

THE

House of Assembly Debates

(OFFICIAL REPORT)

SESSION 1950—51

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, 28th August, 1951

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

Present:

His Honour Mr. K. N. R. HUSBANDS (*Speaker*), Mr. E. L. WARD, Dr. H. G. H. CUMMINS, M.D., C.M., MESSRS M. E. COX, L. E. SMITH, (*Chairman of Committees*) R. G. MAPP, T. O. BRYAN, F. E. MILLER, L. E. R. GILL and J. A. HAYNES B.A.

Prayers were read.

MINUTES

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

Mr. GODDARD entered the House and took his seat.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE TO THE CLERK

Dr. CUMMINS: I beg to move that the Clerk be granted leave of absence for to-day's meeting.

Mr. Cox seconded the motion which was agreed to.

Dr. CUMMINS: I beg to move that Mr. D. A. Banfield be appointed to act as Deputy Clerk for today's meeting.

Mr. Cox seconded the motion which was agreed to.

DOCUMENT

Mr. SPEAKER: I have the honour to inform the House that I have received the Financial Report of the Accountant General, for the month of July, 1951.

PAPERS LAID

Dr. CUMMINS: Mr. Speaker, I am commanded to lay on the Table of the House the following Papers:

Statement of the sums of money paid over to the Accountant General by the Commissioner of Police during the quarter ended 30th June, 1951.

Report of the Registrar on the Vital Statistics for the year 1950.

PETITION

Mr. GILL: Mr. Speaker,—On behalf of the honourable senior member for St. Philip, I beg to present a Petition from the Commissioners of Highways of the parish of St. Philip praying the Honourable House to pass a Bill authorising the Commissioners to increase the salaries of the Inspector and the Assistant Inspector of Highways and also to increase the rates of travelling allowances to be paid to the said officers. The Petition is respectfully worded and I ask that it be taken as read.

The Petition was taken as read.

GOVERNMENT NOTICES

Government Notices were given as follows:—

Dr. CUMMINS: Resolution to place at the disposal of the Governor-in-Executive Committee the sum of \$15,000 to supplement the Estimates 1951-52, Part I — Current as shown in the Supplementary Estimates, 1951-52, No. 22 which form the Schedule to the Resolution.

Dr. CUMMINS: This is a Resolution to grant relief to Jamaica in respect of the recent hurricane which took place there, and I am giving notice of my intention to move for the suspension of Rules 88 and 89 in order to deal with this Resolution today. I hope honourable members will realise that he gives twice who gives quickly; the situation in Jamaica is a desperate one and we should pass this Resolution quickly.

Mr. COX: Bill to amend The Cinematograph (British Films) Act 1935.

Dr. CUMMINS: Bill to amend The Public Health Act, 1908.

PRIVATE MEMBER'S NOTICE

A Private Member's Notice was given as follows—

Mr. GILL (on behalf of Mr. GARNER): Bill to authorise the Commissioners of Highways of St. Philip to increase the rates of pay and travelling allowances of the Inspector and the Assistant Inspector of Highways of the said parish.

QUESTION

Mr. SMITH:—To enquire of the Appropriate Member of the Executive Committee present at the next meeting—

Is Government aware that the rate of pay given to Janitors for Elementary Schools is inadequate?

2. Will Government give favourable consideration to increasing this grant in the coming financial year?

BILLS READ A FIRST TIME

On the motion of Dr. CUMMINS, seconded by Mr. Cox the Bill to amend the Public Health Act, 1908 was read a first time.

On the motion of Mr. Cox, seconded by Dr. CUMMINS, the Bill to amend the Cinematograph (British Films) Act, 1935, was read a first time.

On the motion of Mr. GILL, seconded by Mr. WARD, the Bill to authorise the Commissioners of Highways of St. Philip to increase the rates of pay and travelling allowances of the Inspector and the Assistant Inspector of Highways was read a first time.

COUNCIL'S AMENDMENTS TO THE REPRESENTATION OF THE PEOPLE (MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS) BILL 1951.

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 amendments of the Honourable the Legislative Council to the Bill intituled an Act to make provision for the direction and supervision of the election of members to serve in the General Assembly of this Island, the procedure at such elections, the expenses at such election and for other purposes in connection therewith.

Dr. CUMMINS: I ask leave to take charge of this Order in the absence of the honourable senior member for St. Joseph.

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

Dr. CUMMINS: Mr. Speaker, — We have before us the amendments of the Other Place to the Bill to make provision for the holding of Elections, and most of these amendments are verbal ones. The first amendment is in Clause 25 (3) of the Bill; that Sub-clause as passed by the House reads as follows:

"Any such order for the inspection or production of such documents may be made subject to such conditions as to persons, time, place and mode of inspection or production as the Judge seems expedient."

The Other Place has deleted the word "seems" and inserted the word "deems." The next amendment is in Clause 32 (2) (b). Clause 32 deals with persons assembling within 100 yards of any building in which is situated any polling station and Sub-clause (2) deals with persons to whom the Clause does not apply. Sub-paragraph (b) of this Sub-clause as passed by this House reads: "any person who under the provisions of this Act lawfully enter or remain in such polling station." The Other Place has changed the word "enter" to "enters," and the word "remain" to "remains." The plural has been changed to the singular. Honourable members will find that most of the amendments are verbal amendments except in respect of the case of illegal practice, which is dealt with in Clauses 31, 34, 42 (1), 42 (2) and a new Clause numbered 45 has been added by the Other Place. On this question of illegal practice, hon. members will remember that when the Bill was originally dealt with in this House, the hon. senior member for St. Joseph asked for and was granted leave to delete the words "illegal practice" occurring in the Bill. The reason for that was that there is no provision made for illegal practice in the common law of Barbados, and with the consent of the honourable Leader of the House and the Attorney General provision was

made for a penalty. The new Clause as inserted by the Other Place reads as follows:

"45. Every person who is convicted of any offence declared to be an illegal practice under this Act shall, in addition to any other penalty for such offence, be incapable during a period of five years from the date of his conviction, of being registered as a voter or voting at any election of a member of the General Assembly or being a candidate at any election."

While that provision has been made in this Bill, it is not altogether new. I hate to refer to it, but honourable members will remember the case of Mr. Hanschell who was found guilty of an illegal practice and he was debarred from standing for election to the Assembly for five years. I have only cited that case to remind honourable members that that provision is nothing new because it is the law to-day. After the insertion of this new Clause 45 the remaining Clauses have been re-numbered in consequence. I beg to move that these amendments be now read a first time.

Mr. COX: I beg to second that.

Mr. MILLER: Before the question is put, Mr. Speaker, I want to say a few words in connection with these amendments. Honourable members will find that in several of these amendments the words "illegal practice" seem to have been inserted. In the Bill as passed by this House there is no Clause setting out in a specific manner the meaning of the term "illegal practice." I do not know that these amendments, or a Bill of this sort at all, should be before this Chamber and least of all, be passed by a Socialist Government. We have always been pushed against the wall.

Mr. SPEAKER: Is the honourable member speaking on these amendments?

Mr. MILLER: I am speaking on the question of illegal practice. I do not know that you should want to forbid any candidate from offering himself for election for a period of five years in simple matters; a quarrel or squabble or anything like that might take place at public meetings and I do not know that you should want to prevent a candidate from offering himself for election for five years in these matters. I feel that in a Socialist democracy you should be free to offer yourself as a candidate even if you happen to be imprisoned; I think you should be free to be a Communist, Fascist or anything you want to be. In a built-up country like England with centuries of background and tradition attached to it, you will not find words like those which are in these amendments today.

Another point is this: I think the Attorney General is responsible for these amendments and his office is one of liaison between both Chambers of the Legislature, and I feel that any officer who makes changes which we are bound to accept is really cheating this Chamber of its privilege and power. I want to have it very carefully recorded that no officer of the Government should take it upon himself to cheat this particular Chamber of the privileges which it has enjoyed for centuries. You do not want to spank a child today because you feel that tomorrow it would be capable of doing something wrong; I think that posterity will hold something against the present Government for bringing forward this Bill. I would like to hear the honourable Leader of the House or the honourable Leader of the Opposition speaking on amendments like these. We came in here to relieve the suffering of the masses, and today we find that we are creating something which will bring about greater hardship on the people!

Mr. SPEAKER: The honourable member must confine his remarks to these amendments.

Mr. MILLER : I am doing that. The honourable senior member for St. Thomas has said that provision relating to illegal practice has been on the Statute Book for some time and he referred to Mr. Hanschell's case which was one of bribery; but here if you say anything at a meeting which is an attempt to break up the meeting, that can be regarded as illegal practice. I regret that I had to say as much as I have said in connection with this Bill; I do not think that a Socialist Government should have anything to do with a Bill like this.

Messrs. MOTTLEY and ALLDER entered the House and took their seats.

