasant?" That question has always been asked but we had it demonstrated beyond all doubt on a particular occasion at Spring Hall Factory when a lorry load of canes was weighed and when the weight was tested it was found to be 565 pounds in excess of what had been registered. An itinerant Inspector of the Labour Department was told by the caneweigher that the weight of the lorry load of canes was so much and the Inspector insisted on having the canes weighed again and there was a difference of 565 pounds! That factory boasted of its fine recovery; the recovery was a fine one because they were getting more canes than what they were paying for. In their reply to this question the Government say that all factory scales are tested prior to the commencement of the crop and several times during the crop; but the scales are tested in a manner in which it would be almost impossible to obtain accuracy. They are not tested to capacity. I have been informed by a competent engineer that the way in which to demonstrate that scales are working accurately is to test them to capacity. The Police do not carry any proper facilities for testing these scales and on this occasion at Spring Hall Factory they had to go through a long process before it was eventually discovered that there was this shortage of 565 pounds in the weight recorded. Do hon. members have any idea of what a shortage in the weights recorded will mean to the poor peasants this year? They must have every half ounce of the weight of their canes recorded. Here we have the Government indifferently and placidly giving this reply; the usual inspection took place last year and what was the result? A lorry load of canes was tested by a Government Itinerant Inspector—I take it that the Government will not discredit their own Inspector—and it was found that that lorry load of canes was 565 pounds in favour of the purchaser, the big factory owner. This routine inspection is strongly to be deprecated. If certain days were fixed for the peasants to send their canes to the factories then arrangements could be made for Government Itinerant Inspectors or some other representativs of the Department of Labour or members of the Police Force to be present at the factories throughout the inspection of the scales. I feel that the inspections that are carried out at present are not enough. This discovery at Spring Hall Factory was the result of a casual visit by an Itinerant Inspector. If we had these Inspectors present at the sugar factories all the time there may be many revelations in connection with the weighing of peasants' canes. As you know, Mr. SPEAKER there are many sugar factories in this island which possess what are known as Pooley scales, and a very competent engineer has told me that it is almost impossible for a Pooley scale to go wrong. If it goes wrong it is a question of manipulation. There is a Pooley scale at Spring Hall Factory and yet on this particular occasion to which I am referring an error was

made to the amount of 565 pounds! This amount might seem small to the big people but it is a substantial amount when it is a question of a small load sent to the factory by some poor peasant. It would not make any difference with this 565 pounds if the canes were sent by some hon. members of this House

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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.

SUSPENSION OF RULE 60

Mr. COX: Mr. SPEAKER—I ask leave to move for the suspension of Rule 60 in order to deal with Order No. 72 in my name as the first Order of the Day under Private Members' Business. That Order is an Address dealing with the appointment of a Committee to recommend to the Government the various tenantry roads which are to be taken over. I believe that hon. members will support this Address because they realise that many of these roads are sadly in need of repair.

Mr. WILKINSON: I object.

Mr. SPEAKER: Objection having been taken, I shall have to put the question. The question is that leave be granted the hon. member to move the suspension of Rule 60 so as to deal with Order No. 72 as the first Order of the Day under Private Members' Business. Hon. members in favour of that will please say "Aye," those against will please say "No." I think the "*Noes*" have it.

A division was taken as follows:

Ayes: Dr. CUMMINS, Messrs RAMSAY, SYMMONDS, SMITH, F. L. WALCOTT, COX, FOSTER, MAPP, LEWIS, BLACKMAN, BRANCKER and HAYNES—12.

Noes: Messrs CRAWFORD, DOWDING, GALE, S. A. WALCOTT, WILKINSON, WARD and MOTTLEY—7.

Mr. SPEAKER: The question has been decided in the affirmative, twelve hon. members voting "Aye" and seven honourable members voting "No". The honourable member may therefore make the motion.

Mr. COX: I beg to move that Rule 60 be now suspended.

Mr. F. L. WALCOTT seconded the motion which was agreed to.

