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HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, 26th October, 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, A. E. S. LEWIS, H. D. BLACKMAN, H. A. DOWDING, V. C. GALE, S. A. WALCOTT, J. H. WILKINSON, O. B. E., and E. L. WARD.

Prayers are read.

Messrs. MAPP and MOTTLEY enter the House and take their seats.

MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting which was held on the 19th October, 1948, having been circulated are taken as read and confirmed.

Mr. GARNER enters the House and takes his seat.

PAPERS LAID

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

Message No. 30/1948 from His Excellency the Governor informing the Honourable the House of Assembly that the funds provided by resolution No. 24/1948 to meet the cost of an investigation into the departmental organisation of the public service will be exhausted by the 30th of November, and that it is not proposed to continue the investigation unless the legislature otherwise desire.

Message No. 31/1948 from His Excellency the Governor inviting the views of the Honourable the House of Assembly on the application to Barbados of the Economic Agreement between the Governments of the United Kingdom and the U.S.A.

Message No. 32/1948 from His Excellency the Governor informing the Honourable the House of Assembly that, in response to an invitation by the Secretary of State for the Colonies, he advised H. M. Government that there was no objection to the accession of Barbados to the General Agreement on Tariff and Trade negotiated at Geneva and amended at Havana.

Statement showing sums advanced to the Colonial Postmaster for the payment of Money Orders up to 30th September, 1948.

Report on the Treatment of Offenders for the year, 1947.

NOTICES

Government Notices are given as follows:—

Mr. BLACKMAN: Resolution for £16,175 to supplement the provision in the Estimates of Expenditure for the year 1948—49 under Head XXXII, Department of Highways and Transport, Item 41, Special reserve for extraordinary flood damage.

Dr. CUMMINS: Resolution to place the sum of £143,901 at the disposal of the Governor-in-Executive Committee to supplement provision under various Heads of the Expenditure Estimates 1948—49 as shown in the Schedule hereto for the purpose of paying certain salaries and allowances at increased rates for the year to the 31st March, 1949.

Dr. CUMMINS: Bill to amend the law relating to Income Tax.

Dr. CUMMINS: Of my intention to move later in the day for the appointment of a Select Committee to prepare a draft Reply to His Excellency's Message No. 31 of 1948, which I laid a few moments ago.

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

BILL READ A FIRST TIME

On the motion of Dr. CUMMINS, seconded by Mr. BLACKMAN, a Bill to amend the law relating to Income Tax is read a first time.

SUPPLEMENTARY RESOLUTION FOR MISCELLANEOUS SERVICES WITHDRAWN

Dr. CUMMINS asks for and is granted leave to withdraw Resolution No. 1 under Order No. 1—a Resolution for the sum of £1,000 to supplement the provision in the Estimates of Expenditure for the year 1948—49 under Head XXIX, Miscellaneous Services, Item 2, Cost of Exchange.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

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

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

RESOLUTION TO PURCHASE AND CONSTRUCT ROAD LEADING TO THE BELLE PUMPING STATION POSTPONED

Dr. CUMMINS asks for and is granted leave to postpone the further consideration of Resolution No. 2 standing in the name of the honourable junior member for St. John,—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.

RESOLUTION TO MEET CAPITAL AND RECURRENT EXPENSES AT DODDS PLANTATION

Dr. CUMMINS: The next Resolution, Sir, is for the sum of £8,750 to meet capital and recurrent expenses in respect of Dodds Plantation until the 31st March, 1949. Consideration of this Resolution was begun on Tuesday last and was postponed. I am going to ask leave to amend it by deleting the words "Eight Thousand Seven Hundred and Fifty" and substituting therefor the words "Three Thousand Six Hundred." It does not seem as if the balance of the amount is urgently needed but there is urgent need of the £3,600 to carry on the work on the plantation.

There being no objection, the honourable member is granted the leave for which he asks and the Resolution is amended accordingly.

Dr. CUMMINS: I beg to move that this Resolution, as amended, do now pass.

Mr. BLACKMAN: I beg to second that.

Mr. WILKINSON: Sir,—On this occasion I wish to congratulate the Government on coming to its senses. I think the comments which were made on this side, as well as on the other side, of the table of the House on the last occasion have been appreciated. I hope that the present Government has been taught a lesson and will never come again to this House to ask us to vote money in circumstances which, it knows, this House will not approve.

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

RESOLUTION TO MEET THE COST OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE POTTERY INDUSTRY

Dr. CUMMINS: The next Resolution is for the sum of £2,750 to supplement Resolution No. 6 of the 29th January, 1946, (to be subsequently refunded as a free grant under the provisions of the Colonial Development and Welfare Act on the terms and conditions stated in the Message from the House of Assembly to His Excellency the Governor, dated the 14th of December, 1943,) to meet the cost of financing a scheme for the appointment of a Ceramist and for conducting of a pottery industry.

I do not think that I need say much about this matter. It is recognised that we have good clay in this island which can be made into good class pottery and tiles and if this pottery industry can be developed it will be a means of helping us to solve some of our economic problems. A ceramist has arrived and is conducting certain experiments which he has favourably reported upon. I should also like to draw the attention of honourable members to the fact that this money is to be subsequently refunded from Colonial Development and Welfare funds. I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

Mr. BLACKMAN: I beg to second that.

Mr. LEWIS: Mr. Chairman,—One must really compliment the Government on taking a step of this nature, that is, to discover from the investigation of an expert what are the chances of developing a pottery industry in this island; but I would like to point out, Sir, that this is an additional £2,750 for this purpose. We have already voted £3,000 and the figure in connection with this scheme has now reached the £5,750 mark. It appears, from the addendum, that this gentleman came here since 1947 and I am sincerely hoping that some headway is being made to justify this expenditure because although it is not being met by actual taxation of the people of this country, yet if we waste these funds we shall be decreasing the sum of money which has been allotted to this colony under the Ten-Year Development Plan. £5,750 seems to me to be a large sum of money to conduct experiments and investigations into the development of a pottery industry in this island and I regret that we have not had a progress report on what has taken place so far.

Mr. WILKINSON: I agree with the honourable member who has just sat down. If, as he very properly said, we waste Colonial Development and Welfare funds, we will have so much less for carrying proposed schemes under the Ten-Year Development Plan into effect. I do not know very much about the pottery industry. I have seen, about three weeks ago, some samples of tiles which were in the possession of a contractor and which were supposed to have been made locally; they looked very well and I do hope that we shall obtain some practical results from these experiments. It is an industry which, of course, should be encouraged but I agree with the junior member for the City that we should watch this expenditure very carefully because if these funds are wasted, it will mean that we shall be getting so much less than the amount which has been allotted to this island under the Plan. I am not saying that this money is being wasted because from what I have seen it seems as though it is going to be a successful experiment. But I am yet of the opinion that £5,000 is quite a lot of money to be spent in conducting experiments into the development of a pottery industry.

Mr. HAYNES: I do not know if I can allay the fears of the two last speakers by making a few remarks on this subject. I think honourable members will realize that it was as a result of my urging that the Government got a Ceramist to come out here with the view of developing a pottery industry and I am very glad that we have secured his services. As regards his work, we cannot expect to receive dividends in a year or two; that would be impossible. He has to put, in the form of a report, what can be produced from the various clays in Barbados as the result of his experiments and then it is up to us to see that those who follow him put these clays to their proper uses. If they will follow his advice, instead of there being a very inferior pottery industry there are all the chances of having just as good an industry in this island as in any other part of the world. I have great hopes that these experiments will bear fruit, and I am sure that they will, not in a short time but in a few years to come.

Dr. CUMMINS: To satisfy the junior member for the City and the junior member for St. James, I shall read certain extracts from a report which has been submitted by the Ceramist. That report states *inter alia*:—"As a result of these tests, it appeared that it should be possible to manufacture (1) good glazed domestic pottery such as vases, jugs, bowls, tea-pots &c., decorated and properly glazed; also flower-pots and terra-cotta ware; (2) roofing tiles

and common bricks; (3) floor tiles; (4) drain pipes. There is also the possibility of fire-bricks manufactured for local use but insufficient data is as yet available on this point." The report is not available for publication but it seems as though there is every possibility of the development of a secondary industry in this instance and I think that this Committee should give it the encouragement that it needs.

Mr. LEWIS: I thank the honourable member for the information which he has given and I should just like to add that paragraph 2 of the addendum states that this expenditure will not be a charge against the Colony's allocation under the Colonial Development and Welfare Act.

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 and the postponement of one in Committee of Supply.

The House resumes.

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.

On the motion of Dr. CUMMINS, seconded by Mr. BLACKMAN, Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER leaves the Chair and the House goes into Committee of Supply, Mr. SMITH being in the Chair.

SUPPLEMENTARY VOTES FOR GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS

Dr. CUMMINS: Mr. Chairman,—The next Resolution is for the sum of £1,713 to be placed at the disposal of the Governor-in-Executive Committee for the service of the Colony. It is the usual quarterly Resolution which is sent down in respect of Departments whose votes have been expended or are about to be expended. I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

Mr. BLACKMAN: I beg to second that.

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

ex gratia GRANTS TO GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES

Dr. CUMMINS: The next Resolution is for the sum of £1,194. 4. 9. to make *ex gratia* grants to members of the Unestablished Staff who have resigned. There are 19 such persons, 16 of whom were employed by the Central Road Board and then continued to serve under the Department of Highways and Transport. Two were casual employees and one was the porter of the Lodge School. This porter has since died and the amount of his gratuity will be paid to his widow. The amount in each case has been computed on the regular basis of one month's salary for each completed year of service. I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

Mr. BLACKMAN: I beg to second that.

Mr. DOWDING: Mr. Chairman,—It is on the one hand gratifying, after a certain amount of urging, to see this Resolution before us to-day. On the other hand, it is regrettable — I hope the members of the Government will take note of what I am saying — that an old man, 72 years of age, should have had to wait for a period of seventeen months before he could receive the £65. 10. due to him. I do not know where to fix the blame but there seems to be a certain amount of apathy in dealing with matters of this

sort. I investigated the case of this old man and I discovered that one office had handed the matter over to another office about six weeks ago. Now, Sir, it should not take seventeen months to deal with a matter of this sort and I do hope that the Government will see to it that these people receive these respective amounts without further delay.

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

RESOLUTION TO MEET EXPENSES INCURRED IN CONNECTION WITH GIRL'S INDUSTRIAL UNION'S EVENING CLASSES

Dr. CUMMINS: The next Resolution is for £100 (to be subsequently refunded as a free grant under the provisions of the Colonial Development and Welfare Act on the terms and conditions stated in the Message from the House of Assembly to His Excellency the Governor, dated the 14th December, 1943) to meet expenses incurred by the Girls' Industrial Union in connection with evening classes.

These evening classes have been carried on by the Girls' Industrial Union for some time now and among the subjects which are taught is typewriting. The Department of Education provides instructors for the various classes but does not provide equipment and this amount is to purchase typewriters. I think it is the desire of this Committee that these evening classes should be continued and, therefore, I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

Mr. BLACKMAN: I beg to second that.

Mr. WARD: I feel that the object of this Resolution is a good one. I feel that these evening classes result in a great deal of good because I have known girls who have been able to secure employment through having been taught to type at the Girls' Industrial Union. I think that these classes should be carried on for the benefit of girls who are not in a position to help themselves, so that they might be equipped to fill jobs.