Dr. CUMMINS : The honourable member who has just sat down seems to be somewhat confused in connection with this matter. He refers to somebody going on a platform and saying things about candidates but that is not illegal practice; there is another Clause which deals with a matter of the sort to which the honourable member referred. Illegal practice deals more or less with corruption and bribery. There is something else which the honourable member has said and which is not altogether correct; he seemed to have given the impression that this amendment was put in by the Other Place and we have to accept it willingly, but that is not the case. When we were dealing with this Bill in this House the matter cropped up and it was more or less the consensus of opinion that we needed some provision of this sort; but it is nothing new; it is the law to-day.

Mr. MAPP: While I have listened very carefully to my colleague's explanation, it seems to me that the amendments to Clauses 31, 34 and other Clauses have gone far beyond what the Government apparently intended to go. If we accept the explanation of my colleague, whereas, originally, Clause 31 made it an offence for any person before or during any election to make or publish a false statement in relation to the personal character or conduct of a candidate, the Other Place has made it an illegal practice to do so, and the offence is subject to two penalties which are set out in the new Clause 45 as has been inserted in the Bill by the Other Place. A person who is convicted under this Clause might well find that he is incapable of being registered as a voter or voting at any election for five years or being a candidate at any election in addition to any other penalty for any offence declared to be illegal practice. In the case which was brought forward by my colleague, the gentleman was prevented from running as a candidate for five years; in this particular case, any person who has been found guilty of conspiring or combining with another person to break up a meeting can be convicted of illegal practice. Even if we allow for the fact that meetings should be conducted as orderly as possible, we should certainly make it an offence for a person to utter anything false about another person's character; and it seems to be going too far to put the same penalty on a person who might combine with another person to conduct himself in a disorderly manner at a public meeting as in the other case. I am not speaking of a person who is trying to break up a meeting; that is a bad thing. We believe that meetings should be conducted as orderly as possible; we believe it is democratic for people to express themselves publicly at meetings and to reply to their opponents' policy. We all know that the strict letter of the law always aims at restraining persons who become a bit unnatural in the heat and fever of an election campaign. We know that when the law was tightened in Great Britain adult suffrage was given and it

was natural that those who tightened the law would want to see a good muzzle put on the mouths of certain people at election meetings, but the matter should not be carried too far. There is nothing to prevent a person from trying to get behind being guilty of illegal practice and being able to exercise his right of voting for five years; a man might only be heckling; he might be asking questions during a meeting and the one who is speaking can exercise his agility of mind in trying to overcome and defeat the heckler who might be a marked man. Great Britain is so large that you might have a meeting of 45,000 or 50,000 people and that state of affairs might not obtain; but in this island where you get a meeting of about 1,000 people, a man can be a marked man. Such a man can be included among a group of people charged with conspiring together to break up a meeting and be found guilty of corrupt practice; all you have to do to prove his guilt is to get eye-witnesses to prove that he was attempting to break up the meeting. I do not believe that it could ever be the Government's intention to have an offence under that Clause defined as illegal practice; the House passed this Clause making it an offence for any person to contravene the provisions of the Clause. The Other Place has gone too far in changing that Clause and I do not think the Government should accept that amendment as it is. However, I will not move the deletion of that Clause because the other Clauses of the Bill are absolutely necessary at a time like this; we do not want to lose the Bill. When we were dealing with the Bill granting adult suffrage, I said that I hoped to see Barbados following in the footsteps of other colonies and preventing bribery and corruption and limiting expenses at an election. I am sorry to see that the Government has given in to this amendment; it is useless to argue against this Clause but I am just throwing out a last word to the Government that when they are bringing down the amendments made by the Other Place to what they originally intended, I hope this Clause will be included among those amendments. I agree that this amendment is far from being democratic, that it is a deliberate attempt to muzzle unduly a person who has the right to vote at an election. I hope the Government will see their way to amend this Clause as early as possible and let us have real democracy in this colony.

Mr. ALLDER: It is regrettable that we are forced in this position where we have to accept these amendments. I am proud to see that the position has been noticed by the honourable senior member for St. George and the honourable junior member for St. Thomas; I will excuse the honourable senior member for St. Thomas inasmuch as he was not here when this Bill was discussed, but I certainly must say that when objections were raised by certain members of this House the honourable senior member for St. George did not see his way at that time to join in the protest. The honourable member actually assisted in the passing of this Bill with its various ramifications although attempts were made to get the Government to be considerate in its attitude towards certain fines in the Bill. That only shows the harm which can be done when members of this House refuse to pay proper attention to the business of the people, and sometimes they have to wait until it is so late then to express themselves as being out of favour with what had been done. I will say now, as I said when the Bill was originally before the House, that a Bill of this sort should not be put on the Statute Book of this colony. Inasmuch as we have a Labour Government there is nothing to fear.

and it has been said that Barbadians are the most tolerable people that can be found not only in the West Indies but all over the world. We hear about the violence which takes place in other countries, but nothing of that sort takes place here; what is more, the fines and alternative terms of imprisonment are going to fall heavily on people, who, because of the lack of opportunities, find it difficult to comply with the law. I feel that sympathy should always be given to people who, unfortunately, find themselves in that position; it is a fact that a man who has not had any opportunity of getting education or culture might lose self-control and shout during an election meeting, but that mere shout is sufficient to implicate him. He is then carried before a Police Magistrate and is faced with a fine of \$500 or imprisonment for six months. That, to my mind, could not be more severe than it is, taking into consideration that crimes of a greater nature, which may hurt the community permanently are not enforced against those who break the law. I do not think we should pass such punitive measures as will take the manhood out of the population but rather those which will change the general outlook towards people and remove the causes of discontent. I see that this Bill will become law between now and the time of the next election; but I must express my sympathy for those who might find it impossible to comply with the Regulations which are set out in this Bill, and hope that they will not find things too hard against them. Although a majority of this House might have given their assent to the passing of this Bill in its present form, it does not mean that those representatives of the people thought of the people.

Mr. SPEAKER: I should like to draw the honourable member's attention to Rule 120: That Rule says: "No member is to allude to any debate of the same session upon a question or Bill not being then under discussion except by indulgence of the House, or for personal explanations."

Mr. ALLDER: I thank you, Mr. Speaker, but I had actually concluded my remarks.

The question that these amendments be now read a first time was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

On motions of Dr. CUMMINS, seconded by Mr. Cox in each case, the amendments were read a second time and agreed to.

SUSPENSION OF RULES 88 AND 89

Dr. CUMMINS: At this stage, Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that Rules 88 and 89 be now suspended in order to deal with the money Resolution of which I gave notice earlier today.

Mr. Cox seconded the motion which was agreed to.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

Mr. SPEAKER: The next Order of the Day 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 Colony.

Dr. CUMMINS: I ask leave to take charge of this Order in place of the honourable senior member for St. Joseph.

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

Dr. CUMMINS: I beg to move that Your Honour do now leave the Chair, and the House go

into Committee of Supply, and that it be an instruction to the Committee when the House is in Committee to deal with the Resolution for \$15,000 of which I gave notice earlier today.

Mr. Cox seconded the motion which was agreed to.

His Honour left the Chair, and the House went into Committee of Supply, Mr. SMITH being in the Chair.

RESOLUTIONS POSTPONED

Dr. CUMMINS: Mr. Chairman—I ask leave to postpone the first two Resolutions.

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

CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS THE MAINTENANCE OF THE CHILDREN OF MADELINE GREENIDGE, DECEASED

Dr. CUMMINS: The next Resolution, Mr. Chairman, is one to place at the disposal of the Governor-in-Executive Committee the sum of \$1,625 to supplement the Estimates 1951-52, Part I, Current, as shown in the Supplementary Estimates, 1951-52, No. 21, which form the Schedule to this Resolution.

Honourable members will remember that during last year a motor lorry of the Department of Agriculture had a mishap in South District and killed a woman named Madeline Greenidge. That mishap took place on the 17th November, 1950. The lorry was not insured; the case was decided as one of misadventure and while the Government is not legally bound to grant any assistance to the children of the deceased woman, yet on humanitarian grounds the Government thought that it should grant some assistance to these children. There are two children, one being 7 years old and the other being 5 years old. This Resolution seeks to assist in the maintenance of these children by granting the older of them \$2.50 a week until he reaches the age of 14 years and the younger one \$1.25 a week until his brother no longer receives assistance from the Government. These children are at present being supported through the Court by their father and that maintenance will be continued. This assistance by Government, which is on the basis I have given, amounts to \$1,625. I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

Mr. COX: I beg to second that.

Mr. CRAWFORD came into the Committee and took his seat while Dr. CUMMINS was speaking.