Mr. COX: I beg to move that Order No. 7 be taken as the first Order of the Day under Private Members' Business.

Mr. F. L. WALCOTT seconded that motior which was agreed to.

ADDRESS *re* APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEE TO MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS *re* TENANTRY ROADS, STANDPIPES AND HYDRANTS

Mr. SPEAKER: The first Order of the Day under Private Members' Business therefore stands in the name of the hon. senior member for St. Michael —To move the passing of an Address to His Excellency the Governor *re* the appointment of a Committee to recommend to Government the tenantry roads to be taken over and repaired and the localities for installing standpipes and hydrants.

Mr. COX: Mr. Speaker,—The Address reads as follows:—

The House of Assembly
To
His Excellency the Governor

The House of Assembly respectfully request Your Excellency to take immediate steps to appoint a Committee including members of the House to recommend to the Government the tenantry roads to be immediately taken over and repaired and the localities for installing standpipes and hydrants.

In moving the passing of this Address I should like to say that I think the majority of hon. members will be in favour of it since it deals with one of the most important phases of our social make-up. Everyone of us who travels about the various tenantries knows that the roads are in a very deplorable condition. Recently we voted £75,000 for the purpose of reconstructing some of these roads, and it would appear is if the Director of Highways and Transport is not certain as to the number of roads or the miles of road which he can take over and repair. Recently I visited one of these roads which are being taken over and I notice that the road only runs as far as a rich man's land, so to speak, but where the majority of people are living I find that no provision has been made for carrying on of this road. There are other roads which need to be taken over not only in the parish of St. Michael, but in St. Lucy and St. Andrew as a matter of fact all over the island; but more especially in the pasishes where the Highway Commissioners cease to exist or where they have nothing to do with the repair of the roads, namely the parishes of St. Lucy and St. Andrew. I think i is absolutly necessary for a Committee to be set up to go into the question and make recommendations to the Government so that the Government can issue orders to the Director of Highways and Transport to repair the various roads. I feel also that the time has come when we should decide as to the localities in which standpipes and hydrants should be placed I notice that there is a great lack of standpipes in the various districts, to say nothing about hydrants. As a matter of fact, there are few hydrants in the suburban districts and I feel therefore that something should be done more especially in the three parishes which I have mentioned. I am well aware of the fact that these roads cannot be taken over unless the owners hand them over to the Government. I also know that the majority of the people who live in these areas are willing to hand over the roads; I know that people have petitioned the Government to take over these roads and there are others who are quite willing to do likewise since they are not. in a position to bring these roads up to the standard required by the Act I feel that this Address will meet the approval of the majority of honourable members. I have a duty to perform; I know how the people are suffering; I know that in many cases they live far from the standpipes and they have to go through plenty mud to get water into their homes. Therefore I feel that the Government should be asked to repair these roads as speedily as possible. I beg to move that this Address do now pass.

Mr. SYMMONDS: I beg to second the hon member's motion. There is hardly a member of this House who is not conversant with the deplorable condition of the tenantry roads of this island. Everyone of us has at some time or other, pledged his constituents to do something to remedy this deplorable state of affairs; and while it is true that under the present laws of this island the Commissioners of Highways of the various parishes are still responsible for the repair of the tenantry roads, and since the amount of taxes raised from parishioners in respect of the repair of the roads has proved to be grossly inadequate, and since the Central Government is being called upon to shoulder the burden of the repair of the roads, I feel that the time has come when a representative Committee including members of this House should have a voice in making suggestions as to the repair of these roads. Since the funds which are being expended upon the repair of the roads come out of the general revenue, where there are a large number of members of the com-

munity living in back areas and who by their purchases of the different necessities of life contribute to the collection of the revenue of the island, I feel that the time has come when consideration, and serious consideration, should be given to the plight of these poor people who have to wade through mud and water so as to get a telephone message in the hour of sickness, people to whom promises have been made year after year for many years, promises which I am glad to see the Government is now trying to carry out. But, in my opinion, they are not doing the job as thoroughly or as quickly as the needs of the people require. If we continue as we are continuing at present, the present generation will pass away and there will still be people living in back areas under conditions where there are no facilities for obtaining water, conditions where people have to walk for two or three miles through dusty streets with uncovered buckets and getting dust in the water which they have to store up at home. I have made a pledge to my constituents that this is one of the very first improvements to which I would give my support in this House. I heartily commend the action of the hon. mover of the passing of this Address and I beg most heartily to support it.

