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HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Monday, 8th November, 1948.

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

Present:

His Honour Mr. J. E. T. BRANCKER (*Deputy Speaker*), Mr. L. E. SMITH (*Chairman of Committees*), Dr. H. G. CUMMINS, Messrs. F. L. WALCOTT, K. N. R. HUSBANDS, M. E. COX, D. A. FOSTER, R. G. MAPP A. E. S. LEWIS, C. E. TALMA, H. D. BLACKMAN, E. D. MOTTLEY, J. A. HAYNES, B.A., V. C. GALE and S. A. WALCOTT.

Prayers are read.

Messrs. DOWDING and SYMMONDS enter the House and take their seats.

MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting which was held on the 2nd November, 1948, having been circulated are taken as read and confirmed.

Mr. WILKINSON enters the House and takes his seat.

DEPUTY SPEAKER'S RULING *RE* COUNCIL'S AMENDMENT TO RESOLUTION TO MEET EXPENSES IN RESPECT OF DODDS PLANTATION

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: With regard to the amendment by the Honourable the Legislative Council to the Resolution for £3,600 to meet capital and recurrent expenses in respect of Dodds Plantation to the 31st March, 1949, I have given due consideration to the Resolution which was returned by the Honourable the Legislative Council to this House at the last meeting. Honourable members will recall that it contained an amendment and I pointed out at that time that I would have to decide whether or not it was a constitutional breach of privilege. It is laid down very clearly in May's Treatise that it is the function of the Speaker to direct the attention of the House, when occasion arises, to a breach of its privileges in Bills or amendments brought from the Other Chamber and to direct that a special entry be made in the Journal by which the House, in respect of particular amendments, signifies its willingness to waive its privilege, without thereby establishing a general precedent.

On considering this amendment which, in my opinion, does not materially infringe the privileges of this House, it is open to the House, if it so wishes, to waive privilege in this case. If the House so decides to waive privilege, it justifies its action by an entry inserted in the Journal under direction of the Speaker which, while implicitly asserting its general rights, explains its motives for not asserting them in this particular instance. In cases where the amendments are verbal or further the intention of the House or carry out the intention of the Assembly or make clear the intention of the House, such amendments come within the category of those which do not materially infringe the privileges of the House. This is an amendment in respect of which I suggest the House might well decide to waive privilege, and accept the amendment of the Other Chamber. It is an amendment, honourable members will recall, which consists of the deletion by the Other Chamber of the words "capital and" in the Resolution in respect of which the Committee of the House reduced the amount voted in the Resolution but inadvertently omitted to delete the words "capital and."

PAPERS LAID

Dr. CUMMINS: Mr. Deputy Speaker,—I have the honour to lay on the table of the House the following Papers:—

Message No. 36/1948 from His Excellency the Governor informing the Honourable the House of Assembly that the Governor-in-Executive Committee has decided not to proceed during the present Session of the Honourable House with the resolution to implement certain of the recommendations of the Salaries Commissioner as accepted or varied by the Governor-in-Executive Committee. (Cheers).

Message No. 37/1948 from His Excellency the Governor, with reference to the Addresses from the Honourable the House of Assembly dated the 22nd of June and the 14th. of September, informing the Honourable House that provision will be made in the next quarterly schedule of additional appropriation for the payment of salaries to the Official Reporters of the Legislature at the rates recommended by the Honourable House.

Audited Statement of the Housing Board's Account to the 30th September, 1948.

Statement showing the Gross Customs and Excise receipts for six months ended 30th September, 1948.

Quarterly return of transactions in Rum for the Quarter ended 30th September, 1948.

NOTICES.

Government Notices are given as follows:—

Mr. BLACKMAN: Resolution for £60 to supplement the provision in the Estimates of Expenditure for the year 1948-49 under Head VIII, Post Office, item 17, Occasional Labour.

Dr. CUMMINS: Of my intention to move the House into Committee of Supply at the next meeting to conisder the money Resolution of which notice has just been given.

COUNCIL'S AMENDMENT TO RESOLUTION TO MEFT EXPENSES AT DODDS PLANTATION.

On the motions of Dr. CUMMINS, seconded by Mr. BLACKMAN, the amendment of the Legislative Council to the Resolution for £3,600 to meet capital and recurrent expenses in respect of Dodds Plantation is read a first and a second time and is agreed to.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I instruct the Clerk to enter in the Journal of the House that, whilst implicitly asserting its general right, in this particular instance, inasmuch as the amendment only makes clear the intention of the House, the Assembly waives its privilege.

ORDER POSTPONED

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

Dr. CUMMINS: Mr. Deputy Speaker,—I ask leave to postpone this Order and the consideration of the Resolution under it, namely, a Resolution for £7,000 (to be subsequently refunded from loan funds) to meet the cost of (a) acquiring land for a road to connect the Belle Pumping Station with My Lord's Hill and for stores buildings and quarters for engineers and resident staff; and (b) constructing the road.

There being no objection, the Order and the consideration of the Resolution are postponed.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The next Order stands in the name of the honourable senior member for St. Thomas,—To move the House into Committee of Supply to consider the grant of sums of money for the service of the Government.

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

Mr. TALMA: I beg to second that.

Mr. LEWIS: Mr. Deputy Speaker,—I think the honourable senior member for St. Thomas should make clear the Resolutions with which he proposes to deal in Committe of Supply.

Dr. CUMMINS: I propose to deal with Resolutions 1 and 3.

Mr. SMITH: Mr. Deputy Speaker,—As it is my duty to be in the Chair when the House is in Committee of Supply I should like to compliment the Government on sending down the Resolution for £2,500 to help repair the houses of those poor sufferers which were damaged as the result of heavy rains and high wind on the 5th July this year. I, Sir, am very glad about it because I happen to be one of the persons who went about the parish which I have the honour to represent and, believe me, Sir, £2,500 will only help those in my parish alone because these people are living under most miserable conditions. There are some of these houses, Sir, in which I would be afraid to house a good animal of my own which cost me £50 and I hope that the Government will see fit to supplement this Resolution very soon so as to assist those poor suffers whose houses were not entirely blown away by the wind. I believe it would have been better for those poor people if the wind had completely blown away their houses.

The question that Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER do now leave the Chair and the House go into Committee of Supply is put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER leaves the Chair and the House goes into Committee of Supply, Mr. SMITH being in the Chair.

SUPPLEMENTARY VOTE FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORT.

Mr. BLACKMAN: The first Resolution, Sir, is for £16,175 to repair roads and bridges in the parishes of St. Lucy, St. Peter and St. Andrew which were damaged as the result of the heavy rains on the 25th September. I think that that is as much as I need say and I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

Dr. CUMMINS: I beg to second that.

Mr. WILKINSON: Mr. Chairman, — I am supporting this Resolution but not in its entirety. I had the pleasure of visiting these districts with the junior member for St. John last week and I can assure you that there is very considerable damage. We went first to Swan's where the bridge has collapsed and there is just sufficient room for a cart to pass. It appeared to us that if there were another heavy rain, more of the roadway there might give away. We then went to Warleigh and the damage there is similar to what took place about ten years ago. That is a serious state of affairs because it takes some time to rebuild this bridge. Then we went to Speightstown where, of course, the bridge is entirely gone. I quite agree that all this flood damage must be repaired but, Sir, if you will look at the addendum to the Resolution, you will notice that paragraph 4 states this: "An additional amount of £6,000 is included so that there will be a reserve to meet possible further flood damage to the 31st of March, 1949." Now, I think that that is a bit too optimistic. I quite agree that the Department should have some funds so that they could start work if we unfortunately had further flood damage, yet I do think that the sum of £6,000 is too excessive. In the Estimates we provided £2,000 for purposes of this nature, part of which is now being used, and I think it is asking us too much to vote a further £6,000 to be set aside as a reserve to meet possible further flood damage to the 31st March, 1949. After all, if we provide a reasonable sum — £2,000 or £3,000—it will be enough, in my opinion, to enable the Department to carry on until they can come back to this House as they have done on this occasion. I suggest to honourable members to reduce this amount by £3,000 and I now formally move that the sum of £16,175 be reduced by £3,000.

Mr. F. L. WALCOTT: I should like to say, in this matter, that I too must compliment the Government on its speedy action in sending this Resolution down to this House. But in view of the latter part of the remarks of the junior member for St. James I do not believe that he knows sufficient about this matter at all. He visited these places, he said, but I would like to point out to this Committee that the Warleigh bridge is broken and the Speightstown bridge is broken. Most of the

traffic is along the Round-the-Town road which is a very narrow road and at the present time it is a practical impossibility for two lorries to pass each other on that road. The bridge in the Round-the-Town district is lighter than either of the two other bridges and if anything should happen to it, the parish of St. Lucy and this part of the island would be cut off completely and travel to and from Bridgetown would have to be by way of Morgan Lewis road. I am not an engineer but I believe that it would be a short-sighted policy to reduce this vote. Why reduce it? If this money is not spent, it would lapse in the Treasury and I think we should make adequate provision for any emergency that may arise in this form. No person in this House knew that those two bridges would have been damaged simultaneously. It has never happened that the Warleigh bridge and the Speightstown bridge broke down at the same time.

Mr. WILKINSON: Perhaps I can save some discussion if the honourable member would allow me to explain. I have not suggested that the amount for repairing the bridges should be reduced. What I have suggested is that instead of having a reserve of £6,000 in case more rains fall and there is further damage, the amount of the reserve should be £3,000.

Mr. F. L. WALCOTT: Precisely, Mr. Chairman, and how does the honourable member know that £10,000, instead of £6,000, may not be needed? There must be some argument to show why the amount should be reduced. Can any honourable member prophesy what is going to happen? I would like to point out to the introducer of the Resolution that now that the Government is about to repair these bridges, steps should also be taken to widen the Round-the-Town road; there cannot be proper vehicular traffic along that road because it is too narrow. The road is only 10 ft. wide and not later than some day last week an accident took place on it when a man was knocked off a bicycle. That road should have been widened years ago. Now that the two other bridges are damaged, imagine two omnibuses passing along that road! My colleague and I can speak with authority on this matter because we have to pass that road very often and we not only know that it wants widening but we also know that the people in the locality want it widened. The reaping of the crop will be soon begun; it is going to be a heavy crop and there is going to be a steady stream of vehicular traffic along that road as the result of the damage to the two other bridges. I would never be in favour of reducing this reserved amount because if it is not spent, it will be in the Treasury; it is well to have it as a safeguard. It is fortunate that this damage did not take place during the period in which the Legislature was prorogued. What would be the position if that had been the case? The people in that part of the island would be suffering until the House of Assembly meet again and vote money for the repair of the damage. As the senior member for the City would say, it would be parsimonious indeed if this vote is reduced on the ground that the reserve is too much. We are no oracles or prophets and do not know what is to happen.