Mr. WILKINSON: I support the remarks of the honourable member who has just sat down, although I may not know the girls as well as he does (Laughter), but I do know some of the work which has been done by the Girls' Industrial Union and I have nothing but praise for these classes. I think they are serving a useful purpose in this community and I have very much pleasure in supporting this Resolution.

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

RESOLUTION TO MEET COST OF SIX-MONTH COURSE FOR CANDIDATE IN DOMESTIC TRAINING AT HOUSE-CRAFT CENTRE

Dr. CUMMINS: The next Resolution is for the sum of £38 (to be subsequently refunded as a free grant under the provisions of the Colonial Development and Welfare Act on terms and conditions laid down in the Message from the House of Assembly to His Excellency the Governor, dated the 14th December, 1943,) to meet the cost of the subsistence allowance of a Barbados candidate attending a six-month course in Domestic Training at the Barbados Housecraft Centre.

This Course is given to candidates from the Windward and Leeward Islands and this money is required to pay the subsistence allowance of the Barbados candidate at the rate of \$30 a month. I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

Mr. BLACKMAN: I beg to second that.

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 four 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, six Resolutions which were passed in Committee of Supply are read a first and a second time and are agreed to.

BILL POSTPONED.

Dr. CUMMINS: Mr. Deputy Speaker,—I ask leave to postpone the consideration of the next three Orders—Second reading of a Bill to provide for the division and sale and the division and letting of land in lots and for the regulation of tenancies; Second reading of a Bill to amend the Poor Relief Act, 1892 (1892—3); and to resume Committee on the Bill to consolidate and amend the Acts relating to Public Health. I think there is a certain amount of agreement among honourable members to meet on Thursday this week and deal with only these three Bills which hinge one on the other, so to speak.

There being no objection, the honourable member is granted the leave which he asks for and the consideration of the three Bills is postponed accordingly.

RESOLUTION POSTPONED

Dr. CUMMINS: For a different reason, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I ask leave to postpone the further consideration of Order No. 6—Special Resolution under the provisions of section 2 of the Colonial Secretary's Office Act, 1903 (1903-5,) as amended by section 2 of the Colonial Secretary's Office (Amendment) Act, 1947 (1947-24).

There being no objection, the honourable member is granted the leave which he asks for and the further consideration of this Resolution is postponed accordingly.

RESOLUTION TO ENTER INTO AGREEMENTS WITH PERSONS TO SERVE IN THE MATERNITY HOSPITAL AND THE BARBADOS GENERAL HOSPITAL

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The next Order stands in the name of the honourable senior member for St. Thomas,—To move the passing of a Resolution to authorize the Governor to enter into agreements with persons to serve in the Maternity Hospital in the office of Matron and the Barbados General Hospital in any of the following offices, namely, House Surgeon and Anaesthetist, House Surgeon, Matron, Assistant Matron, Sister Tutor and Home Sister, Sister, Radiologist and Radiographer, subject to the conditions set out in the schedule to the Resolution.

The power which this Resolution seeks to vest in the Governor was vested in the late Hospital Board. Since the General Hospital has become a Government Department, there is no authority for the Governor to enter into agreements with certain officers; consequently certain appointments have been held up and the Resolution seeks to give the Governor power to enter into such agreements. I beg to move that the Resolution do now pass.

Mr. BLACKMAN: I beg to second that.

Mr. SYMONDS enters the House and takes his seat.

Mr. LEWIS: Mr. Deputy Speaker,—I think that some explanation, apart from the fact of the coming into operation of the Barbados General Hospital Act making the General Hospital a Government Department, is necessary in this matter because so far as I remember, in the Bill in connection with

the Hospital it is expressly stated that all contracts in existence would automatically be taken over by the Government,—contracts for professional services and, I take it, contracts for supplying the institution with various things. Well, Sir, now that the General Hospital is a government institution and is being run, as we were told, as a colonial hospital, I am wondering why it is necessary to enter into contracts with persons coming to this island to fill the offices mentioned in this Resolution. It would seem as if we were led into believing that if the Government took over the General Hospital, it would ease the position, as far as the securing of staff is concerned because the persons who would be coming here to fill certain offices would be colonial servants. That is, as far as I remember, one of the blessings that would be bestowed upon us if the General Hospital became a Government institution. I would like the honourable member who moved the passing of this Resolution to tell us whether the Governments of places like Trinidad and British Guiana have to enter into contracts with professional persons to fill offices of this nature. The next thing I would like to know is this: Why is an office such as Medical Superintendent omitted from those for which contracts are necessary? I think that that is a very important office at the General Hospital and I would like to know whether a contract is in existence with the person who is already performing the duties of that office. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I should like to take this opportunity, while I am asking why the office of Medical Superintendent has been omitted, to make this remark upon the official designation of the person at present administering the General Hospital. So far as I remember, Sir, a Resolution came to this House in respect of the employment of a Surgeon Specialist and we were told that we were getting the services of an eminently qualified Barbadian who at the time was in the service of the colony of British Guiana, filling a similar post. Since that officer has assumed his duties I have seen him referred to as the Surgeon Superintendent. I understand that none of the offices mentioned in this Resolution which is now before us,—offices which have been created in accordance with the Barbados General Hospital Act of 1947—has been occupied as yet and having seen, as I have said, that the official designation of the person administering the General Hospital is Surgeon Superintendent, I am enquiring why this office is not mentioned in this list. I can tell this House that when the person who is now administering the General Hospital was leaving British Guiana to come here to take up his appointment he could tell the people in British Guiana that he was coming to be Medical Superintendent of, and to organize the General Hospital. I heard that in British Guiana when I was there quite recently and I would like to know exactly what it is that I am agreeing to now and how a thing of that sort could have happened. This officer was employed because of his skill and ability as a Surgeon and after he has been here a little time, we find that he is performing the duties of Medical Superintendent, instead of devoting his time to the particular work which he is very skilled to do. It is regrettable that we were not told the purpose for which this officer was coming here when he could say that he was coming to perform duties which he is, at present, performing. Mr. Deputy Speaker, it would be better if this Resolution was discussed in Committee because the General Hospital is an institution which is very vital, as far as the community is concerned, and a matter of this sort should be discussed in such a manner that any questions which may be asked can be answered and the answers commented upon. I am going to throw out a hint to the

members of this House. As a member of the late Hospital Board for some time, I discovered that professional persons who come here to fill offices at the General Hospital will make you enter into contracts with them to do all sorts of things; you may find yourself in a professional racket. The late Hospital Board had to put its foot down on the last Radiologist attempting to get a salary far in excess of the amount which he was really coming to this island to receive, as the result of these contracts, and when he did get here I think that the island was glad to be rid of him.

My next point is in connection with the amounts which are paid for the passages of these persons who come out here to join the staff of the General Hospital. In the past, if one of these professional employees came out here and didn't like his office or, for some insufficient reason, broke his contract, he had to refund the passage money that was paid by the Hospital Board and I know that it is very difficult to get persons to come out here and, if they do not like the job or the place, to agree to a refund of the passage money. I wonder whether the Government or the Governor wants permission to enter into a contract with a Colonial Secretary, for instance, who comes out here and if you do not have to enter into a contract with a Colonial Secretary I would like to know why it is necessary to enter into contracts with these persons. Are we really running the Hospital as a Colonial Hospital or are we not? That is what we should be told. We were told that you cannot get these people at any time; that there was much trouble in getting officers to do the work of the Hospital, and that the problem would be solved, the moment the General Hospital became a government institution. Now that it is a government institution, people who have been working at it for years do not know to-day where they are because the appointments have not been made and we are being asked to give the Government or the Governor permission now to enter contracts with the persons who would be filling what we would call the top-ranking positions while the ordinary employees of the Hospital do not know where they are to-day, as far as their appointments are concerned. I have seen it stated that the Government is waiting on the Report of Mr. G. H. Adams, C.B.E., in connection with the Barbados General Hospital but I cannot for the life of me see why a man like Mr. Adams should have to come out here to tell the Government and the members of the Advisory Committee of the Hospital what is necessary for the Hospital by way of staff, professional or otherwise. Mr. Adams can tell you whether an office is worth so much but I fail to see that he could tell you whether a porter or a House Surgeon or 200 nurses at the General Hospital are necessary. The Doctors at the General Hospital should, with the assistance of the Chief Medical Officer, have been able to tell the Government to make these appointments and set the people's minds at rest. The difficulty has arisen there that some poor man who wants to resign because he has reached the age limit, cannot very well resign and I believe that a Bill had to be put through the Legislature to connect the present system of control at the Hospital with the past system, so that an employee who resigns on reaching the age limit could receive his pension. That, I consider, is a very unsatisfactory state of affairs, namely, to leave the employees of the General Hospital in doubt upon these points. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am at a disadvantage discussing this matter in the House. I have no doubt that the senior member for St. Thomas will have adequate replies to make to the questions I have put but I will have no opportunity

to comment upon the replies if they are satisfactory or not and, therefore, I am taking this opportunity, Sir, of asking the honourable mover of this Resolution whether he will accept a motion that the House go into Committee on this Resolution. I should like, before I vote for it, to know whether this is something entirely peculiar to this colony or whether it is done in other colonies and I would like to know why certain offices have been omitted from this list. I do not see any reason why the office of Medical Superintendent should not be included. Is it the intention of the Administration not to have a Medical Superintendent at all? Because the present office has been filled by a Barbadian I see no reason why you should exempt it from those for which you contemplate entering into contracts. I sincerely hope that the senior member for St. Thomas will have some replies to make to the questions I have asked because I think those replies would help to ease the minds of honourable members and assist them to vote one way or the other in respect of this Resolution after we have gone into Committee and heard the facts of the case. With that end in view, Sir, I beg to move that Your Honour do now leave the Chair and the House go into Committee on this Resolution.

Mr. SYMMONDS: I beg to second the motion that this House go into Committee on this Resolution.

Mr. GALE: I take it that this Resolution is for the specific purpose of allowing the Hospital Authorities to enter into contracts with certain officers. The persons who are mentioned here will not be civil servants. Special arrangements will be made with them when they are taken on; their passages will be paid and they will be required to enter into contracts. If a private firm is taking on a man for a special purpose, it enters into a contract with him and that contract is binding on both parties to it. I do not see any difficulty in this matter at all. These persons will not be pensionable; their services are simply being engaged on contract.

Dr. CUMMINS: I am surprised to hear the junior member for the City make those comments. The honourable member was at one time a member of the Hospital Board and he ought to remember that the persons who held the offices set out in this Resolution always came to this colony on contract. The same procedure is observed in hospitals all over the world because medical men, matrons, sisters, radiologists, and radiographers, do not tie themselves down for life to one particular hospital; they go from place to place. When we became a Federated West Indies with a Unified Medical Service, I do not suppose the question of a contract will arise in the filling of these offices. But as conditions are now, all these officers come to the colony and go to other colonies on contract. As far as the point about the Surgeon Specialist is concerned, it should never arise because it has no connection with this Resolution. He was appointed under an Act, as honourable members will remember; the honourable member was a member of this House when that Act was passed and he should remember all about it. I really do not see the point in going into Committee on this Resolution; there is nothing to be gained by so doing; honourable members cannot get any more information than that which I have given if we go into Committee on the Resolution.