Mr. MOTTLEY : I suppose that every hon. member of this House who thinks in terms of civilization thinks in terms of good roads; but surely no hon. member who has any commonsense or who is acquainted with procedure could vote for this Address as it stands. As the law of this colony stands at present the roads of the several parishes with the exception of St. Michael, St. Lucy and St. Andrew are still vested in the local authorities. Until the Act has been amended can we stand here in this House and ask the Government to set up this Committee to make recommendations as to which roads are to be taken over? In the parish of St. George the roads are still vested in the Commissioners of Highways of the parish and to appoint a Committee including members of this House to say that this or that road should be taken over is ludicrous. As far as the parish of St. Michael is concerned, hon. members will remember that just before the abolition of the Commissioners of Highways for the parish when the Department of Highways and Transport came into being, the Governor-in-Executive Committee set up a Committee under the Chairmanship of the now President of the Legislative Council to report on the various village roads or what are described as tenantry roads, and privately-owned tenantry roads—

Mr. SPEAKER : Would the hon. member mind explaining what are privately-owned tenantry roads?

Mr. MOTTLEY : In places like the Bay Estate, Carrington's Village, Hanschell's Tenantry where the tenantries are owned by private individuals and rented out the roads are called privately-owned tenantry roads. People who own private tenantries should contribute towards the upkeep of these roads; that is my feeling and I have expressed it on several occasions. I was saying that a Committee was set up under the Chairmanship of the now President of the Legislative Council and as a Commissioner of Highways of the parish of St. Michael at that time. I recall that we were asked to make recommendations as to the roads in the parish which we considered should be taken over. I am in a position to say that every possible road in this parish set out under the heads privately-owned tenantry roads and village roads was considered and we recommended to the Committee which was set up by the Government something like 60 miles of roads to be taken over. I recall that several of the other parishes had already sent in their recommendations as to the roads to be repaired. Time and again you have reasons given for being able to carry out repairs to roads. If the Department of Highways and Transport has not got direct control of all the existing roads in the colony, if the local authorities are still responsible for the upkeep of the roads in many cases, although the intentions of this Address are the best I am at a loss to understand how the Government can be asked to appoint a Committee of this House to recommend what roads are to be taken over in the various parishes. (A MEMBER: A Committee including members of the House). I repeat that in many cases the roads are still vested in the local authorities. I am sure that there are members of this House who have served in one capacity or another in respect of the roads. As far back as three or four years ago when the Department of Highways and Transport came into being when the Commissioners of Highways were abolished, I distinctly recall—and I am sure that the honourable junior member for St Michael also recalls—that several roads were actually handed over to the Department for repairs under the usual procedure suggested by the former Road Board. I recall that on several occasions representations were made to the Department in order to find out the reasons why several of the roads which had been handed over when the Commissioners of Highways of St. Michael were in existence had not been proceeded with, and there was the reply which I do not accept at all, that you cannot find a man in England, in the West Indies or in any part of the world to become Executive Engineer in Barbados for the salary offered. I do not like some of the reasons which come before this House at times. I should like to see the roads repaired by the wand of a magician if you like, but let us approach the matter in the right way. I believe the intentions of this Address are the best but I cannot accept it; if hon. members feel that they can accept the Address, it is a matter for them. I should like to remark here that if the hon. senior member for St. Michael would learn manners, it would be much better for him; his mind has not been elevated with his body. No hon. member of this House could say that I have not associated myself with anybody who wanted to take over roads; I challenge any hon. member to say——

Mr. SPEAKER : I do not think that anyone is suggesting that.