Mr. MOTTLEY: I should be the last person to deny anybody the right of support when, by some accident, his mother has been taken away from him; but however urgent this Resolution might be, there are many things which we should like to know. For one thing, the addendum to this Resolution is vague; I have on several occasions warned the Government about sending down addenda as vague as this one is. We are entitled to know as much as the Government. This Addendum says: "In November last the Government-owned lorry M-269, operated by the Department of Agriculture became involved in an accident in which Madeline Elaine Greenidge was killed." Anything more vague than that would be that the Government owned a lorry which got away and struck somebody. Is the wording of this addendum designed to hide something from the Opposition or the backbenchers? It may be that if the facts are known here we might say that this money is not enough; if I came to the conclusion that the Government's servant or agent was wrong and, as a result, this woman lost her life and left these dependants, it strikes me that \$1.25 per week for the support of a child is not good enough. I would not be surprised to hear

some reply to the effect that if the Government were comprised of the Opposition, nothing would be granted to these children. First of all, we are entitled to know whose fault was the cause of the accident; if somebody is intoxicated and the Government's lorry kills him, one would assume that nobody is responsible for that; on the other hand, if one of His Majesty's subjects is going on his lawful business and the Government's lorry driven by a Government agent or servant who is having some fun and he negligently kills that subject with the lorry, then it does seem to me that, while it might be argued that the King can do no wrong or that one would not be able to recover damages in Court, yet we could not sit here with any human sense of responsibility and pass this Resolution for this amount of money.

The addendum goes on to say this: "The deceased left two small sons, Haskell (aged 7 years) and Henderson (aged 5 years) and the purpose of this Resolution is to provide funds to pay weekly maintenance to Haskell Greenidge at the rate of \$2.50 per week until he attains the age of 14 years and to Henderson Greenidge at the rate of \$1.25 per week until his brother, Haskell ceases to receive maintenance, and thereafter at the rate of \$2.50 per week until he attains the age of 14 years."

You will agree with me that what the honourable Deputy Leader of the House has said has carried the matter slightly further, but this is not enough to satisfy any body of men, unless they knew the facts beforehand. I know that if the honourable member knows more about this matter he will tell us; all we have here is the fact that the Government-owned lorry M-269, operated by the Department of Agriculture, got in an accident as a result of which this woman was killed. Was this lorry left on a hill with the brakes off and came down and killed this woman? I do not know anything about the matter. However urgent this Resolution might be, if I stand alone I will have to suggest that the Resolution be postponed, and I really do not want to postpone a matter like this. I hope the honourable senior member for St. Thomas will tell me what sort of accident this was, what the investigation has proved if the Government has been cleared of any wrong or if this grant is an *ex gratia* one.

The honourable senior member for St. Thomas has said that the father of these children is supporting them through the Court; it would be in the interest of the Opposition to know what is the father's position legitimately in respect of these children and whether the father has entered into any agreement with the Government to waive his right. I am not a legal luminary, but I have as much commonsense as to know that if the union between the deceased woman and the father of these children was of a certain type, the Government would have to make an agreement with him before arranging with the Social Welfare Officer to administer these funds, as is set out in the addendum. In short, if the father of these children had been married, even although he is supporting these children through the Court, it strikes me that before any agreement could be made for the Social Welfare Officer to administer these funds, the Government would have to be satisfied that the father has waived his right.

With all I have said, I do not want it to be taken that I am in opposition to granting this money to these children because I say it is unfortunate that their mother has been taken away through this accident, whether it is her fault or not, and none of us should sit by and see these children suffer; that is the reason why I want to know more about this matter. I cannot assume that the father of the children is the legitimate father,

but I must assume that the deceased was the mother of the children. If the breadwinner of these two youngsters has been taken away from them, it seems to me that if one had to go into Court against any company in connection with this matter, a reasonable body of men would have to come to the conclusion that the accident was not due to the woman's fault and the amount for the support of these children should be more than \$1,625. If I do not get sufficient information in respect of this matter, I shall ask for a postponement of this Resolution, not with a view to turning it down, but if the Government admits that the accident was due to the fault of its servant, this sum of money for the support of these children, to say nothing about the claims on behalf of their mother, would not be sufficient. I hope the honourable senior member for St. Thomas will enlighten us on the entire subject.

Mr. CRAWFORD: It seems to me that the Government Departments should have their lorries insured so that whenever they become involved in accidents of this sort, the insurance company and not the Government will be liable. It is the ordinary practice with the average business people in the City to have their vehicles of this sort insured, and I can hardly imagine that this Department or any other Department would have lorries on the road without their being insured. Another point is this; if this accident took place since November last year, why has it taken nine months before this Resolution could reach the House? And what has been happening to these two children during that period? Have they been supported by the Government? Have they been living on the charity of friends or just suffering at their home? It does appear to me that a period of nine months is an unduly long time for the Government finally to decide if it has to take action in a matter like this. If these children are so destitute that the Government has to support them now, what has been happening to them all the time? It is a wonder that they are still alive; it is a matter for some speculation as to how these children have not followed their mother long ago as a result of starvation and distress.

Mr. ALLDER: I think I have followed the Press report in respect of this accident and I felt at the time that the Government would have been obligated to compensate the relatives of the deceased woman. I am glad to see that some consideration is being given to these children; as the honourable senior member for St. Thomas has said, that is a moral obligation. However taking everything into consideration, in the opinion of many people there is also the question of a legal obligation. It is true that so long as the Coroner has found that this woman's death was accidental, the matter would have to be taken as an accident. It is a fact that the Government has made provision to assist these children and one has to take into consideration whether the amount which is offered to them is sufficient for that purpose in view of the fact that the ages of the children range from five to seven years. Suppose we say that the children still have their father; we will still have to consider the fact that their mother who would have had to look after their protection is dead. The amount which is being offered for the maintenance of these children does not exceed \$6.00 a week; and suppose the father has to employ somebody to look after these children, suppose a relative even does it, you will still have to take into consideration an average payment for a servant. It is a fact that during the time a relative has to attend to these children she is deprived of getting a livelihood; if a servant has to be employed

you will see that you are providing nothing to contribute to the general maintenance of these children. I feel that the amounts set out in the addendum to this Resolution in respect of the maintenance of these children are too small having regard to the present-day cost of living. To say that a child of the tender age of five years, who has been deprived of his mother, should be offered \$1.25 a week for his maintenance, is to say that anybody can use a bicycle and if he knocks down and kills anybody, all he has to do is to arrange to give his dependant \$1.25 per week. I feel that if the Government feel they are morally obligated to help these unfortunate children, it would give a better appearance if the total sum were given to their father or put in the name of a Committee, and the money could be invested and the profits from such investment would last the children for a longer period than that set out in the addendum to this Resolution. Even if that were done, the amount, in my humble opinion, is still too small. If these children were of a different parentage I am sure that no amounts like \$1.25 per week and \$2.50 per week would have been considered; the matter would have been taken to the Courts, judging from the expressions of people who saw the accident, to say nothing of the Press report. The owners of the lorry would be legally bound to give a greater measure of compensation to the relatives of the deceased.

If honourable members took the trouble to reflect on what they read about the accident, they must come to the conclusion that it was no fault of the deceased; and if the accident was no fault of the deceased, then the owners of the vehicle and the person who was manipulating it are legally obligated to pay tangible compensation to the relatives of the deceased woman. I think I can remember reading where the lorry entered a few holes in a field and the woman was standing at the border of the field. The jury made their decision and that decision was disappointing; it is my feeling that the Government were not going to make provision for giving these children anything if they did not feel not only morally but legally bound to do so. If the woman had crossed the road or went too far in the road and got killed, it would have come out in the evidence that the accident was due to her fault. Nothing of that sort has been reported and therefore the fault appears to have been that of the lorry driver. The honourable senior member for the City has suggested the postponement of this Resolution and he should do anything that lies in his power with my assistance to see if greater justice can be done to these unfortunate children in the loss of their mother.

Dr. CUMMINS: Mr. Chairman.—Some honourable members have asked for a little more information in connection with this matter. I began by saying that an inquiry was held as to the cause of the woman's death and the jury came to the conclusion that it was a case of death by misadventure. (Mr. MOTTLEY: That does not mean anything). I have always heard that a verdict of death by misadventure means that death occurred as a result of an accident pure and simple. I am not a lawyer, but that is what has been represented to me. Extensive enquiries were carried out by the Police but there was no evidence of criminal negligence obtained. The brakes of the lorry were tested by Mr. Farnum of the Department of Highways and Transport and they were found to be in good order. The health of the driver was not so good and it was discovered that while driving the lorry he had a temporary blackout and the lorry crossed the road and struck the woman. After hearing the medical and other evidence, the

jury came to the conclusion that the woman's death was due to misadventure, as I have already mentioned. The lorry did not carry Third Party insurance; I can only assume that it carried other insurance.

The father of these children pays 5/6 a week to the Court for their support. I should like to mention that this matter of granting this assistance gave the Government a little trouble in working it out and we had to arrive at some sort of basis on which to arrive at a reasonable amount for assisting these children who have been left with their old grandmother who is unable to work. We bore in mind that we were not legally responsible for giving this assistance; we thought of dealing with the matter through the Workmen's Compensation Act and it was alleged that the deceased woman used to work for 18/- a week as a seamstress. On that basis we arrived at an amount of \$400 which we did not consider good enough; the only other basis we considered to be right was that of giving a weekly allowance to the children. I am glad to see that honourable members are now satisfied about this matter.