Mr. COX: I think we can appreciate an amendment to this Resolution. I would suggest that the Governor-in-Executive Committee make the contracts with these persons rather than the Governor. I also feel that these contracts—

Dr. CUMMINS: Let me correct the honourable member at once because I do not think I will have

the right to speak again. The honourable member is out of order. The Governor is the only person to make these appointments. When the Hospital Board was in existence, it made these appointments but now the Governor makes them.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Has the honourable member a copy of the Act with him? If the Act vests the power to make these appointments in the Governor, we cannot, by the means suggested by the senior member for St. Michael, vest it in the Governor-in-Executive Committee.

Dr. CUMMINS: Under the Barbados General Hospital Act, the Governor makes these appointments.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: If that is so, the proposed amendment of the senior member for St. Michael will be out of order. The senior member for St. Michael was interrupted in the course of his speech; does the honourable care to continue?

Mr. COX: I do not care to go any further with my suggestion but I feel that the House should see these contracts beforehand.

Mr. MOTTLEY: I am afraid that I cannot support the motion for going into Committee. In the course of a conversation with a young medico who recently returned to this island I was made to understand that it is the custom for medical practitioners and other persons who fill some of these professional posts to be appointed on contract because in the first place the employing Authority would know the period for which the employees would be serving and would not wake one fine morning to find that all of them were leaving together. In the second place, these professional persons do not bind themselves down for life at any particular hospital but endeavour to get experience in various fields; therefore, I think that this Resolution is perfectly in order. As regards the Surgeon Specialist I well remember that he was appointed under a Special Act, so it would serve no useful purpose sending the Resolution to the Committee.

The question that Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER do now leave the Chair and the House go into Committee on this Resolution is put and resolved in the negative, Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER declaring that the "Noes" have it.

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

THE VESTRIES (AMENDMENT) BILL

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The next Order stands in the name of the honourable senior member for St. Thomas,—Second reading of a Bill to amend the Vestries Act, 1911 (1911-5).

Dr. CUMMINS: The object of this Bill, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is to extend the powers of the Vestries of this Island. The Vestries operate under an Act which circumscribes their ambit but Barbados being in the march of social progress, it has been found necessary to come to this House to amend that Act, so that the Vestries will be given power to engage in social undertakings. Now, Sir, I want to point out that this Bill is purely a permissive Bill. It provides that the Vestries *may* do this, that and the other and any Vestry which does not see its way to undertake duties which this Bill permits it to undertake, need not undertake them. I think that has been made perfectly clear. This Government, Mr. Deputy Speaker, envisages certain social activities being undertaken by Vestries,—activities such as laying out and running of playing fields for the welfare of the people and, Sir, the Government is hoping that in the not too distant future there will be district markets

in the several parishes of the island under the supervision of the respective Vestries. There is a fund known as the Labour Welfare Fund which has been created under the Sugar Industry (Rehabilitation, Stabilization and Welfare) Act and funds will be provided from that fund to meet initial expenses in laying out playing fields, parks and expenses in connection with other amenities to which I have referred. I also want to make it quite plain to those honourable members who seem to have fears about the financial implication of this Bill that all expenses incurred by the Vestries for these purposes will be paid out of monies provided by the Governor-in-Executive Committee from the Labour Welfare funds. Clause 2 of the Bill sets out quite clearly the additional powers to be conferred upon the Vestries and I beg to move that this Bill be now read a second time.

Mr. BLACKMAN: I beg to second that.

Mr. MOTTLEY: Mr. Deputy Speaker,—This is a Bill which, to my mind, is long overdue and I should regret very much if any member of this House offers any opposition to it. I make that statement in anticipation of what might happen. If for years members of this House have been crying for power to be given to local Government to enable social improvements to be effected in the several parishes of the island I fail to see any reason why there should be any amendment or amendments to this Bill. As the result of representation which was made to the Government by several Vestries, including the Vestry of St. Michael, the Governor-in-Executive Committee, after discussions with several deputations, felt that either the Vestries Act would have to be amended immediately, if these social improvements were to be effected, or the Vestries would have to wait until the entire parochial system was changed. Well it has been decided that the former course should be taken and this Bill which is in no way obligatory on the Vestries has been sent to this House. The Bill does not say that the Vestries *shall* do these things; it merely gives them the power to provide for the maintenance of these playing fields, parks and district markets which may be established in their parishes. The Objects and Reasons of the Bill state *inter alia* that "under modern conditions the range and variety of local Government activities is considerable and steadily increasing". That is true. For instance, in St. Michael there is the pressing need for district markets where people can offer their wares for sale. Everybody knows that people should have a certain amount of recreation and places for such recreation must be provided, whether the Central Government or the Local Government provides them. I agree that it is much better for such activities to be assigned to the Local Government—the people on the spot—than to the Central Government and if there are any fears in the minds of certain honourable members that that will be a burden on the taxation of the parishes, those fears should be dispelled by the statement of the senior member for St. Thomas who has made it abundantly clear that the expenses in connection with the laying out and running of these playing fields and parks will be met from Labour and Welfare funds. I go further and say that even though that has been made very clear, it would be parsimonious in these days for the Vestry of any parish to object to looking after a playing field that has been established in that particular parish. I feel very strongly on that point. As the senior member for St. Thomas has said, there is nothing in this Bill which says that the Vestries *must* do these things. There are sections in the Vestries Act which say that the Vestries *shall* do so and so but this Bill says that the Vestries *may* do so and

so. If no paying field is provided in the parish of St. Lucy, then there is no obligation on the Vestry of St. Lucy to provide for the upkeep of a playing field; but surely if a playing field was given, let us say, by the estate of the senior member for St. Lucy, they could not expect him to pay the necessary expense for its upkeep. Why should the expense for the upkeep of that playing field not come out of the rates of the parish of St. Lucy? If an individual has been generous enough to give a playing field, somebody else should pay for its upkeep and as the taxpayers and their families would have the use of that paying field, they should contribute the greater portion of the expense for its upkeep. I consider that this Bill is absolutely necessary and I have said what I have said in anticipation of any argument which might be used to the effect that it imposes a hardship or is an unnecessary burden financially on the parishes. In this twentieth century this Bill is about 50 years late and, therefore, I have much pleasure in supporting it as it stands. I consider that not only should these playing fields and parks be established by the Government but I feel that the example which has been set by some people recently might be emulated by many other people who are large landowners in the island; they should give up certain portions of their lands in some of the parishes for this purpose and that, in itself, would, in my opinion, relieve the situation. If more persons could be found to give up portions of their lands in the parishes for the establishment of playing fields, then the Vestries could make the necessary provision in their Estimates for the upkeep of those playing fields and parks.

Mr. F. L. WALCOTT: Mr. Deputy Speaker,— I do not know whom the senior member for the City was anticipating when he made certain remarks in the course of his speech but I should like to say that while I agree, in principle, with this Bill I would like to point out that I am agreeing to it in view of the fact that Sir John Maude made an enquiry a few months ago into the system of local government and his report is being anxiously awaited. The senior member for the City talked about this Bill being long overdue but I would never have agreed to it if Sir John Maude had not made his enquiry because I could not agree to giving more authority to the Vestries with the present restricted franchise. If there is anything in this island which is long overdue, it is the necessity for a change in the qualification for membership of the Vestries. This is the 20th Century but the qualification for membership of the Vestries is the same as it was in the Elizabethan era and suits certain honourable members. No honourable member could say that the institutions known as Vestries in Barbados are definitely 20th century institutions; they are a relic of the Elizabethan era and we cannot be living in this age and carrying on with institutions whose outlook happen to be the same to-day as it was three hundred years ago. I quite agree that Local Authorities should have power to do these things but it is wrong in principle to give them more power unless you are going to spread representation. I feel the Vestry system must be approached in the right form, that is to say, at the core of it, at the base of it. You must broaden it so as to bring in other people with other points of view, rather than the old fellows who sit at these parochial boards and whose only claim is that they pay taxes to the extent of \$30 per annum. We know that in Barbados a tax of \$30 per annum to be able to seek membership on a Vestry, is more or less a prohibitive tax and in these days we should not have institutions on which only

the small minority of the people can serve. A Vestry is an administrative body and not a legislative body such as the House of Assembly is and only people with a certain money qualification can have seats on it. Again, I would like to know what is the alternative to the discretionary word "may." Now, if the Vestries may do these things and they refuse to do them I would like to know what is the alternative. You are giving them the power to do these things and you should have some medium to act by if they refuse to do them. The senior member for St. Thomas has said that this Bill is purely permissive but if the Vestries refuse to do these things, we should not allow the expenditure of large sums of money such as these are to be held up because "A" Vestry or "B" Vestry or "C" Vestry has refused to undertake these activities. Speaking for myself I believe that the Vestries are the appropriate bodies to deal with local matters, such as the establishment of playing fields, parks, markets, slaughter houses and so forth but I say that when it comes to the playing fields and parks, I do not believe that they are the only groups of persons whom you can get to look after these things now. I feel that there are people in other sections of this community whom the Government could very well call upon to assist in the effecting of social improvements in this island. We have to encourage people who though they may not have high sounding titles, nevertheless, have the ability to do this work and it should be the policy of the Government to ask as many of such persons as possible to assist in this work. I repeat that I regret very much that I have to vote for this Bill to-day in view of what I have said; but I do so, knowing that Sir John Maude has left this island to prepare his report on our present system of local government. I should like to go on record as saying that I would not give any Vestry in this island any more power until that old Elizabethan system has been changed and made something fitting in the middle of the 20th Century.

Mr. SYMMONDS: I am glad to hear the honourable member who has just sat down say that he is not going to oppose this Bill to-day because I am one of those who feel that the maintenance of playing fields throughout the length and breadth of this island by local Government out of Government funds is very long overdue. All of us who have the interests of the people at heart know the part which games play, not only in producing healthy and sound bodies but also in character building, particularly the grand old game of cricket. In the parish of St. George which I have the honour to represent, I know that this is a very crying need. In the Ellerton district, the members of the Club in that district have been experiencing the greatest difficulty, through their limited means, in obtaining a suitable playing field to enable them to enter the cricket competition and some of them spoke to me only a few nights ago, hoping that such a Bill as this would be sent to this House in the very near future. At present, the young men of another district in the same parish play upon a veritable precipice and through their love of the game they have been able to produce, during the local cricket season, at least one century batsman. At St. George's Church, on the ground known as "George Park," keen young men, at real sacrifice, provide themselves with bats and balls week after week, in order to participate in the game of cricket; while at Drax Hall and St. Jude's and Charles Rowe Bridge, many of the young men who have attempted to form clubs in those districts in order to enter the local cricket competitions have been unable to participate in games because of the lack of finance to maintain playing fields. The establishment of playing fields, whether they are to be used for cricket or football or

other games, is a very expensive business; they have to be managed by some responsible authority—and I do not think there is any better authority to-day to supervise the management of them than the Local Authorities. I want to say that there is very great need of a proper park in the parish of St. George. The maintenance of parks and the necessary playing fields will entail the expenditure of a considerable sum of money and I do not think that any better Authorities could be established for the maintenance of such playing fields and parks than the Vestries of the respective parishes who are already trained in the administration of parochial affairs and the disbursement of parochial funds. It is for that reason that I want most heartily to support the passing of this Bill in its present form. I am one of those who look forward to the day when a wider degree of representation on Vestries will be given to the general public but I also know that while the grass grows, the horse starves and the people of the country districts particularly are looking forward anxiously and hopefully to the passing of this Bill.