Mr. SYMMONDS: I want to commend the Government for setting aside this £6,000 as a reserve to meet any unforeseen flood damage, not only because November may be the month for our heaviest rainfall and the House may not be in session at the particular moment when we may or may not have some further damage but also because I too have inspected these bridges throughout the island and I know that at this moment in the parish of St. George, Saltbury bridge, between Newbury and Tate Hill, is showing signs of falling in and will fall in, if some assistance is not given by the Government. I am hoping that the Highway Commissioners of St. George will be approaching the Government shortly for some assistance because this is a bridge over which very heavy traffic passes. Lorry loads of stone pass over it daily and when the crop is in full swing, peasants will be using it to get their canes to the factories. I feel that it is a very wise provision to set aside this £6,000 because we do not know what is going to happen. I do not think that we would be gaining anything by reducing this vote by £3,000. If the money is not spent, it will remain in the Treasury. We are hoping that the generous rainfall we have had this year will continue and there is no doubt about it that more money is going to be required for the repairing of bridges in this island. In passing, I want to express the hope that the draughtsmanship and the preparation for the repair of these bridges will be carried out by some responsible engineer because this is not the first time that these bridges have fallen in within recent years and it would be a misuse of public funds to re-erect them in a haphazard manner when there are engineers available to do the draughtsmanship and supervise the work. I understand that some of the parishes, right now, are experiencing difficulty in repairing those bridges which are showing signs of falling in and although an engineer has been appointed by the Government to assist with the tenantry roads in this country, his terms of reference do not include repairs to bridges and some parishes, including St. George, are facing the possibility, for want of technical advice, of not being able to repair these bridges. It would be a penny-wise-and-pound-foolish policy to allow those bridges which are showing signs of wear and tear to deteriorate further and I am hoping that the terms of reference of the engineer who now carries out the supervision of the repairs to the tenantry roads generally will be widened to include bridges. A stitch in time saves nine; much money will be saved by effecting these repairs at this moment and I am hoping that the Commissioners of St. George and other parishes will make an early appeal to the Government before this House dies, for assistance with funds and technical advice to repair any bridges which show signs of falling in. Let them do so in time for the crop season, so that the peasants in the various parishes, especially in the parish of St. George, will be relieved of the inconvenience at present suffered by the people in St. Peter at this moment because of the damage to their bridges.

Mr. WARD entered the House while Mr. SYMMONDS was speaking and took his seat.

Mr. HUSBANDS: Mr. Chairman,—Every member of this House knows well enough that this Resolution is the direct result of the questions I asked sometime ago relative to the damage done to bridges and roadways during the recent heavy rainfall, and I must add my quota of appreciation and congratulation to the members of the Government for acting so expeditiously in sending down this Resolution. I have seen every bridge in St. Peter, beginning at Diamond Corner in the north eastern part of that section down Six Men's on the Leeward coast, and I am happy to say that work has already been begun on these bridges. I had a very interesting conversation with the Parochial Medical Officer of St. Peter who pointed out to me the difficulties that lie before him, in case immediate repairs were not started on these bridges and I do not know if honourable members of this House realize that if the Diamond Corner Bridge was left in a state of disuse, owing to the damage done to it in that heavy rainfall, it would mean that the people of St. Peter in that part of the

island would have had to journey to Bridgetown by way of St. Andrew. Also in view of the large crop which is to be reaped, it would cause great inconvenience to the planters in St. Peter, I can assure this House, and, of course, a direct loss of revenue, if those bridges were not repaired. I do not understand the position of the junior member for St. James when he hinted a sort of cheeseparing policy in connection with this Resolution. As a matter of fact, the questions which I put in the House sometime ago went further than the immediate repair of these roads and bridges. I remember asking distinctly that in case of an emergency further provision be made to relieve any block in transportation that might result in a highway being put out of use. I do not think that we could commend the viewpoint put forward by the junior member for St. James because I do not feel that those who are responsible for acting so expeditiously—I will not say so generously because such an estimate must have been made by somebody competent to make it—have displayed foresight in making provision for things unforeseen. I think it is a bit mean and ungenerous that a suggestion such as that of the junior member for St. James should be made. I do not believe that a single member of this House would agree that there should by any reduction of this vote. I repeat that the Government should be commended and I hope, in connection with one of my questions I put in relation to these bridges and the damage to them that the Government will go further and set aside some amount to alleviate the distress that may at any time come to us in the form of an emergency.

Mr. TALMA: I rise to say that a matter of this nature should not have engaged the attention of this Assembly for longer than five minutes. If the Government did not make provision for the repairs of these bridges which are essential to all the people of this island, the Government would have been blamed; now that the Government has made proper provision for this purpose, we have a motion which has not been seconded and which should not be seconded, for a reduction of this amount of money. It is an absolute waste of time. If the Government did not do this, it would have been said that it should have been done; now that the Government has done it, it is being said that it should not be done. I cannot understand that type of mentality. This is the result of an act of God and instead of the reserve being £6,000, we might need £12,000 or £20,000 in the future. When the Government tries to do a thing in the right way, it is told that it is wrong and if it does not act, it is blamed. Where are we? I repeat that this is an absolute waste of time. There are many important matters on the Order Paper to be dealt with and we are acting in this stupid manner.

Mr. MOTTLEY: I rise to second the motion of the honourable junior member for St. James (Cries of "Shame"). Honourable members may cry "shame" as much as they like. It is not my policy to support motions for reduction of votes but, Sir, I have not heard any argument to show why this vote should not be reduced. This Resolution is for the sum of £16,175 and paragraph 3 of the addendum to the Resolution clearly states that the estimated cost of the repairs is £11,400; that there is an available balance in the current year's Estimates of £1,225, leaving a balance of £10,175 required to complete the repairs. The senior member for St. Peter suggested, in the course of his speech, the widening of the Round-the-Town road. Surely the honourable member knows that not one cent of this £6,000 which is to be set aside as a reserve can be spent in widening that road; that is a fact.

Mr. F. L. WALCOTT: On a point of explanation. I never said that the £6,000 should be used in widening the Round-the-Town road. I said that that road needs to be widened and that immediate steps should be taken to do so. I also said that we do not know what may happen in the next two or three months and the £6,000 would be there to be used in the case of an emergency. The honourable member must quote me correctly.

Mr. MOTTLEY: What the honourable member has said is beside the point. What is the real position? In the current year's Estimates the sum of £2,000 was provided under Head XXXII, Department of Highways and Transport as a reserve for extraordinary flood damage. At that time, honourable members will recall that the Government was telling the public over the air and in the Press to expect a storm and in the preparation of the Estimates £2,000 was set aside for extraordinary flood damage. I heard honourable members on that side of the House argue that to reduce this vote would be a wrong act. Well, I am only supporting the reduction because I feel that it is a question of a principle which we are following in so doing. If we are not to know more about the expenditure of money over and above stipulated sums, then the easiest thing to have done was to have set aside £20,000 in anticipation of damage which may have resulted from the storm. Of course it is true that if this £6,000 is not spent, it will remain in the Treasury but that is not the argument which we, on this side of the table, are putting forward. The argument which we are using is that if a vote or votes in the Estimates are to be overexpended, the particular Department should come back to this House, let us know what they are doing and get the required additional amount. If the junior member for St. James had challenged the estimate for the repairs, I would be the first to oppose him but if we are to follow ancient practice in this House, we should know when stipulated sums are to be overexpended. That is an argument which certain honourable members seem not to appreciate. It may also be argued that instead of setting aside £6,000 to repair bridges which have been damaged, the Department might import some special type of bridge, as has been suggested by the junior member for St. Peter in certain questions which he put recently, to be used in case of emergency arising from hurricane or severe flood that may cause any of our bridges to be temporarily put out of use. If we were thinking in terms of money only, the sum of £6,000 would be small for this purpose but we are thinking of a principle as well and this House still holds the purse strings. Although this is a small amount and although we are all desirous of seeing these bridges in proper repair and that proper arrangements are made for transportation, we cannot get away from the fact that this amount of £6,000 is too much to set aside as a reserve for this purpose and I have much pleasure in seconding the motion for the reduction of the vote. When the senior member for Christ Church talked about wasting time I am sure that he could hardly mean any of us on this side of the table because time is too valuable to us to waste it.

Dr. WILSON and Mr. GARNER entered the House while Mr. MOTTLEY was speaking and took their seats.

Mr. WARD: I totally agree with the honourable member who has just sat down. The question is not the amount of money that is going to be spent but a principle which we should try to observe. Now, within the last few years this House has been giving up most of its rights and privileges. This House is not being kept in touch with the affairs of the Department of Highways and Transport, as was the case when there were members of the House on the Central Road Board, so that we would know how the money is spent. We are told that during these months the storm period is over but I take it that when the

addendum states that "an additional amount of £6,000 is included so that there will be a reserve to meet possible further flood damage to the 31st March, 1949," the Department is anticipating further flood damage and I feel that if the £2,000 which has been set aside as a reserve in this year's Estimates for this purpose is spent, the correct procedure is for the Department to come back to this House, as they have done in this instance. In that case, this House, I am sure, would vote £20,000 if that were the estimate of the repairs; but, Sir, to give that Department £6,000 to be set aside as a reserve is tantamount to voting money without knowing what it is to be spent for. I am not one of those who will give any Department money to spend without giving this House some information as to how that money is going to be spent. We are not fighting the Government on the amount of this vote; we are fighting for the observance of a principle. If we were not to observe that principle in this instance it would mean that this Department would come in future for large sums of money and we would not be in a position to turn them down. We are not saying that the Department should have a reserve but we are saying that £6,000 is too much for the purpose. If there should be further flood damage, let the Department do what they are doing now, that is, prepare an estimate and come back to the House. The House will not be dead forever. We have had flood damage during the past eight weeks and only about £800 has been spent up to now; so I do not see the sense in voting £6,000 to-day when the Department can come back to the House and get what they want.

Mr. DOWDING: As long as I have the honour of a seat in this Assembly I shall not give blank cheques to any Department above the amounts which are necessary and reasonable. Here we are being asked———

Mr. TALMA: I rise to a point of explanation. £6,000 could not be regarded as a blank cheque; it is a specific amount.

