THE

House of Assembly Debates

(OFFICIAL REPORT).

SESSION 1947—48

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, 4th May, 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*), Messrs. L. E. SMITH, M. E. Cox, D. A. FOSTER, C. E TALMA, H. D. BLACKMAN, H. A. DOWDING, V. C. GALE, D. D. GARNER, J. H. WILKINSON, O.B.E., and E. L. WARD.

Prayers are read.

Mr. HAYNES and Dr. CUMMINS enter the House and take their seats.

MINUTES.

The Minutes of the meeting which was held on the 27th April, 1948, having been circulated are taken as read and confirmed.

MR. K. N. R. HUSBANDS TAKES NECESSARY OATHS.

Mr. SPEAKER: I have the honour to inform the House that I have received a letter from the Honourable the Colonial Secretary stating that he was directed to inform me that at a meeting of the Governor-in-Executive Committee held on Thursday, 29th April, 1948, Mr. Kenmore Nathaniel Rhystone Husbands attended and took the necessary oaths to serve as a Member for the Parish of St. Peter in the General Assembly.

DOCUMENT.

Mr. SPEAKER: I have the honour to inform the House that I have received a Statement of Revenue and Expenditure from the Commissioners of Highways for the parish of St. Joseph for the half year ended 31st March, 1948.

PAPER LAID.

Mr. TALMA: Mr. Speaker,—I have the honour to lay on the table of the House on behalf of the honourable senior member for St. Joseph (Mr. Adams) the following Paper:—

Statement of sums of money paid over to the Colonial Treasurer by the Commissioner of Police during the quarter ended 31st March, 1948.

MR. HUSBANDS TAKES HIS SEAT.

Mr. K. N. R. HUSBANDS is ushered into the House by Messrs. F. L. WALCOTT and M. E. Cox and he takes his seat amidst cheers.

Mr. F. L. WALCOTT also takes his seat.

NOTICES.

Government Notices are given as follows:—

Dr. CUMMINS: Resolution to place the sum of £177 at the disposal of the Governor-inExecutive Committee (to be subsequently refunded as a free grant under the provisions of the Colonial Development and Welfare Act, 1940) to meet the cost of a three-month Course of Training for two nurses at the Caribbean Medical Centre.

Mr. TALMA (On behalf of Mr. Adams): Bill to make provision with respect to housing, the acquisition, reconstruction and management of development areas, the improvement of unhealthy areas, the repair or demolition of insanitary dwellings, the orderly and progressive development of land, towns and other areas whether urban or rural, to preserve and improve the activities thereof, and for other matters connected therewith.

Mr. TALMA (On behalf of Mr. Adams): Bill to authorize the acquisition of land for public purposes.

Mr. TALMA: Of the intention of the honourable senior member for St. Joseph to move the House into Committee of Supply at its next meeting to consider the money Resolution of which notice has just been given.

Mr. MOTTLEY enters the House and takes his seat.

QUESTIONS.

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

Whether the Waterworks Department has informed Government that no water has been available in the parish of St. Lucy at many of its standpipes since Sunday, April 23, 1948?

2. Whether Government is aware that only one lorry has been allocated to supply water for all the thousands of residents in that parish?

3. Will Government immediately take steps to ensure that, at least three times daily, water is car-

ried to this parish, and that these lorries stop at each standpipe then for persons to obtain water during this shortage?

4. If Government has not sufficient equipment to render such service, will it immediately take steps to secure, by purchase or by hire, the necessary lorries and tanks at once?

5. Will Government utilize the many wells in this parish, during the present water shortage, to assist in alleviating current conditions for washing purposes?

Messrs. MAPP and ADAMS and Dr. WILSON enter the House and take their seats.

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

Is it a fact that certain members of the Police Force have recently been transferred, or notified that they may be transferred, from the Harbour Police to the Land Police or *vice versa*?

SELECT COMMITTEES' REPORTS.

Mr. WILKINSON: Mr. Speaker,—I beg to present the Report of the Select Committee appointed to prepare a draft Reply to His Excellency's Message No. 31/1947 relating to the recommendations of a Conference held in Barbados in May, 1946, concerning the Unification of Currency for the Eastern Groups of the British West Indies.

Dr. CUMMINS: Mr. Speaker,—I beg to present the Report of the Select Committee appointed to consider and report on the Public Health Bill.

BILLS READ A FIRST TIME.

On the motion of Mr. TALMA, seconded by Mr. BLACKMAN, a Bill to make provision with respect to housing, the acquisition, reconstruction and management of development areas, the improvement of unhealthy areas the repair or demolition of insanitary dwellings, the orderly and progressive development of land, towns and other areas whether urban or rural, to preserve and improve the amenities thereof, and for other matters connected therewith is read a first time.

On the motion of Mr. TALMA, seconded by Mr. BLACKMAN, a Bill to authorize the acquisition of land for public purposes is read a first time.

Messrs. SYMMONDS and S. A. WALCOTT enter the House and take their seats.

CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES.

On the motion of Dr. CUMMINS, seconded by Mr. F. L. WALCOTT, the honourable junior member for St. Joseph (Mr. Smith) is appointed Chairman of Committees for the day's sitting.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY.

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

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

RESOLUTION *Re* ENGAGING FIRE BRIGADE OFFICER POSTPONED.

Dr. CUMMINS asks for and is granted leave to postpone the first Resolution for the sum of £2,740 to meet the cost of engaging on contract for a period of two years of a Fire Brigade Officer.

RESOLUTION *Re* ALTERATIONS TO GOVERNMENT OFFICES POSTPONED.

Mr. TALMA asks for and is granted leave to postpone the second Resolution for the sum of £520 to meet the cost of alterations to the offices at present occupied by the Colonial Secretary, the Department of Education and the Public Works Department and of the office hitherto occupied by the Labour Department.

ESTABLISHMENT OF A SPINNING AND KNITTING INDUSTRY

Mr. BLACKMAN: The next Resolution is for the sum of £1,000 to be placed at the disposal of the Governor-in-Executive Committee to obtain expert advice regarding the establishment of a Cotton Spinning and Knitting Industry in Barbados. According to the addendum, a pilot Spinning Plant was established in Barbados with funds provided under the Colonial Development and Welfare Act. This Plant was taken over by this Government in 1945 and has been in full operation for the past ten months. A project for the erection of a Spinning and Knitting Plant has already been submitted for the consideration of the Colonial Development Corporation but the Corporation's decision is unlikely to be known for some time. It is, therefore, proposed to seek the assistance of the Secretary of State to obtain expert advice regarding the development of a cotton spinning and knitting industry in Barbados and this amount is to pay the expert. I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

Dr. CUMMINS: I beg to second that.

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

TRAINING IN PROBATION WORK FOR MALE AND FEMALE PUBLIC OFFICERS.

Dr. CUMMINS: The next Resolution is for the sum of £380 to be placed at the disposal of the Governor-in-Executive Committee to pay full salary, cost of living and other allowances, and travelling expenses to a male and a female public officer during a six-month period of training in probation work with the local probation officers. Capt. Brooks and his wife were appointed Probation Officers in 1946 for a period of three years. That period expires in May 1949 and in order that no time should be lost it is proposed that the persons selected to succeed them should undergo, in the first instance, a six-month course with these officers, and, if considered suitable to perform the duties, to send them for further training outside Barbados with a view to their returning and being appointed to the substantive posts of Probation Officers for males and females respectively. I think the public generally is fully satisfied with the work that has been done by Capt. Brooks and his wife and I repeat that in order that no time should be lost it is proposed to look around immediately for a desirable male and a desirable female to be trained by Capt Brooks for a period of six months and then to be sent to Jamaica for a further six-month course of training, so that when Capt. Brooks and his wife retire they will be able to fill their places. I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

Mr. BRANCKER: Mr. Chairman,—I must admit that the two Probation Officers whom we have now have been doing their work very efficiently and the system of probation is one which, I think, is very necessary and should be extended. According to the modern theory of punishment we should, wherever possible, avoid sending people to prison and probation officers are a very necessary part of the system of dealing with the punishment of offenders who have not been incarcerated. But two trainees as probation

officers strike me as somewhat inadequate a number. If either of these two does not turn out to be the right type of probation officer, what will we do when Capt. Brooks and his wife retire? I sugest that four persons at least should be trained for this work. Two may be in training and one may die and we shall be at a loss to fill his or her place at a moment's notice. If the Government appreciates the necessity for these officers, the good work which they are doing and the essential part which they play in any system of judicial punishment to-day, then I feel that we should be training, even at the outset, more people. I notice that paragraph 3 of the addendum to this Resolution states that a Government officer has been seconded for this training. One wonders who he is and I wonder if the Government will let us into that secret. In supporting this Resolution I am saying that the system of probation officers is such an essential one that I am surprised that the Government should only be starting off by training only two persons. That seems to presuppose that those two persons, at the end of their period of training, will be of the right type and will be the logical successors to the present officers. But in case it happens that one or both of those two did not prove satisfactory or became ill, provision would not have been made for anybody else to step into their shoes. That is why I urge on the Government the desirabiity of training more than two persons for these posts, especially as they are government officers who will be trained and not persons who will be taken out of employment to be trained; you will be just giving this type of training to certain people who are already government officers, so that when a vacancy occurs you may second any two of them for employment in this capacity. Everybody will recall what a very favourable and illuminating Report was presented the other day by the Probation Officers to the Court of Grand Sessions in respect of those persons who were placed on probation and the very excellent results which have accrued to this island from the probation system. That is why we should look forward to the day when we should increase the number of probation officers from two to four. I think that a probation officer is expected, according to the general accepted opinion, to devote at least three hours of his time per month to each person under probation and under his care; that will show how many will be required if the system is extended and a large number of people is put under probation and the amount of time and care that is to be expended to see that those persons who have fallen by the wayside, so to speak, do not go astray again. It is for those reasons that I am asking the Government to have more than two persons trained at the beginning, so that we may have a sufficient number of persons not only to replace the Brookses but to add to the numbers when the Government finds it necessary so to do.

Mr. WARD: I am not opposing this Resolution but I feel that the system of training these individuals is a very one-sided one. We have no definite agreement that we will secure the services of these individuals after they have been trained and the Government may one day find itself faced with having to start all over again, as far as the training of these probation officers is concerned. It is a recognized fact that the probation system has done a lot of good and I feel that the work should be carried out but the Government should formulate a better plan of securing probation officers than the proposal to train one or two occasionally. As the junior member for St. Lucy has said, one of these trainees may prove unsatisfactory or die and there would then be one probation officer less with the necessary knowledge to carry on. I feel that some other system should be adopted which probably would give greater satisfaction; that we should not be called upon all the time to train individuals for this particular work.

