THE

House of Assembly Debates

(OFFICIAL REPORT)

SESSION 1950—51

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, 13th June, 1950.

Pursuant to adjournment, the House of Assembly met at 3 o'clock p.m. to-day.

Present

His Honour Mr. K. N. R. HUSBANDS (*Speaker*), His Honour Mr. A. E. S. LEWIS (*Deputy Speaker*), Mr. L. E. SMITH, (*Chairman of Committees*); Messrs. D. A. FOSTER, O. T. ALLDER, R. G. MAPP, T. O. BRYAN, M. E. COX, F. L. WALCOTT, G. H. ADAMS, B.A., H. A. DOWDING, L. E. R. GILL, F. C. GODDARD, E. K. WALCOTT, K. C., J. H. WILKINSON, O .B. E., and J. E. T. BRANCKER.

Prayers were read.

MINUTES

Mr. SPEAKER: I have the honour to inform the House that the Minutes of the last meeting are not yet ready for confirmation.

Mr. CRAWFORD enters the House and takes his seat.

DOCUMENT

Mr. SPEAKER: I have the honour to inform the House that I have received a Statement of Revenue and Expenditure from the Highway Commissioners of St. Peter for the half year ended 31st March, 1950.

PAPERS LAID

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

Statement of the sums of money paid over to the Colonial Treasurer by the Commissioner of Police during the quarter ended 31st March, 1950.

"The Motor Vehicles and Road Traffic (Amendment) Regulations, 1950" made by the Director of Highways and Transport on the 3rd day of June, 1950, and approved and sanctioned by His Excellency the Governor on the 7th day of June, 1950.

PETITION

Mr. E. K. WALCOTT: Mr. Speaker,— I beg to present a petition from the Barbados Gas Co., Ltd; praying the House to pass a Bill to amend the Gas Works Act, 1911-9. The petition is respectfully worded and I ask that it be taken as read.

The petition is taken as read.

NOTICES

Government Notices are given as follows:—

Mr. F. L. WALCOTT: Resolution to approve the Regulatoins entitled "The Motor Vehicles and Road Traffic (Amendment) Regulations, 1950", made by the Director of Highways and Transport on the 3rd June, 1950, under the provisions of section 7 of the Motor Vehicles and Road Traffic Act, 1937, as amended by sections 41 and 42 of the Department of Highways and Transport Act, 1945, and approved and sanctioned by His Excellency the Governor on the 7th day of June, 1950.

Mr. ADAMS: Resolution to place the sum of $40,940 at the disposal of the Governor-in-Executive Committee to supplement the Estimates 1950-51, Part I, Current, as shown in the Supplementary Estimates 1950-51, No. 5, which form the schedule to this Resolution.

Mr. ADAMS: Bill to settle the rates of income tax for the year 1950, and to make provision for certain other matters in connection with the levying of the said tax and to amend the law relating to Income Tax.

Mr. ADAMS: Of my intention to move the House into Committee of Supply at the next meeting to consider the money Resolution of which I have just given notice.

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

Other Notices are given as follows:—

Mr. CRAWFORD: Of the following Address:—

The House of Assembly
To
His Excellency the Governor

The House of Assembly would draw Your Excellency's attention to the position of agricultural and sugar industry workers who are entitled to housing loans under the provision of the Labour Welfare Fund Regulations (1950) who possess no land of their own and who, owing to the general unavailability of land, among other reasons, find it difficult to acquire same.

2. The House would point out that,
   (a) in the majority of cases referred to in the preceding paragraph, these workers at present occupy houses which are sited either on rented plantation land, or a rented house-spot, and that retention of the site is contingent upon continuation of employment with the owner of the land.
   (b) if the most extensive use possible is to be made of the Labour Welfare Fund, consideration must be given immediately to the grave disadvantage which exists when people construct, repair, or extend homes with such insecure land tenureship even when due allowance is made for the provisions of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1897.
   (c) construction in coral stone is more durable and economical than in imported lumber (the quality of which, in addition, has deteriorated considerably in recent years). Moreover, it provides employment for rock-cutters, quarry labourers, lorry-workers etc., and, generally speaking, is of greater advantage to the economy of the country.
   (d) Every effort should be made to ensure that the greater portion of the Fund is expended on local materials and will therefore remain in the colony.

3. In view of the foregoing, and since people cannot be expected to construct in stone except in cases of secure land tenureship, the House respectfully request Your Excellency to take the necessary steps for the acquisition by Government of at least 2 or 3 suitable sites in each parish, located conveniently near main highways and within easy access of electric light and water services, from which house spots can be obtained by people who now rent land or house spots, or, for any other reason, possess no secure tenureship of land.

Mr. E. K. WALCOTT: A Bill to amend the Gas Works Act, 1911.

Mr. ADAMS: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker. I should like Your Honour's ruling, either to-day or on some subsequent date, as to whether it is in order for the honourable member to give notice of this Bill, inasmuch as there is already on the Order Paper under "Notices" a Bill to amend the Gas Works Act, 1911. In the meantime I invite the honourable member to refrain from going further with his Bill. The Government has given notice of a Bill to amend the Gas Works Act and the notice which the honourable member proposes to give would be putting on the Order Paper two Bills to amend the same Act. I repeat that I should like a ruling from Your Honour either to-day or on some subsequent date as to whether that is in order.

Mr. E. K. WALCOTT: Notice can be given of any number of Bills to amend an Act as long as all the amending Bills do not relate to the same subject matter. For example, there have been on the Order Paper from time to time more than one Bill to amend the Customs Tariff Act, 1921. The senior member for St. Joseph has only given notice of a Bill to amend the Gas Works Act but he has not put in a copy of the Bill, so that it could be seen whether that Bill and my Bill relate to the same subject matter. In my humble submission, Mr. Speaker, that is the material point. It is not a question of giving notice of two Bills to amend the same Act; you may give notice of five Bills to amend the same Act as long as they do not relate to the same subject matter. In any case I should like to point out that my Bill is a private Bill—

Mr. ADAMS: I have not asked the honourable member for a ruling. I ask Your Honour for a ruling either to-day or on some subsequent date because there have been conflicting rulings on previous occasions on the question of two Bills before the House relating to the same Act. Some years ago I gave notice of a Bill to amend the Representation of the People Act and about the same time the senior member for St. James introduced a Bill relating to the same Act and the then Speaker ruled that inasmuch as the honourable member's Bill was a Government Measure it should take precedence.

Mr. SPEAKER: I shall defer my ruling on the matter to a later date.

QUESTIONS.

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

In view of the general advantage to the community to be gained from expansion of facilities for free reading of books, and of the deep and appreciative interest demonstrated by the people of the parish of St. Philip in the colony's Public Library Service, —practical evidence of which can be seen from the comparatively high numbers of registered borrowers and of Library books which are circulated in the parish, the figures for the Juvenile Department being the highest for any rural area in the colony—will the Government at the earliest date possible arrange for the establishment in the said parish of a Branch of the Public Library?

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

Is the Government aware that District Turncocks and their assistants at the Waterworks Department are called upon to work at all hours of the day and night with no pay for overtime?

2. Will the Government please state
   (a) the reason why this condition obtains?
   (b) what steps it proposes to take to improve the conditions of employment of these men?

SELECT COMMITTEE'S REPORT

Mr. ADAMS presents the Report of the Select Committee appointed to prepare a draft reply to the speech which His Excellency delivered at the opening of the legislative session 1950—51.

BILLS READ A FIRST TIME

On the motion of Mr. ADAMS, seconded by Mr. Cox, a Bill to settle the rates of income tax for the year 1950 and make provision for certain matters in connection with the levying of the said tax and to amend the law relating to income tax is read a first time.

Mr. E. K. WALCOTT: I beg to move that a Bill to amend the Gas Works Act, 1911, be now read a first time.

Mr. GODDARD: I beg to second that.

Mr. ADAMS: On a point of order. Is the honourable member's motion in order, Mr. Speaker, in view of the statement which you made earlier in these proceedings?

Mr. SPEAKER: No, it is not. I have already stated that I will give my ruling on the matter on some subsequent date.

Mr. E. K. WALCOTT: I bow to Your Honour's ruling but I should like to point out that the first reading has not been already given to any Bill to amend the Gas Works Act, 1911. I draw that to Your Honour's attention for the purposes of the Record. With Your Honour's permission I would still like to present a copy of my Bill to the Clerk.

Mr. SPEAKER: I cannot allow it at this stage.

REPLY TO HIS EXCELLENCY'S SPEECH

Mr. SPEAKER: The first Order of the day stands in the name of the honourable senior member for St. Joseph,—To move the consideration of the Report of the Select Committee appointed to prepare a draft Reply to the speech which His Excellency delivered at the re-opening of the Legislature.

Mr. ADAMS: Mr. Speaker,—I hope that honourable members have found time to read the Report It is not long, though the Speech has been given very careful consideration by those members of the Select Committee who found it convenient to attend. I am suggesting that the Select Committee has avoided the errors of being too brief and, on the other hand, of being too diffuse. The Committee endeavoured to pick out the salient point in His Excellency's speech and it says, in effect, that it agrees that those points are deserving of the earliest and most earnest consideration. The Select Committee, like His Excellency, hopes that its audience will not take its silence on other matters to be an indication of its unawareness of their importance but just as His Excellency thought that there are many public matters of which he need not make mention but hopes that favourable consideration will be given to his silence on them, so the Committee feels that if it has not specifically referred to everything mentioned by His Excellency, it has no desire to give the impression that it regards them as being of little importance. I believe that an amendment which I imagine the Select Committee will be willing to accept will be made to the Report, it relates to that part of His Excellency's speech in which reference is made to the services rendered the colony by the Government of Alberta and their Minister of Lands and Mines, the Hon. N. E. Tanner. Whatever may be the views, at least of the Legislature, I think this House should go on record as having expressed our thanks to the Government of Alberta for having placed at our disposal an expert with such high qualifications to advise the Government of Barbados on oil matters and to Mr. Tanner for his services in that respect. I beg to move that the following Address, embodying the Report of the Select Committee, be the Reply to His Excellency's speech:—

The House of Assembly
To
His Excellency the Governor

The House of Assembly thank Your Excellency for the Speech which Your Excellency was pleased to deliver on the re-opening of the Legislative Session 1950-51.