Mr. DOWDING: Mr. Chairman,— As far as I am concerned, this £6,000 is a blank cheque because I do not know what is going to be done with it.

Mr. F. L. WALCOTT: On a point of order. The spending of this money will not take place without the sanction of the Governor-in-Executive Committee. Honourable members should acquaint themselves with the law of the island before they get up and make speeches. It is not true that this is a blank cheque. If this is a blank cheque, then the House gave a blank cheque for the £2,000 which it set aside in the Estimates as a reserve for purposes of this nature.

I repeat that this money can only be spent with the sanction of the Governor-in-Executive Committee.

Mr. DOWDING: Governor-in-Executive Committee or no Governor-in-Executive Committee, this House has the right to guard the purse strings in respect of the public's funds; it has no right whatsoever to sit here and grant this £6,000 when £3,000 will do. (VOICES: How do you know?) Some argue that the money will be in the Government's hands but, Sir, when it is spent, we would not know anything about it and it would not then be in the Government's hand. Why should we sit here and vote £11,400 to repair these two bridges, when they could import two bridges of the type that was used in the War and which would serve the same purpose? As long as I am in this House I intend to challenge the estimate of any expert, whether he be the Head of the Department of Highways and Transport or the Head of any other Department. He has given an estimate of £11,400 to repair these bridges and he wants this £6,000 as well. What is he going to do with this £6,000? There is absolutely no reason why this House should give £6,000 when £3,000 will do. This money is being asked for for a specific purpose. If, as my honourable colleague suggested, £3,000 of this £6,000 would be used to repair the Saltbury bridge I would be willing to vote for it because I would know the purpose for which it is going to be used. However, I can assure my colleague that steps have been taken in that direction and the matter of repairing the Saltbury bridge is going before the Authorities as soon as possible if it is not already there.

VOICES: Question!

Mr. LEWIS: Mr. Chairman,—I am going to make an appeal which, I hope, will not fall on deaf ears. In a matter like this, anybody's guess is the right one; this money may or may not be needed but previous estimates of this nature must of necessity have been based on previous experience and I have no doubt that the special reserve of £2,000 was based on the experience of flood damage in previous years. In the case where a reserved amount of £2,000 has been provided, it has come to pass that £12,000 is needed—£2,000 reserve and £10,000 now—to repair damage that has actually occurred. Sir, this Resolution was brought to this House since the 26th October and so far as I know, the last set of flood damage in the northern part of the island occurred in November. Certain repairs had to be effected in October and if after they got half way with the work, flood damage occurred again and washed away what was done, do not honourable members think that in the light of that experience a reserve of £6,000 is justifiable? Again, Sir, the House will be prorogued in the next couple of weeks; then there will be elections,—it is already admitted that they are to be held at a bad time of the year; then there will be Christmas and the re-opening of the House before business of this nature can be transacted; so that in the circumstances I am willing to agree to the reserve being fixed in the amount of £6,000 and I am appealing to the honourable members on the other side to appreciate that that is sound argument. The Department may not use this £6,000 before the 31st March next year, if they are spending at the rate which the senior member for St. Lucy stated but in view of the possibility of further damage from flood I would give them a reserve of £6,000 so that they would be able to carry on during the period in which the House may not be sitting. I sincerely hope that my appeal will not fall on deaf ears. This debate has taken an unusual turn. It would appear that whatever the Government brings to this House, argument could be adduced against it and some amendment made. I feel that on the facts of the case the Government is justified in asking for this reserve and it is obvious that in future a larger amount would have to be included in the Estimates for this purpose.

Mr. SYMMONDS: Before the question is put I should like to say that I do not think that certain honourable members are viewing this matter seriously enough. As the junior member for the City has said, this House will be prorogued within the next two weeks and during that period we shall be faced, in ordinary circumstances, with our heaviest rains of the year. Bridges throughout this island are damaged; some have fallen but the bulk of them throughout the island are damaged and there is no doubt about it that if the rains continue to fall we are going to be faced with a very serious situation. Any delay in the repair of these bridges may well mean that peasants throughout the island, who want their canes hauled to the factories will not be able to get them there; users of the public roads will be inconvenienced, not only those who have cars but people who have to walk will have to walk miles out of their way in order to reach their respective destinations. I agree

with the principle of keeping a close watch on the public's purse strings but I do not see any reason why, in such circumstances as these, £6,000 should not be set aside and left in the hands of the Governor-in-Executive Committee to meet what may be a necessary thing within the next few weeks. It is no use making a hard-and-fast rule because circumstances will alter many a case and this is one of them. I am prepared to support the passing of this Resolution and am hoping that the Commissioners of the several parishes will call upon the Government for further assistance. There is flood damage of the roads, not only in the leeward and northern parishes but also in St. George — Good Intent and a number of other districts. The recent rains have damaged already bad roads and one can hardly get along certain roads in St. George unless one got some other person to lift one up. I have had that experience and it is time that the Commissioners approach the Government and ask for some more money to put the roads of their parishes in order. I have more to say about that phase of the matter but I am not going to delay the passing of this Resolution because I am sure that honourable members are going to pass it.

Mr. S. A. WALCOTT: I do not consider that the honourable member who has just spoken understands what is taking place.

Mr. SYMMONDS: I beg to object to that remark. I think I am capable of understanding anything that is put before this House as well as the honourable member can or even better (Cheers).

Mr. S. A. WALCOTT: I would not deny that; but I think that from the way the honourable member has spoken I do not think that he understands this matter. He spoke continually about repairs to St. George's roads, but this £6,000 is not for repairs to St. George's roads or roads in any other parish. So I am quite sure that he does not know what he is talking about.

Mr. SYMMONDS: On a point of order. I take it that paragraph 4 of the addendum to the Resolution is in relation to flood damage as a general thing in the island.

Mr. S. A. WALCOTT: That is not so. If any roads were damaged, the several Highways Boards would have to apply to the Government for money to put those roads in order and those funds would not come out of this £6,000. That is why I said that I do not consider that the honourable member understands the matter.

Mr. TALMA: I hate to rise again. Although what the senior member for St. James has said happens to sound as if it were true, I am saying that this £6,000 is for that specific purpose.

VOICES: No, No!

Mr. S. A. WALCOTT: The amount which was set aside is £2,000. Out of that £2,000, roughly £900 has been spent and I have not heard the Government's spokesman say that the work on these bridges has been kept back through want of money. If that argument had been used I could understand the idea of setting aside some reserved amount which could be used before the House meets. They are making a big point of the fact that this House is about to die but this House will be dead for only three weeks. This flood damage took place much longer than three weeks ago and if up to the present they have spent roughly about £900, why should we give them a blank cheque to-day for £6,000?

Mr. FOSTER: I am sure that I shall not be told that I do not know what I am talking about because Sedgepond bridge is washed away, Springvale's is also gone and Morgan Lewis's is going. Taking into consideration the fact that roads are a vital necessity. Mr. Chairman, I am going to support this Resolution.

Dr. WILSON: I rise to support this Resolution in the hope that those roads which have been damaged by the recent heavy rains in the parish of St. John will be given early attention. I should also like to say that although money has been granted for repairs to tenantry roads in the parish of St. John, yet I find that the people are only given two or three days' work a week, which, I think, is very unfair.

THE CHAIRMAN: I am sorry to interrupt the honourable member. Stick to the Resolution before us; there is nothing in it about repairs to tenantry roads.

Dr. WILSON: I was speaking generally.

Mr. WILKINSON: I do not want to prolong this debate but honourable members seem to be wandering from the real issue. I, Sir, was the member of this House who, when I was Chairman of the Central Board, recommended that a sum of money be provided in the Estimates to meet flood damage because it took two or three weeks to get a Resolution for this purpose through the House, if there had been flood damage and my recommendation was accepted. This amount of £6,000 is to supplement the amount in the Estimates for item 41 under Head XXXII, Department of Highways and Transport and not one penny of it can be used for ordinary repairs to roads. My intention originally was that a sum of money should be provided in the Estimates to be used for this purpose until a proper estimate of the repairs to bridges and roads damaged by flood can be prepared and put before the House, as has been done in this instance. One honourable member said — I think it was the senior member for St. Peter — that the flood damage may require an expenditure of £20,000, and he asked what was the good of providing £2,000 or £6,000 for that matter. Well, the good is that that amount will enable the demolition work to be carried on until the engineer can put a proper estimate of the repairs before the House.

The question that the word "sixteen" in the first line stand part of the Resolution is put and resolved in the affirmative, the division being as follows:—

Ayes: DR. WILSON, DR. CUMMINS, MESSRS. MAPP, SYMMONDS, HUSBANDS, F. L. WALCOTT, COX, FOSTER, TALMA, BLACKMAN, and GARNER—11.

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

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

RESOLUTION TO ASSIST IN THE REPAIR OF HOUSES DAMAGED BY HEAVY RAINS AND WIND.

Dr. CUMMINS: The next Resolution is for £2,500 to assist in the repair of houses that were damaged as the result of heavy rains and high wind on 5th July, 1948.

Honourable members will remember that this House passed an Address to the Governor asking that a Resolution be sent down for a sum of money to repair houses which were damaged by the heavy rains and high wind on the 5th July. The several Vestries were circulated and asked to prepare statements of the houses that were damaged in their respective parishes. Those in whose parishes damage was done responded — there were two or three in which there was no damage — and this Resolution seeks to give effect to the Address. I should like to point out that this amount is only to assist in the repair of these houses. The funds will be put in the hands of the particular Vestries to be administered by them in accordance with the estimates which they sent in. I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

Mr. BLACKMAN: I beg to second that.

Mr. HAYNES: While I entirely agree with this Resolution, the Government, as usual, has treated us like babies by not giving us sufficient information in the addendum to the Resolution. I would like the honourable introducer of the Resolution to give us details about the amounts that are given to the particular parishes. I do not think that I am asking him too much because that information should be in the addendum. As I have said, the Government treats us like babies and the only way to put an end to such treatment is to ask for information whenever a Resolution comes down to us without it.