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

Mr. MAPP: I think that it will be unanimously agreed that this Bill provides a start towards obtaining for the bulk of the people of this island those social, cultural amenities which were so sadly lacking in the past. It is true that when this question of giving the Vestries power to administer playing fields was first mooted, there were many serious pitfalls and many other questions, involved in that arrangement, which sprang to one's mind. The first, I think, is the absence, as other honourable members have stressed, of wider representation on those bodies, especially the absence of ladies on those bodies, because we must admit that when it comes to the supervision of playing fields and other community centres, the feminine hand is absolutely necessary and we do not have women playing as great a part as they should in the provision of these social amenities for the people in this island. That is one serious obstacle. Another obstacle is the fact that although these Vestries are composed for the most part of landowners who are fairly well off, yet it would be found that they are not so alive to their responsibilities and duties towards the poor sections of the community as to sell land or place certain amenities at the disposal of the administering bodies, so that the average ratepayer will not be overburdened for this purpose. That is another objection and I appeal to those members here present who would have some sway with persons such as to whom I refer to use their influence to overcome, for the most part, this second serious obstacle in the way of providing social amenities for the people of this island. But on the other hand, when you take into account the fact that enquiry is at present proceeding into the Local Government in this Colony, when you take into account the fact that the people are suffering to a great degree from the lack of such amenities as will be provided when these playing fields are properly established, when you take into question these things, I think that it is very pressing that we temporize and allow the local bodies to administer these playing fields. As I have said, we are not satisfied with the local set-up as it is at present; we are not satisfied that they are the best bodies to administer these playing fields; but when we take into consideration the fact that these amenities are necessary, I think we can well strike a happy medium and agree to this Bill to-day with the minimum of delay. Yet I think it my duty—and it should be the duty of other honourable members—not to fall into the trap of thinking that if we pass this Bill everything will be easy going after that. We have been told that the initial capital expenditure and a great portion of the recurrent expenditure in connection with these playing fields will come out of the Labour Welfare Fund which has been established under the Sugar Industry (Rehabilitation, Stabilization and Welfare) Act; but

I want to point out that it is the social duty of those persons who possess lands to see that they put at the disposal of the people, especially the workers who have slaved for them all these years, as much land as possible in order that these playing fields might be established. In the constituency which I have the honour to represent I am proud to say that there is at least one proprietor who has informed the senior member for St. Thomas and myself that he is willing to give land, if necessary free of charge, for the establishment of a playing field. He is a liberal-minded planter and I wish the same could be said of the majority of those who have vast areas of land in this island. I hope that some expression of opinion would come from the other side of this table, giving us some hope that there is some liberal change of thought and not only a liberal exchange of words. I do not have land I am sorry for that because if I had land I could give practical expression of my liberality. It is absolutely necessary that land should be obtained as cheaply as possible for the establishment of playing fields. Do not let the people have to pay fantastic sums for amenities with which they should have been provided long ago and which are absolutely necessary for their social advancement.

Mr. WARD: I am not in favour of this Bill as it stands. Sir, I personally feel that a certain degree of hardship will be imposed on certain parishes if they were burdened with the maintenance of playing fields. I feel that if the Government really means to do something for the people in this respect, it should not leave it to the Vestries to say whether they would or would not undertake the upkeep of playing fields. It is no good giving people playing fields and not maintaining them. We have an instance of a playing field which was given in the parish of St. Philip and which was allowed to run to ruin. If we are going to adopt the system of establishing playing fields and leave it to the Vestries to say whether they will or will not supervise them, then we may as well not establish them. Everyone knows that money has been collected from the sugar industry for a Labour Welfare Fund which is nearly £100,000 to-day and up to the present moment nothing has been done with that money. It seems to me pretty unfair to be taking 10/- per ton from people who pay taxes in the parishes and then to turn around and tax those same persons again to maintain playing fields. Sir, another thing which must be borne in mind is that only a few people in the several parishes pay taxes. Taxes are paid by landowners and other people who do a certain amount of trade in the parishes and in my opinion, it would not be fair to those some people to add to their taxation for the upkeep of playing fields which are for the benefit of the whole island. I feel that the expense of maintaining these playing fields should be borne by the Government. If we establish these playing fields, I feel that we should give them the best attention, so that the community could get the best results from them. If they are run in a half-way manner the people would not be attracted to them nor would they get the amenities which they should obtain from them. The honourable member who spoke just before me would not know but there are persons in some of the parishes who have given playing fields to provide recreation for the people; it is not true, as he says, that no playing fields have been given by people in the parishes. As I said before, I would be glad to see these playing fields established but it is no use establishing them and then leaving them to be maintained by the Vestries. There are some parishes which are so poor that they cannot even sustain the paupers of their respective parishes. If these playing fields are to be island wide, it is the Government's responsibility to keep them going. On bank holidays, we see

people going from one playing field to another. This is not a local matter; it is an island-wide undertaking for the benefit of the community and should be an encouragement to people to go from one part of the island to another part and exchange ideas.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: There are other honourable members who want to speak on this subject and inasmuch as it is after 2 p.m., this House stands adjourned 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 on the Table of the House the reply to question No. 70 standing in the name of the honourable senior member for St. Peter; the replies to questions No. 80 standing in the name of Your Honour; and the replies to questions No. 83 also standing in the name of Your Honour.

APPOINTMENT OF SELECT COMMITTEE

Dr. CUMMINS: Earlier in the day I intimated that I would ask leave to move for the appointment of a Select Committee to consider Message No. 31 of 1948 from His Excellency the Governor. I now ask leave to move for the appointment of that Committee.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: What was the subject matter of that Message?

Dr. CUMMINS: It deals with the application to Barbados of the Economic Agreement between the Governments of the United Kingdom and the United States of America.

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

Dr. CUMMINS: I beg to move that a Select Committee be appointed to consider and prepare a Draft Reply to Message No. 31 of 1948 from His Excellency the Governor on the subject of the application to Barbados of the Economic Agreement between the Governments of the United Kingdom and the United States of America.

Mr. BLACKMAN seconded the motion which was agreed to.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Subject to the approval of the House, I nominate the following members to constitute the personnel of that Select Committee:—The honourable junior member for St. James (Mr. Wilkinson), the honourable junior member for St. Michael (Mr. Gale), the honourable senior member for the City (Mr. Mottley), the honourable junior member for St. John (Mr. Blackman), the honourable junior member for the City (Mr. Lewis), the honourable junior member for St. Thomas (Mr. Mapp) and the honourable junior member for St. George (Mr. Symmonds).

Mr. WILKINSON: I am not refusing to serve as a member of this Committee, but I would like to point out that I see very little chance of dealing with a complicated question like this in the short time we have before the end of the session. It is no small matter with which we have to deal. If honourable members can get together and discuss the matter I am quite willing for that to be done but I warn honourable members that this matter is a very difficult one to be dealt with before the session ends.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I trust that honourable members of the Select Committee will do their best in the circumstances.

SUSPENSION OF RULE 61 (a)

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

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

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

Mr. BLACKMAN seconded the motion which was agreed to.

VESTRIES (AMENDMENT) BILL

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: When the House adjourned for lunch honourable members were discussing the second reading of a Bill to amend the Vestries Act, 1911 (1911-5). The honourable senior member for St. Lucy was speaking.

Mr. WARD did not continue to speak.

Mr. GALE: I think that all honourable members will vote for this Bill. I do not see any danger in connection with it; this Bill asks that if there are playing fields in any particular district, the Authorities who should look after them should be the Vestries. In the case of St. Michael the Vestry will also look after the markets. All over the world playing fields, public recreational grounds, parks and so on are looked after by the Municipal Authorities and I do not see why there should be any exception here. For instance, the Vestry of St. Michael has been looking after the only recreational place which we have in Barbados, that is Queen's Park, since the place was made into a Park and if other parishes have small parks and playing fields I think that it is the duty of the local Authorities to look after these parks and playing fields and maintain them. There is some fear that people will have to be very highly taxed so that these parks and playing fields can be maintained, but I have no qualms of conscience as far as that is concerned. A certain amount of expenditure will be required so as to keep up these places but it will not be any enormous amount. The parks and playing fields in the country districts will not be of the size of Queen's Park; they will be small areas and I do not see that it will cost any tremendous amount to keep them in order; so as to be a burden to the taxpayers. For instance, there is a playing field in St. Philip and under this Bill the Vestry of that parish can have the power to take it over and run it. If there are any other playing fields the Vestry can take them over and run them. At present there is no authority for anybody to take over these places and run them. These places spring up haphazardly; in some cases the subscriptions are not as large as they should be and so these places are not maintained. I am therefore supporting this Bill.

Mr. GARNER: I do not see why all honourable members should not vote for this Bill. This is a Bill which, to my mind, is long overdue. Standing in my name on the Order Paper is an Address to His Excellency the Governor relating to recreational centres or playing fields throughout the island; therefore this is a step forward. I have heard a few remarks against this Bill which really cannot stand the light of day. It makes no difference as to what expenditure we have to incur locally or otherwise in order to see that the children of the poor classes have somewhere where they can have their games so that they can keep off the streets which are used by motor vehicles and other traffic. This in itself is something to be encouraged. Speaking on behalf of my Vestry, we have approved this Bill; we answered the enquiry very favourably when we were interviewed in connection with the matter. Mr. Deputy Speaker, those people who say that this Bill will work a hardship on the taxpayers of the various parishes are forgetting that this is a social measure and as

such whoever owns the wealth of the island must help to bear the burdens of the masses in each parish. I share that view; if you have to tax those who control the wealth in the various parishes and they are not satisfied with that, they will have to do something else. So long as you have people who are moving forward progressively, so long as you have conscientious people who will look after the interest of the masses, those who own the wealth of the parishes will have to be taxed locally or otherwise. I therefore do not share the view that this matter will be a burden to the taxpayers. On the other hand, I can see the Labour Welfare Fund which is now being set aside being used to implement some of this work. I do not see that it will require any large amount to run a park in each parish. In St. Philip we have the King George V Memorial Park; that place is not absolutely abandoned but it is in the hands of the Liquidators and we are hoping soon to see it through. We intend to run it through this Bill; it is no fault of ours that the place is in the hands of the Liquidators; the Committee which was in charge of the Park could not run it and I am sure that when the Park comes under the jurisdiction of the Vestry of the parish it will be run properly. I am sure that no progressive-minded person sitting around this Table will vote against this Bill because we owe recreational grounds to the children in the various parishes. It will gratify one's heart to see the children playing in the schutes and so on in the parks. To deny the children these things is a crime. Whatever amount of money it costs, there should be times when children can meet each other for physical exercise and picnicking. I do not think it is fair to deny the children this sport. I do not anticipate that every parish will have a park of quite the size of that which we have in St. Philip; everybody knows that some of the parks will be very much smaller than that. Everybody also knows that cricket is the national game and while some parks will be larger than others there should be in every parish a cricket field so that the boys can play their cricket and exercise themselves with clean sport. Probably if we had more parks we would have less gambling dens and social vices. I am sure that the parks can take a lot of boys and girls away from the streets and offer them some useful recreation. I am strongly in support of this Bill I will recommend it to anybody. The Vestry of St. Philip lays a rate to the extent of the rental charged for the King George Park so that this is really nothing new. I am hoping that every honourable member of this House will vote for this Bill. An honourable member has said *sotto voce* that what we were doing in St. Philip was illegal; but we can give grants to any extent provided that they are for doing social work. The law for that is there; there is nothing illegal about it. So long as I am a member of the Vestry of St. Philip I will see that these things are carried out. I say that this Bill does not need to be looked at twice and there is no need for any hesitancy in agreeing to it. In certain districts the children have nowhere to play and they play in or very near to the streets and they are in danger of being knocked down by traffic. I beseech honourable members not to stand in the way of this Bill but see that it is passed so that we can take the children off the streets and put them in the parks.