The House agree with Your Excellency that the economic development of Barbados is of paramount importance and welcome any plan designed to give effect to such development. In this connection the House look forward to an early consideration of any plan, of a short or long term nature, which would relieve the unemployment situation.

The House agree that in a plan of economic development consideration must be given to the establishment of a deep water harbour for this Island.

The House endorse Your Excellency's main proposition that in order to ensure economic development Barbados must by every means possible increase its production.

The House agree that the prerequisite to increased production is the extension of our water supply, particularly with reference to market gardening and other food production.

With regard to subsidization the House agree with Your Excellency that this is a matter for serious consideration and feel that further attention should be paid to the development of the fisheries and livestock industries.

The House note Your Excellency's reference to the necessity for aiding the Tourist and other secondary industries and agree that the points raised by Your Excellency in respect of these matters are deserving of immediate and full consideration.

The House are of the opinion that for the well-being of the Colony it is essential to have a contented, experienced, and efficient Civil Service and with this in view consider with Your Excellency that the establishment of a Training Scheme for Civil Servants is of vital importance.

The House note Your Excellency's references to the Secretariat and will give most careful consideration to any scheme that may be sent to it for improving the administrative side of the Government.

Mr. MILLER enters the House and takes his seat.

Mr. WILKINSON: I beg to second the motion for the passing of the Address. I had the honour of being a member of the Select Committee appointed to draft a Reply to a most excellent spech—I might almost say "an unusual speech"—delivered by His Excellency the Governor. The Committee feels that it is impossible to go into all the details but there is one subject to which His Excellency referred and to which all of us around this table, I am sure, give a great deal of thought, namely, subsidization. We all agree that we must maintain subsidization to some extent until the prices of goods reach a more stabilized position but some of us are not convinced that the money which is voted for this purpose is used to the best advantage. We do hope that the Government will use every means in its power to see that the amount which is voted for the subsidization of certain commodities is used to the very best advantage. I do not think that I need say any more on this Address and I have pleasure in seconding the motion that it do now pass.

Mr. COX: Mr. Speaker,— I beg to move that the following paragraph be inserted after paragraph 7:—

> "The House join with Your Excellency in expressing their deep appreciation to the Government of Alberta and their Minister of Mines, the Hon. N. E. Tanner, for the invaluable services which he has recently rendered the Government of Barbados in oil development in this Colony."

Sir, the senior member for St. Joseph made reference to the services of the Government of Alberta and Mr. Tanner but I think it is fitting that we should place on record the appreciation of the people of Barbados for those services. Anyone who met the Hon. Mr. Tanner during those negotiations realized, from his manner of approach to the oil question, that he is a christian gentleman. His primary object was to get the best for the community and he set about the negotiations as if, I should say, he was negotiating on behalf of the Government of which he is a member. I feel, Sir, that this generation and posterity will praise him for what he has done, whether we get oil or not—although I hope that we will get it in abundance.

Mr. MILLER: I beg to second the amendment.

Mr. ADAMS: Mr .Speaker,— I accept the amendment.

The question that the Address, as amended, do now pass is put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

Mr. ADAMS: I suggest that Your Honour indicate the nature of the Address to His Excellency the Governor and discover from him when it will be convenient for him to receive the Address from this honourable House.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

Mr. SPEAKER: The next order stands in the name of the honourable senior member for St. Joseph,— 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 Mr. ADAMS, seconded by Mr. COX, Mr. SPEAKER leaves the Chair and the House goes into Committee of Supply, Mr. SMITH being in the Chair.

RESOLUTION TO MEET EXPENSES IN CONNECTION WITH THE ROYAL VISIT.

Mr. ADAMS: Mr. Chairman,— The first Resolution is for the sum of $1,389 as, what I may call, a part refund to His Excellency the Governor of the expenses incurred in entertaining H.R.H. Princess Alice and the Earl of Athlone during their recent visit to the island. As honourable members will see from the addendum, the amount has been arrived at down to the uttermost farthing. Perhaps I shall not be thanked for what I am about to say but it is unusual, to say the least of it, for an estimation to be made of expenditure of this sort down to the uttermost farthing. I do not want to influence the debate by any reference to His Excellency the Governor but I think that we all feel that, may be, we have been less generous than other Legislatures in these parts and when one considers that the present holder of the office of Governor, since he has been here, has had abnormal entertainment to do, starting with the Conference of West Indian Governors, the House can well feel—it is with some embarrassment I say it—that if every official had regard for the finances of the colony, as is apparent from this Resolution, we would have no cause to show the slightest feeling against imported officials. I think that is the correct term. I have much pleasure in moving that this Resolution do now pass.

Mr. F. L. WALCOTT: I beg to second that.

Mr. WILKINSON: I have much pleasure, Sir, in supporting this Resolution. As I said on a previous occasion, in supporting certain remarks of the junior member for St. Philip, I do not think that on the few occasions when we have visits of this nature we should expect the Head of the Administration to meet any additional expenditure. We are only too pleased to pass this Resolution.

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

SUPPLEMENTARY VOTES TO MEET CAPITAL EXPENDITURE.

Mr. ADAMS: The next Resolution is for the sum of $18,430, to meet supplementary expenses in connection with (1) Irrigation at District Agricultural Stations ($1,333). (2) Airport Survey ($1,500), (3) Development of Fisheries Production ($5,581), (4) Motor Launches for the Police Department ($5,000), and (5) Wireless Tele-communications at Seawell Airport ($5,016). The notes to the respective items explain them fully and if there is any further information with which I can help honourable members I shall be glad to do so. I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

Mr. COX: I beg to second that.

Mr. WILKINSON: With regard to item 5, Wireless Tele-communications at Seawell Airport, we provided the sum of $18,720 for this purpose and we are being asked to revote the sum of $1,525 and vote an additional $3,491, which does seem to be rather excessive. Can the honourable member tell us what this additional expense is for and can he give us an estimate of what this is going to cost per annun? I should like to know, particularly, why this additional expense of $3,491 has been incurred.

Mr. LEWIS: I would just like to make an observation or two on the same item 5. When the $60,000 worth of equipment was taken over from the Americans at Seawell I think we were told that such things as tele-communications, lighting and perhaps a broadcasting system would be got out of it. I take it that this scheme would cost a lot more if some of that equipment is not used and I would like to know if it is possible to find among the Papers whether a good portion of it has been used and considerable expense saved as a result. I know that if you use that equipment we are supposed to get back some of the money from the British Government; so that I think that would be a little valuable information that could be given. This estimate was made when the runway was a small one and now you are going to extend it I take it that this additional amount would be for the extended portion for the T.C.A. planes; so we cannot cavil over the additional $5,016 for that purpose. However, the fact that no increase in connection with the other items has been asked for but just a revote I take it that we can be told whether the original estimate in each instance will or will not be exceeded. Sufficient has been spent under the Heads to enable them to let us know whether the original amounts will be exceeded. Perhaps these are questions that cannot be answered now, but I just throw them out as observations so that the Executive Committee might probably investigate them for future reference.

Mr. MAPP: With regard to item 2, Airport Survey, I would like to draw to the attention of the proper Authority that not too long ago we voted a big sum of money to construct a new runway at the Airport. The contract was awarded to a firm which has its headquarters outside this island and from reliable sources I understand that it imposes certain conditions of work on the few Barbadians whom it employs at Seawell which are different from the conditions in force, say, for Trinidadians also working at Seawell. I think that that is a deplorable state of affairs. I do not want to be lengthy in my remarks because there are some questions relating to the matter which will have to be answered later on but I throw out the warning that it is time that these people be made to realize that when they come into this colony to do work and employ local labour, particularly with funds voted by this House, they should observe the conditions under which local employers are required to operate, as far as labour is concerned. I hope, Sir, that the Government will enforce all measures necessary to see that proper conditions of work obtain for local labour on the new runway which is being constructed at Seawell.

Mr. GODDARD: I should like to enquire what progress has been made in connection with the new runway. At first, we were told that we would have the new runway in six months' time and I understand that according to the last report, the time would be extended to December. Another thing which the public would like to know is whether the traffic by the T.C.A. planes would have to be suspended through the crossing of the present runway by this new run-

way and I further understand that the traffic by the B.W.I.A., planes will also have to be suspended. These are questions which, I think, could be easily answered to-day.

Mr. ADAMS: I really appreciate the compliment paid me by the senior member for Christ Church, that is, that I am omniscient. To say that his questions are such that can be answered off-hand can only be a presumption that the members of the Executive Committee know all that is going on in the various Departments. We are not responsible for running any Department. Even we, like the senior member for Christ Church, get people coming to us with information which we hear for the first time. I am hearing for the first time what the honourable member has said and I will certainly make enquiry into the matter. Everything at Seawell is not quite good. I agree with the junior member for St. Thomas that local labour has not at all times been fairly treated. I am not in a position to say on whose shoulders the blame should fairly and squarely be laid because long before the contract was even awarded, it was the decision of the Executive Committee that no politics should be imported into the employment of labour; that there would be no question of this or that Union supplying people and that recruitment of labour for the purpose should be done by an impartial body such as the Department of Labour. I regret that all the arrangements did not work as smoothly as they should have worked. It has been brought to my attention that lorry drivers have been imported when local lorry drivers could have been employed. I repeat that if honourable members know all these things, it is their duty to join with us in hastening the day when one of us would have to give an answer off-hand or resign from the Executive Committee.