Mr. F. L. WALCOTT: One can appreciate the point made by the junior member for St. Lucy but it is somewhat difficult to appreciate the point raised by the senior member for St. Lucy. What I would like to say is this: We ought to compliment the Government on embarking to-day on a policy of training our local people for technical posts and higher positions and not leaving them to be filled by experts from abroad. We are endeavouring to make some of our own people experts and I feel that those persons who pay any attention to the social fabric of this community must realize that this is a step forward and we should give it all our assistance, so that probation officers can be people of this island who are trained in the technique and mechanics of probation work. We could have a more ambitious start, that is to say, we could begin to train more than two persons but I believe that, as in the case of all innovations, you have to be cautious and conservative. Nothing has been done along this line by any previous Government; it was just felt that if a person was unfortunate enough to run into mischief, jail or the industrial shool was there for him but to-day plans and provision are being made for the rehabilitation of such persons into the normal life of the community. There is another thing I would like to say. I do not agree with the phrase "if considered suitable" in the second paragraph of the addendum. I do not envisage the Government embarking upon the selection of people for this training who would not be suitable and there shou'd be nothing to prevent a person who has been selected and trained from going to England or any other place for further training. Although this is a British colony I feel that many of these trainees could learn a lot in places other than Great Britain. I feel that they could learn a lot in Canada or the U.S.A. and we have to depart from this policy of looking to one place—the United Kingdom. That may be all right when the scholarships are awarded by British institutions and the British Government, but so far as our Government is concerned, it should make opportunities which it offers wide enough that the successful candidates could be able to go to the U.S.A. or the Dominion of Canada for their training. That, however, is by the way and has nothing to do with this Resolution. I feel that the Government should state that these two persons are considered suitable and, therefore, they have been selected. Do not go ahead and select two people and then leave them in the embarrassing position that they will not be considered suitable for further training somewhere else. That is the only criticism I have to make about this Resolution. I have no hesitation in saying that, despite what the critics may say, the Government has done something which is to be commended on this occasion and that this act on its part augurs well for the future because the success of this country depends upon its civil administration.

Dr. CUMMINS: I simply want to reply to the point made by one or two members, namely, that a scheme of this sort requires more than two officers. That has been realised by the Government and it is the intention of the Government to train more people for this work. But I want it to be realized that the time for which Capt and Mrs. Brooks were engaged expires in May next year; therefore, in view of the urgency of the situation, it has been decided to get two persons trained as soon as possible and then to look around for others to be trained. It is not so easy a task to find suitable people to be trained for work of this sort. It is not only a matter of doing a job. A probation officer

should be a person who is prepared to save souls, so to speak, for the benefit of the country, not only by way of the Bible but by appealing to people to improve their minds. It is a big job and it is growing from year to year. The figures in my possession show that the work has practically trebled since the Brookses undertook to do it. I repeat that more persons will be trained but in view of the urgency of the situation it has been decided to start with two.

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

On the motion of Dr. CUMMINS, seconded by Mr. TALMA, the CHAIRMAN reports the passing of two Resolutions and the postponement of one in Committee of Supply and asks leave to sit again.

The House resumes and on the motions of Dr. CUMMINS, seconded by Mr. TALMA in each case, the two Resolutions which are passed in Committee of Supply are read a first and a second time and are agreed to.

PUBLIC OFFICERS LOAN AND TRAVELLING ALLOWANCES BILL.

Mr. SPEAKER: The next Order is to resume Committee on the Bill to authorize the Governor-in-Executive Committee to advance loans and pay travelling allowances to public officers required to travel for the due performance of their duties.

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

Clauses 4, 5 and 6 inclusive are read and are agreed to.

The first schedule is read and Mr. TALMA, with leave, amends it by adding the words "Librarian" and "Veterinary Officer." This schedule is then agreed to, as amended.

The second schedule is read.

Mr. TALMA: I should like to move an amendment to Regulation 2 which reads as follows:—

"2. Advances by way of loan may be made by the Governor-in-Executive Committee to such officers as are named in the First Schedule to the Act or in any Regulations which may hereafter be made under the Act in the manner and in the amounts hereinafter set forth, that is to say:—

Salary Scale	Amount not Exceeding
To officers whose salary exceeds £500 per annum	£350
To officers whose salary exceeds £325 but does not exceed £500 per annum	£300
To officers whose salary exceeds £250 but does not exceed £325 per annum	£250
To officers whose salary exceeds £150 but does not exceed £250 per annum	£200"

I hope that I am not disclosing any secret but it is felt that according to this Regulation only those officers whose salaries exceed £500 per annum will be in a position to purchase a proper car, in view of the prices of cars to-day. It has, therefore, been suggested that not only officers in the highest brackets should be able to obtain a loan not exceeding £350 but that all officers should be lent that amount so that they would be able to purchase a proper car. The matter was referred to the Whitley Council and I am happy to say that the personnel of the Council approves of the suggestion. I, therefore, ask leave to delete Regulation 2 and substitute therefor the following:—

"2. The Governor-in-Executive Committee may advance by way of loan any sum or sums not exceeding in the aggregate the sum of three hundred and fifty pounds to such officers as are named in the first schedule to this Act or in any regulations which may hereafter be made under this Act and such advance shall be subject to the conditions hereinafter set forth."

Leave is granted the honourable to delete Regulation 2 and substitute therefor the abovementioned Regulation.

Mr. TALMA: I beg to move that Regulation 2, as amended, stand part of the Regulations.

Dr. CUMMINS: I beg to second that.

Mr. WARD: I feel that the House should consider carefully whether in its enthusiasm to do good for these public officers it may not be doing them harm. It is a peculiar idea to allow an officer to borrow £350 from the Government when he may be working for only £150 a year and on the other hand ask that same individual to pay back the £350 in five years. To my mind, that is an utter impossibility. You are only asking that individual to steal from the Government or you are simply putting this Act on the Statute Book with no intention of carrying it out. One of those two things will happen. If a man is getting a salary of £150 a year, it is absolutely impossible to expect him to repay £150 in five years and at the same time to carry himself in a respectable manner If we really wish to help these officers we shall have to extend the time for repayment of the loan. We must also bear in mind that a car will have deteriorated considerably in five years' time and the individual would be spending more to keep it in order than he would be paying the Government. I feel that we are simply putting some of these officers to live above their means. All of us would like to see them get cars to get around to do their work but, to me, to lend a man £350 who is working for £150 per annum is fraught with danger. I feel that the Government should consider this proposal carefully before giving some of these officers the opportunity to put themselves in trouble.

Mr. F. L. WALCOTT: What has just been said by the honourable member was passing through my mind but there are two sides to this question. On the one hand, you cannot resist the argument that if a man has borrowed £350 and has to pay it back at the rate of £70 a year, he will find it very difficult to do so if he is working for £150 a year. On the other hand, this is to be a loan not exceeding £350 and it does not necessarily follow that every officer who has to obtain a loan for this purpose must of necessity borrow £350 because every individual who is buying a car for the first time may not buy a new car; he may buy a secondhand car to suit his purpose. I believe there are some members in the Goverment Service whose salaries would permit them to advance some of their own cash and borrow only a certain amount from the Government. In these regulations it should be stated the amount to be deducted from the people's salaries because as they stand, it means that the loan is to be paid back in 5 years and an officer in the lower category would find himself paying back at the same rate as an officer in the higher bracket and that will place him in a very invidious position. I do not think that that is the intention of the Government. I suggest that this matter be reconsidered so as not to place an officer in the lower bracket in that invidious position. To-day, there are young men entering the Service and their families have no financial background. Some of them have to assist their families and the jobs they are given to do make it necessary that they should own cars. If they start at £150 a year, it is a financial impossibility to expect them to buy cars and repay loans at the rate fixed for officers

who are in a better position financially pay. Motor cars are very expensive to-day and to get one that would last for any appreciable length of time you would have to pay at least $1,000. With all his other commitments, it would be difficult for the young man to whom I am referring to pay back $1,000 out of his salary. If the member in charge of the Bill would give some assurance that that phase of the matter will be taken into consideration it would put the minds of many of these officers at rest.

Mr. WARD: I have just been informed that the allowances under the Travelling Allowance Act will cover four-fifths of the cost of a car and that the officer would probably pay only one-fifth. In those circumstances I would not press for an extension of of the 5-year period because after a certain number of years a car becomes a liability instead of an asset. I withhold my objection to the Bill, in view of that information, and will allow those officers who are bound to travel to get their cars, because a second-hand car would probably cost them more money to keep it in order than a new car would.

Mr. TALMA: I just want to say this: The maximum amount that an officer could borrow is £350 but it does not necessarily follow that that maximum will be borrowed.

The question that Regulation 2, as amended, stand part of the Regulations is put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

On the motion of Mr. TALMA, seconded by Dr. CUMMINS, the second schedule, as amended, is passed.

On the motion of Mr. TALMA, seconded by Mr. BLACKMAN, the CHAIRMAN reports the passing of the Bill in Committee.

The House resumes and on the motions of Mr. TALMA, seconded by Mr. BLACKMAN in each case, the Bill is read a third time and is passed.

RESOLUTION TO APPOINT DEPUTY MARSHALS.

Mr. SPEAKER: The next Order stands in the name of the honourable senior mmeber for Christ Church.—To move the passing of a Special Resolution under the provisions of section 3 of the Provost Marshal's (Amendment) Act, 1947 (1947-36).

Mr. TALMA: This matter has been engaging the atention of this honourable Chamber for quite some time and anyone who happens to be conversant with the Provost Marshal's Office will know that that office has been terribly understaffed for many years. The Deputy Marshals are three in number; they are called upon to perform functions, such as putting executions into effect and issuing summonses all over the island and they are not even provided with travelling allowance I regret to state. The object of this Bil is to appoint two additional deputy marshals so that the performance of the work can be facilitated and the working of the office put on a more satisfactory basis. I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

Mr. BLACKMAN: I beg to second that.

Mr. BRANCKER: There is hardly any reasonable member of this community who would not agree that the deputy marshals are underpaid. The only reason why I wou'd not make any further comment or that to-day is because the Adams Report is a little nearer publication than it was three weeks ago. I presume that he would be considering the inadequate remuneration for these offices and we are hoping to hear of some recommendation to put the salaries on a basis commensurate with the responsibilities which these marshals have and the tasks which they have to perform. I am wondering whether even two additional marshals are sufficient in view of the work that the present staff has to do. There are instances in which cases have had to be adjourned and in which comment has been made by the Chief Justice that there was not time available for the small staff of deputy marshals to have people summoned in time to attend the Court. That is why I throw out the suggestion that two additional deputy marshals may not be adequate. There is no disputing the fact that the High Court to-day has more work than it has ever been known to have. A case in almost every month is heard in this Court whereas in former times there used to be about two in the space of a year. This means more work for the deputy marshals and I regard this Resolution as a step in the right direction. I repeat, however, that I do not feel that even with these two additional marshals they will be able to cope with the increased work which has to be done.

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

THE MARRIED WOMAN'S (SEPARATION AND MAINTENANCE) ACT.

Mr. SPEAKER: The next Order is to resume Committee on the Bill to amend the law relating to Separation and Maintenance.

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

Clauses 10 to 16 inclusive are read and are agreed to.

Mr. CRAWFORD enters the House and takes his seat.

Mr. ADAMS: Mr. Chairman,—Before the Clerk reads Clause 17 I am going to move that you do now report progress and ask leave to sit again. Since Clause 6 of this Bill was passed a case has arisen in the Law Courts in which the Court has held that as the law stands at present a husband can sit down, do nothing and not pay his wife one cent, whereas he would not be able to do it in England. If an order is made against a husband, his wife has to prove that he has means to pay since the order was made and that is the only way she can collect arrears. In the case which I have mentioned, the husband has given away his house and his motor lorry and would not work; he is fed by his parents. As I say, it is impossible for that to be done in England. It could have been done 50 years ago but the law has been changed and is is my intention to interview the Attorney General with the view of having Clause 6 worded in accordance with the present English law. I am, therefore, asking the Committee to agree to the further postponement of Clause 6. Of course, as the senior member for the City will tell the Committee, the Churchwarden of the parish in which the man lives can put him in Court for the maintenance of his children if he has any but that is a roundabout way of going about the matter. The English Act provides that if the wife can prove that her husband neglects to support her she can bring him before a Magistrate. According to the local Statute, a husband can burn his house, draw all his money from the Bank and give it away in order not to support his wife. The law has been changed in England and it is only reasonable that it should be altered in Barbados. For that reason I ask the Committee to agree to the further postponement of Clause 6 and give the Attorney General the opportunity to re-draft it to cover the point I have mentioned.