Mr. MOTTLEY : No Sir, but it may be expedient to remind hon. members of that, lest they think to the contrary. It is all right for hon. members to pass an Address of this sort but I here remind them that the authorities for making recommendations as regards standpipes are the Commissioners of Health of the various parishes and they are still in existence. Every day in this colony you hear that there are not sufficient standpipes; the local authorities, the Commissioners of Health, are well acquainted with that because they are responsible for sanitation in the various parishes. This Address asks that a Committee be appointed to recommend to the Government where standpipes should be placed——

Mr. SPEAKER : It does not mean that the Committee would not take evidence in the various parishes.

Mr. MOTTLEY : You cannot see anything in this Address which recommends any great phenomenal change which will come overnight. Really and truly, like all other members of this House, I should like to see the repairs to the roads started. I have been a member of this House only recently, but I have been associated with the repairs of roads and so forth and that is known to the general public. While I

should like to see the road campaign started immediately, if we pass this Address as it is to-day and have this Committee set up we are going to hear the same thing that we have been hearing for years. Rather than adopt this attitude one would have thought that the Government would have been asked to get an Executive Engineer. When the hon. senior member for St. Andrew spoke about the East Coast Road and the hon. senior member for St. George brought up his Address you heard that you could not get engineers and so forth.

Mr. SPEAKER: The object of appointing the Committee is to receive recommendations as to the roads to be taken over and getting the engineers would come afterwards.

Mr. MOTTLEY: There is no object in appointing this Committee unless the work is going to be expedited, because the roads which should be taken over have already been recommended by the Committee which was set up under the Chairmanship of the present President of the Legislative Council. If we obtain the services of an Executive Engineer——

Mr. SPEAKER: The question of getting an Executive Engineer does not come within the ambit of this Address at all.

Mr. MOTTLEY: In order to give the necessary fillip to the Address I have mentioned that as a possibility, but to set up a Committee to say what roads should be taken over when recommendations in this connection have already been made looks to me like going back to the old days. As regards the standpipes, I take it that hon. members will consider for themselves what I have said about the proper authorities responsible for the erection of these standpipes. I say that the Government has already asked the various Commissioners of Health to recommend the various localities where standpipes and hydrants should be placed. The Commissioners of Health have already recommended, as far as St. Michael is concerned, that every road which was recommended to be taken over should have standpipes and hydrants. I remember having to take up the matter with the Manager of the Waterworks Department and he pointed out that in the case of several of the roads it would be impossible to lay down standpipes and hydrants because the Government did not have any mains along these roads. I should like to make my position clear and I say that an Address worded as this is worded has only one object. Despite the feeling of the hon. mover of the passing of this Address, he will admit that it needs to be amended and in due course I hope to offer an amendment to it. When you see things such as this you have to let it be known what the position is. Not even the hon. senior member for St. Michael could accuse me of not paying any attention to the question of roads; I have always been doing that.

Mr. GALE: This matter of tenantry roads has been exercising the minds of the public and of the Government for many years. In the parish of St. Michael when the Highway Commissioners existed they used to take over a certain number of roads every year and hand them over to the Central Road Board. With the abolition of the Central Road Board and the creation of the Department of Highways and Transport a number of roads were handed over to the Department to be repaired and the reason given by the Department for not dealing with them was that according to the law if a road is not in a proper state of repair the Government cannot take it over. If that part of the law is not repealed the Government will not be able to take over any of these tenantry roads because none of them is in any proper state of repair. Years ago there was no proper legislation with regard to the establishment of villages and tenantries and we are suffering from that to-day. People were allowed to sell their land without making any provision for either water or roads and after the land was sold those who bought it had to come and say: "Well, we have bought this land; we are taxpayers and we want either the local authority or the Government to make roads for us roads which we have never had." I happen to be a member of the General Board of Health and even in these days we receive applications regularly from people for permission to divide and sell land in lots, they show how the land is divided and the roads are marked on the plans but these roads always remain at the stage as shown on the plans. The roads are not properly constructed and the Government is therefore called upon to go into these places and spend large sums of money which ought to be spent before people are allowed to sell their land. In other countries before you can establish a tenantry you have to provide proper roads and they have to be inspected and passed by the local authorities before a single house can be erected on the land. Here in this island people only dig a small track and lay on top——

Mr. SPEAKER: Is that anything to do with the matter?