Mr. CRAWFORD: With reference to the unsatisfactory conditions of labour at Seawell I drew the situation to the attention of the Government by means of questions in which I pointed out that the workers employed up there were working under very unsatisfactory conditions. As a matter of fact reference to the questions I tabled reveals that I stated that the majority of the artisans are being paid at the minimum wage rate in the lower scale which had been fixed for the remuneration of skilled labourers; the rate of 25 cents an hour is what they are being paid although the two scales fixed were 25 to 29 cents and 30 to 38 cents per hour respectively. The contractors apparently took advantage of the situation to pay the minimum wage rate in the lower scale. In addition to that, the men are called upon to work 10 hours a day—60 hours a week—with no pay for overtime and are dissatisfied over the fact that wages are being paid fortnightly instead of weekly as is the habit in this colony. Furthermore, there is dissatisfaction with regard to the number of local people employed on the project. At the time when I asked my questions, that is, on the 23rd March, the total number of artisans, watchmen, unskilled labourers, chauffeurs —Barbadian workers—was only 88 on a project which involves the expenditure of nearly $1,000,000! In my opinion the entire conditions of labour would more or less revolve around the type of contract under which the work is being done and that is why I asked a supplementary question whether the Government would lay on the table of the House a copy of the contract under which the work is being done. Of course, the House was prorogued before the replies were given and perhaps some useful purpose might be served if I re-table the questions and we get the replies in detail along with a copy of the contract because it does appear to me as if the greater portion of these unsatisfactory conditions would not have existed if suitable provisions had been made in the contract under which this firm was empowered to do work at Seawell. So far as I know, there are very few people in the colony who have ever seen a copy of the contract. and the firm itself is reported to be guarding its copy with extreme care as if it were a closely guarded secret. I repeat that my conviction is that conditions could never have been so unsatisfactory if the contract itself did not permit of the perpetration of the injustices which have been referred to by the junior member for St. Thomas and myself in the form of the questions of which I made mention a moment or two ago.

Mr. ADAMS: Mr. Chairman,—I think that the honourable member who has just sat down is a bit too strong in the use of his adjectives but it is natural with him. I have not yet investigated the matter to find out if there is any truth in the allegation that everything was not entirely fair to Barbadian workers at Seawell but it is not correct to draw the inference—I do not suggest that the junior member for St. Philip has directly said it nor has he used language which necessarily implies it—that the contract was badly drawn and as the result an injustice has been perpetrated. I have seen a copy of the contract and it is similar to contracts that are entered into elsewhere, with the necessary provisions in relation to His Majesty's Government and the Government of this island. It is a fact that these particular points were not foreseen and written in but I have been instructed that the matter of overtime has been satisfactorily settled and that it is being paid now. No administration in the world is perfect and sometimes with the best will in the world mistakes will take place. As far as the Executive Committee is concerned, everything was done to ensure that absolute fairness would take place. Members of the Labour Party who are members of the Executive Committee were more than anxious that no suggestion should be made that they were using their position to secure jobs for persons at Seawell; they were more than anxious that the Labour Commissioner should deal with this in the same way as he would deal with work in Aruba or Surinam. We were very emphatic about that, otherwise perhaps many of these mistakes would not have occurred because the Union would bave been behind its workers The honourable member on my right informs me that it was not so much a case of wilful discrimination against Barbadian workers as it was that they felt that they should have somebody there constantly to look after their interests. As regards the point raised by the junior member for St. James, perhaps it would help best if I quoted somewhat extensively from the Minute Paper in my hand because this matter does appear strange both to the Financial Secretary and the late Auditor General who has since been acting as Financial Secretary. There has been a careful research, so to speak, into the whole matter. There is a note here which points out that the total amount which was approved originally was $18,229 and that at the 31st March, 1950, the sum of $16,704 had been spent. There seems to be some mistake in these figures because they are different from those in the explanatory note in the addendum to this Resolution but the balance is the same in each case—$1,525—available for re-vote in 1950—51. The Manager of the Airport, who honourable members will remember is a new one, reported that he has outstanding debts

to the amount of $5,016, which means that the approved cost has been exceeded by $3,491. He was called on to account for the over-expenditure and he replied giving all the information he could give at secondhand and from what had been left over from the previous management of the Airport. I repeat that both Mr. Petrie and Mr. Jemmott have gone thoroughly into the matter and have discovered that, in effect, these outstanding debts should have been brought to the notice of the Government earlier. These outstanding debts would mean that the original vote would be exceeded and they include a sum of $200.20 due to the Admiralty for the purchase of 100 ft. of power cable. Again, I repeat that the present Airport Manager inherited accounts that are long outstanding; now that they have been sent in, the Financial Secretary and the late Auditor General have discovered that the $18,720 that was voted has been exceeded.

Mr. CRAWFORD: With reference to my remarks about the contract what I meant was this: We have a Labour Commissioner and it is the specific province of the Labour Commissioner, in contracts of this sort, to see that there are inserted in them a fair wages clause and general terms of conditions of work which are satisfactory to the employees engaged on the work. I recall, for instance, that Mr. Perrin, the former Labour Commissioner, used to exercise the utmost caution, whenever it came to a contract under which local labourers were going to be employed, to ensure that as far as humanly possible the terms and conditions allowed for no exploitation of the workers employed or any injustice on the part of their employers. Therefore, Sir, one wonders if the present Labour Commissioner did pay any attention to the conditions of work at Seawell.

Mr. ADAMS: The Labour Commissioner had nothing to do with it in the initial stages. That is the point I am trying to make; the initial arrangements were not all that they might have been. The contract was handed in last Tuesday and is in the hands of the printers, otherwise I would quote the appropriate clause. There must be a fair wages clause in it but the point is that there should have been somebody whose duty it was to see that these things were carried out. I make that statement in fairness to Mr Burrowes who is one of the best Labour Officers this colony could have.

Mr. CRAWFORD: I am glad that the honourable member made that statement. I have no intention of making any allegation against Mr. Burrowes's efficiency. I only cited the fact that ' cases of this sort it is customary for the Labour Commissioner to see that such a clause is inserted and that has not been done in this case. There must be some reason for it and I was enquiring what the reason was and I have got the answer.

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

SUPPLEMENTARY VOTES FOR GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS.

Mr. ADAMS: The next Resolution is for the sum of $79,667 to be placed at the disposal of the Governor-in-Executive Committee to supplement the amounts provided under the following Heads of Expenditure in the Estimates for 1950—51:— Head I. Governor, item 17 (New), Purchase of Stair Carpet $400; Head xv Police, item 67, Purchase of Horses $1,728; Head xvi, Prisons, item 30 (New) Alterations and Furnishings for Chapel $160; Head xxi, Science and Agriculture, item 84 (b) (New), Refund of Customs Duty and Road Tax on articles used in the fishing industry $2,000; Head xxii, Public Library, item 20, School Libraries $1,000; Head xxiii, Medical, (2) *General Hospital,* item 4 (New), Preparation and Service of Foods $10,000, (3) *Lunatic Asylum,* item 47 (New), Installation of Gas Service to kitchen and purchase of gas cooking equipment $3,256; Head xxxii, Highways and Transport, item 44, Installation of Crusher Plants $11,123, and Head xlv, (New Head) Arrears of Salaries, item 1, Arrears of Salaries, Wages, Allowances and Grants $50,000. This is the usual quarterly supplementary Resolution and I beg to move that it do now pass.

Mr. COX: I beg to second that.

Mr. GODDARD: I just want to ask one question. I am sorry that the senior member for St. Thomas is not here. With regard to the new item under "General Hospital", Preparation and Service of Foods, I would like to know if a dietician has yet been appointed. A lady was sent to the U.S.A. to be trained for the job. On her return she made an estimate, certain equipment for the kitchen was ordered and up to then she was not appointed. Has she been appointed?

Mr. ADAMS: I will tell the honourable member this: Nobody could be more anxious—I would almost say angry—than the senior member for St. Thomas over this appointment. I was present when he raised the question of this appointment and he was given the assurance at the time that the matter was under consideration. If it has got further than that, I am not in position to say. I repeat that the senior member for St. Thomas is very strong on the question and I have no doubt that the lady will be appointed at the earliest possible moment.

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

On the motion of Mr. ADAMS, seconded by Mr. F. L. WALCOTT, the CHAIRMAN reports the passing of three Resolutions in Committee of Supply.

Mr. GARNER enters the House and takes his seat.

The House resumes and on the motions of Mr ADAMS, seconded by Mr. F. L. WALCOTT in each case, the three Resolutions are read a first and a second time and are agreed to.

RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE PENSIONS (PENSIONABLE OFFICES) (AMENDMENT) ORDER

Mr. SPEAKER: The next Order stands in the name of the honourable senior member for St. Joseph,—To move the passing of a Resolution to approve the Order entitled "The Pensions (Pensionable Offices) (Amendment) Order, 1950," made by the Governor on the 11th May, 1950, under the provisions of section 2 (1) (a) of the Pensions Act, 1947.

Mr. ADAMS: Mr. Speaker,—I ask that the senior member for St. Peter be allowed to take charge of this Order.

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

Mr. F. L. WALCOTT: Mr. Speaker,— This and the next two Resolutions are really a matter of formality. Honourable members will remember that sometime ago we passed an Order creating the posts of Controller of Supplies and Senior Officer in the Controller of Supplies Department and this Resolution is to make those offices pensionable. I beg to move that the Resolution do now pass.

Mr. COX: I beg to second that.

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

RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE PENSIONS (PENSIONABLE OFFICES) (AMENDMENT) NO. 2 ORDER

Mr. SPEAKER: The next Order stands in the name of the honourable senior member for St. Joseph,—To move the passing of a Resolution to approve the Order entitled "The Pensions (Pensionable Offices) (Amendment) No. 2 Order, 1950," made by the Governor on the 17th May, 1950, under the provisions of section 2 (1) (a) of the Pensions Act, 1947.

Mr. ADAMS: Again, Mr. Speaker, I ask that the senior member for St. Peter be allowed to take charge of this Order.