Mr. WARD: Mr. Chairman,—Much of this discussion could have been saved if we had been given the information which we have just been given. If this lorry driver suffers from blackouts I hope the Government will not continue to employ him. (Dr. CUMMINS: His licence has been suspended). I should like to know if it is not the custom of the Government to insure their lorries: if they have driving these lorries people who occasionally get into this condition knowing that they cannot be charged in connection with any act of theirs, the Government should carry Third Party insurance in respect of these vehicles for the benefit of the community. I feel that the Government should keep their vehicles in such a way that if an accident takes place and anybody is injured or killed as a result, and that person was not at fault, the insurance company would have to pay out money and remove the onus from the taxpayers of this colony. I am quite satisfied with the information which we have just been given. I think that the Government should carry some special Third Party insurance on their vehicles so that the community would be in safety and in case of an accident the injured party would be sure of getting compensation. This Government is sympathetic but we might have a Government which may not be so sympathetic.

Mr. MOTTLEY: The hon. senior member for St. Thomas has answered as fully as he could answer and I hope that in future the Government will give information in the addenda to Resolutions which are sent down here. In support of what the hon. senior member for St. Lucy has said, I am saying that where the Government is running a fleet of lorries, in fairness to the general public, just as they ask people to carry comprehensive insurance on their motor vehicles, they should also carry such insurance on theirs. The hon. member said that there was no criminal negligence but the Government would not be anything to do with criminal negligence; I was listening to hear something about civil negligence. I do not want to leave here with the impression that the driver of this lorry was not civilly negligent; however, it strikes me that to give this assistance until these children attain the age of 14 years is a bit narrow. The honourable senior member for St. Thomas has been in the capacity of Churchwarden of St. Michael and he knows what some fourteen-year-old children look like by way of development; therefore it would seem that when these children attain the age of 14 years, that should

not be the end of their receiving this assistance. I am satisfied with the honourable member's explanation and I repeat that where the Government is operating motor vehicles in several Departments, those vehicles should carry comprehensive insurance for the protection of the community.

Mr. ALLDER: Now that the hon. senior member for St. Thomas has given his explanation, the case has been shown up. The hon. member has said that these children are illegitimate and they are left with their grandmother who is an aged person. While it may be true that the father of these children contributes \$1.32 per week to their maintenance, the Magistrate who fixed that amount might have been influenced by the position of the father. This amount of \$1.32 per week should not have been considered by the Government in arriving at the amount which they would give these children; it must be remembered that these children are of tender ages and they have to be sent to school. When I first spoke I thought that the father lived at the same house as these children and he was shouldering the responsibility for them; but the Government knows that he contributes this \$1.32 per week and they are only offering these children \$3.75 per week! That is saying that these children must live on what some people will spend in cigarettes per week. Admitting that the driver of this lorry had a blackout the unfortunate woman did not cause him to have that blackout, and must that woman be blamed or her children be compelled to pay for the blackout which the lorry driver suffered? While under the law the woman's death would be accidental, in truth and in fact her dependants are morally bound to receive tangible compensation. While hon. members might agree with the Government that the amount of this Resolution is sufficient compensation for these children, in my opinion and in the opinion of any reasonable man, we are adopting a wrong system; but I would hate to do anything to prevent these unfortunate children from getting this assistance as quickly as they can get it.

There is another point which comes to my notice and it is this; these children lost their mother since last November—nine months ago—and no suggestion has been made that this assistance be given retroactively; we are just giving this amount of \$1,625. I would like to know if, when this Resolution was being discussed in Executive Committee, the suggestion was made about making this money available to these children as from the date on which their mother was killed. I do not know if the hon. senior member for St. Thomas has mentioned anything about that. While it has been said that the Government is granting this assistance because they feel that they are morally bound to do so, I still feel that they should grant this assistance as from November last.

Dr. CUMMINS: I am not in a position to say anything about that.

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

On the motion of Dr. CUMMINS, seconded by Mr. Cox, the CHAIRMAN reported progress and that the Committee had asked for leave to sit again.

Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

Dr. CUMMINS. At this stage, Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this House do now adjourn for half an hour.

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

On the re-assembling:—

Mr. SPEAKER: On the adjournment the House was in Committee of Supply.

Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair and the House resumed committee of Supply, Mr. SMITH in the Chair.

RESOLUTION FOR AID TO JAMAICA

Dr. CUMMINS: Mr. Chairman—the next Order is a Resolution that the sum of \$15,000 be granted from the Public Treasury and placed at the disposal of the Governor-in-Executive Committee to supplement the Estimates 1951–52, Part 1, Current, as shown in the Supplementary Estimates, 1951–52, No. 22, which form the Schedule to this Resolution.

I have some copies of this Resolution, in case honourable members need them. This is a Resolution for \$15,000 to help Jamaica in her hour of devastation and destruction. There is nothing I can say which would adequately describe conditions in Jamaica. As honourable members have no doubt heard over the radio, and seen in the Press, over 150 have been killed, thousands are homeless and others have been injured in accidents, and there is general want and misery and distress. Barbados as a member of the Caribbean group, and not herself immune from such visitations, has come forward with aid to Jamaica, and we want to act quickly, bearing in mind the old saying, "he who gives quickly gives twice." In accordance with that, sir, the Government has sent down this Resolution. His Excellency the Governor on behalf of the people of Barbados cabled the Governor of Jamaica immediately after the news was received of the storm, expressing deepest sympathy with the people of Jamaica, and enquiring whether Barbados could help in any way. As I said before, conditions are very bad in Jamaica and the Governor of Jamaica started a Governor's Fund for hurricane relief. In Trinidad and British Guiana a similar thing is being done, and in Barbados the Advocate Newspaper a few days ago started a Relief Fund. I beg to move, sir, that the Resolution do now pass.

Mr. COX: I beg to second that, sir.

Mr. WARD: Mr. Chairman—I am sure that the whole House will have much pleasure in advancing this money to Jamaica which is passing through such great distress, bearing in mind that were the economy of this island in a better position, we would be willing to subscribe even a greater amount. We must bear in mind, that we do not know when we will be confronted with a similar disaster. I feel sure that in passing this Resolution we will feel that it is not the money alone that we are sending, but also our deep sympathy. I feel, sir, that this amount is small, but we are sure that the people of Jamaica will receive it in the same spirit in which it is offered. This colony is meeting great economic pressure at present, and we have many things to do; but we do not know when our turn will come, and we send this aid to Jamaica hoping that if our turn comes someone will come forward and aid us in our time of distress. I will say on behalf of the members on this side of the House, and on behalf of the whole House, that it should be always a matter of great concern to the people of the West Indies when one part of that area is in distress. It is only good fortune that has for the time being kept a similar visitation from us.

Mr. CRAWFORD: Mr. Chairman—The sum of \$15,000 is a mere drop in the bucket of suffering which has befallen the people of Jamaica. As the last speaker has said, the people of Jamaica will accept our gift in the spirit of sympathy and fellow feeling in which we send it. The catalogue of Jamaica's sufferings is very extensive, and it is harrowing to read. Our hearts really go out to the Jamaicans in their hour of distress, and I am sure that although this donation is very, very small, it represents the sincere feeling of everyone in this colony that something should be done to show our practical

sympathy to the people of Jamaica. We have been extremely fortunate in this colony, and we pray that our good fortune will continue. But it is well that our good luck should not blind us to the misfortunes of our brethren in the West Indies when they are visited by these calamities of nature. We expect that there will be generous assistance given to Jamaica from all over the world, and we hope that the total amount of such provisions will eventually, if not completely compensate for the damage done, will at least assist the Jamaicans to a great extent in recovering what they have lost.

Mr. REECE: Mr. Chairman—The last speaker has expressed the hope that the provisions which Jamaica will receive from this part of the world and elsewhere will go far in offsetting the great loss which that colony has suffered. I will say that if all those provisions are going to be of this size, there can be no such hope. I think that in a matter of this sort we should have done our best. I say without fear of contradiction that the amount asked for in this Resolution does not represent the best that we could have done in the circumstances. I remember other occasions when similar calamities have overtaken colonies in the West Indies and we have sent more money. During the last war we have sent the U.K. infinitely larger sums of money. It is true that the U.K. was engaged in a major war. We in this part of the world do not become engaged in major wars, but we do get involved in major catastrophes. When one reads the Press reports it is brought to one's mind the extent of the damage and destruction in Jamaica, the loss of life which has occurred and the great difficulty and distress which must result to that colony. To say that Barbados is in such a bad financial condition that the only amount we could afford to send to Jamaica is \$15,000 is to my mind something which I cannot accept, not if the financial statements which are issued by the Treasury are accurate. Sir, I too hope that this gift will be received by Jamaica in the spirit in which it is offered. But I do not think that as a true West Indian I would be fair to myself or the colony if I were to agree that this is the best that we can do to help Jamaica. Jamaica is a big place, and it has occupied a most prominent position in the history of the life of the Caribbean colonies. I think that in view of the prominent part that she has played and the contribution of that colony to West Indian thinking and the welfare of the colonies, we should act as one. I think that we should be prepared to go as far as to hurt ourselves in order to assist a fellow Caribbean colony. This is perhaps one of the most terrific calamities that has ever overcome a colony in the West Indies. Only a little time ago we had a disastrous fire in Antigua, a small colony with a small population, and on that occasion the damage was nothing as great or as widespread as that which has now occurred in Jamaica. But on that occasion we sent a larger amount to that colony than we are proposing to send to Jamaica. I think that in a matter of this sort the aid should bear some relation to the distress. This does not. As the last speaker said, this is a mere drop which he and everyone else hopes will be received both as a token of our appreciation of that colony and of our sympathy. But to say that this is going to have any effect on relieving the distress and putting things right in that colony is a joke. We have not done enough. We should always come to the aid of a fellow West Indian colony as fully and generously as possible.