Mr. SYMMONDS: Before the question is put I should like to make a few remarks. First of all, I take it that the Government has done everything that lies in its power to make just recommendations in this matter. I know that many people in the country districts have been complaining that this Resolution has been too long delayed but it has been well said that it is better late than never. Although, as I have said, there have been very loud complaints that the people have been left too long without this very necessary aid yet I want to throw out a suggestion. The second paragraph of the addendum states that this amount will be allocated on the basis of two-thirds of the estimated cost of repairs. I had been hoping—and I know that many of the people whose houses have been damaged have been hoping—that the assistance granted them would be not two-thirds of the amount of the repairs but that it would be adequate enough to cover the entire cost of repairing the damage. It has been well said that half a loaf is better than no bread at all but these people whose houses have been damaged are very poor and while they will be grateful for this two-thirds I, for one, am sorry to see that the assistance is not complete assistance. I am, therefore, throwing out the suggestion that after we have passed this Resolution to-day—as I am hoping honourable members will do and not keep the people waiting any longer—the Government will send back to us the necessary Resolution for the remaining one-third to give these people the full assistance in this matter.

Mr. WARD: The honourable member who has just spoken has said what I would have said if I had spoken before him. I do not believe that if the Government knew the circumstances of some of these people, it would ask them to pay one-third of the cost of the repairs to their damaged houses. I am sure, Sir, that some of the people in the parish which I represent are not in a position to pay one-eighth of the cost of the repairs and this is only putting them in a very unfortunate position. They will still have to go around and beg other people to help them complete the repairs in order to make their homes habitable. Some of these people cannot pay anything at all and although I am glad to see that this Resolution has been sent down, yet I repeat that there are some of these people whose homes have been damaged who are absolutely unable to contribute anything towards the repair of them.

Mr. DOWDING: Mr. Chairman,—Being the instigator of the Address which has resulted in this Resolution I feel that the Government cannot be fully blamed for any delay in this matter. Speaking on behalf of the Vestry of which I am a member I know that it took some time to obtain the information that was required. I should like to thank the Government for sending down this Resolution so speedily and I hope that the Vestries will carry it into effect just as speedily.

Mr. F. L. WALCOTT: I should like to express sentiments similar to those expressed by the last speaker. This is another instance in which we have to compliment the Government; but as I have said on a previous occasion, these old fogey Vestries should not be given more authority under the present restricted constitution. The senior member for St. Andrew is a member of the Vestry of St. Peter but I can tell this House that that Vestry has not sent in any list of sufferers in this respect in the parish of St. Peter.

The CHAIRMAN: I do not want to interrupt the honourable member but I want him to stick to the Resolution.

Mr. F. L. WALCOTT: The addendum to the Resolution states that the Vestries are to administer these funds. Well, I went to the Colonial Secretary myself and I discovered that up to the 26th September, the Vestry of St. Peter had not sent in any information along these lines. I heard the senior member for St. Andrew ask a question about the details of the amounts to be given to the particular Vestries and could honourable members imagine that despite the fact that the Vestries were authorized to investigate this matter in their respective parishes, the Vestry of St. Peter made no investigation at all? They have reported that there has been no damaged houses in St. Peter as the result of the heavy rains and high wind. I want to say that this is an act on the part of this Vestry which honourable members should view seriously. The Government tells this Vestry to do something and they sit back, waiting for the information to be supplied to them. I have seen a letter signed by the Clerk of this Vestry to the effect that there are no houses in St. Peter which have been damaged by the heavy rains and high wind. Although this damage took place on the 5th July, 1948, it is common knowledge to honourable members that we have had similar damage in St. Peter since then and I feel sure that when this House went on record in July of giving assistance to sufferers, it meant to include sufferers from any subsequent calmnity as well, so as to avoid the necessity of having to pass another Address. But even those cases which have suffered on the 5th July have not been investigated by the Vestry of St. Peter and I am very much loath to give further authority to some of these old fogeys who sit on these Vestries. I feel sure, Sir, that the senior member for St. Thomas must read "blank" as far as the St. Peter's Vestry is concerned because, as I have said, I went to the Colonial Secretary myself and discovered that nothing had been sent in from St. Peter—my honourable colleague accompanied me at the time—and if that Vestry had made an investigation, it would definitely have found that they were houses in St. Peter which were damaged by the heavy rains and high wind on the 5th July; but nothing was done by them.

Mr. HUSBANDS: I am in hearty collaboration with my colleague. I was out and about the parish of St. Peter after poor people suffered damage to their houses by the heavy rains and high wind in July and I remember the case of a poor woman who had a side of her house blown off. She came to Speightstown in a state of confusion, not knowing what to do with the house and when I knew that the Government was asked to help I got in touch with everyone of those people who suffered damage and told them that the Government was asked to remedy their position and give them assistance by way of money to repair their homes. I paid more than one visit to the office of the Parochial Treasurer of St. Peter and he told me that the Parochial Treasurer had no power to prepare an estimate; in other words, he told me that it was against the law and he told me that he had no authority to send to tell the Government to what extent these homes should be repaired. I told him that as far as I knew, the Executive Committee would take care of that and after some further talk he agreed to wait before he sent in his final estimate;

no list has been sent in from St. Peter. I want to tell this House that there is direct unwillingness on the part of some people in authority in this island to serve the poor people of this country. I am very interested in this matter and only this morning before I left home one of these poor persons came to me and asked what is the Government doing in this matter.

Mr. HAYNES: I am getting really tired of the senior member for St. Peter calling on me to speak on behalf of the Vestry of St. Peter. If the honourable member wants my seat on the St. Peter's Vestry he can have it. I only carry on just to allow them to have a quorum (Cries of Shame), nothing else. As regards the accusation against the Vestry of St. Peter is concerned, I can only say this: The Vestries of the several parishes have their Poor Law Guardians who have the machinery at their disposal to obtain this information. The Vestries do not have the machinery for this purpose and if their Poor Law Guardians do not submit recommendations to them in this respect, what are the Vestrymen to do? Are they to go about the parishes and get the information? If the honourable member is so keen a representative of the parish of St. Peter, he should have a list of the sufferers in St. Peter in his pocket and an estimate of the cost of the repairs that are to do done to any damaged houses in the parish. It seems that he is more at fighting others than at getting something done.

Mr. F. L. WALCOTT: The Vestry of St. Peter is a unique body. The honourable member suggests that I should obtain this information, when the Government asked the Vestries, including St. Peter, to prepare statements of the houses which were damaged in their respective parishes, together with the estimates of the cost of the repairs. Could there be anything more ludicious than such a suggestion? The Parochial Authorities in St. Peter are paying officers to do this work and the honourable member gets on the floor of this House and asks what was the Vestry to do if the information was not forthcoming. The honourable member does not appreciate the resposibility which he has undertaken as a member of the Vestry. It is no use his telling this House that he is there only to form a quorum. That is not good enough for 1948, although it might have been good enough for 1848. When the honourable member makes reference to me personally, I should like him to know that I am not employed by him; he must speak to his servants in that manner. I do not have to care about his attitude towards me; let him go and tell his servants what he said in respect of me.

MR. CRAWFORD entered the House while Mr. WALCOTT was speaking and took his seat.

Mr. COX: I would just like to express my appreciation of the remarks made by the junior member for St. George and the senior member for St. Lucy, both of whom feel that in some cases the Government could well grant the entire cost of the repairs. I feel, Sir, that there are some of these poor people whose houses have been damaged, who are not in a position to repair them and I would suggest to the Government to find out from the Vestries those persons who are not able to stand this expense and grant them the entire cost of the repairs.

Mr. MOTTLEY: There can be no dispute about the sentiments which have been expressed by the senior member for St. Peter in respect of the Vestry of St. Peter; they are rotten to the core. But in spite of that, the honourable member should not condemn the entire Vestry system because there are Vestrymen who are prepared to look after poor people in this Island. I should like to hear how much each Vestry sent in for and if the statement made by the senior member for St. Peter is correct that is, that the Vestry of St. Peter has not sent in for anything, then we should view it very seriously.

Mr. FOSTER: I disagree with the senior member for St. Peter that all vestrymen are old fogeys. The honourable member did not state the particular Vestry to whom he was referring, so when he lashed the entire Vestry system I think he made a great mistake. I, as a member of the Vestry of St. Andrew, took part in the investigation which took place in St. Andrew and I agree with the junior member for St. George and the senior member for St. Lucy that the Government should contribute the entire cost of the repairs. Every case in St. Andrew which has been recommended by the Vestry of that parish is a deserving one. Some of the people's houses have been damaged to such an extent that they would be left in a worse condition if they were only partly repaired; it would be better if they were not touched at all. I think that the Government should send down another Resolution for the remaining one-third of the estimated cost of the repairs to these houses.

Dr. CUMMINS: One or two honourable members have asked for the amounts. They are: St. Michael $300, St. George $716, St. Thomas $245, St. James $206, St. Lucy $4,083, St. Andrew $1,037, St. Joseph $4,800, St. John $617; Christ Church, St. Peter, and St. Philip—nil. The letter which was sent to the Vestries asked whether they would be good enough to prepare statements of the houses in their parishes which were damaged by the high wind on the 5th July and the estimated cost of the repairs; to say whether the owners are able to assist in the repairs and if so, to what extent. Enquiry was also made in the letter as to whether the Vestries would be willing to administer the funds if grants were made by the Government. Some honourable members said that the Government should bear the whole cost; but it is peculiar that in most of these cases, when the enquiry was made, the houses were either partly or fully repaired already. It is not that the Government is parsimonious but it would seem that these people, in many cases, were able to help themselves.

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. BLACKMAN, the CHAIRMAN reports the passing of two Resolutions in Committee of Supply and asks leave to sit again.

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

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

REPLIES LAID

On re-assembling,

Dr. CUMMINS: Mr. Deputy Speaker,—I beg to lay the replies to questions No. 90 standing in the name of the honourable junior member for St. Peter.

SUSPENSION OF RULE 61 (A)

Dr. CUMMINS: I ask leave to move the suspension of Rules 61(a) and 61(b) in order to continue Government Business. Honourable members will remember that we were to come here today to deal with certain Bills, namely, the Public Health Bill and the other two concomitant Bills under Government Business. I am therefore asking leave to

move the suspension of the Rules so as to deal with these Bills.

Mr. HAYNES: I object to leave being granted the honourable member to move the suspension of Rule 61(b).

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The honourable member should deal with the suspension of the Rules separately.

Dr. CUMMINS: I will deal with them separately. I ask leave to move the suspension of Rule 61 (a) in order to continue Government Business.