Mr. GALE: It is something to do with it; that is why we have this Address to-day. If the Government had passed proper legislation we would not have had this Address before us to-day. I remember that some time ago the Colonial Development and Welfare Organization asked this Government to prepare a plan of the village roads which needed repairs; the plan was made but I do not know what has become of it since then. The various Commissioners of Highways were asked to submit the roads which they considered should be taken over by the Government and put in proper repair and consideration was also given to the question of water. Recommendations for an increased water supply and so forth were made by the Commissioners of Health, but as far as water is concerned the majority of these West Indian Islands have not kept pace with their development. The water facilities have not been sufficiently increased in proportion to the development of the islands and the people find themselves in this difficult position. I suppose that some years will have to elapse before anything can be done to satisfy the needs of the people who are continually clamouring for water. It is of no use to go around fooling the people and telling them that they will get water within the next year or so, because I do not see any possibility of their getting it before the next five years. On account of the present shortage of materials there cannot be that adequate supply of water in the villages for the benefit of the people who should be getting it.

Mr. DOWDING: This is a very flagrant attempt at playing politics and the seriousness of the matter is herein contained; roads and water are not questions to be played with because they are of the utmost importance to the people of this island. Earlier in this Session an Address was passed in this House with regard to tenantry roads and as a result the Government immediately took steps in the matter. I do not know what has happened in respect of other parishes but in the parish of St. George a great amount of work has been done. Several roads have been repaired and the only difficulty we have is that we do not get the money fast enough from the Government. (Laughter). Now, Mr. Speaker. I foresee that if the present situation is interfered with by a Committee, the good work which has been start-

ed and which is being done is likely to cease. I would warn hon. members to be very careful in passing this Address on that account. With regard to the roads which the Government have allowed to be repaired, recommendations were asked for and received by the Government and these recommendations were based on facts which date back to 1890. These facts are that petitions were received from people in those days and they were submitted to the Government. I believe that the reason for the introduction of this Address is because of circumstances existing purely in the parish of St. Michael, certainly not in the parish of St. George and I fail to see why any Committee should be appointed now that good work has started by the Government. I repeat that a good start has been made by the Government who has given grants for repairing the roads and in some parishes as much as £2,000 has already been spent in relieving this hardship. It would be a bad policy indeed now that such a good start has been made, to interrupt it as I see that there is such a possibility by passing this Address. To pass over to the question of standpipes, I say that these are greatly needed. In some parishes people have to walk for over a mile before they reach a standpipe; but what this Address asks for is already known. We want the pipes to be put down at these sites and if this Address had asked for an investigation as to why the pipes are not forthcoming I would be more in sympathy with it. I know that money has been voted by this House for the purpose of putting down pipes in the vicinity of a certain plantation in St. George, and in view of the water passing by its door that plantation set out and got its pipes to be put down and the Government have not got their pipes yet! That is a serious state of affairs; the hon. member on my left has said that it may take five years before the situation is relieved but I say that this is a situation which should be tackled immediately. I would hate to see the good work which has been started by the Government with regard to the tenantry roads in the various parishes stopped in any way by the appointment of another Committee to do something which has already been done.