Mr. HUSBANDS: Like most honourable members who have spoken I hail the motives behind this Bill; like the honourable junior member for St. George, I know how much playing fields mean to the youth of this colony. I have associated myself with the handling of school teams with the idea of promoting inter-school matches, and I know that in the parish from which I have come very often we have had difficulty in getting grounds where our

youths both male and female could not get somewhere for carrying on out-door sports. Most of us know that in the past some provision has been made for out-door sports so that people could regale and exercise themselves, to the personal advantage of those who made it sometimes, but out-door activities have been provided by people of big minds. A few of the upper tens have at times graciously put at the disposal of youth certain areas of land, but I do not think that a community like Barbados should content itself with having its youth served only by patrons. We do appreciate gracious acts by people but I do feel that we should move from the realm of patronage to a more appreciable and respectable line of action. That is why I do appreciate this amendment to the Vestries Act as far as it allows provision to be made for public places for the youth of this island. Like other honourable members I express the opinion that the type of person who has served on the Vestries in the past is not the ideal type of person to manage these places for reasons which are well known to honourable members; and to use the words of the honourable junior member for St. Thomas I would temporise and allow it to be so for now. Alongside of that I would express the wish that times will change and men will change with them. I therefore have much pleasure in adding my quota on the side of those who have spoken in favour of this amendment. I think it was most unfortunate to hear the remarks of the honourable senior member for St. Lucy; here we are approaching something bigger than what has formerly obtained and he wants to pin us down to saying that those who pay rates will have greater expense. I think that is rather parsimonious and it is most unfortunate that this debate should have been marred by an expression of that nature. I should like to say as regards Queen's Park that this Park is in the parish of St. Michael and people from St. Lucy and from all over the island come to this Park and amuse themselves at the expense of the ratepayers of St. Michael. I think that the honourable senior member for St. Lucy was most ungenerous and it would have been better if those remarks had not been made. There is no fear as far as the maintenance of these playing fields is concerned when we consider the type of individuals who are going to be served by this Bill. We know that these individuals are the type of individuals who will prepare these places in their own time and, by the sweat of their brow, will make them fit. I feel that proper and sensible regulations should be enforced on these local bodies in order that these playing fields may serve the purpose for which they are intended. I feel, like honourable members, that this amendment is overdue. There is just one thing more; I have been told that the money which is to be used in carrying out these provisions is coming out of the Labour Welfare Fund. When we speak of this Fund we understand that it concerns those who have laboured for the sugar industry and hear I might express my fear; I hope at no future time after these playing fields have been established that priority will be given to other sportsmen who do not appear to be sympathetic with that sort of individual—I mean the agricultural labourer. (Cheers).

Mr. FOSTER: While I appreciate the fact that these playing fields are very necessary, I also feel that this expenditure and the recurrent expenditure should be borne by the Government. I am speaking with 25 years' experience as a Vestryman. I am not speaking about myself because I consider myself as a big taxpayer, but when the small taxpayers receive their tax bills every year they ask for remittances. I am sure that my colleague will bear me out that up to this very year there were about 100 applications for tax relief received. I am not opposing

this Bill because it will help youth. I will take a leaf from the book of the honourable junior member for St. Peter who has spoken about St. Michael as an example. I think it is unfair, however, to take St. Michael or Christ Church as an example since they collect more revenue than the other parishes. Parishes like St. Lucy and St. Andrew collect little or nothing from the land and I am bound to admit that the small landowners are unable to pay their taxes. For that reason I am saying that this expenditure should be borne by the Government. I hope that the Government will see its way to send down a further amendment to this Act so that they can take over this expenditure. As the matter now stands, it is very potential; the Bill says that the Vestry may do so, and so. St. Michael and Christ Church are two wealthy parishes but I am sure that no other parish will support this matter in the potential way in which it stands. Anyway, I am supporting this Bill but I hope that in the future the Government will bear both the expenditure and the recurrent expenditure which will be entailed by this Bill.

Mr. CRAWFORD: If there are things which are very necessary in this island but which are conspicuous by their absence, there are recreational centres for the large mass of children throughout the island. It is impossible to drive through any major village in this colony, or even through a small village on any day of the week without finding large numbers of children playing in the road because of the fact that there are no recreational centres provided where these children could amuse themselves. I envisage that in the present proposals more than one playing field will be established in the various parishes throughout the colony. I am not concerned about the question of finance because I have the impression that the greater part of the funds for providing and maintaining these recreational centres will come from the Labour Welfare Fund. The Bill before us says that the Vestry shall have power to provide, maintain or manage playing fields, parks, open spaces or other places of public resort or recreation for the use of the public; and to establish, maintain, manage, supervise or regulate other things like public markets which are also necessary for the convenience of the public. I take it that this Bill is before us more for the purpose of legally authorising the Vestries to participate in the management or exclusively to manage these playing fields, rather than to suggest that the Vestries themselves shall be compelled by law to establish and maintain these recreational centres in the various parishes. The question of the provision of additional playing fields in this colony has been urged on the floor of this House for the past six years, and even in 1942—1944 when suggestions were made from time to time by other honourable members and myself with regard to this matter, at no time did we suggest that the Vestries should be called upon to bear exclusively the cost of providing or maintaining these playing fields. In those days I am sure, Mr. Deputy Speaker, you will recall that my suggestion was that in respect of the cess of 2/- per ton on sugar produced in the Colony, which the Royal Commission recommended should be levied, a part of that cess should be used to establish and maintain these playing fields. In those days the Government refused to adopt the same suggestion made by the Royal Commission although they were told that other West Indian Colonies notably Jamaica, and I think St. Kitts, were prepared to implement the recommendation of the Royal Commission. The result was that we neither got the cess for providing the playing fields nor for providing any of the other social amenities which the Royal Commission recommended in its Report. With the money provided from the Labour Welfare Levy of

10/- per ton of sugar produced in the colony it is possible for the Government to provide the necessary unance where necessary for the establishment and maintenance of playing fields throughout the island. I interpret the present Bill as merely an instrument authorising the Vestries to control these playing fields if and when they are established by the Government out of the Labour Welfare Fund. At the moment whether the Vestries which can afford to provide these playing fields were to establish them or whether the Central Government were to establish them out of the Labour Welfare Fund, there is in this island no authority for running these playing fields. Your Honour will recall that in June or July this year I asked the Government to take steps to restore the playing field in St. Philip at the very earliest possible date. As a matter of fact, the question read as follows:—

“In view of the fact that playing fields or recreational centres for the masses of the people are conspicuous by their absence, will the Government take steps to ensure that the K. G. V. M. Park, St. Philip, be restored at the earliest possible date, as a rural playing field and recreational centre, thereby enabling the people of the parish and of the island once again to enjoy the amenities which it provided?”

The Government replied in August, I think, and in that reply they emphasized that there was no proper body, either local Government or otherwise, which could provide, maintain or manage playing fields, parks, open spaces or other places of public resort; and that the only solution to the problem was to send down legislation to the House giving the necessary authority to some recognised public body. I take it that this Bill is the answer, so to speak, to the whole problem. As we know, Barbados Welfare Limited used to be responsible during the latter years of its existence for the K. G. V. M. Park and that Institution went into bankruptcy and its assets were placed in the hands of the Receivers. Even if the Park had been restored, and of course it should have been restored, the question would have been: Who would be responsible for its administration? In answer to my question the Government said that there was no proper body which could be responsible for the maintenance or management of the Park unless legislation had been passed conferring on some local body the power to provide, maintain or manage these places and that is what this Bill seeks to do. This Bill gives power to the Vestries, power which they do not now have, to be responsible for the running of these recreational centres, and under the Bill it is entirely a matter for any Vestry to say that they are going to levy a rate for this purpose. If any honourable member thinks that under this Bill the Vestries are compelled to provide any playing fields he is mistaken, because they are not compelled to do so. I can foresee that very few Vestries will provide these playing fields under this Bill and the only way in which the public will get them is if the Central Government makes funds available to the Vestries out of the Labour Welfare Fund so as to establish these playing fields. There can therefore be no reasonable objection to the Bill by any vestryman or landowner who feels that its passage may result in an increased rate being levied on his land because the Vestries are not compelled to provide these playing fields. I repeat; we will get these playing fields if the Government gives the money from the Labour Welfare Fund to provide them, and if the Bill is passed to enable the proper authority to be set up so as to administer them.

Dr. CUMMINS: In reply I just want to allay the fears of those honourable members who feel that the parochial rates may be increased in order to

provide and maintain these playing fields. This Bill is really an amendment to the Vestries Act, which will give these local Authorities permission, if they so desire, to provide and maintain these playing fields. This Bill is to be followed by two other Bills. This Bill also seeks to give the Vestries power to establish markets and, as I say, two other Bills will follow it. There will be a Bill empowering the Vestries to provide playing fields and other social amenities and Clause 6 of that Bill says that all expenses incurred by the Vestries shall be defrayed out of the moneys payable to the Governor-in-Executive Committee from the Labour Welfare Fund. I think that the fears of honourable members will now be allayed.

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

ACTING CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Before the honourable introducer proceeds with his motion that the House go into Committee on this Bill, I should like to say that the Chairman of Committees is unavoidably absent and an Acting Chairman of Committees will have to be appointed.

Dr. CUMMINS: I was about to mention that the Chairman of Committees had to attend a funeral this afternoon and that someone would have to be appointed to act as Chairman of Committees. I beg to move that the honourable junior member for St. Thomas be Chairman of Committees for the remainder of to-day's session.

Mr. BLACKMAN seconded the motion which was agreed to.

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. MAPP being in the Chair.

Clause 1, the title Clause, was being read when, at 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 the suspension of Rule 61 (b) in order to finish this Bill.

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

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 Private Members' Business arrived, the House had just gone into Committee on the Bill to amend the Vestries Act.

VESTRIES (AMENDMENT) BILL

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

Clause 1 was read and passed.

Clause 2 was read as follows:—

2. (1) In addition to the powers conferred upon a Vestry by the principal Act or any other enactment, a Vestry shall have power—

(a) to provide, maintain or manage playing fields, parks, open spaces or other places of public resort or recreation for the use of the public;

(b) to establish, maintain, manage, supervise or regulate public markets or slaughter-houses: Provided that the St. Michael's Vestry shall not, except with the approval of the Governor-in-Executive Committee, exercise any powers under this paragraph with respect to any market or slaughter-house established within the city of Bridgetown at the commencement of this Act;

(c) to exercise such other powers and undertake such other duties and functions as the Legislature may, from time to time, approve by special resolution.

(2) A Vestry shall have power to do such things and employ such persons as may be requisite for giving effect to the provisions of this section including the power to lay rates in accordance with the provisions of the principal Act.

Dr. CUMMINS: I beg to move that Clause 2 stand part of the Bill.

Mr. BLACKMAN: I beg to second that.

Mr. WARD: Before the question is put. I want to say that I regret that the information which has just been given by the honourable member in charge of the Bill was not given earlier in the day. My whole contention earlier today was that the Vestry should not lay rates so that the taxpayers would have to bear the burden of the maintenance of these playing fields. I was never against the provision of these playing fields; what I contended was that the maintenance of these playing fields should be borne by the Government out of the Labour Welfare Fund. I am quite willing now to accept the Bill in its present form having regard to the remarks which the honourable introducer has just made. I feel that the Government should maintain these playing fields and not put that expense on the Vestries. Some parishes are very poor and in my opinion it was a bad policy to have a playing field and not be able to maintain it. That would only be fooling people that you have given them something when it cannot be maintained.