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

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

Mr BLACKMAN seconded the motion which was agreed to.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I omitted to observe just now that there are 38 series of questions which, up to now, have not been replied to by the senior member of the Executive Committee and we are drawing near to the end of the session. I am just drawing to the attention of the members of the Executive Committee that, according to my record, the first question was put on the 7th of December, 1947, and there are 38 series of questions which have not been replied to. Well, one series has been replied to this afternoon and that leaves a total of 37 series of questions to which replies have not been given.

Mr. HAYNES: Shame!

THE PUBLIC HEALTH BILL.

Dr. CUMMINS: I ask leave to take Order No. 5 as the next Order of the Day.

There being no objection, the honourable member was granted leave to take the Order.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The next Order of the Day is to resume Committee on the Bill to consolidate and amend the Acts of the Island relating to Public Health.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER left the Chair and the House resumed Committee on the Bill, Mr. SMITH being in the Chair.

Dr. CUMMINS: Mr. Chairman,—On the last occasion we thought that we had dealt with all the Clauses of this Bill but since then the Clerk has gone through the whole Bill which has been reprinted with the amendments which are shown. The Clerk has reported that there is only one Clause which we have not passed and that is Clause 61.

Clause 61 was read as follows:—

61. (1) No person shall construct or extend any building unless the Sanitary Authority shall have accepted as satisfactory the provision proposed to be made for the drainage of such building or the extension thereto or shall be satisfied that in the particular case of such building or extension they may properly dispense with any provision for drainage.

(2) Where the Sanitary Authority to whom any application is made for the purposes of subsection (1) of this section do not accept as satisfactory the provision proposed to be made for the drainage of the building or extension thereto or are not satisfied that in the particular case of such building or extension they may properly dispense with any provision for drainage, they shall within thirty days after the receipt by them of such application give notice of dissatisfaction to the person making the same.

(3) Any question arising between any Sanitary Authority and any person proposing to construct or extend any building as to whether such Sanitary Authority ought to accept as satisfactory any provision proposed to be made for the drainage of such building or extension or to dispense with any provision for drainage in the particular case of such building or extension thereto may on the application of such person be determined by the Assistant Court of Appeal sitting in its appellate jurisdiction.

Dr. CUMMINS: I beg to move that Clause 61 stand part of the Bill.

Mr. BLACKMAN: I beg to second that.

Mr. S. A. WALCOTT: I think that this Clause is wholly unnecessary; this Clause is turning the island into a town or a built-up area. If you read the Clause you will see that it means that no shedroof can be put to any house in any part of the island until you satisfy the Sanitary Authority that drains are put around it. The owner of a small house will have to supply a plan to satisfy the Sanitary Authority as to the drainage or get the Sanitary Authority to visit the spot. This Clause is thoroughly unworkable. The corresponding Clause in the English Act is not as strong as this Clause; the English Act says that where the plans of a building or the extension of a building are in accordance with the bye-laws deposited with a Sanitary Authority, then the Sanitary Authority decides whether the plans are satisfactory or not. Under this present Clause you cannot construct or extend any building unless you satisfy the Sanitary Authority that the drainage is correct. By-laws should be made differentiating between the different parts of the island and plans should only be supplied in respect of built-up or swampy areas. It is ludicrous to expect a man in Chalky Mount, for instance, to satisfy a Sanitary Authority and send in a plan before he can add a shedroof to his house. I think that this Clause should be more in line with the corresponding Clause in the English Act. As this Clause stands now it will create a hardship on a small man. As soon as a small owner receives the money for his crop he tries to enlarge his house and he cannot do that under this Clause unless he satisfies the Sanitary Authority that the drainage around the house is in order. I suggest to the honourable member in charge of this Bill that he should amend this Clause so as to put it more in accordance with the English Act. In a district like Fontabelle or Kensington I consider that people should satisfy the Sanitary Authority that the drainage in respect of a building is correct. Graeme Hall Swamp would be on the same principle, but it would be ludicrous to expect a small man who wishes to add a little kitchen to his house, to send in a plan to the Sanitary Authority before he can do that. This is simply putting in this Bill a Clause which cannot be complied with. It will not interfere with the Bill in any way if this Clause is deleted.

Mr. MAPP: I do not know if the honourable member was looking at the whole Clause or not but I do not see that the Clause means entirely what he says. Sub-clause (1) makes it obligatory on any person who wishes to extend any building to apply to the Sanitary Authority before he can do it and provision will first have to be made for drainage. I take it that there is an alternative so that the necessity for drainage in certain areas will be ruled out. I do not see that the honourable member's arguments are worth anything at this moment.

Mr. F. L. WALCOTT: I find myself agreeing with both honourable members. As regards the point made by the honourable senior member for St. James if you are putting a small extension to a building, it

does seem to be a bother to have to submit to plan to the Sanitary Authority; but provision is made that the Sanitary Authority can dispense with the provision for drainage. There is an obligation on any person to submit the provision for drainage. It does seem peculiar that if a man is adding an ordinary shedroof to his house he should have to ask for permission to do that; because we would have so many cases to deal with that I do not think that it would be worth while to make this provision. It seems to me that a hardship would be created on a small man under this Clause but at the same time people have to be protected from themselves. Some people construct houses in places where they should not construct them and many of them lose their stock and so forth. Unless you are going to have certain areas in which people should not construct their houses it seems to me that there will be some difficulty in respect of this Clause.

Mr. MOTTLEY: When this Bill was first discussed it will be recalled that I dealt with this Clause at length and pointed out the difficulty and hardship which it would entail. I think that I was even a bit strong at the time and I am more than convinced now that the procedure which we should follow in enacting legislation of this sort is to take all copies of the English Act and amend and modify them to suit local conditions. This particular Clause is not in the English Act and I was hoping that we would not have to sit and discuss this Clause again because I have spoken at length on it. When you enact laws you do not enact them for one set of people and not for the other set of people; any of us who has had administrative experience where Boards are concerned will appreciate that a Clause like this coming into force will mean what it says. According to Subclause (I) you must submit your plans to the Sanitary Authority; it will be an offence for a person, say, at Bawdens to add a shedroof to his house unless he submits his plan to the Sanitary Authority. I repeat that the Clause means what it says. I say—and this should be known—that unfortunately somebody who is not acquainted with local conditions have drafted this Clause and put it in here. I wonder whether the people concerned with the drafting of this Clause ever really read the Act. Mr. Chairman, the organised hooliganism on that side of the Table does not affect me. What I am worried about and what will worry honourable members who are really thinking about this Clause and not just thinking of passing it is this: How are you going to satisfy the Sanitary Authority as regards drainage unless something is put before them? I appeal to the honourable senior member for St. Thomas to see that this Clause should apply to built-up areas. By virtue of the building Regulations under the Bridgetown, Speightstown and Holetown Act, which in due course will come under this Bill, provision will be made for drainage and so on. To pass this Clause as it stands here will cause great inconvenience and no end of prosecutions if it is to be carried out to the letter; otherwise it will be a misnomer. It will be an enactment of legislation, which you know cannot be carried out or it will be of use as class legislation. I do not see that in the outlying parishes where people receive money for their crops and want to extend their homes, they should first have to submit some sort of drawing to the Sanitary Authority. Under this Clause if you hear that somebody, let us say at Bawdens, has actually extended his home you either have to go there and say that you are satisfied with the plan or you have to bring a prosecution against that person. If you dispense with the provision for draining in the case of "A", "B" might be better off and honourable members will appreciate that you can hardly initiate legislation which is to be really observed in this way. I contend that provision should be made to prevent people from going all over the island and putting down houses without providing any proper drainage; we all agree with that and all these provisions should be made under the Control of Land (Division and Sale) Act. What we want to know is whether this Clause will effect an undue hardship on people rather than do what we hope it will do. If people who really do not want to go into the Almshouses would have to be removed, will we be achieving by this Clause the objects which we hope to achieve? I am wondering why a Clause limiting built-up and other areas should not be inserted in the Bill. This Clause was postponed because honourable members other than those of the Opposition felt—and the Leader of the House was here—that there was some reasonableness in the argument that the Clause should not apply to all persons who are constructing or extending their houses. Where you are extending any sort of building you cannot dispense with something of which you know nothing; and you cannot enact legislation where one person shou'd be prosecuted and not another. What we should do is to insert a Clause limiting the provisions of this Clause.

Mr. HUSBANDS: As I see it, this is a question of administrative powers where the Sanitary Authority is concerned. I have noted that in the country districts there are buildings erected on spots which are unsuited as far as sanitation is concerned and I think that there should be some protection for people. People should be protected from themselves. If a person is about to make an extension to his house it may be that that person is doing wrong from the point of view of sanitation. If that person makes application to the Sanitary Authority he might be directed as to how that extention might be carried out. In case that a person is advised that on no part of his house would he be able to make an extension, obviously that house has been built on the wrong site. Proper drainage might be found on another site. I do not therefore see the harm which some people envisage in the passing of this Clause. There is no getting away from the fact that some people find themselves in the position of having their houses on improper sites and if an extension is necessary it might be improper to carry out that extension on one site whereas it might be carried out on another.

Dr. CUMMINS: I have listened to the arguments which have been adduced by honourable members and I would like to say, as we all know, that people in St. Michael as well as in the country districts put their houses in any place. A man wants to build a house and he is not concerned about any drainage; he builds it on any spot and after a good rainfall water settles around the place. The water does not run off for a few days and he and his family are exposed to all sorts of diseases. They are exposed to influenza, pneumonia, tuberculosis and diseases of that sort. That state of affairs is what this Bill is aimed at correcting; we have to save people from themselves. When a person wants to erect a house—this Clause says nothing about drawing plans—he just applies to the Sanitary Authority who will send one of their servants to inspect the spot and that servant will report to the Sanitary Authority whether or not, in his opinion that spot is good where sanitation is concerned. The Sanitary Authority can dispense with any regulation for drainage; it may be that the spot can drain itself and in that case no regulation for drainage will

be necessary. Sub-clause (3) gives the right of appeal to any person in case any question arises between the Sanitary Authority and the person as to whether the Sanitary Authority ought to accept any provision proposed for drainage as satisfactory. However I feel that probably we can grant some relief to the small man who is extending his house but where a person is constructing a house this Clause should remain in the Bill. I feel that this Clause would create some hardship on a small man who has already put his house on a spot and who wants to extend that house. I therefore ask leave to delete the words "or extend" and "or the extension" wherever they occur in this Clause.

There being no objection, the honourable member was granted leave to delete the words.

Mr. MOTTLEY: It looks as if the only amelioration which we can get is to support that amendment, I feel that even that amendment will not meet the case but it is better than nothing at all.