Mr. ALLDER: Mr. Chairman—We all sympathise with Jamaica and its people on the great damage that they have suffered. But the last honourable member who spoke must remember that just two years ago we had distress on a smaller footing,

and Jamaica did not contribute one half penny to aid us as far as my knowledge goes. But I do not want to make that the basis of refusing to help them now. Certainly we should help them. But to say that we have not done as much as we can is to make too great a demand on an already hard-pressed colony like this. I think that British Guiana gave only £2,000. I think that the amount we are proposing to give is generous when we compare our resources with those of a large country like British Guiana. Nevertheless we must still consider what we spent locally when we had a similar fate. There is not much difference between what we propose to give to Jamaica now and what we gave to the sufferers of Barbados in 1949. And I know that there are many sufferers of our 1949 flood who have not yet fully recovered from their fate. We must bear that in mind even when we are responding to the need of Jamaica. It seems that the Mother Country herself has given them a very small amount, comparatively speaking, and you must not forget too that there are a lot of wealthy Europeans in Jamaica who should have to pull their pockets and relieve the suffering of the colony which has rescued them. I am told that Jamaica is a rich man's paradise, and from what I have read it seems that it is not impossible to find people down there with incomes of over \$50,000 a year. I am sure that if these persons were to be asked to pull their pockets to help Jamaica regain the comfort which it offers to them, the amount which we give would be more because those who are in the best position to help would have already helped. I appreciate the gift of \$15,000 which we are making now. To ask us to do more is to close our eyes to the realities of life as they obtain in this colony.

The motion that the Resolution do now pass was put and carried *nem. con.*

On motion of Dr. CUMMINS seconded by Mr. Cox the CHAIRMAN reported the passing of two Resolutions in Committee of Supply and the postponement of two.

Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

On the motion of Dr. CUMMINS seconded by Mr. Cox the two Resolutions passed in Committee of Supply were read a first and second time and agreed to.

BILL TO PROVIDE FOR COLLECTION OF ENEMY PROPERTY

Dr. CUMMINS: Mr. Speaker — I am asking leave that Order No. 14 standing in the name of the honourable senior member for St. Michael be the next Order of the Day.

There being no objection, leave was granted to deal with the Order which is as follows: to move the second reading of a Bill intituled an Act to provide for the collection and realisation of German enemy property and for the distribution of the proceeds thereof and for purposes connected with the matters aforesaid.

Mr. COX: Mr. Speaker—From the Objects and Reasons of this Bill honourable members will see its scope. I move that it be read a second time.

Dr. CUMMINS seconded and the motion was carried *nem. con.*

On the motion of Mr. Cox seconded by Dr. CUMMINS the House went into committee on the Bill Mr. SMITH in the Chair.

Clauses 1 to 6 inclusive were respectively read and passed.

On motion of Mr. Cox seconded by Dr. CUMMINS Mr. Chairman reported and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the

Chair and reported the passing of the Bill in committee.

On separate motions of Mr. Cox seconded by Dr. CUMMINS the Bill was read a third time and passed, and the title read and agreed to.

IMMIGRATION OF PAUPERS REGULATIONS

Mr. SPEAKER: The next Order stands in the name of the honourable senior member for St. Thomas—Resolution that the House of Assembly sanction the following Regulations made by the Governor-in-Executive Committee on the 14th day of June, 1951, under the provisions of Section 17 of the Immigration of Paupers (Prevention) Act, 1909.

Dr. CUMMINS: Mr. Speaker—Formerly fees for overtime were collected by the Harbour and Shipping Master in connection with the immigration of paupers. Those duties are now done by the Police. Inasmuch as the police are on duty 24 hours a day there will be no longer any need for these overtime fees, and the Regulations which this Resolution seeks to approve are for the purpose of abolishing those fees. I beg to move that the Resolution do now pass.

Mr. Cox seconded.

Mr. MAPP: Mr. Speaker—You may remember that sometime ago this House discussed the question of immigration into this island at a time when Trinidad was prohibiting the immigration of other West Indians into Trinidad. Trinidad has begun to take those steps again. It was my opinion then—

Dr. CUMMINS: On a point of order Sir,—this Resolution has to do with the collection of fees. I believe that the honourable member has on the Order Paper an Address which deals with the question that he is raising now. I would like to call that to Your Honour's attention.

Mr. MAPP: If my colleague is appealing to me not to make any lengthy remarks on the matter because of the Address I have introduced I will yield gracefully to his appeal. But he should not tell me that this Resolution has to do with fees, because it also has to do with the immigration of paupers. I think, Sir, that with your leave I can discuss any matter under that head. If my colleague is asking me to save the discussion until I deal with my Address, I will leave the matter as it is.

Mr. ALLDER: Mr. Speaker— I think that the sooner we reach a decision on this immigration question, the better it will be for the island. It was reported to me Sir, that since the change over from the Harbour and Shipping Department to the Police Department it was thought that greater control of the entry of people into the colony would have been maintained. But the Police are claiming that their hands are tied as far as the law is concerned. Some of these immigrants state to the Police Department that they have only come here to stay for a matter of weeks, but after they have got in they do not leave. Some of them who have been approached by the Police on the matter have been to lawyers who advised them that there was no law which would compel them to leave at the specified time. Whatever honourable members may think about Federation, the fact is that colonies with greater resources at their disposal than we have are beginning to control the entry of people into their colonies. I think that that is sufficient reason for us, however much we dislike it, to take similar action, even if we are not as drastic as I am told that Trinidad has been. What is more, the influx of these people who do not have the means of maintaining themselves is stated to be the chief reason why Trinidad is asking them to leave. When they come here, even if they do not run afoul of the law, they consume the food and other things that

might go to natives of Barbados. Again, Sir, you even find some of them in Government jobs—not of a big nature—but if you go to the Housing Board or Highways and Transport Department you will find some working as day labourers, while at the moment you will find many Barbadians who would be glad to get an opportunity to get a job. I am drawing to the attention of the House the difficulty being experienced by the Police Department which has to be concerned with immigration. Some of these people arrive and create congestion in already overcrowded areas. We dislike to have to approach the question, but bigger colonies are doing it, colonies that are the leading exponents of the federation issue; so I do not see why we should try to father the whole of the West Indies when our resources do not permit us to do so. It is time that the law should be changed. It was handled anyhow when it was in the Harbour and Shipping Master's Office. People just came on ships or schooners, and walked ashore as they thought fit. The time has come when we must check up. I do not think it can be considered immoral if we do it now, because other colonies who are also assisting in bringing about federation have already started it. People talk about Barbadians being all over the globe. But there are Trinidadians all over the globe too; but they do not fear that similar reprisals will be taken against them. What I know is that there are several thousand Barbadians in Cuba awaiting repatriation, as well as quite a large number in Panama. We may awake one of these mornings and find that these Barbadians have returned to add to our acute housing problems and to the unemployment situation. So we should try to make living room for these Barbadians who may return at any time by getting rid in a gradual way of strangers who are burdening our resources. Some of them I have seen charged with creating disturbances, housebreaking etc. Police Magistrates should be told that when these strangers are found guilty of offences steps are to be taken to see that they leave the colony as soon as they have paid their fines or left prison. We cannot be sentimental in a matter of this sort. I hope that the Government will see the wisdom in the not distant future of amending the immigration laws so as to give the Police Department that authority without which they cannot perform their duties effectively.

Motion that the Resolution do now pass was put and carried *nem. con.*

RESOLUTION TO APPROVE NUMBER OF BURSARIES

Mr. SPEAKER: The next Order stands in the name of the honourable senior member for St. Thomas—to move the passing of a Resolution that the House of Assembly approve that the number of bursaries which the Board of Industrial Training may award annually to suitable candidates under the provisions of sub-section (1) of section 3 of the Apprenticeship Bursaries Act, 1947, (as amended by the Apprenticeship Bursaries Act, 1951, shall be forty-eight.