Mr. S. A. WALCOTT: As the hon. senior member for St. George has said, I think that it would be wrong to interfere with the Commissioners of Highways in the work which is being done to-day. This House has voted a certain amount of money for the repair of the tenantry roads; the parish of St. James has been granted £2,500 and I think that this Address is behind the times. The Commissioners of Highways are repairing the tenantry roads to-day and if the Government continues their financial assistance the Commissioners will continue to repair the roads. As regards the question of water I think that the hon. junior member for St. George is living in a fool's paradise; he wants standpipes but we want water. In some cases measurements have been made but there is no water to be put into the pipes. The Waterworks Department is not supplying the water and what is the use of appointing a Committee to say where the standpipes should be put? I do not know if the hon. member is living in Barbados at all because he would know that lorries had to be used to transport water in some districts. I do not agree with this Address at all; I say let us have the water and we can take care of the standpipes. Let the Government continue to supply us with money and we can take care of the roads.

Mr. RAMSAY: This Address is worthy of the consideration of the entire Assembly but it reminds me of a parent who has a child suffering from a malady and instead of giving the child honey the parent gives it oil. As a matter of fact, this Address goes to the crux of the entire situation, and it has been mentioned by some hon. members who have preceded me that the Government have already set out to repair the tenantry roads. About two weeks before Christmas I went to Sealy Hall, St. John, at the invitation of the Churchwarden of that parish to look at a road and the Churchwarden's cry was that he wanted money. I understand that just before Christmas the Government decided to give certain parishes $2,000 more. I hope that I have not disclosed any secret. In Barbados we are very particular about power whether temporary or permanent; we have given money to the various parishes and we would like to go into these parishes to tell people what they must do! The law is there but I still think that this Address will serve a useful purpose in allowing the Government to see that our feeling is that certain Acts should be repealed. The Government will see where our minds are travelling. We feel that this work should be done more expeditiously. I do not think that the hon. senior member for St. Michael should take umbrage because of what hon. members have said, because I feel that in our heart of hearts we agree with the hon. member. The hon. senior member for the City has pointed out that we cannot overstep the law; we have to amend it. Of course, there is nothing wrong with the wording of this Address where it asks that this Committee to be appointed include members of the House. That is a very good part of the Address, in that it would assist in getting money which is required to do the work voted by the House much more quickly. As regards the question of the erection of standpipes, it is known that the Commissioners of Health can apply to the Colonial Secretary or the Manager of the Waterworks for standpipes. Ordinarily, if you send in £5 the work of installation can be started and the balance of the money can be paid. We are really allowing our zeal to outrun our discretion. Even if this Address is not passed—and I cannot see how we can pass it as it is—we are in sympathy with it; I have not heard of any honourable member who is not in sympathy with the Address. In the matter of making laws many an eminent lawyer has made a slip. the lawyers make gaps in the law and the laymen stop those gaps. In this Address the honourable senior member for St. Michael should have said certain things; I cannot vote for this kind of Address as it stands. I think the hon. member should have asked the Government to send somebody into the various parishes and see that the work is supervised and that the money is correctly spent. (Cheers). On this question of water, the hon. senior member for St. James has put the position clearly; we want more water and not merely standpipes, but that should not preclude this Address from being put into effect. If things go well some three years will elapse before we get pipes and ten before we get water and if this drought continues we will have to get machinery to change the salt water into fresh water. I advise the hon. senior member for St. Michael to postpone the consideration of this Address and he will have the unanimous feeling of the House that he has brought forward something worthy of commendation (Cheers). But with this Address worded as it is I fail to see how any intelligent hon. member can subscribe to its being passed.

Mr. WILKINSON: I am not in favour of this Address because I think it is unneecessary. I would recommend that we do not put any more roads, particularly tenantry roads, in the hands of the Government. I think that what is being done now in connection with the repair of the tenantry roads is