Mr. F. L. WALCOTT: I should like to point out that the money in respect of the Labour Welfare Fund can only be used for capital expenditure; it cannot be used for recurrent costs unless the necessary change is made. I do not agree with the honourable senior member for St. Lucy as to the maintenance of these playing fields; I feel that it is the duty of local bodies to look after the maintenance of anything which is in their area. Queen's Park, for instance, is not even maintained by the St. Michael's Vestry; the Police and Spartan Cricket Clubs pay their groundsmen for keeping the ground in order there while the other part of the Park is maintained by the Vestry. Whoever wants to use the grounds of Queen's Park has to pay a fee for the use of them, and you will find that in the various parishes there are sufficient clubs which can pay a nominal fee for the maintenance of the grounds. We will be making a sad mistake if we provide these playing fields for people and do not ask them to pay a small fee towards the maintenance of these playing fields. There are those who enjoy facilities in various places and they pay something for the use of them. I feel that people should be asked to pay something for the maintenance of these playing fields even if it is 3d. a week or some nominal fee.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The honourable senior member for St. Lucy has explained that his objection to the Bill was made because of the fact that the honourable member in charge of the Bill had not

explained in the first place what he explained later. I only mention that as a reminder to the Committee.

Mr. F. L. WALCOTT: I am only saying that that Labour Welfare Fund can only be used for capital expenditure and not for recurrent costs. In each local area we have sufficient people who can pay for the running of these playing fields which we want to start; and the cost of the upkeep of such playing fields will not be very great.

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

Clause 3 was 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.

REVERSION TO PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Government Business for which the Rule was suspended having been concluded, the House will now revert to Private Members' Business.

SUSPENSION OF RULE 60

Mr. MOTTLEY: Mr. Deputy Speaker,—I ask leave to move the suspension of Rule 60 for the purpose of dealing with Order No. 88 on the Order Paper as the first Order of the Day under Private Members' Business. That Order is a Bill authorising the St. Michael Vestry to raise a loan for the purpose of purchasing suitable sites in the parish and erecting public lavatories and communal latrines. It must be appreciated that this House has only a few days now in which to do its business and we want to facilitate the Government in getting through with as much business as possible. This is a matter which is in connection with local Government; if this Bill is not dealt with during this session it will entail unnecessary expenditure in having to advertise it all over again before it can be brought before the House. I am therefore asking leave to move the suspension of the Rule.

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

Mr. MOTTLEY: I beg to move that Rule 60 be now suspended in order to proceed with Order No. 88 as the first Order of the Day under Private Members' Business.

Mr. GALE seconded the motion which was agreed to.

ST. MICHAEL'S PARISH LOAN BILL

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The first Order of the Day under Private Members' Business stands in the name of the honourable senior member for the City:—Second reading of a Bill to authorise the Vestry of the Parish of Saint Michael to raise a loan for the purpose of purchasing suitable sites in the said parish and of erecting thereon public lavatories and communal latrines.

Mr. MOTTLEY: In moving the second reading of this Bill I think it is hardly necessary to elaborate on it. Obviously honourable members have read the petition and the Bill and they have seen the aims and objects of the Bill. The only thing I can add to what is set out in the Bill is that it is very necessary to have these baths and latrines. It might appear to honourable members that the Vestry have asked for this large amount of £12,000 on this occasion, but it does not

mean that they will borrow this amount of money at one time. The idea is to get permission to borrow this money so that over a period of one, two or three years they will erect these baths and latrines; and they will borrow only the amount of money which is needed in each year. There is the necessity for the erection of these sanitary conveniences in the City areas as has been urged on the Commissioners of Health of St. Michael, and this Bill seeks to give the Vestry the authority to raise this loan for the purpose. I have much pleasure in moving that this Bill be now read a second time.

Mr. GALE: I beg to second that.

Mr. MAPP: This is another of those Bills to provide what the hon. mover calls very necessary social amenities, but I notice in some correspondence in the Press recently that according to statistics the number of people who are actually using these amenities in St. Michael have decreased considerably in recent years. That would give rise to some very noteworthy considerations and one of those considerations is that obviously, under 20th century standards of living, people would prefer to use individual baths and latrines rather than communal baths and latrines. I would like the hon. member in charge of the Bill to tell us if it is true that the number of people who use these baths and latrines have decreased considerably in the metropolitan parish. If that is true I think that the hon. member should bear that in mind and it should not be the endeavour so much to make a splash of these things, but rather to see if the statistics really indicate that the public desire individual baths and latrines rather than communal baths and latrines; and if this expenditure is really justified. A sensible suggestion has been made and I ask this question sincerely.

Mr. MOTTLEY: With Your Honour's permission I would prefer to hear any other hon. member who wants to ask anything further in connection with this Bill before I reply.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Does any other hon. member want to speak on this Bill before the hon. member makes his reply?

Mr. SYMONDS: This is one of those Bills which need no special comment. There is a crying need in this community for the amenities which it is sought to provide through the passing of this Bill, and there ought to be a greater number of Bills of this nature coming from the Vestries of the various parishes throughout the island. All of us are aware that with regard to the labouring people in the country districts as well as in Bridgetown, the facilities for having shower baths are totally absent because, in the first place, in many districts there is no supply of water at all and even when there is an available supply of water the poverty of the people prevents them from being able to install the necessary water services with which to obtain desirable sanitary amenities. It is known that many people in the country districts and even in St. Michael have no bathing facilities; as a matter of fact I have been told that in the Jackson district people have had to stop by the wayside while carrying water for drinking purposes and take a bath in the canes. I say that that is a reproach to any community such as this. The Vestry of St. Michael, by bringing forward Bills such as this through one of its members, is setting an example which I hope that the Vestry of St. George and others will soon emulate. I hope that there will be no further dissenting voices in connection with this Bill.

Mr. F. L. WALCOTT: I, too, want some information from the hon. member in charge of this Bill. I am in favour of providing these amenities because

they are necessary; but it has been drawn to my attention that there are a lot of people who own large areas of land and they are refusing to sell the various bits where the Commissioners of Health of St. Michael want to erect these baths and latrines on the ground that the land would be depreciated in value. I should like to know from the hon. member if that statement is correct. If that is so, there will be a lot of difficulties encountered, because in spite of getting this permission here they will find that they cannot erect these baths and latrines in places which they feel are suitable for them. It might also be a question of amending the Compulsory (Powers) Land Act. If you are putting baths and latrines to serve people, say at Eagle Hall or Tweedside Road, you do not want to put them where they cannot be found. If you get resistance from people who own land I would like to know what can be done in the matter.

Mr. FOSTER: This is a very essential Bill and I do not think that we should hold it up. I make bold to say that the people in my parish are thirsting for water and I appeal to hon. members to pass this Bill so that the parishioners of St. Michael can have their baths.

Mr. GARNER: I am surprised to hear that this Bill is a splash when each and everyone of us should know that a Bill of this nature cannot come before this House unless 16 men who form the Vestry of St. Michael have approved it. This is no splash by any individual member; not very long ago we passed a similar Bill in respect of St. Andrew and we supported it strongly. As a matter of fact, a Bill such as this should have come from the Government; but if the Government does not see fit to bring forward such a Bill and the Vestry of St. Michael is setting an example, I see no reason why hon. members should not support it wholeheartedly. Hon. members know that in some districts the people have no sanitary arrangements and this Bill is certainly a means of helping these people (A MEMBER: Who said not?) This is not a question of politics; this is social legislation and it is absolutely essential. With our standards of living so low where sanitation is concerned, I would have thought that the junior member for St. Thomas would have been advocating that the parish of St. Thomas be supplied with some of these baths and latrines tomorrow morning. (Laughter). Instead of the boys and girls having to expose themselves in the canefields they would have somewhere to go and enjoy their bath. Some people forget what they should really do to help their constituencies; I speak very humbly, not because I have any fear on this score; but if I have the honour to be returned to this House I am going to bring forward a lot of these Bills because St. Philip needs these amenities. Some people have no sanitary arrangements; they have nowhere to take a bath. These amenities should be provided in every parish, and I hope that the hon. junior member for St. Thomas will be so inspired by what the hon. senior member for the City is doing that he will go up there and tell the sleeping Vestry to send up something so that they may get some of these amenities for the people. (Laughter and Cheers).

Mr. MOTTLEY: It is true that we do see a lot of letters in the Press but everything we see in the Press we cannot say that it is true. I saw in the Press the statement which has been referred to by the hon. junior member for St. Thomas and in one of the Committees on which I have the honour to serve, we looked into the matter very carefully and we discovered that in one district particularly the percentage of people who use the bath went down. The answer to that is this: With the potential slum

clearance in the City and with the number of people who have been taken from this area to Belfield and Deacons Road, it must be obvious that the number of people using the bath would fall off. One admission which I will make is this: There were certain hours during which people were allowed to use the baths, and I hope that those hours will very soon be amended because very many people were unable to use the baths after they leave their work. We hope to have the hours so regulated as to enable people to use the baths even late in the night. As regards the point raised by the hon. senior member for St. Peter, I suppose he will appreciate the fact that I have been advocating for some time now that in respect of persons who own tenancies or large areas of land in the parish of St. Michael, it is their duty to give and not sell land for the purpose of the erection of these baths and latrines by the Commissioners of Health. As a result of that advocacy we have been in the fortunate position of two tenantry owners giving us the available sites for erecting baths and latrines and it is hoped that they will soon be erected on these sites. I hope that other persons will follow that example. There has been some trouble where tenantry owners have refused to sell their land for the purpose of erecting baths and latrines and who want to say where these baths and latrines should be erected. I quite agree that these sanitary conveniences should not be put in places where they cannot be found except with the help of a lantern. I should like to say that with the strength and perseverance of the Commissioners of Health they will have the sites which they want, the objections of people have been broken down and the tendency now is to assist the Commissioners in the provision of these social amenities. I think that that explanation will satisfy everybody more especially the hon. member who thought that this was a splash but who will appreciate that such a splash is not confined to Commissioners of Health but is open also to legislators.

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

On the motion of Mr. MOTTLEY, seconded by Mr. GALE, Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER left the Chair, and the House went into Committee on the Bill, Mr. MAPP being in the Chair.

On a similar motion the Preamble was postponed.

The thirteen Clauses of the Bill and the two Schedules were read and passed.

The Preamble was read and agreed to.

On the motion of Mr. MOTTLEY, seconded by Mr. GALE, the CHAIRMAN reported the passing of the Bill in Committee.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

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

ADDRESS RE UNEMPLOYMENT RELIEF WORKS.

Mr. CRAWFORD: I beg to move that Order No. 93 on the Order Paper be taken as the next Order of the Day.

Mr. GARNER: I beg to second that.

Mr. MAPP: I object. The honourable member had an Address made the first Order of the Day under Private Members' Business on a previous occasion and he shied away from it. There are other honourable members who have matters on the Order Paper to be dealt with and I do not think the honourable member should be allowed the privilege of bringing up this Order before others.

Mr. CRAWFORD: I presume the honourable member knows what he means by using the words "shied away." If that sort of conduct is carried on by the people with whom he associates I do not think that we should be connected with it. Last Tuesday we dealt with a Bill which had the object of assisting in the relief of people who were getting help from people in America and that is why preference was given to that Bill. All the honourable member has to do now is to vote against the motion.