Mr. TALMA: I beg to second the motion that the Chairman do now report progress and ask leave to sit again.

The question that the Chairman report progress and ask leave to sit again is put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

The CHAIRMAN reports progress and the House resumes.

SUSPENSION OF RULE 60.

Mr. TALMA: Mr. Speaker,—Before you call the next Order of the Day I ask leave to move the suspension of Rule 60 in order to go back to Order No. 1—Committee of Supply.

Mr. SPEAKER: There is no necessity to ask leave to suspend that Rule because you are going back to an Order. All you have to do is to ask leave to take Order No. 1 as the next Order.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY.

Mr. TALMA: I ask leave to take Order No. 1 as the next Order.

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

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

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

ALTERATIONS TO GOVERNMENT OFFICES.

Mr. TALMA: The Resolution with which I propose to deal is No. 2 which is for the sum of £520 to meet the cost of alterations to the offices at present occupied by the Colonial Secretary, the Department of Education and the Public Works Department. and of the office hitherto occupied by the Labour Department. Owing to the fact that the Financial Secretary who will soon be arriving will be attached to the Colonial Secretariat and owing to the inadequate accommodation which at present obtains in that Department, it is absolutely essential that more accommodation be provided for these officials and their staffs. The Resolution speaks for itself and is far from being controversial. I beg to move that it do now pass.

Mr. ADAMS: I beg to second that.

Mr. MOTTLEY: I am supporting this Resolution but I would like to make a few observations on it. It is rather significant that offices such as those occupied by the Colonial Secretary, the Department of Education, the Public Works Department, the Labour Department are to be altered. I say it is significant for this reason. All these Departments have Heads who are imported officials and those Departments whose Heads are local officials, such as the Registrar's Office, the Provost Marshal's Office and the Income Tax Commissioner's office are standing disgraces to this colony. As soon as an imported official comes to the island, he is given an office with luxurious appointments. I hope that the Government will appreciate that this state of affairs should not be allowed to continue. I feel that something is wrong somewhere. I remember that when Mr. Hayden, the late Director of Education, came here everybody was thrown out of offices adjacent to the Education Office and a proper office was provided for him. I feel that the Government should give some explanation in the matter.

Mr. ADAMS: I am going to give the answer which will please my critics. It is this. Whoever makes the most noise gets attended to first. When Mr. "Ossie" Bancroft was Police Magistrate of Dist. "A" he would protest year after year against the condition of the Police Magistrates' Courts and offices. I cannot repeat what the sanitary conditions of the Police Courts were like; they were the most primitive offices one could think of and some of them still exist at the Courts in the country districts. Mr. Bancroft used to make a noise and he got everything he wanted, even a fountain pen because he said that the pen-nibs were no good; he got a fan; he got toilet conveniences put in because he sat down week after week and made out complaints to the effect that he could not work under the conditions which existed at the time. The same thing happened in Mr. Hayden's time. So too in the case of the Road Commissioners. The Commissioners who make the most noise get their grants first and the two honourable members for St. James know that that is true. The Government has under consideration the alteration of most of its offices, especially the Registrar's Office and Mr. DeSyllas has prepared plans for such alterations. Plans have even been prepared for a new House Assembly in case we decide to remove this Assembly to some other site. As soon as we rebuild the Town Hall, the Registrar's Office and other kindred offices will be accommodated therein. It is not a question of forgetting them or of discrimination. You do not remember the man who does not shout at you as often as you remember the man who is constantly shouting after you. Maybe that is the cause of it.

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

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

The House resumes and on the motions of Mr. TALMA, seconded by Dr. CUMMINS in each case, the Resolution is read a first and a second time and is agreed to.

ORDERS POSTPONED

Dr. CUMMINS asks for and is granted leave to postpone the consideration of Orders Nos. 5, 6 and 7—Bill to consolidate and amend the Acts of this island relating to Public Health, Bill to amend the Poor Relief Act, 1892 (1892-2), and Bill to provide for the division and sale and the division and letting of land in lots and for the regulations of tenantries—owing to the fact that the Select Committee appointed to consider, and report on, the Public Health Bill reported only to-day and that the Report will have to be printed and circulated.

RESOLUTION TO ADOPT RECOMMENDATIONS OF OILS AND FATS CONFERENCE

Mr. SPEAKER: The next Order stands in the name of the honourable junior member for St. John, —To move the passing of a Resolution to authorize the Governor-in-Executive Committee to adopt and give effect to the recommendations of the Conference on Oils and Fats which was held in Barbados from the 18th to the 22nd July, 1947, as set out in the Schedule.

Mr. BLACKMAN: The Barbados Co-operative Cotton Factory Ltd. manufactures Edible Oils, Paint Oil, Meal etc. During the war, and since, it has supplied the island's requirements of edible oils. It also supplies a quantity of crude oil, and, at times, edible and refined oil for the purpose of manufacturing soap, margarine and lard. During the past few years very little cotton has been produced locally, as a result of which only about 17 tons of cotton seed has been available for oil purposes. We have had to fall back upon copra which has been imported from other

West Indian islands and the quantity we used in 1946 was about 3,272 tons. It is estimated that if the Leeward and Windward Islands order the same quantities of copra products as they did in 1946, we shall need an additional 624 tons of copra, making a total of 3,896 tons required for 1947. I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

Mr. ADAMS: Mr. Speaker,—In seconding the motion I should like to say that I have been referring to the Rules and apparently it is a practice based on Rule 237 that the clauses of a public Bill should be considered seriatim. This is not a public Bill and if the House approves I am going to move that the Schedule to this Resolution be taken as read. Honourable members have had the opportunity of reading it and it is merely a Report of what the Conference agreed to. If we agree to the principle of that Report, it comes within the category of the Minutes which we take as read at every meeting.

Mr. SPEAKER: Personally I see nothing against taking the schedule as read.

Mr. ADAMS: In that case, Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that the schedule be taken as read.

Dr. CUMMINS: I beg to second that. ....

The question that the schedule be taken as read is put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

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

SUSPENSION OF RULE 60

Mr. ADAMS: Mr. Speaker,—I ask leave to move the suspension of Rule 60 in order that the senior member for Christ Church may take Order No. 22 as the next Order of the day.

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

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

Mr. TALMA: I beg to second that.

The question that Rule 60 be now suspended is put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

THE SUGAR INDUSTRY (REHABILITATION, PRICE STABILIZATION AND LABOUR WELFARE) ORDER.

Mr. SPEAKER: The next Order stands in the name of the honourable senior member for Christ Church,—To move the passing of a Resolution to approve the Order entitled "The Sugar Industry (Rehabilitation, Price Stabilization and Labour Welfare) Order, 1948", made by the Governor-in-Executive Committee under the provisions of sections 3 (1) (c) and 4 (3) of the Sugar Industry Rehabilitation, Price Stabilization and Labour Welfare Act, 1947 (1947-13).

Mr. TALMA: This is a Resolution to approve of the Order made by the Governor-in-Executive Committee under the Sugar Industry Rehabilitation, Price Stabilization and Labour Welfare Act and I beg to move that it do now pass.

Mr. ADAMS: I beg to second that.

Mr. F. L. WALCOTT: Before you put the question, Mr. Speaker, I am going to suggest that inasmuch as it is nearly 2 o'clock and as honourable members are hungry—I am one of those—we should postpone the consideration of this Resolution. I want to be clear in my mind that this money which we are setting aside under this Act is exempt from the payment of income tax. If this money is to be exempted, then it is all right but if it is not to be exempted I can see no reason why it shoud not be taxed because while we are putting down money to be used some years hence I am not so sure that it is going to be used for the benefit of the people in the manner we desire it to be used. In rehabilitating these factories are we rehabilitating the industry for the benefit of the people far and wide or are we not putting people who already find themselves in sound financial and business positions in better positions? You are making factories better than they are and in so doing you are puting more people out of work and making the unemployment problem more acute. Before I support this Resolution, it must be clear to my mind that we are going to get the necessary tax from this meney.

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

REPLIES LAID.

On re-assembling,

Mr. BLACKMAN: Mr. Speaker,—I beg to lay on the Table of the House the reply to question No. 54 standing in the name of the honourable junior member for St. Lucy.

Mr. TALMA: I beg to lay the reply to question No. 52 standing in the name of the honourable senior member for St. Peter.

SUSPENSION OF RULE 61 (A).

Mr. ADAMS: I ask leave to move the suspension of Rule 61 (a) so as to continue Government Business.

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

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

Mr. TALMA seconded the motion which was agreed to.

SUGAR INDUSTRY (REHABILITATION, PRICE STABILISATION AND LABOUR WELFARE) ORDER.

Mr. SPEAKER: On the adjournment for lunch the House were debating a Resolution to approve the Order entitled "The sugar Industry (Rehabilitation, Price Stabilisation and Labour Welfare) Order, 1948," made by the Governor-in-Executive Committee under the provisions of sections 3 (1) (c) and 4 (3) of the Sugar Industry Rehabilitation, Price Stabilisation and Labour Welfare) Act, 1947 (1947-13). The honourable senior member for St. Peter was speaking.

Mr. F. L. WALCOTT: Before the luncheon interval I was saying that I do not consider that this House should pass these funds as they are unless they are assured that the funds are exempt from the Income Tax law. This money is a gift but it is income to the sugar industry; therefore it should be taxed. No honourable member of this House can receive money from any source, whether by gift or otherwise, that is not taxed and I feel that in this matter the only exemption from taxation to which the House should agree is in relation to Labour Welfare funds. Too many employers are threatening to put people out of work by whatever means they can do so, and we have to be sure that we are not allowing a certain amount of money to be free from taxation and at the same time have employers telling people: "Before I pay you I will get something to put you out of work." That has been said by responsible people in this community, and are we going to exempt this money from taxation so that when people are put out of work you will not have any money to embark upon some project so as to assist them? I feel that honourable members will have to pass this Resolution with their eyes wide open; we have to be sure that we are not making any millstone to be

put around the necks of the future generation. I can see what the sugar industry is planning and if honourable members cannot see it I am sorry for them. It is clear to me that all plans and devices are being made for the employers and the people engaged in the sugar industry to make as much profit as they can irrespective of any other consideration; and I repeat that we have to make sure that these funds are exempt from Income Tax. I feel that we will be making a great mistake if this money is not taxed.

Mr. SPEAKER: There is nothing dealing with Income Tax in this Resolution.

Mr. F. L. WALCOTT: Speaking for myself I want to be assured that this money can be taxed, and if it is taxed already what will be done this year——

Mr. SPEAKER: This Resolution has nothing to do with the question of taxation.