Mr. S. A. WALCOTT: That is better than nothing at all but I still am not satisfied with it. In spite of what the honourable senior member for St. Thomas says, any person who is extending his house will have to submit plans to show where water settles. He cannot do otherwise. If you read this Clause carefully you will see that if a man owns half-an-acre of land he cannot build his house on it unless the Sanitary Authority give him leave to do so. I think that that is taking away a man's right entirely and I will vote against this Clause if I vote against it alone. We should pass by-laws in respect of built-up areas and swampy districts in this island so as to go through with this Clause but it should not apply to the whole of Barbados. If we had swamps here as in the case of Demerara then I could understand this Clause being passed, but we have no such swamps.

Mr. F. L. WALCOTT: While what the honourable member says has a measure of truth in it, he must bear in mind that houses are put on the wrong spots and we have to protect people from themselves. We know that people get their houses washed away because they build them in places where they should not have built them originally. I know of a case in my parish where a man's house was washed away twice and there is no denying the fact that that man and his family suffered. I do not see that any hardship would be effected on anybody under the amendment, I do not see that because a man owns half-an- acre of land he must build a house on it to the detriment of himself and his family where the drainage is concerned. Children have no responsibility over their parents; there may be very small children living in a house and because a man can live there, the children should not live in a place which is injurious to their health. It is not a question of taking away a person's right; from the point of view of health it is a question of a Sanitary Authority saying what part of the land on which a person can build his house in the interest of the health of the poor children.

At this stage, it now being 3.30 o'clock, Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER took the Chair and stated that it was now time for the consideration of Private Members' Business

SUSPENSION OF RULE 61 (B)

Dr. CUMMINS: I ask leave to move for the suspension of Rule 61 (b) in order to continue Government Business.

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

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

Mr. BLACKMAN seconded the motion which was agreed to.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: When the time for the consideration of Private Members' Business arrived, the House was in Committee on the Bill to consolidate and amend the Acts of this island relating to Public Health.

THE PUBLIC HEALTH BILL

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER left the Chair and the House resumed Committee on the Bill, Mr. SMITH being in the Chair.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: When the House was last in Committee on this Bill Clause 61 was being considered. The question is that Clause 61 as amended by the deletion of the words "or extend" and "or the extension" stand part of the Bill. Honourable members in favour of that will please say "Aye," those against will please say "No." I think the "Ayes" have it.

A division was taken as follows:—

Ayes: Messrs. HUSBANDS, F. L. WALCOTT, COX, FOSTER, MAPP, BLACKMAN and DR. CUMMINS—7.

Noes: Dr. WILSON, Messrs. MOTTLEY, HAYNES, S. A. WALCOTT and WILKINSON—5.

On the motion of DR. CUMMINS, seconded by MR. BLACKMAN, the CHAIRMAN reported the passing of the Bill in Committee with amendments.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

On motions of DR. CUMMINS, seconded by MR. BLACKMAN in each case, the Bill was read a third time and passed.

CONTROL OF LAND (DIVISION AND SALE) BILL

Dr. CUMMINS: I beg to move that Order No. 3 be taken as the next Order of the Day.

Mr. BLACKMAN seconded the motion which was agreed to.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The next Order of the Day is to resume Committee on the Bill to provide for the division and sale and the division and letting of land in lots and for the regulation of tenantries.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER left the Chair and the House resumed Committee on the Bill, Mr. SMITH being in the Chair.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: When we were last in Committee on this Bill Clause 3 was under consideration.

Mr. COX: On the last occasion when this Bill was before the House I made it clear to the honourable senior member for St. Thomas that some amendment should be put in this Bill by which the valuers would be guided. Sub-clause (3) of this Clause says:

"Any owner or possessor desiring to divide and sell any such land shall upon receipt of a certificate from the Director may make application to the Governor-in-Executive Committee, who shall, within fourteen days of the said application, appoint five persons to appraise and value the said land and determine the maximum price at which the said land may be sold, provided always that in arriving at such valuation the said valuers shall take into account any costs already incurred or to be incurred in providing such water, roads and necessary sanitary arrangements as may be required by this section....."

This Sub-clause says quite clearly that the question of water, roads and so on must be taken into consideration. In my opinion, if the land is provided with water, proper roads, drainage, and things of that sort, it is worth more than if the individual who is supposed to be buying it has to provide these

necessary things. That is why I said that on the last occasion when we passed the Public Health (Amendment) Bill, the object of that Bill was defeated because of the fact that there were people who, when they were selling the land, did not take into consideration the fact that they had not provided proper roads or proper drainage. The result is that the people who bought the various spots are now asking the Government to provide them with proper roads and drainage. Take Kensington for instance; that is a swampy area, no proper roads have been provided and people who have paid exorbitant prices for the small bits of land there are now asking the Government to provide them with proper roads and drainange, while the people who sold the tenantry have the profits in their pockets. Everybody will know that a burden has been put on the poor people after these wealthy ones have made big profits out of the land. I submit to the honourable senior member for St. Thomas that some Clause should be put in this Bill by which the appraisers can be guided. I feel that a profit of 20% on the price paid for these tenantries which are to be divided into lots would be a reasonable profit to be allowed. After all, we have to take into consideration the fact that land is a fixed quantity; it is not a perishable article and I feel that a maximum profit of 20% on the sale of it should be allowed and nothing more. In the case of Carrington's Village a profit of as much as 70% was made on the land which was sold there. I am therefore asking that the poor people be protected. Whenever the price of land goes up it is the poor people especially who have to purchase spots and a burden is placed on their slender incomes. This is a very important matter; people must live on land and I am asking, since the object of the last Bill was defeated both in the case of Carrington's Village and Kensington, that some amendment be put in this Bill so as to prevent a recurrence of what has taken place. I sincerely hope that the honourable senior member for St. Thomas will appreciate what I am saying; I am going to speak on this matter whenever it comes before the House because I know the suffering which has been brought to bear on poor peole. The poor people have been blackmailed as a result of the sale of this land and the Government should do something so as to protect such people.

Mr. MAPP: I agree with the remarks of the honourable senior member for St. Michael and I appreciate the difficulties with which we are faced in passing this Bill as it stands. I am really sorry that the Government has not seen fit to send down an amendment as the honourable member has suggested because it is obvious that the framers of this Bill did not intend going half way to control the vicious spiral caused in respect of the price of land which was being sold in St. Michael. What has been produced here is really a farce; actually it may be said that since this Clause has been put in the Bill the price of land has been higher than when it was not put in. This Clause does not go anywhere near controlling the price of land or fixing prices beyond which the sellers of land should not go. I understand that the Government contemplates resolving the difficulties with which we are now faced by the Housing Bill which is actually on the Order Paper and which will hardly be discussed during this session, and we are told to possess our souls in patience until that Bill comes before us for consideration. It requires a lot of patience to wait until the Housing Bill comes before us and in the meantime much injustice can be done. There is no doubt that much of the inflation caused in this island recently has been due to the fantastic prices which have been paid for land, because the price of land plays a great part where the cost of living is concerned. The community has been set squirming because of the fantastic prices which have been paid for land in St. Michael. (A MEMBER: That is not true). I challenge the honourable member to produce facts to show that what I have said is not true. In any country when people find it hard to invest money in other ways they invest it in land and if you do not put some controlling price on land the price of everything else goes up. Any economist will tell you that that is true; a big racket is being caused in respect of land prices. I think that the honourable member in charge of this Bill should accept an amendment whereby two valuers should be recommended by the person dividing and selling the land, two by the intended purchaser and one by the Governor-in-Executive Committee. I beg to move that amendment. That amendment will not meet all the difficulties here because no maximum price has been set out beyond which the valuers cannot go, but it at least changes the valuers and it makes provision for the purchaser of the land to enter into the fixing of the price. That is the procedure which is adopted in case of disputes. Very often you appoint people to appraise the land and they are mixed up in the racket. Under this amendment the seller and the intended purchaser will be able to recommend people to protect their interests.

Mr. MOTTLEY: I do not know if the hon. member who has just sat down anticipated that I would speak, but when he says that this Clause was put in the Act as a result of the price of the land which was being sold out in St. Michael, that is not true. That Clause existed since 1928. I would like to see a lot of amendments made to this Act, but I would just like to make one or two observations in reply to the hon. member when he referred to the question of the price of the land. I do not pretend to be a trained economist like the hon. member who has just spoken but whatever can account for inflation where the price of land is concerned, the principle cause of inflation of anything in any community is when money has become cheap. Whenever money is in sufficient quantity people always have a tendency to pay inflated prices. Where money is cheap and there is no room for certain investments in a community you find people making investments which they would not make if money was not cheap. Surely this particular Clause came into operation in 1928. Whatever those hon. members who have just spoken might say or think, my present vocation is to sell land. Unfortunately I do not own any but they will agree that I have some experience in this matter. I do not think that the person who drafted this Bill could be more fair. In Sub-clause (3) it is stated that "the said valuers shall take into account any costs already incurred or to be incurred in providing such water, roads and necessary sanitary arrangements as may be required by this section." If you read the Clause you will find that a person who is dividing and letting or selling land has to produce a plan and statement to the Board of Health before they actually say "Yes" or "No" and when they say "Yes", the plan and statement have to be forwarded to the Waterworks Department. The Clause says that when the appraisers go to appraise the land they shall take into consideration the question of the provision of roads and water; and obviously the price of the land will be greater if provision has been made in this respect. Originally these regulations were left to be carried out by the Sanitary Commissioners but now the Board of Health will appoint an inspector to see that the regulations are