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

Mr. F. L. WALCOTT: This Resolution is to make pensionable the offices of Director of Medical Services, Senior Medical Officer of Health, and Health Officer, respectively. I beg to move that the Resolution do now pass.

Mr. COX: I beg to second that.

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

RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE CIVIL ESTABLISHMENT (GENERAL) (AMENDMENT) NO. 6 ORDER

Mr. SPEAKER: The next Order stands in the name of the honourable senior member for St. Joseph. —To move the passing of a Resolution to approve the Order entitled "The Civil Establishment (General) (Amendment) No. 6 Order, 1950," made by the Governor-in-Executive Committee on the 27th May, 1950, under the provisions of section 3 of the Civil Establishment Act, 1949.

Mr. ADAMS: I ask, Mr. Speaker, that the senior member for St. Peter be allowed also to take charge of this Order.

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

Mr. F. L. WALCOTT: This Resolution, Mr. Speaker, seeks to amend Schedule B to the principal Order by substituting the words "Director of Medical Services" for the words "Chief Medical Officer", the words "Senior Medical Officer", of Health" for the words "Sanitation Officer", the words "Health Officer" for the words "Port Health Officer", the words "Assistant Health Officer", for the words "Assistant Port Health Officer", and by adding after the words "Qualified Medical Officer" in the second column opposite the words "Assistant Port Health Officer" the words "or the holder of a Certificate of the Royal Sanitary Institute." I beg to move that the Resolution do now pass.

Mr. COX: I beg to second that.

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

RESOLUTION TO AUTHORIZE THE GOVERNOR TO ENTER INTO AGREEMENTS WITH CERTAIN OFFICERS OF THE GENERAL HOSPITAL

Mr. 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 Barbados General Hospital in any of the following offices, namely,—Medical Superintendent, Specialist Surgeon, Specialist Physician, Specialist Radiologist, and Medical Officer, subject to the conditions set out in the schedule to this Resolution.

In the absence of the senior member for St. Thomas the senior member for St. Peter, with the leave of the House, takes charge of this Order.

Mr. F. L. WALCOTT: Mr. Speaker,—Honourable members will remember that they have already approved of these offices at the General Hospital and this Resolution is to give the Governor authority to enter into contracts with the persons appointed to fill these respective offices. I can tell honourable members that they will soon have to consider other offices, including an Anaesthetist, at the Hospital. I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

Mr. COX: I beg to second that.

Mr. E. K. WALCOTT: There are just one or two points to which I would like to draw attention. It is very difficult for us on this side of the table to hear everything that is said on the other side. This Resolution will authorize the Governor to enter into agreements with the holders of these offices but the schedule to the Resolution does not state the period for which these agreements will be entered into. That is the first point. The second point is this: We were told, when we turned over the Hospital and made it a Government Department, that it would be much easier to get medical officers because they would then become members of the Civil Service and would be eligible for promotion to other places, and that the reason why the Hospital Board could not secure the services of medical men was not due to salary but to the fact that the men could not be induced to come out here and serve for three years with no prospect of promotion. Now, this proposal is cutting right across that line. This would mean that these men would neither get pensions nor are they likely to get promotion. This will be just an agreement and I do not understand how you can reconcile the agreement with the original argument. But I do know this: Everywhere I have heard that so long as the Colonial Office persists in mixing the two ideas, so long will they fail to get the necessary officers even with the increased salaries. They feel that they should not advertise in the Medical Journals and accept men who would be willing to come for a time and they want to keep the appointments within the ambit of those persons whom they think should become Civil Servants. If the Hospital Board was in the happy position that it is in to-day, that is, to have been able to advertise in the Medical Journals of Canada and Great Britain for men at the present salaries, they would have found it easier to get men and the results would have been more satisfactory. That is what I have heard. The medical officers were allowed miserable pittances when they were employed by the Hospital Board as compared with the salaries which they propose to pay now. It is true that you say that "the salaries of the persons so engaged may not, subject to the provisions of section 4 of the Civil Establishment Act, 1949, be more favourable than those authorized for persons holding the respective offices in the Civil Establishment (General) (Amendment) No. 5 Order, 1950," but that does not mean that the Governor could not keep a medical officer, say, past the age limit or deal with him in a way that would appear to be more advantageous than to the ordinary civil servant. Personally, I have been forced to agree with a statement which the junior member for the City made sometime ago, that is, that the

administration of the Hospital has fallen into dis repute and that it is due to the fact that the specialists are interfering with the administration. The moment these officers are made Civil Servants they can be dismissed. Some years ago, before we started to make all these Departments Government Departments, the senior member for St. Joseph made the point that it was high time that the Government should subject itself to the same remedies to which the individuals are subjected. In those days we did not have so many Departments but I think if the honourable member's statement was true then, it is ten times true now. As is the case in England and Australia, any person employed on these statutory agreements should have the rights against the Government which the normal individual would have against his employer. The position should be such as to allow the employees of the Government to have recourse to the Law Courts if they have grievances to be redressed and not merely have to rely on the good feeling of the Government itself.

Mr. ADAMS: I wish to congratulate the honourable member on his conversion. Adversity is a good schoolmaster. Some years ago I petitioned the then Governor (Sir Mark Young) in respect of a case in which the Government of this colony received money from abroad on behalf of a local individual and the money was converted to the use of somebody else, largely through the King's Solicitor having been hoodwinked by this person. The honourable member advised the Governor not to allow the petition and he now states that an individual should be in a position such as would allow him to sue the Government if he has suffered. We all learn from experience; even the honourable member has learnt something.

Mr. E. K. WALCOTT: The honourable member seemed to have been acting for both sides at the same time.

Mr. ADAMS: I could have told the Government what the real law was, contrary to the opinion of the then Attorney General That is the only way in which I could have been acting for both sides. The honourable member is not on a platform; he should not make these utterly reckless misstatements. I agree, in principle, that if the Government's motor lorry knocks down a man he should be able to sue the Government rather than have to ask the Attorney General to allow him to sue the Government. Attorneys General do not allow it, except in the Opposition in Parliament. It is within my knowledge that the senior member for St. Thomas went one day to the Colonial Office with the express intention of drawing to their notice the fact that we have to make these appointments and that they should be made as speedily as possible.

Mr. LEWIS: I would just like to express the hope that the Government will not enter into contracts with these medical officers for long periods. The salaries are considered reasonably good now and if the contracts are for long periods it will mean that any young Barbadians who come back here to practice Medicine may be denied the opportunity of what would amount to a postgraduate Course at the Hospital. I sincerely hope that things would be worked at the Hospital in such a way that any young doctors who come out here will be able to find room in the Hospital so as to gain the necessary experience. I would go so far as to say that it should be made a condition for practising his profession here that a young doctor should have some practice at the Hospital.

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

On the motion of Mr. ADAMS, seconded by Mr. F. L. WALCOTT, the House is adjourned for half an hour.

RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE WAGES BOARD (BRIDGETOWN SHOP ASSISTANTS) ORDER, 1950.

On re-assembling.

Mr. ADAMS: Mr. Speaker,—I propose to continue Government Business.

Mr. SPEAKER: The next Order of the Day under Government Business stands in the name of the honourable senior member for St. Thomas :— To move the passing of the following Resolution: Resolution to approve the Order entitled "The Wages Board (Bridgetown Shop Assistants) Order, 1950" made by the Governor-in-Executive Committee on the 27th May, 1950, under the provisions of section 3 of the Wages Board Act, 1943. The honourable member is not in his place.

Mr. F. L. WALCOTT: I ask leave to take charge of this Order.

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

Mr. F. L. WALCOTT: This Resolution is to give legislative approval to "The Wages Board (Bridgetown Shop Assistants) Order, 1950", for the purpose of setting up a Wages Board to deal with the wages and conditions of work of shop assistants. There is an explanation in paragraphs 2 and 3 of the Order which says:—

2. In this Order "Bridgetown" means the area as defined in section 2 of the Bridgetown, Speightstown and Holetown Act, 1891.

3. There shall be a Wages Board for shop assistants employed in Bridgetown, consisting of the Labour Commissioner as Chairman, and three members representing the interests of employers, and three members representing the interests of workers and such other persons as may be appointed by the Governor at any time under the provisions of subsection (5) of section four of the Wages Board Act, 1943.

I think that all honourable members are aware that shop assistants are not easily organized and therefore it becomes very difficult for Trade Unions to negotiate for them. The wages and conditions of service of shop assistants should be to some extent regulated as to what is fair, and it is a fact that the wages of shop assistants in this island are still below the real living standard. I hope that this Board will give close consideration to these matters and it would quicken the hearts of some employers to realise that shop assistants have the right to live a decent life. It is not always the best thing to have wages regulated by legislation, but in some cases there is no other alternative in getting something done. I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

Mr. COX: I beg to second that.

Mr. SMITH: I am in agreement with very nearly every word which the honourable mover has said relative to the setting up of this Wages Board. I can assure honourable members that shop assistants are underpaid and some of them have to wear two sets of clothing almost at the same time. (Laughter). Honourable members may think that this is a joke, but it is no joke; shop assistants have to wear one set of clothing along the street while going to their jobs and when they get on their jobs they have to change their clothing to suit the work. The other day I spoke with a shopkeeper and I was surprised to know the wages which he paid his

assistants; the wages were very low—practically encouraging the shop assistants to steal. But let us not forget to fix the retailers' profits when fixing the wages of shop assistants; it is all very well to set up a Wages Board to fix the wages of these people but where is the money to pay them coming from? I want the Government or its representatives to go into this question quite clearly. The shop assistants as well as the small retailers should be looked after; the retailers should not be left to the mercy of the merchants. If you compel the retailers to pay proper wages to the shop assistants you must also consider the retailers. I am making these hints to the honourable introducer of this Resolution because I feel that he will be part and parcel of this Board; in fixing the wages for the shop assistants he must also see that the retailers get a proper margin of profit so that they will be able to pay the shop assistants.