Mr. F. L. WALCOTT: I want to be sure that this colony is getting what it deserves and I say that a gift to the sugar industry should be taxed in the same way as any other income. I would not have made these remarks if I had seen the willingness of people engaged in the sugar industry to make plans which I feel would relieve the present serious situation. Far from people being rehabilitated I have seen many of them knocking about for want of employment. On the one hand while you are trying to protect the sugar industry, on the other hand there are people who are begging, people for whom no regard is paid. There are those who say: "Let the Government find work for you", and I say: let us get Income Tax from them. I want to make it clear that the people who are engaged in the sugar industry do not want any Government to protect them; they have been protecting themselves for many years but when they are in a hole they run to the Government. I feel that we have to be very careful to see that we are not perpetuating a policy, which might have been that of the Victorian era, of making good for people who can make good for themselves. In this island there is much unemployment and we have to get money from every available source so that we can start projects so as to relieve this evil of unemployment. We do not know what reaction or what repercussions this unemployment will have upon people and therefore I say that before we pass this Resolution we must be sure as to whether this money can be taxed.

Mr. MAPP: I rise to make a few relevant observations relative to this Resolution. While it is true that these conditions have been laid down by the Secretary of State for the Colonies consequent upon an increase in the price of sugar granted by the Ministry of Food, while we cannot even modify these conditions furthermore to reject them, I feel that these conditions call for comment by those of us who see certain issues in the sugar industry in this colony. The apparent object of this levy is to aid the sugar industry as a whole. There is no doubt that conditions today call for greater production in the sugar industry in the whole West Indian area, especially with the Dollar Crisis staring us in the face and especially now that we have to compete with a world crisis, with rising prices and imports from the world's markets. Therefore most of us will agree with the object of this Resolution and these conditions of helping the sugar producers throughout the Caribbean area to produce sugar. It is obvious from these Regulations that great attention is being paid to the factories in helping them to increase their productivity, but I do not know how far the peasant farmers will be affected by the passing of this Resolution. I do not know what terms and conditions will be arranged for the benefit of the cane farmers, especially the small man, and while we are all agreed that it is necessary to help the sugar factories in this area to rationalise even further, it cannot be said that these arrangements are working out for the benefit of the small producer, the labourer and the worker in the sugar industry. I hope that any criticism which I make today will be observed by the Head of the Administration and that he will make strong representations to the Secretary of State for the Colonies; because it is a fact that coincident with the greater rationalisation of the sugar factories, there is greater unemployment in this area and I say that that is a serious state of affairs. Those who are engaged in the sugar industry are endeavouring to keep down the cost of production and lessen it to as great an extent as possible, therefore labour must be reduced. But while the sugar producers and the factory owners are being helped, we find that the small people who play a very vital part in the production of sugar are being put out of work and are being hit at in all directions. I do not want to dilate too much on that aspect of the matter now because I hope to do so when dealing with an Address which is in my name on the Order Paper; but I am saying that strong representations should be made to the Secretary of State for the Colonies in view of the fact that there is greater rationalisation in the sugar industry today than there was in 1945. There should be some change in the basis and the terms of this Resolution so that a greater part of these funds could be allocated to the Labour Welfare Fund in order to help the workers in the industry. That is only fair and right. These recommendations were made at a time when it was not foreseen that there would have been such changes in the sugar industry as there are today, and the cost of production was heavier than it is now. It was therefore quite fair for the Secretary of State for the Colonies to lay down these terms and conditions and allocate these various amounts in the ratio in which he has allocated them. It was necessary to help the sugar manufacturers to increase the sugar production, but we have seen a great importation of machinery in the industry. We have seen great rationalisation and the natural consequence has been that while the cost of production has been lessened and the factory owner and the big plantation owner have been helped, the worker on the other hand has been hit very hard. Unemployment, starvation and all the evils consequent on this mechanisation face the worker and his family. Since these terms and conditions were sent down by the Secretary of State for the Colonies conditions have changed to such an extent that this ratio should be changed and a greater part of the funds should be allocated to the Labour Welfare Fund so as to help the workers who have been hit so hard. I do not know if the Committee which has been sitting in connection with this matter has reported, but if its findings have not yet been made public I hope that we will have the Report in our hands so that we can implement the recommendations. I think it should be pointed out to the members of the Committee that the position is a very serious one. We have just had a drought which will affect the worker especially; there is much unemployment and I hope that the Report of the Committee will be made available in a short time. My particular recommendation is that the Governor-in-Executive Committee or the Head of the Administration should in future try to have the proportion of these funds altered to suit the changed conditions in respect of this industry so that a greater amount will be allocated to the Labour Welfare Fund than is at present allocated to it. If this House terms itself a thinking and responsible body in this community, it must pay attention to the crisis which is facing the

workers in the community; it cannot afford to sit down and pass what is intended to help the sugar industry as a whole when it is found that while the sugar producers are being helped the workers are left to face unemployment and all the evils consequent upon this rationalisation. I hope that this state of affairs will be brought to the notice of the Head of the Administration and that some other recommendations will be made in the near future.

Mr. GARNER: I have always heard it said that too far east is west and I think that these Regulations can be classified as having gone too far east and have therefore reached west. I cannot support these Regulations in their entirety because I know from personal observation and personal knowledge that this island is going to experience an unhappy past. We are heading for chaos and unless something unforeseen happens I do not know what the results will be. As the position is now, the Home Government have presumably sent out this scheme to rehabiltiate the sugar industry in this island, and let me say here and now that the first thing which they should do is to try and rehabilitate the workers in the island. They have allocated only 10/- per ton for the Labour Welfare Fund, £1. 5/- per ton for the Price Stabilisation Reserve Fund and £1 per ton in respect of the Capital Rehabilitation Reserve Fund which I think is quite unfair. The honourable member who has just sat down has made one really interesting point and it is that the sugar industry is now highly mechanised; the tendency is to save money and what really existed in 1943 or 1945 does not exist today. It is true that there are some factory owners who are misers, who spend no money as capital expenditure on their factories and those factories have deteriorated; but the fact remains that they have reserves to their credit or to the credit of their families. Because the factories have deteriorated it does not stand to reason that the owners have not got the surplus money tucked away somewhere for the benefit of their families. Therefore if the Colonial Office or whoever is in charge of this matter would find out, it is not really true that the factories do not make any money in Barbados and are in need of help; I cannot be a party to that because it is not true. One man owns one-half of St. Joseph and one-half of St. Andrew and I repeat that the labourers of this island need to be rehabilitated before the sugar industry. It is a joke to talk about rehabilitating the sugar industry first: something is wrong. Mr. Speaker, if you went around this island now you will see that there are people who cannot get any employment because of the mechanisation of the sugar industry and are you going to rehabilitate these factory-owners? That is a joke. This Resolution has to be rejected; Downing Street must know what is going on in this island. The rich will be getting richer, the poor will be getting poorer and can we sit idly by? The idea of rehabilitating Bruce Vale Factory, for instance, is a joke. In the parishes of St. Joseph and St. Andrew there are people who are hungry and are you going to give more money to the sugar industry? A factory owner will say: "I will get everything out of this factory and when I am gone I will leave the hard cash for my family and they will not experience the hardship that I am experiencing now." Then he sells this white elephant. The peasants contribute to the making of these factories; the factory-owners know beforehand what they are going to pay the peasants for their canes and they are not going to pass on anything to the peasants. What are the peasants getting today out of these funds?—Nothing. They are growing canes, they contribute to the making of these factories and they are getting nothing out of these funds! This Resolution must be rejected; I caution honourable members that they should reject it.

Mr. SPEAKER: According to the Act, this money is distributed in accordance with Rules and Regulations made by the Governor-in-Executive Committee.

Mr. GARNER: That is a matter for them. I am not a member of the Government and if they lose sight of these things which I am saying now, it is a matter for them. I think I am justified in saying these things. The peasants of this island have nothing to gain by this Resolution; some of the money which they should be getting will be passed on to the factory owner and who is to make the factory owner pay the correct price for canes? No law of the land can make him do that. We paid £2,000 to bring out a gentleman to fix this matter and when he came he was a little worse. If we had accepted his scheme, the peasants would have owed the factories between 40 cents and 80 cents per ton in excess of what the factories paid. These are crude things but you have to say some crude things sometimes. The cane growers are unprotected; they have no shares in the factories and because of that they will lose. Those who have shares in the factories will get something but the peasants are fleeced. There is no law of the land to protect them and cannot the ways and means be found of putting something on the Statute Book to make the factory owner pay a proper price for canes? People are working hard day in and day out and when they come to reap their canes they lose money! To work land now is an absolute waste of time; you are between the devil and the deep blue sea. This Resolution should be sent back to the Government and let them know that 10/- per ton in respect of the Labour Welfare Fund is inadequate. We do not mind giving something for the Price Stabilisation Reserve Fund but when you come to the rehabilitation of the factories there is a big question mark there—a question mark as big as the universe. There should not be any attempt made to do that at this ime when the people are starving, when there is no work for them to do, and when there is no law to prevent anybody from importing mechines and mechanising whatever he wants to do. Human nature being what it is, a man seeks to get the most of whatever he puts his hands to do; and so it is with the people engaged in the sugar industry. They will pay a little more in order to mechanise the industry but the machinery will make up for that, so that they will not lose anything at all. It is a sad spectacle to go around the the island and see that two-thirds of the arable land has been tilled by machinery; the machines are doing this work by day and by night and people have been deprived of a day's work. If that is so; if these people are going in for this mechanisation, then a case has definitely been made out against their getting any of this money. I hope that that point has been made quite clear. If it is true that these people are mechanising to the hilt, they are saving money and you cannot stop them from mechanising and putting thousands of people out of work, that is something to be considered. They ought to have a heart; I say that at least they should mechanise up to a certain point and try and meet labour half way. In my parish some of the people have been told that there will not be one stroke of work for them before July and we have had a short crop! You can realize what that means, Mr. Speaker; you cannot rehabilitate the factories at this time, you have to rehabilitate the workers first. If an investigation were to be made into this matter what would you discover? You would discover that the most of the people who will be applying for help from