Mr. F. L. WALCOTT: It is not merely a matter of voting against the motion. This matter with which the honourable member wants to deal is a matter which has already been debated. Must we sit down now and listen to arguments which we have already heard?

Mr. CRAWFORD: I am not moving that anything be debated; all I am moving is the passing of the Report of the Select Committee in reply to the Message from His Excellency the Governor. In ordinary, common courtesy we have to reply to the Message.

Mr. F. L. WALCOTT: In connection with this Report I would like to say that I have been in here long enough to know that some honourable members have their own way of doing certain things. I have a personal objection to this matter being dealt with and I am voting against the motion. The honourable member can say and write what he likes about my voting against it.

Dr. CUMMINS: I am objecting to this matter being dealt with but for different reasons from those which have been given, reasons which are well known to the honourable senior member for St. Philip. I did not want to relate those reasons but one or two honourable members say that they would like to know the grounds for my objection. I am sorry that the honourable senior member for the City is not here now; however, yesterday afternoon a few of us including the honourable senior member for St. Philip met at Government House and a certain undertaking was given. (Mr. CRAWFORD: By whom?) I do not want to say all that was said: if the move now is to try to sabotage what we had thought was an agreement with those who were present then I am very sorry for that.

Mr. CRAWFORD: Lest there be any misunderstanding about what the honourable member has said I just want to say that at the meeting to which he refers certain suggestions were put forward to the effect that they were going to deal with certain items on the Order Paper under Government Business and any matters under Private Members' Business concerning the Vestries before the end of the session. I merely interposed to say that we would also have to deal with the Report of the Select Committee relative to unemployment Relief Works. I listened to a recitation and I gave absolutely no undertaking because none was asked of me specifically. We were told that we were only there to hear certain suggestions made by the speaker. We were also told that we were not asked to bind ourselves to anything or to agree with the suggestions which we heard. We were asked to listen to what the Government considered to be important and what they would like to do before the end of the session if possible. I listened to the recitation and made no promise whatever with regard to it.

The question that Order No. 93 be taken as the next Order of the Day was put and resolved in the affirmative on the following division.

Ayes: Messrs. SYMMONDS, FOSTER, CRAWFORD, GARNER, HAYNES, DOWDING, GALE, S. A. WALCOTT, WARD and MOTTLEY—10.

Noes: Messrs. HUSBANDS, F. L. WALCOTT, MAPP, BLACKMAN, LEWIS and Dr. CUMMINS—6.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The question has been decided in the affirmative, ten honourable members voting "Aye" and six honourable members voting "No." The next Order of the Day therefore stands in the name of the honourable senior member for St. Philip:—To move the consideration of the report of the Select Committee appointed to draft a Reply to His Excellency's Message No. 13/1948 relating to unemployment Relief Works.

Mr. CRAWFORD: As honourable members are aware, the matter before us is the Report of the Select Committee appointed to prepare a Reply to His Excellency's Message No. 13/1948 relating to unemployment Relief Works and the reply is in the form of an Address to His Excellency the Governor. His Excellency's Message was with reference to an Address which was passed by this House in the month of May requesting that certain steps be taken in order to provide employment for the people of this colony. The Address asked for the reclamation of the Constitution Swamp; the construction of the proposed East Coast Road and the Cycle track from Thickets; the taking of steps to enable the individual parochial authorities to relieve the land tax for the past year on all owners of one acre of land or less throughout the island who can establish that they are unable to pay it; the development of the Airport at Seawell and the construction of a new runway for use by larger aircraft; the repairs to the Wharf Walls; the construction of proposed new Elementary and Secondary Schools; and the laying of all water mains and the erection of standpipes which have been requested or suggested by parochial sanitary bodies or by petitions. That Address was passed on the 18th of May and it took the Government three months to reply to it. The Reply from His Excellency the Governor was laid in this House on the 10th of August. In the introductory part of the Address the House expressed its deep concern over the widespread unemployment which was affecting an increasingly large section of the population, and although the House expressed the view that no appropriate effort had been made by the Government to relieve the condition of the people and requested that immediate steps be taken to implement some of these proposals, not only did the Government fail to take the appropriate steps to do so but even refused to reply to the Address until August. When the Reply did come, the most remarkable excuses were found for not adopting the suggestions which had been put forward by the House. The Select Committee has taken some pains to reply point by point to the arguments which appeared in the Message sent down by the Government in reply to the Address passed by the House. All of the ground has been covered and I think the Address speaks for itself. It would be easy for anyone to appreciate the points to which the House takes objection and it would also be easy for the Government to understand why we find it absolutely impossible to regard the advice given to His Excellency the Governor by his Executive with any degree of seriousness. The Address makes it perfectly plain that in the opinion of the House the Government has failed to appreciate the economic position in which large masses of the people find themselves; that the excuses which the Government has offered for refusing to embark on any of the projects suggested in the Address passed by the House cannot hold water and are in many cases incorrect. I do not propose to say anything more because the Report of the Select Committee, which is very self-explanatory, will explain for the benefit of those who want to read it, the reasons for the stand which has been

adopted by the Select Committee. I beg to move that this Address which embodies the Report of the Select Committee do now pass. It reads as follows:—

*The House of Assembly
To
His Excellency the Governor*

The House of Assembly begs to acknowledge receipt of Your Excellency's Message No. 13/1948 with reference to the question of measures for the relief of unemployment.

2. Considering the urgency of this question, the House would like to express its astonishment over the delay in replying to the Message under reference. The Message from the House was dated May 18th, 1948; Your Excellency's reply was received on August 10th, 1948.

3. The House would respectfully inform Your Excellency that, in the selection of projects for the relief of unemployment, due regard has been paid to the necessity for not indulging in extravagant or unnecessary expenditure and to the long term value of the projects specified.

Reclamation of the Constitution Swamp.

4. The House considers it more than remarkable that only now has the Government come to the conclusion that the cost of reclaiming the Constitution Swamp is out of proportion to its value. The House would refer Your Excellency to the fact that the machinery for the carrying out of this project arrived in the island only during the latter part of last year, and since it is to be presumed that the same engineering experts who reported favourably on the matter last year, to the extent of advising the acquisition of the necessary machinery, are now condemning it, the House is of the opinion that some further explanation should be forthcoming as to why the colony was committed to this waste of public funds. The House therefore would be interested to discover the origin of and the reason for the advice tendered Your Excellency.

Construction of the proposed East Coast Road, Etc.

5. The House would draw to the attention of Your Excellency that four years have expired since both Houses of the Legislature agreed to the construction of the proposed East Coast Road and the cycle track from Thickets. The equipment was actually ordered from England to proceed with it.

The Grant of £60,000, under the Colonial Development and Welfare Act, for certain projects, including this one was allowed to lapse. Competent engineering opinion in the Island does not regard the proposal as a "major engineering project" and the attention of Your Excellency is called to the fact that

In January 1947, the Road Commissioners of St. Joseph submitted to the Government that if they were provided with the necessary funds they would build the St. Joseph portion of the road and supply all the rollers and supervision.

6. The House is in thorough agreement with the suggestion advanced by the House of Assembly since 1944, that before a certain portion of this work was commenced, legislation should be introduced as a result of which the Government would obtain the maximum benefit from enhanced land values arising from the construction of the road. The House also appreciates the position with regard to acquisition of "land necessary for the road and preserve the adjacent land from exploitation by speculators."

The House is, however, of the opinion that legislation to ensure the above could be made retrospective, if necessary, and in any case would emphasize that, since as Your Excellency observes, a certain amount of preliminary examination and survey work is necessary, there seems no justifiable reason why, if the Government does really intend to embark on the project, this examination and survey should not be proceeded with pending the introduction and passing of the required legislation.

7. The House would point out that apart from the "practical value to the long term development policy of the island" of this project, and the relief which it would provide to the unemployed, that—

- (a) Since the abandonment of the railway, there are now 226 acres of land in this area lying fallow, and being eroded, because the owners have no means of getting out their crops.
- (b) Reclamation of these 226 acres of land would provide work for 106 people in its cultivation.
- (c) Wages for cultivation would put another \$15,956.00 in circulation annually among the people.
- (d) The putting of 226 acres back into cultivation will provide more food, and further revenue for the colony.
- (e) This road would take the minimum of cement, steel and lumber to construct. The greater part of the expenditure would be on unskilled labour.
- (f) The Committee appointed to examine and report upon the continuance of the railway, recommended its discontinuance with the specific proviso that it should be replaced by a vehicular roadway.
- (g) The parishioners of St. Lucy, St. Peter, St. Joseph and St. Andrew have forwarded a petition to the Government asking that this road be built.
- (h) While it is true that 2 plantation owners possess land in this area, there are 32 small holders who also own plots ranging in size from less than $\frac{1}{4}$ an acre. Their land, through the action of the Government in closing the railway and failing to provide a roadway, has become of no use to them.

Land Tax Relief

8. The House would express its astonishment over the Government's refusal to take steps to enable the parochial authorities to relieve the land tax for the past year on all owners of one acre of land or less throughout the island who can establish that they are unable to pay it. The House can come to no other conclusion than that the Government has failed to appreciate the position in which these small holders found themselves after last year's island-wide drought. The House would point out that relief of the sort suggested would cost the Public Treasury probably less than £500.

Development of Seawall Airport and Construction of New Runway

9. The House can arrive at no other conclusion than that a considerable time has been allowed to elapse before some decision has been arrived at with regard to the construction of a new runway suitable for use by larger aircraft. The House would remind Your Excellency that a four-engined bomber has landed at Seawall without doing the slightest visible

damage to the runway and respectfully requests that all steps be taken to expedite this matter.

Watermains and Stand Pipes

10. The House assures Your Excellency of its willingness to supply all necessary funds for the provision of equipment for the extension of the colony's water service, and requests that the matter be given the prompt and early attention of the Government.

11. In view of all the circumstances outlined above, the House is of the considered opinion that the Government has failed to appreciate the economic position in which large masses of the people of the colony find themselves and the need for providing relief for these people coupled with the necessity for embarking on long-term projects essential to the island's development.

Mr. HAYNES: I have much pleasure in seconding the motion for the passing of this Address. I think that by now most honourable members must be tired of the scandalously loose way in which Addresses are treated by the Head of the Administration and his advisers. They seem to forget that when these Addresses are passed they are not matters which are requested by one or two members of the House; these Addresses are passed generally unanimously by the 24 representatives of the people of Barbados. Some of these Addresses never even seem to see the light of day; this Address which was passed in May is an important one, one of extreme urgency, and it took three months to retrieve this sort of flimsy excuse from the Head of the Administration and his advisers. I think it is time to advise those who are responsible for it that this state of affairs cannot go on and that the representatives of the people must have their wishes acceded to otherwise, well, I would not like to say what the consequences may be in the future. (Mr. F. L. WALCOTT: Say it). You can say it for me.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The honourable member must address the Chair and honourable members must bear in mind Rule 135. That Rule says:

"To the end that all debates in this House shall be grave and orderly, and that all interruption shall be prevented, no member of the House is to presume to make any noise or disturbance whilst any member is orderly debating, or whilst any Bill, Order or other matter is being read or opened; and in case of such noise or disturbance Mr. Speaker is to call upon the member by name making such disturbance, and every such person will incur the displeasure and censure of the House."