carried out. In truth and in fact, the appraisers will take all that into consideration. The Governor-in-Executive Committee is not bound and need not take the actual price which has been fixed by the appraisers for land; they can appoint other appraisers to fix the price of the land, but they cannot go on doing that. The point raised by the honourable junior member for St. Thomas relative to the appraisers is covered by the fact that the Governor-in-Executive Committee has the right to appoint the appraisers and the owner of the land can object to three of them. If you really bring in the question of arbitration, that the person who is buying the land must appoint two appraisers, the person who is selling must appoint two and the Governor-in-Executive must appoint one, well you can clearly see what will happen. The Governor-in-Executive Committee never accept any majority decision; I have had the experience of a majority of valuers arriving at a decision and the Governor-in-Executive Committee refusing it. As a matter of fact the Governor-in-Executive Committee cannot accept a majority decision; it must be a unanimous one. Therefore it looks to me that as long as you are in a democratic country, as long as a man must be tried for a felony by his peers, it must follow that a man's property must be valued by his peers. If you want a dictatorship where one can never say what land really costs then you can have a dictatorship. What is the principle of appointing appraisers? The principle is that all taxpayers in this country are appraisers regardless of colour. If you are appointing people to value land in St. Michael you do not appoint people from St. Philip; and you do not appoint people from St. Philip to value land in St. Lucy. The idea is that if you own land at all, you know something about valuing it; and do you not think that even one of the appraisers which the Governor-in-Executive Committee will appoint will be honest? The inference to be drawn from the hon. member's amendment is that all of the appraisers appointed by the Government will be corrupt; and therefore if the person selling the land appoint two appraisers, the buyer appoint two and the Governor-in-Executive appoint one there is less likelihood of there being a corrupt person among the five appraisers. That seems to me to be a joke. The honourable senior member for St. Thomas has had experience in the Law Courts and he can appreciate what I am saying. When you have to deal with matters under the Landlord and Tenant Act whom do you take to value the crops? You do not take people who have no experience in these matters. An amendment such as that suggested by the honourable junior member for St. Thomas would really open the door to a really serious state of affairs. I have my views as regards appraisements despite what honourable members think of those views, and when I am called upon to appraise land, I appraise it. Whatever honourable members might think about my association with land I can give counsel in this matter; this is a matter on which I can speak with experience. I do not think that a better system can operate than where the Governor-in-Executive Committee will appoint the appraisers and where the owner of the land can object to three of them and he cannot object the second time. The honourable member's amendment cannot work inasmuch as different appraisements will be made and the people whom he is trying to protect will not be served at all. I have refrained from making some amendments which I think are necessary because I do not want to hold up the Bill and the honourable senior member for St. Thomas has assured me that those amendments are being made in the Housing and Town and Country Planning Bill. The only way in which the honourable junior member for St. Thomas can suggest that you can get around this Bill is to be friendly with the Government. If you have an emigration scheme tomorrow and cheap money is flowing into this country you will find people buying land all over the island. So it was in the days when people emigrated to Panama; when they returned, they paid as much as £300 an acre for land. That is the way with real estate. Even in connection with what honourable members have referred to as high prices being paid for land I have had the privilege of seeing a lot of that land being bought at one price and sold at twice the value soon afterwards. You may say that because "A's" house is on a spot of land he has got to buy that land at a particular price; but what about "B" who says that he would like to buy a spot of land from you and pays the price for it? Honourable members are rather apprehensive about this Clause but it was in existence since 1928 and not only from 1945. Until we are actually amending the Housing and Town and Country Planning Bill where we are going to have zones, so to speak, and put a maximum price for land in a particular area when it is being built up, there is no hope of making any amendments which will prevent a normal Barbadian from expressing his view as to what land is worth.

Dr. CUMMINS: I know as well as honourable members that the price of land is very excessive, but I had appealed to the honourable senior member for St. Michael to leave this Clause as it is because under the Housing and Town and Country Planning Bill which is coming before the House during the next session there will be a better control over the price of land.

Mr. COX: I have listened attentively to the honourable senior member for the City putting the case for the land owners and those who sell land on the commission basis; but all I am asking the Government to do is to put in some amendment so as to guide the valuers in view of the fact that the poor people who inhabit Carrington's Village and Kensington have suffered in the past which caused the 1945 Amendment to be brought forward. The honourable senior member for the City says that this amendment cannot be made and the honourable senior member for St. Thomas has told us about the Housing and Town and Country Planning Bill. We know that that Bill is coming before the House but God knows when it will come down; meanwhile people are buying land. That is why I am asking that this amendment be made to the Bill which is now before us. We have Legal Draughtsmen and we have Clerks who are supposed to be trained men and if they cannot find brains enough to draft some amendment which will give satisfaction both to land owners and intended purchasers where are we? I have visited places where the prices charged for housespots have been excessive and the spots are not even large enough. People have been pushed off these spots because of the excessive prices charged for them. All I am asking the Government to do, inasmuch as some clever fellows were able to get around the Amendment Bill which was passed in 1945 and which sought to protect the poor people, is to try and put in some workable amendment. Do we know how many tenantries will be sold out before the Housing and Town and Country Planning Bill is passed? During all

this time the people are suffering. The honourable senior member for the City has said that he has seen people buy land at what was considered a high price and in a short space of time they sold it for twice the amount which they paid for it. That only shows the necessity for land: people must live on land and if there is absolutely no control over the price of it any person will sell his tenantry at whatever price he feels like selling it. If it were a question of lumber the price might be increased, but when it is a question of land it must be borne in mind that nobody has done anything to make land; land has been put here by Almighty God and people must live on it. It is unfair for an individual who might wake up and find some ill-begotten fortune and who might purchase some broad acres of land, to fleece people because they are not in a position to protect themselves. It is true that under Sub-clause (5) of Clause 4 of this Bill, the Governor-in-Executive Committee can have a re-valuation of the land made if he considers that any valuation is not fair and reasonable or if he is requested by the owner of the land to have a re-valuation of it. That is to say that you can have a re-valuation of the land if the Governor-in-Executive Committee finds that the land has been valued at a price greater than that at which the owner is selling it, and another set of valuers will be appointed. If they value the land at about 30% to 40% higher than the original valuers where are you? And the second valuation is final. You have to abide by that. I am asking the honourable senior member for St. Thomas not to waste any time with this Bill unless he is going to put in an amendment in the terms which I have suggested. This Bill is not worth anything otherwise. We have postponed this Bill so as to have an amendment put in so as to protect poor people and the Bill is still before us as it was originally. I am saying that we should put in this Bill an amendment which will protect both the owners of land and the intended purchasers. As I pointed out on the last occasion there must be some finality where the appointment of appraisers is concerned but the price of land must be fair and reasonable. I repeat that a profit of 20% is a reasonable profit for anybody to make on the sale of land which is nothing perishable. I am suggesting too that the names of the valuers be published in the Press; I know that on the last occasion people who valued land at Carrington's Village had a direct interest in the land and we do not want that to happen again. I beg to move that the words "whose names shall be published in the local Press" be inserted after the word "persons," occurring in line 5 of Sub-clause (3) of this Clause.

Mr. HUSBANDS: I beg to second that.

Mr. MOTTLEY: The honourable member has said that I have made out a case for the landowners, agents and so on, but I am not ashamed of that. The Government went into Black Rock and paid 32 cents a square foot for land which was considered cheap; this House approved of it and I supported it then. We did not have to move anybody off the land. I know a lot of land for which I could get 32 cents a square foot. In some cases you do find people who are unduly and unnecessarily hard on others on whom they could be more lenient, but it is not that people go out of their way in fixing prices.

Mr. COX: In the absence of a proper Land Acquisition Bill the land might have been valued at 40 cents instead of 32 cents a square foot. There is no proper Bill by which the Government could say "We want this land and you must have it valued". There was another place which the Government could have bought but it would have cost very much more money and we had to agree not to purchase it.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The question is that the words proposed to be inserted stand part of the Clause. Honourable members in favour of that will please say "Aye", those against will please say "No." I think the "Noes" have it. The question now is that—

Mr. COX: I asked for a division.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The honourable member will have to move that the Clause be re-committed.

The question that Clause 3 stand part of the Bill was put and resolved in the affirmative on the following division:—

Ayes: DR. WILSON, MESSRS. F. L. WALCOTT, LEWIS, BLACKMAN, MOTTLEY, S. A. WALCOTT, DR. CUMMINS, and MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER—8.

Noes: MESSRS HUSBANDS, COX and MAPP—3.

Mr. COX: I beg to move that Clause 3 be re-committed. I think that any decent man who is not afraid of letting his name appear in the Press would support an Amendment such as this. It is a very necessary amendment.

DR. CUMMINS: We have just dealt with this Clause. The amendment of the honourable senior member for St. Michael was put and lost and are you allowing the same amendment to be put again, Mr. Chairman? That is entirely out of order.

Mr. MAPP: I am speaking on the motion for the re-committal of the Clause. I find myself in this difficulty—

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Are you seconding the motion for the re-committal of the Clause?

Mr. MAPP: Yes Sir. With all due deference to your ruling, the honourable member had called for a division.

Mr. MOTTLEY: What is the position? The honourable senior member for St. Michael made a speech and pointed out the reasons why he thinks a certain amendment should be inserted in this Clause. I do not know whether the honourable member is in order or not. He made an amendment which has been put and lost.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: All the honourable member has to do is to vote against the motion for the re-committal of the Clause.

The question that Clause 3 be re-committed was put and resolved in the negative.

A division was taken as follows:—

Ayes: MESSRS. HUSBANDS, COX, MAPP and LEWIS—4.

Noes: DR. WILSON, DR. CUMMINS, MESSRS. BLACKMAN, MOTTLEY, WILKINSON, S. A. WALCOTT and MR DEPUTY SPEAKER—7.

Clause 4 was read.

Dr. CUMMINS: I beg to move that Clause 4 stand part of the Bill.

Mr. BLACKMAN: I beg to second that.

Mr. MAPP: Sub-clause (5) says this:—

(5) Notwithstanding anything to the contrary contained in subsection (4) of this section, if the Governor-in-Executive Committee:—

(a) considers that any valuation of land returned to him under the said subsection is not fair and reasonable, having regard to all the circumstances of the case, or

(b) is requested in writing by the owner of such land, within seven days after the return of such valuation, to have a re-valuation of such land made.

he shall without delay appoint five other valuers, who shall make a final valuation of such land, and for the purposes of such valuation all relevant provisions of

subsection (4) of this section shall apply as they apply in respect of an original valuation under the said subsection.

I understand that the legal authorities cannot make any hand of this Sub-clause and I do not know what hand we are going to make of it. There is one part of this Sub-clause which I cannot understand although I have stretched my imagination. I notice that the Sub-clause gives power to the owner of land to apply to the Governor-in-Executive Committee and have a re-valuation of the land made. The Governor-in-Executive Committee will appoint five other valuers who will make a final valuation of the land but the power to have a re-valuation of the land made is not given to the intended purchaser. That must strike one as being in favour of the owners and not the purchasers of the land. We have been told that we have passed the Public Health Bill and we must get through with this Bill and the other Bill. I am really minded to make some amendment to this Clause. I quite realise that if the Governor-in-Executive Committee considers that the price arrived at by the valuers is not reasonable he can have a re-valuation of the land made. I understand that that has been done already. (Mr. MOTTLEY: Several times). Does this mean when an application has been made to the Governor-in-Executive Committee—

Mr. MOTTLEY: I can explain the position to the honourable member. The Governor-in-Executive Committee must see the return of the price of land made by the valuers. If the Governor-in-Executive Committee is not satisfied with the valuation—and he would only be dissatisfied, if in his opinion, the valuation is too high—he will order another valuation to be made. On the other hand it is quite fair for the owners of the land, if after applying for and receiving their licence for the sale of the land the valuation is too low, to ask the Governor-in-Executive Committee to have the land re-valued. If the Governor-in-Executive Committee is satisfied that the valuation is correct then he gives the licence for the sale of the land. On several occasions the Governor-in-Executive Committee has withheld such licences.