Dr. CUMMINS: Mr. Speaker—This Resolution has to do with increasing the number of bursaries. Honourable members will remember that just a few weeks ago the Act was amended giving the Governor-in-Executive Committee power to increase these bursaries from time to time without having to come to the Legislature. This Resolution is the sequel to that amendment, and in this, the Government proposes to increase the number from

24 to 48. I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

Mr. COX seconded.

Mr. REECE: Mr. Speaker—I think that everyone will agree that this increase is very welcome indeed. I think that as time goes by the Government will be well advised to make an even bigger increase. There can be no two ways about it. The bursary system has done much for skilled craftsmanship in this colony. Today it is impossible to take full advantage of the system because today a much larger number of pupils are being turned out from schools, pupils who have shown an aptitude for craftsmanship. I have known many instances where people would have been only too glad to have their sons apprenticed under the Bursary System, but owing to the fact that the number of bursaries were limited, and that all the places were filled, it was impossible to do so. The system is one in which apprentices are apprenticed to craftsmen well skilled in the art, and that goes to the very fundamentals of the technical side of craftsmanship in the island. I hope that the time will soon come when Government will be able to put technical schools or classes into operation; but until such time comes, I think that the Bursary System is the best one that we can pursue.

Motion that the Resolution do now pass was put and carried *nem. con.*

RESOLUTION TO SANCTION PETROLEUM REGULATIONS

Mr. COX: Mr. Speaker—I am asking leave to take Order No. 20 as the next Order of the Day.

There being no objection leave was granted.

Mr. SPEAKER: The next Order stands in the name of the honourable senior member for St. Michael—to move the passing of a Resolution that the House of Assembly sanction the regulations entitled the Petroleum (Amendment) Regulations, 1951, No. 2, made by the Governor-in-Executive Committee on the 9th day of August, 1951, under the provisions of sub-section (2) of section 2 of the Customs Tariff Act 1921, (1921-3).

Mr. COX: Mr. Speaker—This Resolution aims at giving the Comptroller of Customs power to collect road tax on petroleum distillates. Under the 1936 Regulations the people at Spring Garden were given an opportunity to store volatile petroleum at their place and road tax was collected when withdrawals were made from that storage. But no provision was made for petroleum distillates. Recently it has been discovered that these distillates are also stored there. Inasmuch as this item is used as motor fuel it becomes necessary to amend the regulations in order that road tax may be collected on it. I beg to move, sir, that the Resolution do now pass.

Dr. CUMMINS seconded, and the motion was put and carried *nem. con.*

RESOLUTION WITHDRAWN

Dr. CUMMINS: Mr. Speaker—I am asking leave to withdraw Order No. 10 standing in my name. It was the original Resolution dealing with the appointment of an Analyst to the Department of Science and Agriculture. A couple of meetings ago a similar Resolution was dealt with by the honourable senior member for St. Peter, so I am asking leave to withdraw the one standing in my name.

There being no objection, leave was granted.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS ADDRESS RE INSURANCE OF HOUSES

Mr. HAYNES: Mr. Speaker—I am now asking leave to deal with Order no. 58 under Private Members' Business.

Mr. SPEAKER: If there is no objection leave will be granted.

There being no objection leave was granted.

The Order was called for Mr. Haynes to move the passing of the following Address:—

*The House of Assembly
To
His Excellency The Governor*

The House of Assembly view with grave concern the cost of replacing the approximately 40,000 small houses in the Island, which in the event of a hurricane would probably be destroyed; considering the present very high cost of building materials.

In view of this immense increase in replacement costs the House of Assembly consider that the Government should carry a Comprehensive Hurricane Insurance Policy on these houses as most of the owners are not in a financial position to insure themselves against Hurricane risk.

Mr. HAYNES: Mr. Speaker—In moving the passing of this Address I would say that I think all honourable members will realise that this is a very serious matter. On reflecting on what has happened in Jamaica just a few days ago, it occurred to me that we are in just as vulnerable a position as Jamaica, Antigua or any other West Indian colony, and that some day or other our turn will come.

A VOICE: God forbid.

Mr. HAYNES: God forbid. I hope that it will never come. But that does not mean that we should not be prepared to meet one of those disasters if they ever came. I claim that at present we are not prepared. We in this island are a very heavily populated community—I believe one of the heaviest in the world. That means that we have got to have a lot of houses. I have made certain inquiries, and from what I can gather there are approximately 40,000 small houses in the island—wooden houses in which the majority of people live. I tremble to think what would happen to those people if those houses were destroyed. Years ago this difficulty did not exist so much because the price of lumber was reasonable—\$60.00 a thousand. But today pine is 35 cents a square foot, deal is 26 cents and fir is 28 cents a square foot. You can imagine what the cost of building a 9x18 house would be today. To put it plainly, the cost of the pine frame for a small house today is approximately what would have built the entire house seven or eight years ago. Not only has the price of lumber gone up, but also the price of nails which are essential. The price of nails used to be about eight cents a pound; then they went to 27 cents; now I am told they are selling at 53 cents a pound. When you take these prices into consideration, you will realise that it will be practically impossible for private enterprise or individuals to replace these houses if they were destroyed by hurricane, and undoubtedly they will be destroyed if a hurricane comes. They cannot stand up to winds moving at 120 miles an hour. The idea contained in this Address is that the Government should step in and either put up a fund commensurate with the hurricane insurance premium on the houses, or take out a comprehensive insurance policy on these houses. I am told, sir, that the difficulty of collective insurance is a legal technicality which can be got over. The Government could therefore put their Crown Law Officers to work the matter out and they will get over the difficulty of running a collective insurance policy. I think, speaking under correction, that that was done in the case of insuring fishing boats. Most of our fishing boats today are insured against storm etc., and I think that in a matter like houses which are so important, and which today are practically irreplaceable owing to the high cost of materials, the Government should take the necessary action. I hope, sir, that this Address will not fall on

deaf ears like some that I have seen passed by the House this session. I think it would be very remiss for the Head of the Administration and his advisers not to take some notice of this Address as was done in the case of other Addresses most of which were passed unanimously. I hope that some fruit will be borne from the passing of this Address, and I therefore beg to move that it do now pass.

Mr. ALLDER: Mr. Speaker—The condition in which our 1949 flood left some of these unfortunate people is still fresh in my memory, and the present catastrophe in Jamaica has fed my imagination. I am told that in Jamaica millions of dollars in property have been lost. Whenever there is a hurricane, a war, or similar disaster it is the small people who suffer most. In this respect, sir, if the 40,000 houses mentioned in this Address are insured, it will give greater hope to those thousands of persons who occupy them. Like the honourable member who has moved the passing of the Address I am hoping that this Address will not find its way into some pigeon hole. I am hoping that the Administration will be impressed by the fact that the majority of members have given it their blessing. It is time for us to do the things that will help the unfortunate people who are in need of security. I must in my humble way commend the action of the honourable junior member for St. Andrew for taking a leaf out of the socialists' book, and I beg to second the motion for the passing of the Address.

Mr. MOTTLEY: Mr. Speaker—the last speaker sat down talking about taking a leaf out of the socialists' book. But the mere fact of masquerading as a socialist does not give one a socialist trend of thought or a human heart. Like the honourable senior member for St. John I too commend the introducer of this Address and I rise to support it. With all seriousness and from the depth of my heart I say that this Address contains food for thought. It is an unselfish Address. It is so often said that when the honourable junior member for St. Andrew deals with the East Coast Road he is thinking of himself only. I wonder what will be said in this case. No one in this case can point a finger at the honourable member and say that he has any personal interest. I have always considered that there is always wisdom where people get together and begin to reason. Even those who when the honourable junior member for St. Andrew was trying to get back into this Chamber felt that he was not suited to be a member must reflect for a bit and say whether that is so. I imagine some honourable members saying that anyone could have brought this Address. I go further and say that I imagine some of them saying that the Government was thinking of it; the Government will be bringing it down shortly etc. When I walked into the House a few weeks ago and saw this Address tabled I looked across at the honourable member and asked myself if it was just politics or a combination of politics, sincerity and experience. I came to the conclusion that it was that combination. I considered that it took a man of some experience to table an Address of this sort. I feel like the honourable senior member for St. John that this is not an Address to be pigeon holed. Often we hear the words of that great poet, "God moves in a mysterious way," and "behind every dark cloud there is a silver lining." Mr. Speaker we have been spared in God's own wisdom. No one knows why. It was pathetic to hear the news of Jamaica. Cast your minds back and think of these 40,000 houses of the working people. Then think of the cost of material in Bridgetown — nails gone from 27 to 53 cents a pound; galvanise from 28 to 51 cents a foot, just to mention a few. It would be impossible for these people to replace their houses.