Mr. HAYNES: Amongst the matters which were requested in that omnibus Address was a most important one—the construction of the East Coast Road. That is an island-wide topic at the present moment and, as the honourable introducer has said, some flimsy excuse has been given for not proceeding with it! Apart from developing Barbados this project would provide continuous employment, in the reclamation of some 220 acres of land, for about 100 or more people and revenue of about \$24,000 a year. This Labour Government and the Governor have flouted the wishes of the people.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I ask the honourable member to bear in mind Rule 126. "No member may use the Governor's name irreverently in debate nor for the purpose of influencing the House in its deliberations."

Mr. HAYNES: The Government seems to have forgotten that some years ago the matter of the construction of this road was a matter in connection with which there were some heavily-signed petitions.

I think that those petitions are on record in the Colonial Secretary's Office. That alone should spur the Government on with this project but it seems that unless they have some pet scheme in their eyes nothing is done at all. I think it is time for those in authority to realise that this state of affairs must be stopped. I do not want to delay the House any longer; I have spoken fairly lengthily and strongly and I hope that what I have said will reach the ears of the proper authorities.

Mr. LEWIS: This is a rather lengthy Address and it certainly accuses the Government of inaction on a number of items that this House has requested the Government to proceed with. I think that we are entitled to hear the point of view of the Government as to the reason for the inaction since the 31st of July especially when His Excellency sent to tell the House that at least a part of this programme like the tenantry roads had been started, and had given some reasons for not proceeding with the reclamation of the Constitution Swamp and the construction of the proposed East Coast Road and the Cycle Track. I have heard it mentioned that some of the equipment for doing this road had arrived in the island, but from what I can gather that equipment was useless. Certain parts were to come to the island and the equipment could not be used in that condition. I suppose that the Select Committee must have taken steps to discover whether more of this equipment has arrived in the island or not. I take it that we are entirely on solid ground when we state that there are 226 acres of land in this area lying fallow and we are accurate in our figures to the effect that the reclamation of these 226 acres of land would employ 106 persons and that the wages for cultivation would be \$15,956.00. I take it that that would work out at over \$4 per person. I would like to know if we are on solid ground in making these suggestions because it is of no use overstating the case and making mistakes. I take it that the Select Committee has had the benefit of the experience of persons who know something about this matter and we are stating facts. The Message from His Excellency the Governor says with regard to the extension of the runway at Seawell, that an examination carried out by a technical party from the Ministry of Civil Aviation indicated that the runway throughout its whole course was not sufficiently strong enough to bear heavier aircraft, so that the extension would not serve any useful purpose. Some reasons have been given in this Message from the Governor as to why these proposals were not started and attention has been drawn to the fact that considerable capital expenditure has been provided for in the Budget Estimates. I understand that these capital works have been started so that the overall picture of this Reply really gives the impression that absolutely nothing has been done and that is not entirely fair to the Administration. If the Government have given good and sufficient reasons for overhauling any project that has been suggested in a previous estimate, the session of the Legislature is coming to a close and we understand that they are making special arrangements for us to see the works which are proposed to be carried out during the coming financial year. I am wondering whether the useful purpose which we think it will serve to pass this Address to-day will be served. The East Coast Road is a matter of long standing and certainly something should have been done about it. The last thing I heard about this road is that somebody had come out here and had actually started to make surveys. In this Address we say that surveys should be made and I do not remember reading that they have been started. I would like to hear from the Government if some sort of survey of this road has not been started and what

were the findings of the expert. I quite agree that if it is necessary to pass legislation in respect of the enhanced value of the land before this project can be started it does seem to one as if something could be done about that. I feel that the Government should explain its position and not allow an Address like this to be passed without some comment. Apparently this comment is not forthcoming and perhaps it is regrettable because this accusation of lethargy, indifference and callousness in the House of Assembly should not go on record against the Government if there is a reasonable excuse for not doing this work. I am not one of those people who believe that you should build a road merely for the fun of building it; this East Coast Road must be built by somebody who knows what he is doing otherwise it will not serve any useful purpose and it may only become a road on which you will have to spend considerable sums of money every year in repairing it if it is not done properly in the first instance. I sincerely hope that before the Address is passed the Government will augment the information which is given in this Reply. I can understand the attitude of the honourable senior member for St. Andrew; he lives in that district, he has some land there and it will appreciate in value by the construction of this road. I understand that the honourable member is willing to give the Government the appreciated value of his land. (Mr. MAPP: That is a joke). I highly commend him for that. As far as the honourable member is concerned I understand that legislation to get the enhanced value of his land is not necessary. (Mr. HAYNES: What are you talking about then?) I am saying that I quite appreciate the honourable member's offer and I sincerely hope he will remember that he made it, that he will get others to follow suit and not make it difficult when the legislation is to be made retrospective. I know that the honourable senior member for St. Andrew has very broad acres down there and the appreciation will spread far and wide. I am very glad that on a previous occasion the honourable member made this offer to the Government. So far as the Constitution Swamp is concerned, I understand that that is mixed up with a new or improved Victoria Bridge and I am surprised to hear that the expense in this connection will be out of all proportion to the benefits to be derived. This question has been debated inside and outside the House for many years and it is time that some decision be taken in respect of it. I have merely made these observations because this is a lengthy Address, it says a great deal and I hope that the framers have gone very carefully into it and they will not allow anybody of whom action has been demanded to find any loopholes in it.

Mr. F. L. WALCOTT: We have here a very long-winded Report and I am not at all surprised about it. The people who comprised this Select Committee which replied to His Excellency's Message are: the honourable members for St. Philip, the honourable junior member for St. George and they found an apostle in the honourable senior member for St. Andrew. That is the combination which sent in this long-winded Report. From the speech of the honourable senior member for St. Andrew—I doubt very much that he has read this Report—

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I observe that there are less than twelve honourable members in the House and I ask the Clerk to ring the Bell.

On the Bell being rung, a quorum was again obtained.

Mr. CRAWFORD: On a point of order. I do not want the House to be misled as to the composition of the Select Committee which replied to the Message from His Excellency the Governor. This Select Committee was comprised not of the four honourable

members who have been mentioned but of seven honourable members, namely; Your Honour, the honourable members for St. Andrew (Messrs. Haynes and Foster), the honourable senior member for the City, (Mr. Mottley); the honourable junior member for St. George, (Mr. Symmonds), my colleague the honourable junior member for St. Philip (Mr. Garner) and myself.

Mr. HAYNES: I also rise on a point of order. The honourable senior member for Peter has made the statement that he did not think I have read this Report. I made some amendments to the Report and I think honourable members will be able to bear me out on that. I think the honourable member should withdraw that statement.

Mr. F. L. WALCOTT: I said I doubt very much that the honourable member has read this Report. This Report says this:—

"The Select Committee appointed to draft a Reply to His Excellency's Message No. 13 of 1948 in reply to an Address from the House of Assembly dated the 18th of May, 1948, on the subject of measures for the relief of unemployment held a meeting on the 12th day of October, 1948, when the following Honourable Members were present:— W. A. Crawford, D. D. Garner, J. A. Haynes, B.A., F. McD. Symmonds." Those are the members who drafted this Reply.

Mr. CRAWFORD: I want to explain for the benefit of the public who may not be acquainted with the facts, that the Committee to which I have referred, is that which was appointed to draft a Reply to His Excellency's Message. The Committee comprised seven members and the Report was drawn up and circulated to all the members of the Committee. Each member of the Committee had the Report in his possession for some time. On the day in question when it was finally handed to the Clerk to be reported back to the House there were only four members of the Committee present; but it is incorrect and misleading to say that these four members prepared this Report.

Mr. F. L. WALCOTT: If this is an incorrect statement then we will have to censure the Clerk for writing something which is not true. I will read it again. The honourable senior member for St. Philip wants to say that this is incorrect.

Mr. CRAWFORD: I have never said it was incorrect. What I said was that when the Report was handed in there were four members of the Committee present. How many meetings could be held on the 12th of October except one? Other meetings were held previously.

Mr. F. L. WALCOTT: You cannot hold any meeting without having the Minutes of the Clerk.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Perhaps this might help us to proceed further. It is indisputable that this Select Committee comprised those honourable members whose names have been read out by the honourable senior member for St. Philip. On the day when the Committee held its meeting four of the seven members were present, namely, the honourable members for St. Philip (Messrs. Crawford and Garner), the honourable senior member for St. Andrew (Mr. Haynes) and the honourable junior member for St. George (Mr. Symmonds). There was therefore a quorum present.

Mr. F. L. WALCOTT: I am not disputing that there was a quorum present; I am saying that these four members are responsible for sending in this Report and not the seven members who comprised the Select Committee. They held one meeting and it is not true to say that any other meeting was held. It is incorrect and it is a misstatement for any honourable member to say that more than one meet-

ing was held. This is an indication to show how some people try to wriggle out of things but they cannot wriggle out with me.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I ask honourable members to preserve a certain amount of silence while the honourable member is speaking.

Mr. F. L. WALCOTT: It is good that some people are kept down by God and are not allowed to rise because here we have an example of what would happen. This Report, for which four people are responsible, has been signed by the Sir Oracle as Chairman. He knows everything about engineering; if he were the General of an Army he would serve certain countries well. I am not sitting here as a member of this House and allowing my name to be associated with something which four people have written and saying that I am in agreement with it. As regards the reclamation of the Constitution Swamp, the Message from His Excellency the Governor says this:

"Since Resolution No. 73 of 1947 was passed the Government has given further consideration to this project, and has been advised that the cost of the work would be out of all proportion to its value, since even when a new Victoria Bridge is erected with a wider span it will still be impossible to prevent flooding in the area during abnormally wet weather in conjunction with high tides. For this reason the Government has for the time abandoned the proposal in favour of other works of a capital nature which are more urgently required and of greater value to the community at large, but the project will not be lost sight of."

The Report in this connection says this:

"The House considers it more than remarkable that only now has the Government come to the conclusion that the cost of reclaiming the Constitution Swamp is out of proportion to its value."

I cannot say that because I am no expert. I am not competent to say if the cost of reclaiming the Constitution Swamp is out of proportion to its value or not. I cannot sit here and say that the

cost of reclaiming this Swamp is not out of proportion to its value; I would first have to get clear facts. I hold no brief for the Government in any respect; I do not say that the Government should not do its work, I would like to see a lot of work done; but there is no point in paying a competent engineer £900 per annum and then say that his advice is wrong. There is no point in paying people to do a job and then when they give you advice you do not take it. If you do not take the advice of experts then I say that we should get rid of them. The Report of the Select Committee goes on:—

"The House would refer Your Excellency to the fact that the machinery for the carrying out of this project arrived in the island only during the latter part of last year, and since it is to be presumed that the same engineering experts who reported favourably on the matter last year to the extent of advising the acquisition of the necessary machinery are now condemning it, the House is of the opinion that some further explanation should be forthcoming as to why the colony was committed to this waste of public funds."

They have made a statement of fact that the machinery for carrying out this project has arrived, but I cannot say as a fact that the machinery has arrived. I have to go and get some information in this respect. I say that it is the duty of the members of this House to check up on this matter and find out if the Government has this machinery and is only making an excuse, before they let it go on record that they are agreeing with something which four honourable members have written.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I observe that there are less than twelve honourable members present and I ask the Clerk to ring the Bell.

The Bell having been rung,

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: There being less than twelve honourable members present and the Bell having been rung for five minutes in accordance with the Rules this House now stands adjourned until this day week at twelve o'clock noon.