Mr. MOTTLEY: To begin with, I should say, like the honourable introducer of this Resolution, that it is always a difficult matter for a Government to fix wages. I thought myself that an Order having for its object the fixing of wages in respect of shop assistants was very necessary, but I cannot imagine how this Order before us could really be effective in doing the good which it is designed to do This Order is confined to Bridgetown, but if you take the bulk of shops in the suburbs and the number of assistants employed in them, are you going to sit here and pass this Order which would just be effective in regulating wages and conditions of work for people in the Bridgetown area as set out in the Act? The minute you go out of Bridgetown you reach every one of the leading retail merchant shops around St. Michael. Conditions have so changed within the last 20 years that nearly every merchant carries retail businesses to the country and employs shop assistants; can we really sit here and pass any Order which would have as its aims and objects the regulation of wages of shop assistants in Bridgetown and their conditions of work and not think in terms of the assistants outside? I am merely drawing that point to the attention of the members of the Government because I believe they will appreciate that the necessity for amending the Act is very apparent. Under the Act the Government can make Orders in respect of any trade or business carried on in this island. I take it that in this Order the Government is dealing with shop assistants as we know them and I think the Order should also apply to persons employed in the small retail stores because there are a lot of these people who suffer. I think it is the intention of the Government to render some relief to these people. Think of passing an Order that must only apply to girls who work as shop assistants in Bridgetown; what about districts such as Eagle Hall, Jackson and so on? I say nothing about the country districts now. Relative to the girl who attends a shop in St. Philip or St. Joseph, has she not got to wear the same two sets of clothing as the girl in Bridgetown in doing her job? Is the cost of living any cheaper for shop assistants in the country? If a shop is situated in Six Roads, St. Philip, an attendant may have to come from Christ Church to work at that shop. I do not think that this Order is good enough; I commend the Government for bringing down such an Order and although I agree that it is a difficult job and it is not always in the best interest of the people for a Government to have to fix wages, I ask the members of the Government not to proceed with this Order as it stands now. Between Bridgetown and Speightstown there are a number of shops carried on by wholesale dealers who must have shop assistants and you can very well pay shop assistants outside Bridgetown as you like. I think that this Order should affect the whole island. I do not know how that can be done but the Government will readily agree with me that, with the conditions as they are, you should have an Order affecting the whole island. After listening to the honourable junior member for St. Joseph no one will deny that such an Order should come into existence as soon as possible. If you go to St. John you will find that there are dozens of girls employed as shop assistants and they will be in the unfortunate position of not being affected by this Order if it is passed as it is. Everybody knows that the accommodation offered by the honourable senior member for St. Philip to his assistants is proper; I was amazed to see the treatment which the honourable member offers his assistants. Having lived in the United States of America, the honourable member knows the conditions there and he must treat his assistants well. If you once had to take orders in places like the United States you are bound to consider the question of treating people properly. I think that every member of this House appreciates this Order but it must be extended to cover shop assistants in the country. That is my view. There could not be any opposition to the principle of making proper provision for shop assistants because we all agree that the conditions under which some of these people have to work are frightfully bad; and the demands which are made on them do require that something be done in the matter.

Mr. MILLER: I should like to make a few remarks in connection with this Order; it is fortunate that such an Order is before the House providing for the setting up of a Board to deal with wages and conditions of work in respect of shop assistants. I think we should think in terms of employees in Bridgetown; I know of cases where people are expected to work for $5.00 a week and it would appear as if this Order has taken the place of Robin Hood, seeking to provide for people who find it impossible to organise themselves in a Union. I should like to remind the honourable senior member for the City that while this Order has been brought down in respect of Bridgetown, it does not necessarily mean that an amendment could not be brought down so as to include the country shop assistants; the point is to get something on the Statute Book. I suggest that we pass this Order, get the machinery on the Statute Book and then an extension could be made to include the country districts.

Mr. ALLDER: In making an Order such as this those responsible for its being carried out have to consider the various categories of businesses and employees and the ability of the businesses to pay an adequate scale of wages to their employees. If the purpose of this Resolution is to help shop assistants in the City, then those who are employed in the retail dry goods stores, especially those in Swan Street, must be thankful to the Government for bringing such an Order before this House today. There has long been a system of exploitation being carried on not only by the few Barbadians who still try to hold on in Swan Street, but by persons who have invaded the Barbadian commercial circle and whose only purpose is to exploit the situation as far as they can. They take advantage of the situation for which no particular person is responsible, that is, having dozens of young girls coming into their stores daily and seeking employment. They base their conditions of employment on the question of supply and demand and it is not unusual to hear some young lady who has to appear decently clad

on her job say that she is only given 10/- per week, she has to go in at 9 o'clock in the morning instead of 8 o'clock and that is because she will not be getting an hour at breakfast time; that she has to go to a restaurant and purchase milk and eggs and she finds that at the end of the week she has spent all her money in purchasing lunch. That same young lady will say that sometines in one day she despatches more than $100 worth of goods, and when she asks for an increase in her wages as she has sold so many dollars worth a day, she is told by her employer that she has made an agreement and it has to be carried out or she will have to leave her job. As soon as a girl leaves her job there are dozens who unfortunately have to bombard the employer on the next morning seeking to get that job. I think it is very necessary for us in discussing this Order to consider the Shops Act also; there are cases where a shopkeeper, because of the situation of his business, is unable to get the necessary turnover during the average working day so as to help him to bear his expenses; it is very difficult for him to attract sufficient trade. Therefore I feel that in dealing with this Order you should consider the Shops Act so that the owners of small shops can be permitted to open their shops as long as such opening is convenient to the purchasing public and as long as employees are not kept on the premises of shops for longer than 8 hours a day. You have to free the hands of small businessmen because they have the same obligations to carry out as other businessmen and you should not do anything which would prevent them from carrying out those obligations. Another point is this; you get a lot of strangers coming into this colony and offering undue competition to local people; I speak especially of the Indians and some Jews They offer double the rental value of property so as to get it; they only do that because they realise that there is a possibility of exploiting their employees which will assist them to pay the high rents which they offer to pay certain persons for certain business houses. I know of a case where one of these Indians offered a high rent for a premises which was occupied by somebody else and he succeeded in getting it. Since then he has offered a high rent for another premises and he also got it; but now he has one of the premises closed, the owner would not relieve him because he has a lease on it. You find that employees are getting 8/-, 10/- or 12/- per week and honourable members know how difficult it would be for such employees to make two ends meet. I feel that such a state of affairs should not be allowed to exist; on the other hand, the matter is complex because of the various conditions of business, and it should be gone into very carefully so as not to sidestep the purpose for which the Order has been brought down. Relative to the point raised by the honourable senior member for the City some change is necessary, but I do not know if it is the intention of the Government to give the members of the Board power to go outside the places mentioned in the Order and carry out their duties. I feel it would be very unwise only to bring about an Order affecting Bridgetown and Speightstown without giving consideration to the other shops in the suburbs, some of these shops being fairly large. I feel it is a good thing to bring about such an Order and I hope it will be carried out in such a manner as to bring immediate relief to the unfortunate employees especially those employed in Swan Street.

Mr. BRANCKER: I am supporting this Resolution because I approve of the principle of the Order, but I must say how much concern the limitations give me, the Order being confined to the Bridgetown area as defined in section 2 of the Bridgetown, Speightstown and Holetown Act. I do not know if the sponsors of this Order had in mind particularly the shop assistants in Broad Street and Swan Street. Although I have not discovered the definition of the term "shop assistants" either in the Wages Board Act or the Seats for Shop Assistants Act, I am quite certain that the term is wide enough to cover all employees who work behind counters. It might not be generally known that even in Broad Street where the biggest profits in the mercantile community are made, grossly inadequate wages are being paid; and the Labour Commissioner will have to give very close scrutiny to those who "make hay while the sun shines" in the stores in Broad and Swan Streets. I am referring to the Jews and Indians who come out here to do business, and when the honourable senior member for St. George spoke about wages of $4 or $5 a week being paid, I should like to say that there are Jews who pay wages of $8 a month. That salary, small as it is, is not paid when the employees first come out to work; because for the first two or three weeks they are told; "I cannot fix your salary yet; I want to see how long it takes you to catch on to the work." By that means these employers obtain two or three weeks' free service and then they begin to pay the employees $8 a month, or in the case of a liberal employer, $10 a month. If after three or four weeks' probation employees do not suit, they go out and the employers get another three or four weeks' free service. And it is hard to please these employers so long as they continue to get this free service. I repeat; I am supporting this Resolution because the principle of the Order is sound; but despite what the honourable junior member for St. Joseph and the honourable senior member for St. Philip may think, the limits of the Order should be the limits of Barbados and not the limits of Bridgetown as defined in the Act. Do we realise that in passing this Resolution to approve this Order we are leaving unprovided for such employees as those of the British American Tobacco Factory, General Electric Sales and Service and others? If the Government feel fortified in the view that they can come to the House with a more comprehensive and island-wide Order—I hope they will take this debate as an indication that if they do so such an Order will receive the approbation of this Chamber. The Shops Act is island-wide in its application and why should not an Order in connection with the wages of assistants in the various shops be equally as wide? I do not see why honourable members should have great concern in respect of businesses outside the area defined in this Order, because the duty of a Wages Board is not to establish a system of wages which would be beyond the capacity of a business; the duty of a Wages Board is to establish a system of wages which will be in accordance with what the business can afford to pay. There are businesses in Broad Street and Swan Street which can afford to pay more wages than what they pay. I am glad to see that the honourable senior member for Christ Church is in his seat; the big firms in Broad Street like Goddard's and the Colonnade do not overpay their employees and I hope that this Wages Board will go without fear or favour into the wages which are paid so that everybody will be able to pay to the limit of what he can afford, having regard to the huge profits which the business makes.