the result of the Address which was introduced by the hon. senior member for St. George and passed by this House. As a result of that Address the Government very liberally sent down a Resolution granting money for the repairs of tenantry roads in the various parishes. As far as I know the work which is being done in the various parishes where the Commissioners of Highways still exist is done by these Commissioners. I sympathise with the honourable senior member for St. Michael because I presume he is thinking of the large number of tenantry roads in the parish of St. Michael which he would like to see put in order. We all agree that the tenantry roads should be put in order. Unfortunately, as the hon. junior member for St. Michael has said, the Director of Highways and Transport has taken the view that he cannot touch these roads unless they are in good order. Under the old Central Road Board of which I had the honour to be Chairman for eight years, the hon. senior member for St. Michael will remember that one or two miles of tenantry roads in this parish used to be taken over every year; but as soon as the Government Department was created that practice was stopped. If the Government did take over these tenantry roads I can assure the hon. member that they are working very slowly and it will take many years before anything is done. Not many months ago a Resolution was passed in this House relative to the repair of tenantry roads and in every parish except the parishes of St. Michael, St. Lucy and St. Andrew work has been done on these roads. Believe me the people in the various parishes must know and do know which are the most important tenantry roads to be taken over. For the reasons which I have given I am not in favour of this Address. As the hon. senior member for St. George has said good work has been started and let us continue in the same direction. I have seen some of the roads which are being repaired in St. James and they are doing a good job. We have been told that the Department of Highways and Transport cannot easily complete their present programme and what is the use of their taking over more roads? As regards water, that is a very necessary item, but unfortunately we are all aware that there is no water available. It is very likely that we shall have to do with less water and therefore I am not in favour of passing this Address in its present form.

Mr. SMITH: I do not see that there is anything wrong with the wording of this Address. The majority of the members of this House are vestrymen and if the Government were to ask for a Committee comprising members of the House, I daresay that those who are making the selection would recommend members from the various outlying parishes who are vestrymen. It is a fact that members of the House who are vestrymen will know the various parishes and we will have a Committee to make the necessary recommendations. If I am a member of the Committee—as a matter of fact I will say that we do not want any executive engineers of any sort to see after our roads; give us the money and we will have the roads done. It is very important that vestrymen be members of the Committee. The honourable junior member for St. Peter speaks about this Address requiring honey and the honourable introducer giving it oil; but roads, water and light are three of the most essential requirements of the people of this colony. I can tell this House and the Government that there are people in the country districts who had to remove from their own land to other people's land and pay rent so as to be able to be in places where the doctor can get to them. That had to be done because of the very bad condition of the roads where the people used to live. I do not think that these conditions should be allowed to continue all the time. If money is to be granted to the various parishes, give it to them. The Highways Commissioners do not want the Department of Highways and Transport to repair their roads; they have rollers and so forth available. I heard in my parish this morning that the repairs to the roads had to be closed down because there is no more money to be spent, and it would be an excellent thing if a grant were to be given to the parish because we would repair the roads in the Spa, Church Village and other districts so that the poor people will be able to get their canes to the factories. This information which I am giving now would be given to the Committee who would make recommendations to the Government and therefore I do not see that there is anything wrong with the wording of this Address at all. This Address asks that this Committee include members of this House and if there is a member of the House who represents a rural constituency and is living in Bridgetown, it will be his duty to go around in the parish with some of the people of the parish so that he will be able to assist in making recommendations to the Government. I do not think that this Address is anything which should be rejected; it is the stepping stone to what we want. We want money and we can have the roads repaired. Speaking for the parish of St. Joseph we have rollers and the staff necessary for repairing the roads and I ask any honourable member to visit St. Elizabeth's Village and see the repairs which have been effected to a road which had been abandoned before I was born. The roads are repaired so as to bear the transportation of the people's canes. We are quite willing to take over any road but we want the money with which to have it repaired. I think that every honourable member should support this Address and let us make the necessary recommendations to the Government.

Mr. SYMMONDS: I beg to move that this debate be now postponed with a view to the adjournment of the House.

Mr. RAMSAY: I beg to second that.