Dealing with this matter is like dealing with the food of the people. This is nothing for anyone to play politics with. It is asking Government that in view of the high cost of replacing 40,000 houses of the poor if we have a hurricane, Government should carry a comprehensive insurance policy. The questions asked by the honourable junior member for St. Michael about insurance of fishing boats dealt with 1,700 people. But this deals with the people who occupy 40,000 houses, more than half of the population of the island. I am no economist or financier, but I possess a modicum of commonsense. We must provide for rainy days. Just as the Barbadian common man has gained a reputation all over the world for being a man who likes to provide for the rainy day, so the Government should provide to secure him against loss by hurricane. There is no insurance company at present doing business in Barbados which would undertake to insure comprehensively all these small chattel houses. It is true that such arrangements might be made with some company if the Government were to undertake the task. A fund in the Treasury or in the hands of the Government to the tune of £150,000 exists. I think I am correct in saying so. Think of the destruction in Jamaica, and think of what would happen if winds of 100 miles an hour struck Barbados. The working people have no steel or brick houses; they have no protection against the fury of the wind. Even if only 20,000 of these houses were destroyed what would £150,000 do? It would hardly feed the population for a month. Although we do not want on the floor of this House to go into the details of what could be done, I think we have sufficient people of financial and academic ability as well as people of practical ability who, if the Government were to ask them to get together and work on this matter, could work out a solution. Providing some security against hurricane for the occupiers of these houses can be done in many ways as the honourable member has pointed out in his Address. You can either carry insurance yourself or ask a company to come in, or you can set aside a fund for replacement of these houses. But as far as the latter suggestion is concerned I think it would be better business to let someone else carry the risk. Money raised by the Government to be spent on the insurance of this type of houses would not be money frittered away. It would be money spent for the purpose of preparing for the rainy day. It would be good business for the Government instead of merely setting aside a sum for the replacement of these houses to ask, say, Lloyds Underwriters to carry the risk, and let the Government pay the premiums. There will be no difficulty in discovering the sizes of the houses, where they are and the like. The Sanitary Inspectors, for some extra remuneration can easily get all that data as they do their daily work. This Address is not asking the Government to set up an expensive office or to import an official from England and give him 32 clerks. This is as simple as can be. You already have a staff of men in the entire island whose duty it is every month to go to every individual house in the island. Then those people in the Secretariat who take charge of Social Welfare work could well tabulate such statistics and the whole thing could be worked out without any terrific overhead expenses. This is a matter of paramount importance. I have observed, sir, that in recent months the Government has been doing everything to provide in case of storm or hurricane. Only last week we passed money to purchase new radio equipment for the Police. I say that I commend the honourable junior member for St. Andrew for his foresight and selflessness in bringing this Address to the House. I feel that it should have the support

of every serious minded member of the House. This is one of the Addresses which the Government should immediately deal with. There should be no delay. I know that every thinking member of this House would like to see it passed. I have very much pleasure in supporting it in the form in which it stands. I do not have any idea what this insurance will cost. I put it at say £50,000 per annum. The taxation to provide whatever amount it is will fall on the people of this colony. I know it will be said that it will have to come from income tax. That is perfectly right. This expenditure should be borne by everyone who is able to pay, because in the event of a hurricane there is none of us who will not have to pull our pockets to help relatives, friends or someone connected with us. For that reason we may as well make up our minds to pull our pockets now. It will be good policy to pay it now in income tax. If for no other reason than this Address the honourable junior member for St. Andrew will have an honourable seat in the House again next year. You can say what you like about Conservatives; this Address comes from the mind and heart of one who is a human being.

Mr. REECE: Mr. Speaker—This is a matter of vital interest. There will be no community in the West Indies which will be more hard hit than Barbados in the event of a hurricane. There are 200,000 people in this island. Most of them live in chattel houses most of which are situated in St. Michael and Christ Church. These houses are loosely put together. One can understand that the extent of the suffering would be immense if we had a real blow. Imagine in 1949, just as a result of a heavy downpour of rain the loss of money and distress that was caused. In the event of a hurricane the situation is going to be very much worse. Owing to the density of the houses and their closeness together, the loss of property and of life will be terrible. Therefore I say that the subject of this Address is a matter of vital importance to the community. As has been already pointed out, there is no insurance company which will undertake to insure the many chattel houses in this colony unless the Government is at the back of the scheme. If the Government is at the back of the scheme, I have no doubt that any big insurance company would readily undertake to carry the risk so that we will be able to make provision for the distress and loss of life which must be suffered in the event of a hurricane. In Barbados it is true that we do make some provision for hurricanes. We had do not do enough, and these provisions do not really do a provision before us only a week ago. But we go to the root of the matter. It is the duty of the Government to look after the body politic, and in particular, after those members of the body politic who are unable to protect themselves. Now, it is an undisputed fact that most of our people are poor, and their economic conditions are such that if they lost their homes as the result of a hurricane they would be unable to replace them. I am in agreement with the idea of the honourable junior member for St. Andrew. This scheme is going to cost money; there are no two ways about it. We will have to take that money out of the pockets of those who are able to pay. As I have said this scheme is of vital importance. The risk of hurricane is one to which we are exposed every year at this time, and this is a scheme with which we should not be afraid to deal. I have no doubt that in the event of a hurricane the Government will do its utmost to relieve the distress caused as a result. But why wait until that day comes; why not make provision before that? Because it has not been done before is no argument why it should not be done now. Will we wait until a hurricane comes and then find ourselves in the

same position as Jamaica, having to rely on others for help? Would it not be wiser for us to face up to the facts and make provision to meet the difficulties which may come upon us? I too hope that we will never be hit by such a calamity as has hit Jamaica; but we can never tell. It is true that it is a long time since we have had a real blow—as far back as 1898. But one never knows. We may get one even now. And then what position will the Government be in? It will mean that they will have to take money from the Treasury which is there for things that are absolutely essential, and spend it to aid those who are in distress as a result of something over which they have no control. Mr. Speaker I feel that it is best to make provision now. The honourable senior member for the City said quite truly that the people of this country will be willing to pay more taxes to support this insurance scheme. But there is an alternative, Mr. Speaker. Government could carry its own insurance. You could have a hurricane relief fund in the same way that you have a Waterboat Renewal Fund. A sum of money could be contributed to such a fund every year, and in due course it will be built up. But it takes time to build up such a fund, because the amount placed in that fund every year must bear some relation to the risk that it is intended to cover. Therefore any good financier would only place such a sum and no more. So I think that with the example of Jamaica before us, and the possibility of a hurricane in any part of the West Indies at this time of the year, we are faced with the question whether or not the Government should carry insurance, not on its own, but financed by the Government with some insurance company. I think it should be mooted abroad that such a scheme will mean additional taxation of those who are able to pay it; but in view of the protection which it will give to the people I do not think that there is any income tax payer who would not be prepared to contribute to that fund by way of taxation. Any man who thinks of the welfare of the country apart from himself and party is a humanitarian. As one speaker has rightly said, humanity is in the breast of everyone of us. A man is not a humanitarian because he happens to be a member of the Conservative Party. Even among the Socialist ranks you will find such people (Cheers). The honourable junior member for St. Andrew has told you what this party thinks of the Address. We are prepared to do everything to strengthen the hands of the Government when it comes to protecting the property of the people in the event of a hurricane. Again I say sir, that there is no community in the West Indies that is more vulnerable to hurricanes than ours. I have been to most of them, sir, and so have you. In a wind of a hundred or a hundred and twenty miles an hour the chattel houses here would fall like packs of cards. I am not one of those people, Mr. Speaker, who feel that the Head of the Administration and the Executive Committee who are his advisers do not consider the Addresses that are sent to them by this House. I know that every Address which goes from this House is considered on its merits. I know that there are members on the Executive like the honourable senior member for St. Joseph, the honourable senior member for St. Thomas and the honourable senior member for St. Michael who consider with careful attention the subject matter of any Address which comes from this Chamber to the Governor-in-Executive Committee. With that reliance in their faithful discharge of their duties, I know and feel that this Address which is vital to the community

will receive their prompt and careful attention. I am not saying that the wording of the Address is altogether happy, or that it covers all the ideas which will provide a cure for the situation. But I have no doubt that when the Executive considers this Address they will send back to this Chamber a scheme which is fuller, and more ample to deal with any situation that may arise than the scheme which is laid down in this Address. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I say again that I support this Address with the hope that a scheme will be born from it in the near future which will give protection to the people of this country in the event of a calamity such as has taken place in Jamaica.

Mr. MILLER:—Mr. Speaker—I think it is correct to say that there is a good thought behind this Address; but what I am wondering is whether it is practical. If I had the power I would see that every house in this island was insured. But if you examine the figures of a scheme such as this Address asks for, you will be forced to wonder if such a scheme would be possible. It would take about forty million dollars to insure these forty thousand houses. I am thinking in terms of chattel houses. I imagine that the mover of this Address was thinking of houses generally. Think of the Government in the last year or two with a budget of eleven million dollars insuring these houses and having to pay a sum of forty million dollars. When you look at it in that way it does appear ridiculous. But I repeat that there is a good thought aback of the Address. There is a christian thought. But to ask a little Government like this to expend forty million dollars on this scheme does appear to me to be asking too much.