Mr. COX: I am going to attempt to amend this Sub-clause; I suggest that the Governor-in-Executive Committee be given power to appoint as many sets of valuers as are necessary until, in his opinion, the valuation is fair and reasonable. As the position is now, the second valuation is final. If, for instance, one set of valuers put the valuation of land at 20 cents a square foot and the Governor-in-Executive Committee feels that the valuation is not fair and reasonable he will appoint another set of valuers. The other set of valuers may value the land at 40 cents a square foot and what will happen? That 40 cents a square foot has to be taken as the price of the land. I am suggesting therefore that the Governor-in-Executive Committee should be given the power to appoint as many sets of valuers as are necessary until the price of the land is considered fair and reasonable by the Government. That is the only way in which we can deal with this matter. As I have pointed out, the first set of valuers will make their valuation and the next set of valuers may be rogues who are interested in the land and they will increase the valuation; so that instead of the price of the land being 20 cents a square foot which was the orginal valuation. it will be 40 cents a square foot while it is not the Government's intention to have the price of the land increased. It is rather the Government's intention that if 20 cents a square foot is too high the other set of valuers will make a valuation which is fair and reasonable. But the price of the land may be increased and the Government has to be satisfied with the increased valuation made by the second set of valuers. I feel that there should be some amendment inserted in this Sub-clause giving the Governor-in-Executive Committee the authority to appoint as many sets of valuers as are necessary until a valuation which is considered fair and reasonable is made.

Mr. MAPP: The honourable senior member for the City argued in connection with the Public Health Bill even after we had finished with it. (Mr. MOTTLEY: I argued sensibly). The honourable member argued sensibly in his opinion. I cannot see that the argument of the honourable senior member for the City covers the point which I have in mind. The purchaser of the land may not be satisfied with the valuation of the land. I do not know if the honourable member is arguing that the Governor-in-Executive Committee may be told by the purchaser of the land that he does not agree with the valuation, and if the Governor-in-Executive Committee does not consider that the valuation is fair and reasonable he can order that another valuation be made.

Mr. MOTTLEY: My argument is that the Governor-in-Executive Committee decides whether the valuation is high or not. The Governor-in-Executive Committee would not order another valuation if the price is low. The protection of the purchaser of the land is in the Governor-in-Executive Committee. Actually the owner of the land has the right to apply to the Governor-in-Executive Committee for a re-valuation of the land but the purchaser's right is in the Governor-in-Executive Committee.

Mr. MAPP: Obviously the honourable member's argument does not cover the difficulty which I foresee. The Governor-in-Executive Committee may not be partial to the purchasers but, may be, to the owners of the land. The valuation may be fair to the owners of the land whereas it may be very unfair to the intended purchasers. I beg to move that after the word "owner" occurring in paragraph (b) of this Sub-clause the words "or intended purchaser" be inserted. If a man gets a certificate and he wants to divide and sell land and there is no purchaser there will be no dispute. I beg to make that motion.

Mr. COX: I beg to second that.

Mr. MOTTLEY: I could not vote for an amendment like that; there may not be an intended purchaser at all when the certificate or licence is granted. The licence may be granted early in 1948 and there may not be any purchaser until some time later.

The question that the words proposed to be inserted stand part of the Bill was put and resolved in the negative.

A division was taken as follows:—

Ayes: Messrs. HUSBANDS, COX, MAPP and LEWIS—4.

Noes: Dr. WILSON, Dr. CUMMINS, Messrs. BLACKMAN, MOTTLEY, S. A. WALCOTT, WILKINSON and Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER—7.

Clause 4 was passed.

Clause 5 was read as follows:—

5. This Act shall come into operation on such day as the Governor shall appoint by Proclamation in the *Official Gazette*.

Dr. CUMMINS: I beg to move that Clause 5 stand part of the Bill.

Mr. BLACKMAN: I beg to second that.

Mr. LEWIS: I can quite see the necessity for a Clause of this kind in this particular Bill inasmuch as this Bill is to be proclaimed in accordance with the passing of another Bill. I am asking this question so that the members of this Committee and of this House can have their minds put at rest on a point which I believe has been drawn to their attention already

during this session. I am asking the honourable senior member for St. Thomas—I know that he has a legal opinion on the point—to tell me if it is right to pass this Bill with mention in it of an Act which is not an Act. The Public Health Bill is still a Bill and not an Act and I think that certain expressions in this Bill will have the same meaning as in the Public Health Bill, 1948. Speaking subject to correction, on a previous occasion we were told that we could not put in a Bill coming from this House, mention of an Act which has not yet become an Act. I know that the honourable member has some information on the point and I am asking him to give it now.

Dr. CUMMINS: When we revert to Clause 2 of the Bill then I will say what I have to say about that.

The question that Clause 5 stand part of the Bill was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

The Schedule was read and agreed to.

Clause 2. In this Act the expressions "Director" and "Sanitary Authority" have respectively the same meaning as in the Public Health Act, 1948.

Dr. CUMMINS: As regards Clause 2 which was postponed, I have a legal opinion that this Clause is all right as it stands. When the Governor signs the Public Health Bill and this Bill they will become law at the same time. I beg to move that Clause 2 stand part of the Bill.

Mr. BLACKMAN: I beg to second that.

Mr. LEWIS: I apologize for asking the honourable member that question just now. I was not in the House when this Clause was postponed and that is why I took the opportunity to ask about it just now. As far as my memory serves me, we have been advised during this very session that this particular thing could not be done and I am saying it is good that we have had this legal opinion now so that we can proceed. I sincerely hope that we are right.

The question that Clause 2 stand part of the Bill was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

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

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

On motions of Dr. CUMMINS, seconded by Mr. BLACKMAN in each case, the Bill was read a third time and passed.

POOR RELIEF (AMENDMENT) BILL.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The next Order of the Day stands in the name of the honourable senior member for St. Thomas:—Second reading of a Bill to amend the Poor Relief Act, 1892 (1892-2).

Dr. CUMMINS: This Bill is also consequential on the passing of the Public Health Bill. As it stands this Bill is practically the same Bill as we now have on the Statute Book and which is embodied in the old Public Health Bill, with the exception that in the old Bill it was the Poor Law Board which administered the Bill. In the present Bill provision is made for the Director of Medical Services to administer it and provision is also made for the appointment of an Inspector of Poor Relief. With the exception of those provisions the Bill is the same as that which is on the Statute Book. I beg to move that this Bill be now read a second time.

Mr. BLACKMAN: I beg to second that.

Mr. MOTTLEY: While I am supporting this Bill——

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: It has been drawn to my attention that there are less than twelve honourable members present. I ask the Clerk to ring the Bell.

On the Bell having been rung, a quorum was again obtained.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The honourable member may proceed.

Mr. MOTTLEY: I was saying that this Bill is consequential on the Public Health Bill but there are some changes which I think are necessary. If honourable members read Clause 6 they will see the powers which are vested in the Director of Medical Services. I have some amendments which I would like to make. In view of the fact that under the Public Health Bill the Sanitary Authorities will be responsible for the sanitary services and it has been decided to reimburse the parishes the money spent for extraordinary expenses, and the reserves of the several parishes are limited especially where Poor Relief is concerned, I am wondering if the Government does not think it advisable to insert some Clause whereby Poor Relief can be administered not only to the satisfaction of the Director of Medical Services, but where he is not satisfied with it and a parish can ill afford to spend the money, the Government should be able to reimburse that parish. While we have the Old Age Pension Scheme there are still several people in this colony under the age which qualifies them to receive this pension and they must be given some sort of relief. I therefore think that some provision should be made in this Bill whereby the Government will be able to give to any parish the necessary assistance in respect of paupers.

The question that this Bill be now read a second time was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

On the motion of Dr. CUMMINS, seconded by Mr. BLACKMAN, Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER left the Chair and the House went into Committee on the Bill, Mr. SMITH being in the Chair.

The ten Clauses of the Bill were read and passed.

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

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

On motions of Dr. CUMMINS, seconded by Mr. BLACKMAN in each case, the Bill was read a third time and passed.

RESOLUTION WITHDRAWN

Dr. CUMMINS: I ask leave to withdraw Resolution No. 2 standing in my name on the Order Paper—a Resolution to place the sum of £143,901 at the disposal of the Governor-in-Executive Committee to supplement the provision under various Heads of the Expenditure Estimates 1948-49 as shown in the Schedule thereto for the purpose of paying certain salaries and allowances at increased rates for the year to the 31st. March, 1949.

Mr. LEWIS rose to speak.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Is the honourable member objecting?

Mr. LEWIS: I am speaking on the question as to whether leave should be granted. This is a Resolution which was sent down to this House for consideration and from the Message which we received to-day from His Excellency the Governor, we understand that the Resolution will not be considered at all during this session. I would like honourable members to understand that they are agreeing to that when they agree to the withdrawal of the Resolution.

There being no objection the honourable member was granted leave to withdraw the Resolution:

THE ADJOURNMENT.

The Order Paper having been fixed,

Dr. CUMMINS: I beg to move that this House do now adjourn to Tuesday, the 16th day of November, 1948, at twelve o'clock noon.

Mr. BLACKMAN: I beg to second that.

Mr. MAPP: I would like to say something on the question——

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Is the honourable member speaking on the motion for the adjournment?

Mr. MAPP: A Select Committee has been appointed to consider and prepare a draft reply to Message No. 6/1948, from His Excellency the Governor on the subject of the repatriation of distressed West Indians. This is a very important matter; I happen to be a member of that Committee and I am asking that something be done so as to save people from having to pay a deposit of $100 to Trinidad.

The question that this House do now adjourn to Tuesday, the 16th day of November, 1948, at twelve o'clock noon was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER adjourned the House accordingly.