We do not want those who carry on businesses outside the City limits to feel that the time is far distant when they will be required to pay what are adequate and reasonable wages. If it is felt that from the point of view of draughtsmanship the whole island cannot be covered in this Order, then there is no limit to the number of Orders which can be made; at the next meeting of the House other Orders can be sent down. It must not be felt that the limited area as defined in the Act is only to be dealt with. The Government have seen the light and if possible they can come to this House with an all-embracing amendment Order providing for all employees throughout the island; the big groceries and flourishing businesses must be made to pay reasonable and adequate wages to their employees.

Mr. LEWIS: I welcome this Order which is for the purpose of setting up a Wages Board which will give some form of protection and make investigation and, I hope, grant relief in respect of the shop assistants of Bridgetown. I sincerely hope that similar Boards will be established in connection with shop assistants outside the Bridgetown area. However, I am not one of those who believe that this Order is going to usher in any millennium for shop assistants, nor am I one of those who believe that it is only the foreigners or people coming from outside to do business in this island, who are exploiting the shop assistants in Bridgetown or anywhere else. I believe that these people have an example already set; and the example is so striking that it is impossible for them not to follow it in some measure. I do not believe that this Order will give the shop assistants all the relief which they need. The Shops Act sets out certain things; that Act says that there must be a certain amount of breathing space in a store and other things none of which exists in the vast number of business premises in the City of Bridgetown. The Wages Board Act provides among other things, that in making any decision under the Act, a Wages Board "shall take into consideration the circumstances obtaining in particular branches of the trade or particular areas or affecting classes of workers and may in any such decision, determine, different rates of wages, hours of work or holidays or make such other provision for such circumstances as it may consider expedient." We were told when we were dealing with the Shops Act that the matter of holidays could not be included in that Act, and I sincerely hope one of the things with which the Wages Board will concern itself is to provide for holidays with pay. Some of the shop assistants are told that they could get holidays for as long as they like but they will not get any pay: so that they are numbers of things which the Wages Board can do, things which are already provided for in other Acts. I know that Wages Boards have been set up and workers still had to use the Union and strike so as to get better conditions of work. We have had Agricultural Wages Boards for some years and I do not know if anybody has heard anything about them; the only thing which one of those Boards did was to make a member of this House lose his seat. I hope that this Wages Board will take its responsibility seriously; I hope it will effect a change of heart of employers and provide for better conditions of work for employees.

Mr. GARNER: In this matter I have to be very cautious in speaking because it happens to be connected with my line of occupation. I represent the fraternity of shopkeepers, so to speak. Be that as it may, I am bound to speak the truth as I know it. In the first place I must say that you have to get around what is the real trouble in this island; it is more than a question of a Wages Board fixing wages. The trouble is that you have too many shops in the island; too many people are unemployed and cannot find any work to do. The business that should be done by 500 shops is being done by 1,200; hence everybody's standard is somewhat lowered. If a new shop is opened in a district, it adds to the number of shops in the district. That does not necessarily mean that more money is coming into the district, but the business is distributed among many other persons; so that the standard of wages naturally breaks down. What obtains in the City does not obtain in the country districts at all; it is just like two worlds. I am not shielding anybody; I am speaking things as I know them. In the country districts a girl may be a part-time shop assistant, but she is also going into the kitchen and eating a meal there; and more often than not, if there is a little lunch she will get some too. I know that a lot of employees are underpaid but I also know that some of them cannot get any more money because the shopkeepers are not making any profits. In respect of everybody who goes to America, his next exit from being an employee is to open a shop. These are some of the difficulties which you have to face. In the country districts we usually employ girls because it is cheaper to employ them than to employ men; the business cannot afford you to pay men. I would like to say that with the profits which shopkeepers are getting now, most of them are in debt. Ask the merchants to allow you to see their books; so that before you set up a Wages Board to regulate wages you have to see that the shopkeepers get more profits and then ask them to pay more wages. You cannot put the cart before the horse; I tell you that most shopkeepers are in debt and they cannot get out of it. It will take another War for them to do that; it is no easy task. Perhaps the honourable senior member for the City who has spoken does not know the little intricacies in this matter and while he is willing to see all and sundry get on, I can tell him that many a girl is a part-time shop assistant and she would hate to disturb the relationship between her employer and herself. That girl can get the best according to the service she gives to her employer and she stands to gain. Everybody is not an exploiter. But in Swan Street the position is different; they have no kitchens there and they pay wages to people for doing work. There again you have a multiplicity of shops and cut-throat competition is taking place; as soon as you get that state of affairs in business it reduces the standard of things because there is not sufficient business coming into one firm in order to make it pay adequately. Those are the things which you have to look into. You cannot make an employer pay what he has not got; the position is different from that of a sugar factory which gets the money before it grinds the canes. You have to think seriously on this point; there are too many shops and what is more, the poor shopkeeper has to pay whether he sells a dozen bottles of rum or not. Some shopkeepers cannot put $48 worth of rum in their shops although they have to pay $48 for the licence; but they want to employ themselves. You cannot kill a person's ambition to do business, but the place has got too small for people's ambition. Everybody wants to get away from field work and he wants to do this thing, that and the other; but we have not got the resources. As soon as a person

accumulates a little cash he wants to be his own employer. (A MEMBER: What is wrong with that?) What is wrong is that you have to find an outlet for the people so that they will be able to carry out their ambition. The ambition is there but it cannot be carried out in this small area. (A MEMBER: Back to Africa?) It would be a good thing if a lot of them could be carried back to Africa; that is the only solution to the problem whether the honourable member knows it or not. You want to do big things in a small country where you have no resources. Some people do not care what is going to happen 30, 50 or 100 years from now; they are not looking forward. if you think that aspiring people who want to do business are going to stay in this 12 x 6 island and let others keep them down and do not improve their living standards, you are making the mistake of your life. I am speaking about an outlet for people, because the place is so congested that in another five years from now, if somebody does not make a row, we do not know what will happen. The honourable Leader of the House and the honourable introducer of this Resolution know that as well, because in their going around they must come into contact with these things; they know that there are too many shops in existence and that tends to deteriorate the standard of the workers. The problem is a difficult one. Most of the large shopkeepers are being reduced to a certain level; let me give you one instance; I know of one district in which there were two shops and both of them were doing a moderate business. Since the War that particular district has had no fewer than 12 new shops; everybody is doing business and within a year or two the merchants will come out to find out what is happening and then you will hear the bell ringing. The shopkeepers find that whereas they had a certain amount of money with which to start business, they have not got that much to start anything again. I want to let everybody know that it is no small job when you are a representative; if everybody is as serious as I am in finding an outlet for people where they can expand and become business magnates and industrialists—if everybody has a future for people who have no future—he would join forces with me in finding an outlet for them in Africa. Epithets do not help in solving a problem and I can always stand an epithet. I represent a principle that will live when I have gone because it is the lifeblood of a people, When I pass and hear "That is the 'back to Africa' man," I hold my head high. I represent a nation; I have a lifetime solution for my problem. These monkey problems are nothing in comparison with what is going to happen sometime to come. And they are going to be multiplied; you have children coming out of the schools and there is no outlet for them. I did not intend to speak in this vein but since the remark about sending people back to Africa has been made, I want to say that people can become business magnates and they can live in peace and harmony in Africa My offspring has come from Africa and I want an outlet there so that the problems which confront us to-day will not confront us. There is no room for the people here; this island has approximately 1,200 shopkeepers, there is no business for them and people want an outlet. Some honourable member says: "Carry them back to Africa." If I could get steamships tomorrow I would carry them back there and I know that certain people could not get into those ships. (A Member: Would you carry me?) I would not want any opportunists; I want people who see like me and who want to create standards by which the people can live. I say that this present problem is only one of those which are to come. I must aver in closing that you must have an outlet for the people of this island; the people must have an outlet for their aspirations. (Cheers).

Mr. MAPP: I do not think the Government intends that this Order will usher in any millennium for shop assistants, but the very fact that Wages Boards have failed has urged the Government to see how this Board will work before they extend this Order to other districts. While I listened to the arguments of previous speakers, I myself felt that this Order could have been applied to districts which may be smaller than Bridgetown where shops are concerned. I agree to a large extent with the views of the honourable senior member for St. Philip although I do not agree with his suggestion as to solving the problem. Let us take an area in so far as competition in the retail trade is concerned: let us take Speightstown. There you found six cloth stores competing one against the other in a small area; the result was that one fairly large store and a small one were thrown out of business and their employees were put out of work. That sort of competition led to unemployment: I think that the competition would be less felt if the spending power of the people were increased. If the spending power of the people is increased that will lead to more employment, and more competition which will probably be a good thing for the consumers. I think we will all agree that before we extend this Order to the country areas which have special problems of their own, and in which the conditions are not as they are in Bridgetown, we should try out the scheme as far as Bridgetown is concerned, see how it works and then extend it to the country areas. There is one thing which I would like to bring to the attention of the Government; it is that under the Wages Board Act the Labour Commissioner can inspect premises and see that the conditions laid down are enforced. I understand that the Labour Commissioner's Department is very inadequately staffed for carrying out the duties which it is called upon to perform, and I hope that the Government will see that that state of affairs is remedied. It is very necessary that in an Order of this sort, the provisions as laid down in it should be enforced in the areas to which the Order relates; and if the Labour Department cannot cope with the duties which are placed upon it under the Wages Board Act, then you had better not have the Order at all: the work of the persons comprising the Board would be in vain. The Labour Department should be more adequately staffed to carry out its duties of supervision and so on. Under the Act the number of members appointed by the Governor to a Wages Board is limited to not more than three, and I hope that these members will be wisely chosen. I believe that one of the reasons why the Wages Boards in connection with the agricultural industry could not work was on account of the fact that the workers' representatives were outnumbered by the nominated members representing the employers and those appointed by the Governor. I am informed that the workers' representatives did not turn up at all the meetings; obviously they felt that they had a majority against them and they had better not turn up at all. I throw out the suggestion that the appointments by the Governor to this Board be made wisely since three members of the Board represent the employers, three represent the employees, and you do not want to throw the position out of balance by appointing people who have no sympathy with the workers at all. If you are compromising

then I think you had better not have these Boards at all. I hope that this Board will work so well that very soon the Government will be able to extend the scheme to other areas, and we will have set up a model which could be followed.