these funds are the ultra wealthy people. There are those who spend very little on their factories; they keep all the cash and they will now take advantage of this fund to rehabilitate themselves; but the fellow who has been trying to keep his factory up to a certain standard of efficiency would not have so much cash because he has been spending money on his factory. My last point is this and I want to raise this question emphatically; what provision are you making for the peasants to share in these funds? After all, the peasants form no small part of the sugar industry in this colony and they are always left out of consideration. Can't we do something to save them? If we are civilised and we have not declined to the law of the jungle, we would not allow the big fish to eat up all the small ones. We ought to be wise, intelligent and honest enough to envolve some system whereby we can protect one another. It is human nature to have avarice and agreed but it must be disciplined. Men have their difficulties in all walks of life; after all they are only grown-up boys and they still need some parent or guardian to correct them. If we as the representatives of the people do not find ways and means to help the peasants and the workers of this colony we will be failing in our duty. It is time that this question be aired: What is before us now is a sinister move to help the factory owners who are wealthy people, and they are asking that the money which should be given to the workers be given to them! That is a joke. I am not going to say much more but it is grievous to think that for over 300 years the sugar industry has been moving up and down, more up than down, and now today you are improving it to last for ever as against hungry, suffering humanity. We must decide between these two things; are we going to give the rich people more money or are we going to formulate ways and means to help the workers whom these same wealthy people have not only robbed in the past but are now seeking to starve them to death? As it is now if you mechanise the sugar industry in its entirety that will cause wholesale starvation in this colony and that cannot be avoided no matter how you may try. There is certain out of crop work which the machinery will do; and when it rains you will need a few people, but meanwhile you are only getting rain now and again. With all these problems facing us, I should advise whoever is in charge of this matter to send it back and let those on the other side know what is happening. I have never heard of a factory going bankrupt; the more I talk about this thing the more I see that it is a joke. I hope that honourable members will see that this is no time to play politics; this is a time for all of us to get together as one man, denounce this thing and represent the people really and truly. Let us represent all sections of the community. When the under-dog is not working he is a menace to society and if I did not have anything to do I would be a menace to the community. Everybody was not born with intelligence and brains and if possible we who are guardians should see that the under-dog gets what is due to him. What is the use of having investments and the people are hungry? My God, let us have a heart. There are people who are hoarding money at the expense of the worker who is suffering, but it is all going into the fire. I am no wayside politician; I am a statesman. (Hear, hear and Cheers.) In my quiet hours I think of the problems confronting the people of this colony and weigh all the circumstances. I have concluded that unless some ambitious programme is tackled in this colony by the Government, the whole island is coming to chaos and ruin. You cannot avoid that unless smething is done. Something must be done now to change this allocation to the Capital Rehabilitation Reserve Fund and let the money be used for the benefit of some of the people who are now unemployed. At present there is mass suffering and discontent and I think the poor peasants shou'd be included in this scheme. I hope that something will be done for them shortly. I am making a plea for the rejection of this Resolution because it is absolutely no good. I am against putting money in the rich people's pocket's when the poor people are suffering and are hungry. I say that it would be absolutely wrong to pass this Resolution; too many people are out of work today and there is no chance of their getting any employment. We must either rise to the hour or sink in despair. I hate to think that we will sink in despair because I see that there are certain brains who can rise to the hour. I must appeal for that spirit of goodwill and harmony so that we can get together and formulate plans for the good working of the Government and for the people of this island.

Mr. ADAMS: I wish to congratulate the honourable member on his speech. I would say practically the same thing although I might use different language.

Mr. SPEAKER: I think that the honourable member has already spoken.

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

ORDER POSTPONED

Mr. SPEAKER: The first Order of the Day under Private Members' Business to resume debate on the motion that this House adjourn for 5 minutes in order to consider that in the opinion of the House the failure of the Government to formulate and declare its policy with regard to the assistance it is prepared to afford new industries is disadvantageous to the best interest of the island. On the last occasion when this motion was being debated the honourable senior member for St. Philip moved the adjournment of the debate and the motion was seconded by the honourable senior member for St. John. The honourable senior member for St. Philip has the right to continue his speech

SUSPENSION OF RULE 61 (B)

Mr. ADAMS: I have not spoken with honourable members before but since we have gone so far with the Resolution which we have just been considering, I am asking honourable members now to agree to the suspension of Rule 61 (b) and let us try and finish the Resolution. I am not suggesting that we should not proceed with Private Members' Business, but that we shou'd try and finish this Resolution. I would just like to say that under the Act you are bound to make this Order. All the other islands have passed their Act with these allocations——

Mr. SPEAKER: I do not think I can allow the honourable member to make a speech.

Mr. ADAMS: I am appealing to honourable members to go on with this Resolution. We have passed the Act fixing the rates for 1947 and we said that in future we would deal with the matter by Resolution. That is why this Resolution is before the House now and I appeal to honourable members to vote for the suspension of the Rule. I ask leave to move for the suspension of Rule 61 (b).

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

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

Mr. TALMA: I beg to second that.

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

A division was taken as follows:—

Ayes: Dr. WILSON, Messrs. SMITH, SYMMONDS, F. L. WALCOTT, HUSBANDS, COX, FOSTER, MAPP, TALMA, ADAMS, BLACKMAN, CRAWFORD, GARNER and Dr. CUMMINS—14.

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

SUGAR INDUSTRY (REHABILITATION, PRICE STABILISATION AND LABOUR WELFARE) ORDER

Mr. SPEAKER: When Government Business was last being considered, the House were debating a Resolution to approve the Order entitled "The Sugar Industry (Rehabilitation, Price Stabilisation and Labour Welfare) Order, 1948," made by the Governor-in-Executive Committee under the provisions of section 3 (1) (c) and 4 (3) of the Sugar Industry Rehabilitation, Price Stabilisation and Labour Welfare) Act, 1947 (1947-13).

Mr. ADAMS: I am asking for permission to speak because I remember that when I got up to second the motion for the passing of the Resolution, the honourabe senior member for St. Thomas also got up; I sat back down and he seconded the motion.

Mr. SPEAKER: I cannot allow the honourable member to speak again except with the permission of the House. The honourable member is asking for permission to speak again: if there is no objection, the honourable member will be granted that permission. There being no objection, the honourable member is allowed to speak again.

Mr. ADAMS: I was saying just now that I welcome the speech of the honourable junior member for St. Philip; as the honourable member has said, this is nothing with which you should play politics. I welcome such a speech all the more coming from the honourable member, because some of the people with whom he is associated seem to think that they are doing a lot of good to the community by merely cursing the Government in power or the Leader of the House. They fail to realise, as the honourable member has realised, that the whole of our economy is based on sugar. The existence of nearly all the population of this island depends upon sugar and in order to assist in putting the sugar industry on a proper basis, we may be unduly balancing the scales in favour of one section of the sugar industry and against the mass of people who labour in the industry, the people whose wants are not sufficiently catered for. There is no member of the Government who does not feel like the honourable junior member for St. Philip; this is a matter of supreme importance and as the honourable member has pointed out, we have to drop stupid, partisan animosities and join together and use cold, dispassionate logic when we consider the future of the sugar industry. There are times when I am amazed at the childishness of people who write to the Press or who occasionally write leaders in the daily Press. Which of us is so silly as not to see that, as I have expressed it elsewhere, we will always have mechanisation with us? The first man who evolved a wheel made a revolution in transport, and obviously you cannot be for ever putting burdens on people's heads instead of building carts for carrying the burdens quickly. I take it that the point of view of the honourable junior member for St. Philip is the point of view of the members of the Government, that democracy unplanned is as bad as the worst totalitarian system, and that it will be necessary in rehabilitating the sugar industry not merely to give money but to consider carefully how it is to be expended by the factory or plantation owner. In an agricultural community like Barbados regard must be paid to the displacement of manual labour by machines. I am as emphatic as the honourable junior member for St. Philip that this Government has got to control the importation of tractors into this colony and to issue licences carefully having due regard to the number of labourers that you are displacing by these tractors. I attended a meeting of the Rehabilitation Board last Wednesday and this is a question which has come up for serious consideration. We are continuing the meeting tomorrow. I want to state quite clearly and emphatically what my position is; throughout the ages, from the time when the industrial revolution in England began, you always have to consider not holding back development for ever, but regulating the pace of that development. Let us look at the condition of England as a result of the industrial revolution; they created manufacturers, they built up huge industrial centres to deal with a two million unemployment situation and they put money into the pockets of people who would have had to be kept alive by way of a dole. No matter the sneers of the illiterate and semi-illiterate who write letters or editorials, we have got to be very careful in rehabilitating the sugar industry and to see that the pace of mechanisation is carefully considered. After all, there are crises in the life of a community when it is necessary to control importation. It is platitudinous to say that today we cannot import motor cars from Canada or America at our sweet will; and there may be circumstances in which it is better to do without importing mechanical implements. I hope that the honourable junior member for St. Philip will not blush at my saying this: even when he makes mistakes, because he is fallible like the rest of us, he makes them due to the intensity of his desire to do something for the poor sections of the community. But the honourable member is making the greatest mistake of his life if he will not be a missionary among the common people and try and get his colleagues to help the Government who is as anxious as he is to see that the under-dog gets his share. As far as this Resolution is concerned, of all the colonies we are the only one which drafted the Bill in the way in which we drafted it. In section 3 (1) (a) and (b) reference is made to a levy on sugar and fancy molasses and then (c) says this:

"There shall be raised on all produce manufactured during any year subsequent to the year one thousand nine hundred and forty-seven such levy, if any, and at such rate or rates, as may be fixed in respect of that year by Order of the Governor-in-Executive Committee with the approval of the two Houses of the Legislature."

That is why this Resolution has been sent down and therefore we must pass it. What we can do, however, is what Jamaica notably has done and that is to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies to give a more elastic direction to the colonies as to the division of this money. I do not want to trespass on the reply of the honourable member in charge of the Resolution, but as regards the question of income tax, the honourable junior member for the City wrote a letter about it either to the Governor or the Colonial Secretary, the letter was sent to the Secretary of State for the Colonies

and a reply has been received. I cannot see how any factory owner who takes money out of these funds, can hope to get it exempted from income tax. When the money for sugar comes from the Ministry of Food and it goes into the Capital Rehabilitation Reserve Fund, there is no point at which it is taxed; but when a factory owner takes it out, it is income coming to him and he has to pay a tax on it. The trouble is that people feel that the sugar industry is everything, therefore you should do everything to help it; they feel that the factory owner must have a first-class, up-to-date factory and you must help him to get his machinery free of duty. But they fail to see that the factory owner is protected at all points. I say that no factory should become bankrupt because the dies are always laid in his favour. Any factory owner who loses should be put in jail for life. No factory owner ever pays for his canes until he has calculated for his depreciation and so on; and how a man is able to calculate these things beforehand is a Chinese puzzle which I have never been able to decipher. Of course my researches may not have been as elastic as they should have been. I am glad that the honourable junior member for St. Philip has given me this opportunity to re-assure honourable members that the Government is very conscious of the fact that the sugar industry is everything to this island and that we should always see that it is efficiently run; but I go so far as to say that we should like the aid of the honourable junior member for St. Philip and his colleagues in controlling the number of factories in this island. We want a longterm plan by which we will decide that this island is too small for more than four or five central factories. I would say that certain factories should not get one cent of this money; let them go to ruin first. We should plan correctly; let us have four or five factories running efficiently in certain districts and let us see that the others are closed down or do not let any money be wasted in repairing them. Let the Government come to the aid of four or five factories properly placed geographically in this island, and let them do the work of reaping the canes, let us not help a small factory to rehabilitate itself in the area where a big one is to be placed. I think that some eight or nine small factories have gone out of existence within the last few years and the Government is perfectly prepared to join in any scheme with Government funds properly controlled for putting the sugar industry on its feet again. I really got up to make this appeal to the honourable junior member for St. Philip. I welcome his appeal, I accept it; he has appealed to the members of the Government and also to other honourable members to stop playing politics and do something for the under dog. I accept that appeal in its entirety and on my part I am asking him to get his colleagues to see that this Labour Government is doing its utmost for the working classes in this island and not at the expense of the community. We do not want to destroy the sugar industry; we do not want to go down too heavily on one portion of the industry when there are people who are suffering because of the bad distribution of wealth in this colony. I repeat that I am glad for this opportunity of speaking; I assure the honourable junior member for St. Philip that both as a member of the Government and as a member of the Committee which is now sitting in relation to the matter of rehabilitation. I shall endeavour to see that the best is done for the labourer. I assure the honourable member that I, too, will join in any further protestation to the Secretary of State relative to the allocation of these sums so that something more will be given to labour welfare. So far, no colony has succeeded in getting an allocation in which labour welfare benefits any more. Jamaica has 5/- per ton instead of 10/- per ton for the Labour Welfare Fund and I know that the Caribbean Labour Congress has tried to get the amounts reallocated so that the amount in respect of labour welfare would be greater. It is not to say that persons of Labour views have been unmindful of what we consider an entirely inequitable allocation. We will endeavour to do what we have done in the past, but we have to follow what we did last year. In so far as this Resolution is concerned, I should like to point out that the money is not going to be spent in any wholesale "tractorisation" of this colony, so to speak. The Government has been approached, the planters might know this, and it has been suggested that plantations might be purchasing tractors, some of them to the same extent as the factories which would be creating a new policy; but the Executive Committee had agreed that this aid should be given only to the factories. If the present Rehabilitation Committee make recommendations to include the plantations then we will have to make an explanation to the House. When some plantation owners made application to the Government, the matter as to how the allocation was to be spent was referred to the Committee of which Dr. Saint is Chairman. The meeting which I attended last Wednesday was postponed because the honourable senior member for St. Philip was unable to attend, and it has been postponed until tomorrow for the honourable member's benefit. If the plantations are included in this matter, the feeling of the Legislature will have to be obtained as regards the method in which this money for rehabilitation is to be spent. I do not wish anybody to have any misconception as to the members of the Executive Committee from this House; our policy is that there should be a longterm policy aiming at lessening the number of factories in this island. The Government could aid in the construction of central factories larger than the largest in this island, and that aid would be with the object of making these factories as efficient as possible; but a condition of that aid would be that the factories are to be run on co-operative lines whereby everybody will be given a fair share of the profits and not merely the plantations which supply the canes to the factories. Alternatively, the shareholders would be those who are concerned with the growing of the canes and the manufactured product. That is what we are fighting for. Before I sit down, let me remind honourable members that the Government is comprised of four Labour members and five other members who are not always Labour members; and what the honourable junior member for St. Philip should do is to strengthen the hands of the four Labour members of the Government with his colleagues both inside and outside the House. If we get their aid we assure them that in a comparatively short time the policy which I have mentioned will be laid down. We are prepared to see that the under-dog gets his proper share of the market and that he will be rehabilitated before the factories are rehabilitated, using the graphic language of the honourable junior member for St. Philip.