Mr. TALMA: Before the question is put, I should like to say that it would be well if this important matter were thoroughly threshed out this afternoon so that it can be decided in one way or the other. This Address, on the face of it, will commend itself to the average member of this Chamber, because from time immemorial we have been crying out for proper tenantry roads. The money which is there can be utilised in repairing the bad tenantry roads and unemployment will be relieved. I feel that if this money, £75,000, has been voted by the Central Government it is not a parochial concern and it stands to reason that this House should have some say as to how it should be spent. The Highway Commissioners will repair the roads which they think ought to be repaired. In Christ Church over £1,000 has been allocated to the parish in respect of the repair of the tenantry roads and not one cent has been spent on these roads. The only roads which are being considered are those which lead to certain people's homes. If this Address is adopted the Highways Commissioners of the various parishes will have to send in return to members of this House so that we will know what roads are to to be repaired. This matter has been engaging my attention not yesterday but ever since. The principle adoption by the Government in so far as this vote of £75,000 is concerned is to release

£500 on the instalment basis to the parishes. The amount originally allocated to the various parishes was £1,500 and it has been increased to £2,000. In the parish of Christ Church we can do with much more than £2,500. I repeat that if this money has been voted by the Central Government then the Government should have some say as to how the money should be spent. The money should not be utilised in effecting repairs which are not strictly essential. Some Highway Commissioners will probably say that they have no equipment for dealing with these roads; but let me remind them and the members of this Chamber that there are in our midst some competent civil engineers like Mr. Harris, Mr. Wilson and others. They can undertake the construction of these roads and the work can be done by contract because when it is left to the Road Inspectors——

Mr. SPEAKER: The matter of getting engineers would be dealt with by the Committee subsequently: we cannot bring that matter into this debate now.

Mr. TALMA: What the honourable senior member for St. Michael is attempting to do this afternoon should commend itself to the average member of this Chamber. He wants to know how this money is being spent. If this Committee is set up it means that members of this House will be apprised of the necessary information in connection with the matter. Here you find that the electors are insisting that these tenantry roads be repaired and we have no control over the matter! I maintain that we should have some say in the matter otherwise the £75,000 will be spent on roads which do not need any repairs. If this Committee is set up, each and every member of this House—each representative of a parish or constituency—will know what roads the Highway Commissioners have in mind to repair, and you can well understand that each representative will take an interest in the repairs to the roads so that the roads which are in the worst state of repair will be dealt with first. We are not suggesting that this £75,000 can repair all the roads but it will repair all the very bad roads first and so relieve a certain amount of suffering amongst certain sections of the community. If we are really anxious to assist in this matter of the repair of the tenantry roads and not leave it to the Highway Commissioners to do as they like, to repair the roads which lead to their friends' houses and leave the other bad roads alone, we will agree to the passing of this Address which asks for the appointment of this Committee which will have the right in saying that the bad tenantry roads which have been untouched for the last one hundred years should be repaired.

Mr. SPEAKER: The honourable member who moved the adjournment of the debate and the hon. member who seconded the motion have already spoken during the debate.

Mr. SYMMONDS: I beg to move that this House do now adjourn until this day fortnight.

Mr. SPEAKER: The motion which the honourable member made just now is not in order. Rule 141 deals with this matter and this is what the Rule says:—

"A member who has already spoken to a question or has moved or seconded an amendment thereto, or a motion for the adjournment of the debate, may not rise again to move an amendment or the adjournment of the House, or of the debate or any similar question, though he may speak to these new questions when proposed by other members."

The honourable member cannot therefore move the adjournment of the House.

THE ADJOURNMENT.

Dr. CUMMINS: I rise to move the adjournment of the House. I have obtained the feeling of honourable members as to the date to which we should adjourn, and in view of the fact that cricket will be played at Kensington on Tuesday next, the majority feel that we should adjourn until Tuesday, the 20th instant at twelve o'clock noon. I therefore beg to move the adjournment of the House until that date. The Order Paper will remain as it is.

Mr. BLACKMAN seconded the motion which was agreed to.

Mr. SPEAKER accordingly adjourned the House until Tuesday, the 20th day of January, 1948, at twelve o'clock noon.