Mr. F. L. WALCOTT: I must thank the honourable senior member for St. Philip for making a real analysis of this Order. It is true that honourable members do not know much about the Wages Board Act because it does not come into practice in their everyday life. But it comes into practice in my everyday life and I say that when you institute a Wages Board you do not institute it to deal with the whole island, because the Board would never reach a conclusion in any matter. Under the Act you pick out areas and you define the area with which you want to deal. In this particular case the Labour Commissioner made an inspection in Roebuck Street, Swan Street and Broad Street after representation had been made to him from sources such as the Clerks' Union and the Barbados Workers' Union. After making the inspection the only alternative course to adopt is to have a Wages Board set up and under the Act you make an Order in respect of the area with which you are dealing. As regards the dry goods stores, where you have a large number of people employed in Bridgetown and you also have people employed in areas outside, it is better to deal with a restricted area; after that you can institute an Order and extend it to any other area or group of areas. This Order has nothing to do with Speightstown at all; it specifically deals with Bridgetown for the reason that an investigation has been made in Roebuck Street, Swan Street and Broad Street. It is astonishing when you go into stores in this area to find that the wages paid are below the real minimum standard which exists in the colony. We therefore set up a Wages Board to deal with the matter and I feel sure that no Wages Board would find it difficult to determine what should be the minimum wages to be paid in an area. On the question of holidays, there is no statute for holidays with pay: they work a French system of giving holidays here, sending off people for three or four weeks when things are dull. A Wages Board can deal with that question. I agree with the honourable senior member for St. Philip that there are too many shops for the trade and income which exist, but in a democracy you have no control over that matter. If you want an example to show that there are too many shops, take Baxters Road: that road is strewn with rum shops, and what do you find? The people who carry on those shops go to the Vestry and say that they cannot pay their ordinary taxes. If such a state of affairs is going on in this colony you have to let people realise that they are going in for business which is uneconomical. However, the Government feels that there should be an Order in respect of an area where an investigation has taken place and other areas can be dealt with at a later stage. This Order has nothing to do with Speightstown as the honourable senior member for St. John has said: this Order is restricted to the area where an investigation has been made by the Labour Commissioner who has found that the wages paid are low indeed. We are not concerned with racial problems; we would like to get some Barbadians outside but we cannot make those who are already here uncomfortable. Honourable members have contributed their quota to this debate but they have not given serious consideration to the Act with which this Order is concerned; we are more than surprised to think that this Order, which is a simple matter, could have caused such a long debate.

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

RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE CUSTOMS (AMENDMENT) REGULATIONS 1950.

Mr. SPEAKER: The next Order of the Day stands in the name of the honourable senior member for St. Michael:—To move the passing of the following Resolution. Resolution to sanction the Regulations entitled "The Customs (Amendment) Regulations, 1950" made by the Governor-in-Executive Committee under the provisions of section 177 of the Trade Act, 1910.

Mr. COX: In moving the passing of this Resolution, I should like to say that it is the result of a request made by the Shipping and Mercantile Association some time last year. That Association requested the Government to allow cargo which is found in a lighter up to 11 o'clock p.m. to remain there until the following day. It is claimed that when these late hours creep on the work deteriorates in that the men cannot find that energy which is evident during the day, and it is also claimed that the work becomes much more expensive than when it is done during the day. I want to tell this House that this question has been gone into by the Shipping and Mercantile Association as well as by the Barbados Workers' Union, one body representing the employers' side of the matter and the other body representing the workers' side of it. Both bodies have agreed that it would be wise and reasonable for an amendment such as this to be made to the Customs Regulations. With those few remarks, I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

Mr. F. L. WALCOTT: I beg to second that.

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

ORDER POSTPONED

Mr. SPEAKER: The next Order stands in the name of the honourable senior member for St. Joseph—Second reading of a Bill to abolish grand juries and to amend the law relating to the presentment of indictments.

Mr. ADAMS: Mr. Speaker,— Copies of this Bill have not been circulated among honourable members and I am asking leave to postpone consideration of it.

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

MARRIED WOMAN'S (SEPARATION AND MAINTENANCE) BILL, 1950

Mr. SPEAKER: The next Order stands in the name of the honourable senior member for St. Thomas —Second reading of a Bill to amend the law relating to Separation and Maintenance.

Mr. ADAMS: This Bill has already been passed by the House. It was passed towards the end of the session in 1948 and the Legislature died before it was passed by the Other Place. As honourable members will see from the "Objects and Reasons," "The provisions of Section 3 of the Married Woman's Act limit the right of a married woman to apply for an Order to cases where the husband has both deserted and failed or neglected to maintain her, and no Order can be made under the Act in respect of the custody and maintenance of children of the marriage."

Mr. SPEAKER: The honourable member has not asked for leave to deal with this Order.

Mr. ADAMS: I am sorry; I thought that the Order was in my name. I ask leave to deal with this Order.

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

Mr. ADAMS: As I was going on to say, an anomalous position which we still have in the Married Woman's Act is that in the case of a married woman who tries to obtain an Order against her husband, she can only succeed in getting it if he has deserted and failed to support her. A married man can leave his wife, send her a certain amount of money every month, and she cannot obtain an Order against him because he has not failed to support her. In England the two things do not necessarily go together in order that an Order might be obtained. The real object of this Bill is to make provision, as in England, for allowing a married woman to get a separation Order whereby she is not compelled to live with her husband and also allowing her to get an Order for maintenance in case her husband fails to support her. At present no Order can be made in a Police Magistrate's Court—in fact it can only be made in the Divorce Court—for the custody of the children. Except there is a case in the Divorce Court, the husband is the lawful custodian of his children whether they are a week or 16 years old; and it is not right, with modern ideas of what the relationship between a married man and his wife should be—it is not right that a Police Court should be deprived of the right of making a special Order relative to the custody of the children of parents who have found it impossible to live together. As I have already said, this Bill has already been passed by the House and some honourable members may remember its provisions; but other honourable members might want some information about it inasmuch as they were not members of the House when the Bill was passed. In Clause 4 of the Bill provision is made whereby a Police Magistrate may hold proceedings *in camera*. I suppose that most of us when we were children used to feel that a broken marriage was something criminal on the part of a father or mother; and those of us who are members of the legal profession and who see many of these cases at first hand are surprised that there are not more broken marriages. Marriage is a gamble and you cannot tell whether it is likely to be successful or not. It is hardly christian or decent for these cases to be heard in open Court and people be allowed to gloat over the misfortune of unhappy husbands and wives. I think that every member of this House would be glad to feel that we are taking advantage of this opportunity to give power to a Police Magistrate to clear the Court and hear these proceedings *in camera*. In some up-to-date countries there are domestic Courts like our children's Court today where the attempt is made to get away from the atmosphere of the Law Courts. It is with that object that this provision is put in this Bill whereby a sort of family relationship Court may be held so that these matters may be dealt with *in camera*. I beg to move that this Bill be now read a second time.

Mr. F. L. WALCOTT: I beg to second that.

Mr. E. K. WALCOTT: I was not a member of the House in 1948 when this Bill was passed. A copy of the Bill came to me only yesterday afternoon and I have not had time to check it. I am not really in a position to help in any way; I do not know if the honourable senior member for St. Joseph feels that the Bill has already been passed in a previous session of the House and it does not make any difference whether the Bill is checked or not. Among other things I see some misprints; as I have said, I have not been able to check this Bill. I do agree with one thing which the honourable member says—it is the last point which he mentioned—and it is that these cases should be tried *in camera*. In my opinion, that is an absolute necessity; as a matter of fact there should be a Matrimonial Court to deal with these cases. If you do not provide some method of getting these cases away from the publicity in an open Court or some method of dealing with difficulties, you will have more separations than you have now. I find that the number of separations are much greater now than they were before. I was a whole-time Officer of the Government; I have never seen such a laxity as regards the tie of marriage as you find today. In some cases you almost get the feeling that either one side or the other has tried to use illegal means to get away from the other. I have not seen this Bill in time that I could check on it and I must accept what the honourable member says. If he wants to carry on with this Bill I hope that it will meet with success.

Mr. ALLDER: We are embarking upon a very important piece of legislation and I feel that great scrutiny should be maintained in connection with it. The passing of a Bill of this kind means changing the whole social set-up in this island, and I feel that the time has not yet reached us when we should give women greater powers than they already have in relation to their husbands. We have seen in the past that every married woman or single woman who might have had difficulties with her husband or a man with whom she was friendly, succeeded in getting the sympathy of the public and of the Law Courts; we have seen cases where indiscreet women have ridden roughshod over their husbands. I do not think that we should pass this Bill without great consideration of the social problems which exist at present and which are liable to be aggravated as a result of the passing of this Bill. It must cause more homes to be broken up; it must cause more Court work among the various families, and it must have a tendency to have a bad effect on matrimonial cases as some similar Bills have had in this colony where husbands might have been placed at a disadvantage. I have noticed that amounts are allotted according to what a Magistrate or Judge can place on a husband and I am of the opinion that consideration was not given to such of those facts which we see in the everyday life of such people. The earnings of an individual might be such that even when the Magistrate uses his discretion, a husband is still left in a very awkward economic position. In this Bill you make it appear somewhat arbitrary for a woman to decide as to whether she must live with her husband or not. Clause 3 of the "Objects and Reasons" of this Bill says this: "The Bill seeks to bring the local law into conformity with similar laws in Great Britain and other British Colonies by extending the grounds for making an application to include bodily harm, persistent cruelty, desertion, wilful neglect or refusal to provide reasonable maintenance, adultery and the communication of venereal disease knowingly. Provision is also made for Orders in respect of the custody and maintenance of children of the marriage." The provision should not be made wider than it is at present and this matter could not have come at a worse time than now when the chastity of women is something of the past in the majority of cases. It is fortunate for us who