Mr. CRAWFORD: I think that a reference to the records of this House will show that as far back as 1943 I issued a warning in respect of the increasing mechanisation of the sugar industry of this colony. On more than one occasion I endeavoured to point out that if any indiscriminate mechanisation of the sugar industry were allowed to continue, the colony

would eventually reach a point at which work could not be provided for a large part of the population. During that period of time the honourable senior member for St. Joseph was a member of the Executive Committee, and I am somewhat interested to see that he has now been converted to my way of thinking.

Mr. ADAMS: Never in my life have I ever thought other than what I said today. That is a deliberate lie.

Mr. CRAWFORD: I said that five years ago I issued this warning and all down the years the hon ourable senior member for St. Joseph sat as a member of the Executive Committee and you never heard a word about this increasing mechanisation of the sugar industry. The position now is that we are trying to lock the stable now that the horse is out. Every single plantation in this colony has almost all the machinery it wants; the plantations have their tractors, their weeding machines, their grass cutters, etc., and they even rent this machinery to the surrounding plantations and people who have not got any. To raise a howl now that the effect of this machinery is disastrous to the workers is tantamount to locking the stable after the horse is out. The honourable senior member for St. Peter and the honourable junior member for St. Thomas have both declared that they are concerned about the creation of an unemployment problem in this colony; they have now begun to see that there is a lot of unemployment and starvation in the colony and we have to do something about it: I am glad to see that they have realised the gravity of the situation. I presume that when the honourable senior member for St. Joseph referred to the colleagues of the honourable junior member for St. Philip, I was included; but would you believe that the Party to which the honourable senior member for St. Peter and the honourable junior member for St. Thomas belong — if it is to be assumed that the Party is concerned with the unemployment problem—has done nothing by way of affording relief to, or stem the tide of, starvation in this colony? Last year we voted money to begin the canalisation of the Constitution Swamp; the Government imported all the machinery for doing work on this project—

Mr. SPEAKER: That has nothing to do with this Resolution.

Mr. CRAWFORD: The question of umployment is bound up with this matter.

Mr. SPEAKER: The whole point is whether this money is to be allocated as it has been suggested that it should be allocated or in any other way.

Mr. CRAWFORD: Before I begin to deal with the Resolution itself I have to be able to assess the depth of the sincerity of the remarks which have been made so far. If you are concerned with the unemployment situation, when work could have been started at Seawell or on the Constitution Swamp, it should have been started.

Mr. SPEAKER: You can deal generally with the question of unemployment.

Mr. CRAWFORD: It has been argued that the allocation in respect of labour welfare is insufficient and that the workers themselves are in greater need of rehabilitation than the manufacturing end of the sugar industry. Let us consider the facts of the case. This money has been given by the British Government as a result of representations made by the sugar producers in the Caribbean area and also as a result of representations made by representatives of the working class organisation in the area, the allocations having been fixed by the British Government. The honourable junior member for St. Philip has emphasized the point that the small cane farmer should also share in the amount allocated for the rehabilitation of the industry and that matter is now being looked into by a Committee which has been appointed to consider the question. The allocations as made by the British Government are: £1. 10s. for Capital Rehabilitation, £1 for Price Stabilisation and 10/- for Labour Welfare. The hon senior member for St. Joseph said that the last meeting of the Committee was postponed because of my absence and I want to say now that I telephoned to say that I had another meeting with Mr. MacDonald and therefore I could not attend that meeting.

Mr. SPEAKER: You can say that you could not attend the meeting owing to unavoidable circumstances.

Mr. CRAWFORD: I was explaining the position. I attended the previous meeting and the honourable senior member for St. Joseph was not there. In this matter the British Government was concerned more with the question in relation to the British people themselves than that which concerned the Caribbean colonies; in respect of the sugar manufactured in the West Indies th machinery was to be ordered from Great Britain only. The price charged for the machinery is greater than what was charged before the War and it is greater than the price at which machinery can be obtained from markets outside the Empire. So that the decision to allocate this comparatively large sum for the rehabilitation of the sugar industry was made with the major intention of ensuring that the Caribbean sugar manufacturers should order British machinery in the manufacture of their sugar. There is also another side of the story; we have to pay strict attention to the entire situation with regard to sugar production from the point of view of being able to compete with other sugar-producing countries. In January last year Cuba sold sugar to Great Britain at roughly eight cents a pound, and by the end of the year in consequence of a crop of over six million tons of sugar, she was selling Britain the sugar at three cents a pound; nobody knows what price may be offered for sugar next year. Even although we have a limited agreement with regard to the price paid for sugar, we have to bear in mind that we are as financially crippled as Britain is and no British government can tell an economically embarrassed British taxpayer that he must pay eight cents a pound for sugar when he can get it at three cents a pound. Therefore in any long-term policy we have to bear in mind the urgent necessity which exists for guaranteeing that the workers get a proper wage, that the sugar industry is kept on its legs and the fact that if there is a world slump in the price of sugar and our production goes down, we shall have the sugar for ourselves and there will be no export trade. It is therefore essential for this Government while taking steps even at this late hour to protect the workers employed in the sugar industry, also to begin to assist other industries to be started in the colony. The Government should offer attractions to people to come here and set up new industries so that these industries should be able to absorb any surplus labourers who find themselves out of work in consequence of any increased mechanisation of the sugar industry. (Hear, hear). Now Sir, imagine a Government which claims to be interested in this unemployment problem admitting that people who own textile factories in Great Britain and other manufacturers have asked to be allowed to establish industries if we will only offer them the concessions offered by other West Indian colonies! (A MEMBER: That is not true). The Colonial Secretary said that enquiries

were made by the people from Great Britain and elsewhere—

Mr. SPEAKER : I think that the honourable member is going a little wide of the principle of the Resolution.

Mr. CRAWFORD : I am endeavouring to point out that the conditions over which we have no control make it essential that the worker be protected, and we cannot always guarantee the price which we are getting for sugar to-day.

Mr. SPEAKER : The honourable member was speaking about other industries being started here.

Mr. CRAWFORD : What I am saying is this; for five years I have been emphasising that we should prevent any indiscriminate mechanisation of the sugar industry until steps are taken to start some other industries. Obviously if you import machinery you are going to put people out of work and I did not wait until that happened to see it. Five years ago I tabled an Address in this connection, but nothing was done about the matter, and now the position is that practically every plantation has all the machinery it wants. The evil is now on us, not facing us. Even if you stop the importation of machinery now, are you going to dump in the sea all the machinery that is in the colony? There is enough machinery in the colony to keep pepole out of work for ten years. Only a few days ago I saw at Dover a field that was lying fallow for years and in four hours a tractor had it all ploughed! That would have afforded people about sixteen weeks' work. We have got to realise that the machinery is here at the moment and now we are raising a howl which is merely vote-catching. The honourable junior member for St. Philip has rightly tried to point out that there must be some point at which we will be able to rehabilitate the people employed in the industry, and at the same time we should do our best to maintain the economy of the country. I repeat that we are now merely raising our voice in vote catching and playing to the gallery, but we should realise that the unemployment situation is grave; malnutrition and starvation are rife and the situation is worse than what people imagine. Last year about 100 out of 500 babies born in St. Philip died from starvation, and since last year we were trying to get the Government to commence the work at Seawell and they will not do anything although we have voted the money for doing this work. The mothers could not feed these babies and we have to be thankful for the kindness of a few people who give a little Cod Liver Oil and milk to children. Of course, these people feel that that was due and owing to the people; the suffering in the parish has now touched their hearts and they have realised that for years their ancestors were robbing the people out of their wages. There is a high infant mortality rate in the parish of St. Philip; no rain has been falling and a few people give some children this Cod Liver Oil and milk once a week; the effect has been noticed in that there has been a decrease in the infant mortality rate in the parish. The lives of a few children have thus been saved.

Mr. SPEAKER: Let us deal with the matter of the Resolution now.

Mr. CRAWFORD: The infant mortality rate in other parishes is just as high. As regards the East Coast Road, we cannot get any work started there either. I want to assure honourable members that the honourable junior member for St. Philip and myself have given a lot of consideration and attention to this question of the mechanisation of the sugar industry. We realise that our parish is one of the hardest hit in this colony even in good weather and we should be very careful about bringing in machinery and putting people out of work. We realise that we may have to compete with large sugar-producing countries which can produce this commodity at a rate below that which we are producing it at present; therefore we are going to have to provide local schemes of employment for people who are not employed on the sugar estates, and we shall have to use every effort to attract industrialists to come here and start new industries. As far as the agricultural workers are concerned, those in the most primitive parts of the island do not hope to go through life from the cradle to the grave digging cane holes and forking straight banks; they are coming to town with the hope of getting something more to do. The agricultural workers will remain in the land until they can find something else to do; they are only too glad to get away from the land. Therefore any Government which is alive to its responsibilities will leave no stone unturned in fostering other industries and providing other sources of labour and other avenues of employment which can pay better wages than the sugar industry will pay, industries which are not so completely under the control of world fluctuations and prices and weather conditions. Sugar is a delicate economy; two or three years of unfavourable weather conditions and the whole island is ruined; and if as happened before, other sugar-producing countries begin to dump sugar on the market, we shall find ourselves back to the place where we were in the middle 20's. The answers to the present situation are three. In the first place, years ago we should have started to prevent this indiscriminate mechanisation of the sugar industry; and secondly, we should have started—even at this late hour we can start—to encourage new industries and so find other means of employment for our people. Lastly, no Government which professes to be interested in the people can afford to sit down and do nothing in connection with large-scale schemes which can provide employment for an appreciable number of our people.