have been able to get good wives or wives who have not yet turned bad. These are matters you have to face because of the great social implications. Every honourable member must know that at some time or other an unfortunate man is highly aggravated in his home and he loses his temper and uses his hands to a milder or greater degree. The husband is not absolutely responsible for that since he might be labouring under a strain brought about by the behaviour of his wife; he might administer a slap or a cuff or something greater. But whatever it might be, the wife can decide to go to the Court and say: "My husband has been persistently cruel" and the Magistrate has the right to tell the husband that he must give his wife £2 per week even although the case might not have been heard as yet. In other words, if the case is adjourned for two, three or four weeks and a decision has not been reached, the Magistrate can still compel the husband to maintain his wife through the Court, even although the decision might be otherwise when the case is finished. That is why this Bill should not be passed at this time and in its present form; we know the trying circumstances which men experience and it is necessary to show some sympathy towards them. I do not mean that consideration should not be given to women, but I feel that provision has already been made to protect them; and the treatment which some wives maintain towards their husbands further causes me to feel that this Bill will have a worse effect rather than any benefits which the proponents of it may have in mind. I do not want to say anything against the provision of 10/- per week for the maintenance of a child because I feel that children should be maintained; helpless as the children are, the mother should not be left to see after their maintenance without the assistance of the father. But we have heard of cases where wives have not been as contented as they should have been and because of a particular outlook in life and high taste in living, they have decided not to be content with what their husbands offer as regards the standard of living. We know that sometimes a man who appears to be a father is not really a father, and because he has been unfortunate in not being able to prove his innocence he has to go through great sacrifice in maintaining children who should be maintained by somebody else. This is because all women are not satisfied to stick to their husbands or reputed husbands. I am sorry, Mr. Speaker, when I raise these points which might seem to be rash, but I prefer to approach the problem from a matter-of-fact way. There should be nothing hidden in dealing with a Bill of this nature; sometimes it is very difficult in some households to determine who is the guilty person, and I notice that in this Bill one of the grounds on which a woman can make an application for an Order is in respect of one of the social diseases which we know to be in existence in this colony; and we find it in places where people are not as morally inclined as they should be. I have read a few books on medical science and I have seen where it becomes very difficult at times for one of the species to decide if he or she is the person who has introduced anything. All these things have to be considered before we can give our approval to a Bill of this nature, and I hope that honourable members will be serious about this matter and do justice to the community with regard to this Bill. This Bill can bring about a great social change in the life of this community, it can cause a few cases of murder and it can cause more households to be broken up; we are liable in this calm atmosphere tonight to inflict an injury on the lives of innocent persons in our midst. If my utterances appear to be strong, it is because I feel that this Bill should be approached from a more serious angle than is very apparent; and although none of my remarks applies to the households of some honourable members, it does not mean that some people will not be so unfortunate as to suffer from what appears in this Bill. A few of us have been fortunate enough to find wives who have not yet changed, and I think I can say that I am included in that group; but nevertheless I have studied the behaviour of people, I have noticed the various social problems with which people are confronted, and I feel that we should do nothing which would further increase those social problems which we have already. I notice in this Bill that Police Magistrates are given authority to use their discretion and to set up an investigation by the Probation Officer, but again that leaves an individual at the mercies of another individual who may have the tendency to sympathise in one way or the other without doing justice to the side where justice ought to be done. Probation Officers, like Magistrates, are human beings, and they are likely to get their sentiments pulled out on the side of the person who may be guilty. I feel that the whole crux of the matter is that we should avoid opening certain people to the whims and fancies of an investigation Officer although the matter is left to the discretion of the Magistrate or Judge. I feel that the circumstances which householders sometimes experience are very trying and sometimes an unfortunate husband is so cornered and is in such a state of frenzy that if you were present to see the happenings you would be obliged to sympathise with him. But the matter takes a different rôle when the case goes before the Court and evidence is taken which makes it appear as if the husband is inhuman. You only have to be acquainted with some of the behaviour of wives to be able to appreciate the position and sympathise with the poor husbands. Not for one moment do I intend to take away the privilege of a wife and give it to the husband or maintain that she must be held in a state of chattel ownership as has taken place in the past, but in 99 cases out of 100 broken marriages are due to the indiscretion of wives more so than that of husbands. Wives are placed in a position of doing their wrongs in a very subtle way without causing notice even by their husbands unless the husbands spend 24 hours of the day to find them out. I feel that passing this Bill as it is without giving it serious consideration would be doing the community a disservice; I am wondering what influenced the minds of members of a former House to pass such a Bill. I think I read that this Bill was discussed in a past session but it has not yet reached the Statute Book; there must have been some reason or excuse for not dealing with the Bill that we are dealing with it now. This is a Bill which is likely to dig at the root of our social life and that is why I feel it needs greater consideration. I do not know how honourable members feel about this Bill; I do not know if its proponents would consider postponing it. Without any desire to induce any embarrassment to them I would be tempted to ask that the further consideration of this Bill be postponed. With an uncertainty of the feeling of honourable members as regards this Bill I beg to move that its further consideration be postponed.

Mr. MOTTLEY: I beg to second the motion for the postponement and I hope that the honourable Leader of the House will appreciate that I do so only for the simple reason that I got my copy of this Bill this morning. This Bill is rather far-reaching and I have not been able, like the honourable senior member for St. John, to go into it thoroughly. I feel that the one phase of this Bill

which all sides of the House will support is that no longer will families be allowed to suffer the indignity of having their domestic affairs threshed out in open Court. In all civilized countries cases of the sort for which provision is made in this Bill are always tried *in camera* for the protection not merely of the persons involved, but for the sake of their off-spring. Honourable members must recall my support of Mrs. C. N. Weekes when she offered herself as a candidate for election to this House as a representative for the City and the main plank in the platform which she put forward was to offer protection to women under this Act and the Bastardy Act. I am glad to see that this protection is being brought about. I agree with certain things in this Bill and while I am on my feet I would like to say that I do pay serious attention to the utterances of the honourable senior member for St. John, but I cannot agree with him in his reckless generalities which he made on the floor of the House about the chastity of women being something of the past. That is something to which most thinking men — I almost said most decent men—would object. If we are not associated with women, there is still the question of considering sisters and children and one must not be so reckless in his assertions. I do not think it should go on record that we sat in this House and allowed such reckless generalities as have been made by the honourable member to pass unnoticed. I do not associate myself with that and I do not think that I take second place in this House in my experience with the fairer sex. Wherever you find that women are unchaste you must have men to cause that and the honourable member must be more careful as to his words. I appeal to the honourable Leader of the House to postpone the consideration of this Bill and give us an opportunity of going into it. There are things in this Bill which must be passed; the question of a Magistrate making an Order in respect of certain things—that has been going on from the time I had the opportunity of attending the Courts. There should not be so much fear because facility has always been given in all these Acts. However we will discuss certain points when we are in Committee on this Bill, but I do not agree with the honourable senior member for St. John that the chastity of women is a thing of the past; that is not true and I do not subscribe to it.

Mr. ALLDER: On a point of explanation; I just want to clear any misunderstanding———

Mr. ADAMS: Is the honourable member in order in making a second speech? No point of explanation arises in the honourable member's speech.

Mr. CRAWFORD: The only mistake which the honourable senior member for St. John has made is that he did not rise when the honourable senior member for the City was speaking.

Mr. ADAMS: I have already arranged that I would agree to postpone the consideration of this Bill as soon as the second reading speeches were over; in fact I was going to accept the motion for the postponement before the honourable senior member for the City spoke. I am speaking now in agreeing to the motion for the postponement, but I should be failing in my duty as a man if I did not say that the idiosyncrasies of the cesspool which the honourable senior member for St. John has as a mind have been a revelation to all of us. No man who has the slightest regard for the decencies of civilisation and considers himself a man could possibly make a speech of that sort. And the honourable member spoke about his reading books. In the first place he must consort with the lowest of the low and in the second place he must be profoundly ignorant. Remarks of that sort have been made by people like himself since Eve left the Garden.

Mr. ALLDER: I am seeking Your Honour's protection; this is an unnecessary attack on me.

Mr. ADAMS: I object to the honourable member making two speeches; he can tell me anything outside this House, but he has already spoken in this Assembly. No man who is worthy of being called a man, could make the speech which the honourable member has made tonight. Any of us who does not feel that it is a lamentable thing for a member of the House to make remarks of that sort on the floor of the House must be lacking in something moral. In all ages the disappointed or morally weak have made attacks on women; women have been losing their chastity in every age, but women do not lose their chastity except through immoral men as the honourable senior member for the City has said. The honourable senior member for St. John never suggested that men might also be bad; he has said that in 99 cases out of 100 women are at fault. If we have reached such a stage as mentioned by the honourable member we should all commit suicide because life will not be worth living . I do not think that these proceedings should close without some honourable member not only deprecating such a speech as has been made by the honourable member but giving it the portion which it deserves. I am not now replying but I just ask honourable members to look at the Statute Book and see if we have gone as far as we are going now; if they do that they will not say that we are passing extraordinary legislation.

Mr. ALLDER: I am still rising on a point of explanation. I feel that I should explain the point to which I referred as to the chasity of women. I might have been in too much of an emotional state; what I really meant—and the honourable senior member for St. Joseph must agree with me—is that there has been a laxity of morals on the part of women of late.

Mr. SPEAKER: Having made that explanation, the honourable member is out of order in making any further remarks.

The question that the further consideration of this Bill be postponed was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

THE ADJOURNMENT

The Order Paper having been fixed.

Mr. ADAMS: I beg to move that this House do now adjourn until this day week, the 20th day of June, 1950, at 3 o'clock p.m.

Mr. WILKINSON seconded the motion which was agreed to and Mr. SPEAKER adjourned the House accordingly.