Mr. WARD: I have heard all the various statements which have been made and I feel that while some of those statements have been fairly justifiable, others have been utter nonsense. The Resolution before us asks for the £1 for the Capital Rehabilitation Reserve Fund. I am sure that at the present moment neither this House nor any individual knows exactly what the position is in respect of this Fund as far as the factory is concerned, because no definite decision has been arrived at as to the direction in which the money is to be paid out. Up to now no definite decision has been arrived at as to how the money in respect of the Labour Welfare Funds is to be paid out and the scheme has been going on for two years. When this money was allocated by the British Government to these West Indian Colonies it was specifically set out in the Memorandum that it should be allocated to the Capital Rehabilitation Reserve Fund, and it was recommended that the money should be spent in connection with the improvement of machinery for the purpose of increasing the efficiency and production of the factory as a whole. The British Government realised that if the West Indies were to continue to produce sugar they would have to compete with other countries outside their domain; and therefore they must put themselves in a position to be able to compete with these outside countries. It was felt, as the honourable junior member for St. Philip has said, that the allocation of this money was made in the wrong way; the honourable member said that the allocation should have been made in respect of the land as well as factory on a basis where the factory can increase its efficiency, so that it can pay more for it canes and therefore

the cane grower will automatically receive some of the benefit of the allocation which was made to increase the efficiency of the factory. If you take into consideration the fact that you have got to compete with other sugar-producing countries, it means that you must find a way in which to produce your sugar on a more economical basis than you are producing it at present. We were told, therefore, that we must find a way in which to produce our sugar on a more economical basis than we are producing it at present. It was necessary at that time to import certain types of machinery so as to reduce the cost of the output of sugar as well as to increase the production of the land which was also essential to the output of the factory. The position is such that it is of no use our keeping any noise now; as the honourable junior member for St. Philip has said, ruin is ahead and that cannot be avoided now. The machinery is here and it is not here for the purpose of wiping out any individual: it is here to keep some people alive, otherwise some estates would grow grass and be barren. The position is that prices for labour have been fixed only for the purpose of catching votes, regardless of those who die for starvation when you cannot employ them; they have fixed prices in respect of some of these people a long way above those which are paid artisans, masons and engineers. People knew that we must try and produce sugar economically and they are now saying that we are putting people out of work by the importation of machinery! We would not like to put people out of work; personally, I would prefer to employ people than to use the machinery: but I cannot employ them and run the plantation in ruin. If I did that, I will be starved and the people will be starved as well. We have had some dry periods within the past few years and, as the honourable junior member for St. Philip has said, there is starvation in certain parts of the island. People would be glad to work but you cannot employ them. Some estates have lost money and they cannot even borrow any money from the Bank. I know that some estates cannot pay out any backpay unless they get money from the Bank. These matters must be brought to the notice of the public and we must not be able to get away with any rankling talk. It is the duty of honourable members to keep everybody in the colony going; if you want to push me out of existence you are pushing the other man out of existence too. I know very well that the peasants of this island are not in a position to get certain mechanical conveniences and I have ploughed some peasants' land in my district. (A MEMBER: That is good). It must be borne in mind that if these prices for labour are to continue, the peasants must feel the pressure. There is no getting away from these facts. It is all right for honourable members to get around a table and talk without knowing the facts; we must realise that we have had a short crop, no rain has fallen and even if you did not have any tractors, the people would still be walking about. If this Government were energetic they would be able to find work for some of the people in the circumstances. We have voted money to be spent on projects in this island and nothing at all has been done; it is the Labour Government which is starving the people today. I make no apology for what I am saying; I am saying what I know. I feel that it is the duty of this community to give the factories all possible support and let them pay as much money as possible for canes so that the peasant and the worker can get their fair share of the industry. Sir, we are running around merely keeping noise and doing nothing; and if we are not careful we will be in the same position this day year as that in which we now are. If there is another drought, we will not only be hungry, but we will suffer from thirst as well. Some people believe that some factories make a fortune; but some of these factories owe away a lot of money. Probably some people will not believe that. Mr. Speaker, you were the owner of a factory and you did not shut it down for love. I feel that we should not interfere with this allocation at the present time; we must have some very good reason before we can change what has been set out here. Every man is entitled to live and I feel that we should not try to put people out of work on account of the use of machinery. I feel, however, that the price of labour has advanced at such a rate that it has outrun the production of sugar and the only thing on which you can fall back is machinery. With the conditions as they are at present, if you wipe out the machinery, then everybody will be starved. The peasants are unable to work their land under the present conditions. Sir, as the honourable junior member for St. Philip has said, there is trouble ahead, and serious trouble too, in my opinion; and it is too late now to try to avoid what is coming to the island especially if we do not get any rains in the near future.

Mr. COX: I have listened most attentively to the speeches made by honourable members, more especially those of the honourable senior member for St. Philip and the honourable senior member for St. Lucy. They both spoke in the same strain. It amazes me to see how some people can make such a big somersault overnight. The honourable senior member for St. Lucy has said that wages were pushed up out of proportion to those of some artisans and it was done with the object of catching votes.

Mr. SPEAKER: Do not let us assume the reasons for saying things.

Mr. COX: You will agree that so many anomalies are brought in that it is the duty of honourable members who have any sense of responsibility to counteract any wild statements. I was only going to say that if anybody takes he trouble to calculate the wages paid to the workers at the plantations, he will see that these wages do not exceed $10 a week. I am sure honourable members will agree that less than $10 a week cannot attract anybody at all.

Mr. SPEAKER: We are not now debating the cost of living.

Mr. COX: I think that has something to do with this matter but I will not dwell on it because I know that the payment of these wages will be a bagatelle for a person like the honourable senior member for St. Lucy. I am prepared to vote for this Resolution and I appreciate what the honourable senior member for St. Joseph has said, namely, that something must be done to adjust the various amounts paid into these funds. There should be an increase in the amount paid in respect of Labour Welfare and a reduction in the amount delative to Capital Rehabilitation. It is difficult to understand how year after year the factory owners say that they are not making any money and yet they are not willing to get rid of their factories. We were told here a week or two ago by the honourable junior member for St. Andrew that a certain factory owner declared that for five years the factory made no money and no trade tax could be paid. That is unbelievable. No thinking person would believe that a factory owner would run his factory at a loss if he depended on it for his income. Some hon. members have dealt with the question of productivity or non-productivity of the factories and competition from outside with regard to sugar. The British Government has assured us a price for our sugar for five years and whether or not we produce this commodity at a more reasonable cost than

formerly, we are going to get the same price for it; therefore it is unreasonable to say that we must bring in all sorts of machinery in order to produce this sugar at a cheaper cost at the expense of some people, when we know that we will get a fixed price for our sugar for five years. The hon. senior member for St. Philip spoke about the Government not controlling the importation of machinery for working the land; he said that in 1943 he made a motion relative to the question of the mechanisation of the sugar industry but he was actually powerless. But in 1946 the hon. member was a member of the Government and during that period he never said anything about the matter in this House; so that while he was not in power he was quite willing to do something about the matter but when he was given an opportunity to do something about it, he did nothing. The Executive Committee included four members of this House who claimed to be representing labour and the hon. senior member for St. Philip would have had all the co-operation necessary to prevent this machinery from coming into this colony. On the contrary he tried to defend mechanisation.

Mr. CRAWFORD: I cannot have my remarks misquoted. I ask the honourable member to quote a single sentence which I used and in which it could be said that I defended mechanisation as such.

Mr. COX: I am quite willing to withdraw my statement if I am wrong; but I am sure that anybody who has the slightest intelligence will know that the hon. member was trying to defend mechanisation.

Mr. CRAWFORD: I cannot allow that remark to pass unnoticed.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member pointed out that if there was mechanisation arrangements would have to be made for employing labour.

Mr. CRAWFORD: I also pointed out that we might be faced with the fact of sugar being produced at a cheaper rate in the future; and bearing in mind that we have enough mechanisation here, we should take the necessary steps to meet the situation.

Mr. COX: I understand that the hon. member met capitalists and decided on questions including nationalisation. They know that the Workers Union are making the people of this colony pay better wages to the workers than were paid before.

Mr. CRAWFORD: If Your Honour is permitting the honourable member to make remarks which are either irrelevant or untrue I shall have, in duty bound, to rise in protest. It is not my fault if the honourable member is absolutely incapable of understanding simple words which are used on the floor of this House and I am in sympathy with him.

Mr. SPEAKER: Is the honourable member making an explanation?

Mr. CRAWFORD: The honourable member said that I met people and agreed on certain things. It is beyond my knowledge that political parties are not perfectly entitled to discuss a platform for a legislative session.

Mr. COX: I was speaking along the same lines on which the honourable member spoke. I think I have said sufficient in this matter and I repeat that I am supporting this Resolution at this time. None of us will be so stupid as to believe that the sugar industry is so badly off as some of the representatives of the industry would have us believe. We can see that there is luxury and wealth all around when the people who do the work are in misery and under starvation. At any rate, I have seen sufficient in this debate this afternoon to convince me as to how certain organisations are working and I hope at a future date to say something more about the matter.

Mr. WILKINSON: I think that honourable members have got away from the Resolution which is before us and I will endeavour to bring them back to it. I am surprised that we have had this debate this afternoon because this Resolution is only to carry out the instructions of the Secretary of State for the Colonies, the Act having been passed two years ago. I have been told that some of the other islands did not adopt the recommendations and no Regulations went before their representatives. In British Guiana the money has been paid out for last year and probably for this year already. The biggest argument seems to be in respect of this question of Capital Rehabilitation. I do not think that honourable members realise the expenses entailed in keeping up a factory. We have heard a lot of talk about factory owners' wealth, but if honourable members would go into the figures—I am sure the figures can be obtained —they will see that in nearly every case the factory is just a means of turning the raw material into a saleable article, and that is what it should be. Unfortunately, during the past few years, the cost of maintaining a factory has gone up probably over 300 per cent. I think the honourable senior member for St. Joseph or the honourable senior member for St. Philip said that the sugar producers had approached the Secretary of State for the Colonies in connection with these funds being opened up; but my recollection is that that is not so.

Mr. CRAWFORD: I said that they approached the Ministry of Food for an increase in the price of sugar and in granting this increase the Ministry of Food did it along these lines.

Mr. WILKINSON: The increase in the price of sugar was not as much as what had been asked for and the Secretary of State thought it necessary to bring these funds into existence, which we gladly accepted two years ago. The cost of machinery has gone up over 300 per cent and some honourable members seem to think that all this money is going to the factory owners. Not one penny of the money has been paid out except to the Secretary who is employed, and it will not be paid out until the Board is satisfied that the money will be spent on improvements and maintenance. During the year many items could not be obtained either from England or the United States of America and I repeat that the cost of replacements is over 300 per cent. more than what it was before the War. The honourable junior member for St. Philip laid emphasis on the point that the peasants will be getting nothing, but that is not true; the peasants are bound to benefit in the efficiency of the factory and so with the plantation owners. The cane farmers and the plantation owners are bound to benefit from the prices of canes delivered to the factory. As regards the price paid for canes I have heard some very disparaging remarks used and I would ask honourable members to produce a peasant farmer of any other of these West Indian islands to say that he got for his canes the price which we have been paying for them in Barbados. It is a well known fact that in Barbados we pay a very good price for canes; I challenge anybody to produce reliable figures to show that any other West Indian island has paid what has been paid for canes in Barbados. I am connected with two factories and I am heavily in debt because of the endeavour to keep them up to date. I take it that the idea of creating these funds was that at any time assistance could be given to the factories. One honourable member talked about the price of sugar having been guaranteed for five years: I do not know anything about that. I can assure honourable members that these things are not even guar-

anteed for next year. What I do know is that the British Government will take our sugar and they will consider giving a preference. I do not know anything beyond that. I think that too much time has been wasted on this matter; as the honourable senior member for St. Joseph has said, we cannot make any change now and I agree with the honourable member that in future we can ask to be given a little more latitude in the distribution of the funds. At present there is a Committee sitting in connection with the administration of these funds. With the exception of British Guiana I do not think that any of the islands has paid out any money. As the honourable senior member for St. Joseph has explained, the Committee will meet again to-morrow and I hope that we shall be able to meet with a feeling of compromise so that we can get something done. The Banks are laughing at us; they have collected this money but none of it has been paid out. I do not see any reason for any lengthy debate on this Resolution and I will not keep back this House any longer.

Mr. DOWDING: I would like to say a few words on this matter. This long debate has resolved itself into a mere question as to whether we should improve the sugar industry or not. As the honourable senior member for St. Joseph has said, the economy of this island depends on sugar, and therefore it must follow that we must get the greatest possible production of sugar in every manner so that the people of this island may be sustained. Honourable members are taking a very short-sighted view of this matter; in other countries they are mechanising the sugar industry and sugar is being produced at the rate of 70, 80 and 100 tons per acre. (A MEMBER: And the workers have electric lights in their houses). An honourable member has said that the workers have electric lights in their houses and that is what we want too. If sugar is thrown on the open market, this island cannot begin to compete with other countries where they are mechanising the industry. This island has just experienced two years of drought and even although we have had this experience, figures can be obtained to prove that on account of improved methods of cultivation, a greater tonnage per acre has been obtained in the island. The same thing exists today in connection with the factories. The honourable senior member for St. Joseph knows that the factories are incapable of reaping any large crop now and where is all this machinery coming from? The War which began in 1939 is still going on, and we cannot get anything not even to eat. The suggestion has been made that the sugar factories of this island should not be improved; (MEMBERS: Who said that?) but the sooner they are improved the better it will be for this island, because it is on sugar that the whole population depends. Today the factories in this island are by no means properly equipped on account of the War, and Mr. Speaker, I would like to warn honourable members that there is the possibility of this island becoming null and void in the near future if sugar is thrown on the open market. Instead of our wasting all this time, we should have realised the necessity for improvement in the sugar industry; we should have arrived at the proper decision in the matter, get the money to be spent and let the people of this island be employed, people who are suffering and who I saw were willing to eat each other so as to get a hole of potatoes last Saturday.

Mr. MOTTLEY: I think it is right that I should add my contribution to this debate. Although it might appear to some honourable members that this debate has been a waste of time, yet I think it has done a lot of good. Sir, you have allowed honourable members much latitude, more especially in the discussion of the question of the mechanisation of the sugar industry in this colony. The honourable senior member for St. Peter started off by enquiring whether this money is liable for income tax—

Mr. SPEAKER: Do not let us debate that.

Mr. MOTTLEY: I am just reviewing the situation. As we progressed we found the debate centring around the question as to whether or not the portion of the funds allocated to Labour Welfare was sufficient. It has been clearly pointed out that these allocations have been made by the Colonial Office, and it has been suggested that a protest should be made setting out the situation in Barbados and asking that the allocation in respect of Labour Welfare is increased. Speaking for myself, I think that that is a very admirable suggestion and no stone should be left unturned to see that the allocation relative to Labour Welfare is increased. I suppose that every honourable member knows exactly what the position is in respect of Price Stabilisation. When the honourable junior member for St. Philip spoke, he made reference to the condition of some of the factories in this colony, and that is not to be sneered at. It is true that if anybody did not care to make any improvements at all to his factory, then to have an allocation from the Capital Rehabilitation Reserve Fund for the purpose of improving the factory unless the matter had been very carefully gone into, would not be in the interest of the sugar industry.

Mr. SPEAKER: But under the Act money is distributed by the Board in a manner to be approved by the Governor-in-Executive Committee; and we cannot assume that the Governor-in-Executive Committee are not going to do the right thing.

Mr. MOTTLEY: I am not assuming that; I am just referring to the remarks of the honourable junior member for St. Philip.

Mr. SPEAKER: These remarks are not of much value because we must assume that the Governor-in-Executive Committee will do what they should do.

Mr. MOTTLEY: I take the honourable member's remarks very seriously. I do not consider the Governor-in-Executive Committee will act unfairly, and this is sufficient warning that they must be very careful in going into this matter. As to whether or not the importation of mechanical units not merely for the purpose of improving the factory but for agricultural purposes and claiming them through these funds would, in some way, displace labour in this colony. I was at pains to note the remarks of the honourable senior member for St. Joseph when he said —and he was rather rational—that you cannot permanently postpone the mechanisation of any industry in a country, more especially an industry which is so important as the sugar industry. I say that the Leader of the House was rather rational in his statement which was the most important statement made during the whole debate. Apparently surrounding the whole question of mechanisation is whether, with all that has been said about the importation of these mechanised units into this colony for the efficient production of sugar, it can be proved that with these units we are able to produce more sugar than we are normally producing under the old method. I think it is a recognised fact that up to now,—and it has been pointed out to us in the Press and otherwise—that we have been able to produce more sugar as a result of mechanised units than we have been able to produce years ago. Like the honourable junior member for St. Philip, I feel in this matter that whenever the Government proposes to restrict the importation of these mechanised units, they should first go carefully into the matter and see whether they cannot absorb in other industries such persons

as are displaced by the importation of these units. I feel further that if you can produce more sugar as a result of the use of mechanised units, then Income Tax shoud be levied on the money thus earned. If you produce, say 70 tons of sugar without mechanisation and 140 tons as a result of mechanisation, then the obvious thing to do is to take back the money in Income Tax and spend it on social improvements in the colony.

Mr. SPEAKER : Is that anything to do with this debate?

Mr. MOTTLEY : Latitude has been given to other speakers to put their point of view and——

Mr. SPEAKER: The point of view has been expressed that work should be provided for displaced labourers and that applies to every walk of life.

Mr. MOTTLEY : That is the other side of the matter; that is a question of slowing down mechanisation until you find an outlet for displaced labourers.

Mr. SPEAKER : The honourable member can speak generally.

Mr. MOTTLEY: What I am saying now is that you should develop your industry and I suggest strongly to the Government that they should be rather cautious in doing anything to prevent the maximum production, bearing in mind that the more you can produce the better it is for the country. If the money resulting from the increased production of sugar is taken back in income tax, you will be able to find work for a greater number of people. I cannot see that the mere cessation of the importation of mechanised units will be a panacea for our ills; the population of the colony has become too large to be carried by the industry. I am wondering if the land must be made use of for efficient production, whether we should not have a certain amount of mechanisation. I do not think that people should be asked to do to-day the laborious work which they had to do about 30 years ago, work which sapped their lives. At that time people had to work for eight hours a day carrying 300 and 400 pounds of canes on their heads; that was work to be done by oxen, not by human beings. My considered opinion is that we should go very cautiously into the matter of mechanisation; we should not do anything permanently to prevent the mechanisation of the sugar industry in this colony, but we should do everything to improve our output of sugar.

Mr. SPEAKER : I do not think it is in dispute that the output of sugar should be increased by the use of machinery.

Mr. MOTTLEY : I think that we should make every effort to see that a greater allocation is made in respect of Labour Welfare. I suppose that the real question relative to the importation of mechanised units will be discussed in this House, and I will reserve quite a lot of what I have to say on the question until that time. But there is a lot in what the honourable junior member for St. Philip has said and the Governor-in-Executive Committee should be very cautious in granting money for rehabilitation in respect of those persons who take everything out of their factories and then ask for money to rehabilitate them.

Mr. TALMA : I shall attempt to be as brief as possible more especially in view of the fact that this matter has been thoroughly ventilated. I must congratulate the honourable junior member for St. Philip on his speech, knowing that it was a speech made from his heart and not from his brain. Quite a lot of light has been thrown on the matter and that obviates the necessity of my trying to clarify many points. However, I should just like explain the purposes of these funds. The purpose of the Capital Rehabilitation Reserve Fund is to provide a source of funds to meet in part the cost of major renewals and improvements of factory machinery and equipment; the purpose of the Price Stabilisation Reserve Fund is to provide a reserve which can be utilised, if necessary, to mitigate the adverse effect of a reduction in the price of sugar; and the purpose of the Labour Welfare Fund is to provide funds to meet the cost of capital works for the improvement of the welfare of labourers engaged in the sugar industry. The point relative to an increase in the allocation in respect of Labour Welfare will receive due consideration. We all feel that the workers who are engaged in the industry are the backbone of the industry and they should receive greater amenities. The object of the Labour Welfare Fund is to improve the welfare of the labourers and provide certain amenities like community centres and things of that sort; it does not mean that the workers will be deprived of any part of their wages. The honourable senior member for St. Lucy has said that it is the Labour Government which is starving the people to-day. I do not see how that has anything to do with this Resolution. This Labour Government——

Mr. WARD : On a point of order. I said that for one or two years money has been voted for work to be done by this Government, nothing has been done up to now and the people are still hungry.

Mr. SPEAKER : One of the reasons for the difficult situation is the drought.

Mr. TALMA : I just want to contradict the honourable member's statement because it is a very reckless misstatement and a grave departure from what is the truth. The object of this Fund is thoroughly understood by everybody and the question of higher wages is separate and distinct from the Fund. It must be borne in mind that this Resolution is based on the Act which we have passed.

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

APPOINTMENT ON SELECT COMMITTEE

Mr. ADAMS : In view of the fact that the late junior member for St. Peter, who was a member of the Select Committee appointed to consider and report on the amenities of the House, has resigned membership of the House, I beg to move that the honourable junior member for St. John be put in his place.

Mr. TALMA seconded the motion which was agree to.

APPOINTMENT ON HOUSING BOARD

Mr. ADAMS : The late junior member for St. Peter was also a member of the Housing Board and I beg to move that his place on that Board be filled by the honourable senior member for St. Michael.

Mr. TALMA : I beg to second that.

Mr. GARNER : I feel that the new honourable member who has taken his seat to-day should be chosen to fill the vacancy on the Housing Board.

Mr. HUSBANDS : I beg to decline the offer.

The question that the honourable senior member for St. Michael be elected to fill the vacancy on the Housing Board was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

THE ADJOURNMENT

The Order Paper having been fixed,

Mr. ADAMS : I beg to move that this House do now adjourn to this day week, the 11th day of May, 1947 at twelve o'clock noon.

Mr. TALMA seconded the motion which was agreed to.

Mr. SPEAKER accordingly adjourned the House to Tuesday next, the 11th day of May, 1947, at twelve o'clock noon.