Mr. BRANCKER: Mr. Speaker—There can be no getting away from the fact that the best investment that one can make is insurance. Be it insurance against fire or hurricane, be it a life policy or endowment policy, or whatever form it may take, insurance is unquestionably a good investment. That is why I take it that everyone of us who can afford any form of insurance in respect of our home or homes would not fail to do so. We, as guardians of the public purse and custodians of the public Treasury should now consider whether we should apply in respect of small houses in this island the same principle that we apply in respect of our own homes. I can see no reason why we should not apply the same principle. It has been suggested that the cost of the scheme contained in this Address would be prohibitive. May I suggest, Sir, that at the present stage the Address is dealing with a matter of principle. What we are considering is whether or not we should recommend to the Government an insurance policy covering these small houses. Making that recommendation does not commit us irrevocably to it, so that we will have to ask that it be done if after investigation the cost does prove to be prohibitive. Suppose we approve and accept the principle of having a state car; does that commit us to having one if the cost is prohibitive? I say no. If the cost is prohibitive and we cannot possibly afford it, obviously we will not do so. After the passage of this Address it will be for the Government to institute inquiries as to what such a scheme would cost and then consider the cost in the light of the finances of the island, bearing in mind the possibility of an alternative. It has happened today in respect of the amount we passed for Jamaica. Many people did not regard that as an adequate contribution. The U.K. Government in respect of Jamaica has contributed the meagre sum of \$250,000 from their resources. In times of war it is amazing how millions of dollars

can be provided to carry on the war. We cannot sit back and look forward in the event of a hurricane to getting handsome aid from the outside world in the light of the experience of Jamaica and other places which have suffered. We have to make substantial provision for ourselves. Will we be in a position to do it? I must express agreement that as far as Barbados is concerned, because of the density of the population the damage in the event of a hurricane would be very extensive. It would be more extensive than in any other Caribbean colony. There are some of us who like the foolish virgins go on thinking that there will never be a hurricane in Barbados. We have not had one since 1898, and I think that one is now really due. We have been lucky. Only two weeks ago we sat in this House and the news came through that the one which eventually devastated Jamaica was 100 miles away from Barbados. It was diverted, however, and we did not get the blow. But our time will come, and what will be the position then? I think that we will have to depend largely on aid from outside which I suggest is likely to be given on a slender and meagre scale. We may get many expressions of sympathy; but when it comes to rebuilding houses for the people, on what will we have to depend? I think that it will be well for this matter to be referred to the Government for careful consideration, and to let steps to be taken to find out what such a scheme would cost; and unless the cost is prohibitive I think that the scheme should be implemented. What would surely happen if a hurricane were to hit Barbados is too terrible to contemplate with equanimity. I think that people are dividing themselves into two classes when it comes to this question. One class thinks that we will never get a hurricane, and the other feels that if one comes we will get all the necessary aid from outside. Mr. Speaker, I do not find myself in either of those categories. I heartily support the principle of this Address. It is a question of raising more money, and the honourable junior member for Christ Church has made reference to the fact that we are still not taxing sufficiently those in the higher income brackets. They should not continue to escape. People in certain income brackets come here from overseas in order to enjoy our comparatively low tax rates. People from the U.K. in the income tax categories of the honourable members on my left find our rates very reasonable. It is obvious that no excuse would be needed for us to step up the rates of taxation in respect of those in the higher income brackets to enable us to obtain the necessary money to put such a scheme into operation. Mr. Speaker, We can do nothing and leave things as they are in the expectation that we will never have a hurricane; or if we expect that one is bound to come sooner or later, decide what we must do. And there are three things that we can do. (1) Obtain help from overseas, which help, I suggest is going to be inadequate. (2) Leave it to the Barbados Treasury which cannot shoulder the burden. (3) Prepare for it by means of such an insurance scheme as this Address proposes. We all hope and pray that a hurricane will never come. But a hurricane is inevitable. The principle of this Address is sound, and we shall all support it and allow and encourage the Government to go into the matter and see what can be done, before we find ourselves faced with a terrific loss with which we cannot cope, and in respect of which we will not get sufficient aid from outside to enable us to cope with it.

Mr. SMITH: Mr. Speaker—I do not want to tire the House too long. I think it is in the interest of the entire community, and when one comes to

insurance one has to close one's eyes to the cost, as long as you can find the money. Insurance is one of those things that we do not appreciate enough. We only appreciate it when disaster falls upon us suddenly. Imagine, Mr. Speaker, you go to sleep to-night and everything is alright, and to-morrow all you can see is ashes or dust. I can tell you about that. I have already faced it. Insurance is one of those things that the poor need. Those who are rich are properly insured, but the poor man has nothing at all. Imagine the honourable junior member for St. Andrew bringing in an Address of this sort. If the big fellow suffers a loss he can come into the City next day and get the value back. But what about those in the 16x9 houses? We just had a so-called high wind and rain the other day, and we were left with flood victims, some of whom have not yet got back what they have lost, and as a result there is much quarrelling. If we had a proper insurance scheme for those people there would be no need for that quarrelling. Insurance as I have said, should be enjoyed by every person in this country. I know a man in Joes River whose entire house top blew away. He has got no compensation. Some of these houses are so small that I do not know how the occupiers get into them. Some of them are perched on the top of a hill, and sometimes a rock knocks a house to smithereens. They are in danger daily. Here we have this Address asking the Government to do something to try to safeguard these people. I do not see why something should not be done. Where will we get the money? I think that the honourable senior member for the City has told us. There is a lot of money to be got from those in the higher income brackets. We should take it from them and use it to safeguard the small people. All is well that ends well. I have heard about a storm, but I have never witnessed one. If one ever came to this island, the galvanise alone flying off the roofs would kill everyone that it met. But we will not think about the dead. I am thinking about the living. The dead will be buried. (cheers). As I have said, Sir, I heartily commend the honourable junior member for St. Andrew on bringing this Address.

Mr. MAPP: Mr. Speaker,—I came in a bit late to this debate. But after hearing so many showers of congratulations, I think that before I join in the congratulations I will add a note of diffidence. I hope that the honourable junior member for St. Andrew will tell me just a few things. I wonder if the honourable member has in mind that the Government should carry this insurance perpetually or only for a time.

A VOICE: Perpetually.

Mr. MAPP: If Government will be expected to carry it perpetually, then I think that in view of the many social schemes they have to put forward that it will be better not to insure at all. When it comes to carrying it perpetually can the honourable member tell me where this tremendous sum of money is going to come from? I heard the sum of forty million dollars mentioned. Suppose you paid a quarter million every year. Imagine what will have been paid in five years; then imagine this going on perpetually. I think the House should be serious. Can anyone tell me how this scheme is going to be financed? It would pay the Government better to put up new homes. Mr. SPEAKER, the honourable junior member for St. Andrew since he was elected here has come to the House with some preposterous ideas. Recently he was suggesting that the workers of the Highways and Transport Department should be singled out from all other Government employees and have their houses repaired from the Labour Welfare Fund. Now he has come with this other preposterous and monstrous idea, purely as a vote catching business.

He seems to expect all honourable members to follow him and say that this alone will merit him re-election. This idea is most impracticable. I could not sit here and see it proposed without questioning it. I think that it is obvious how difficult it would be for the Government to put this scheme into operation. Of course, as some honourable members said, the idea sounds good. But the honourable junior member for St. Andrew knows that it is not practicable.

Mr. HAYNES: Mr. Speaker—I am going to exercise my right to reply to the remarks made by the last speaker. If he was a man with any business experience he would not have talked as he did. He talks about starting and stopping a policy. Does he think an insurance policy is like a car? You have to keep an insurance policy going. I just thought that I would try to enlighten the honourable member.

Mr. MAPP: Is the honourable member trying to tell me that I do not realise that his idea is impracticable? Storms do not occur every 25 years in the normal course of events. I was pointing out that it would be better for the Government to decide to give those people who lost their homes in a hurricane new homes than to pay for this policy perpetually.

Mr. HAYNES: I cannot follow what the honourable member is saying. I have happened to have control of a business for some years. From the start of my business. I have had a policy on it because I realise that no one is going to help me put it back if it is destroyed. I did not pay that policy for five years and then say I will not insure again until the next five years. What the honourable member is saying does not contain one atom of commonsense. I am not making any longer speech. The honourable member is merely trying to throw cold water on my Address, but I do not think that he will succeed.

Mr. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker—It is only the position taken up by the honourable junior member for St. Thomas—which as a rule we do not take very seriously—which brought me to my feet. By and large, this scheme is not as impracticable as he would like to make it appear. From what I can gather, the idea of the introducer of the Address is that each of these houses should be insured for a sum not exceeding \$500.00. If you insure 40,000 houses at \$500.00 each, and the cost I understand would be \$3.00 on £100, it will mean that the total amount you would be called upon to pay per annum would be £25,000. In 1940 the Government brought down a Reserve Fund Loan Act which created a special reserve fund of £100,000 for this especial purpose. The purpose of the fund was that resort might be made to it in the event of the occurrence of a calamity which might cause serious damage and depletion of the public Treasury. With the fear that this island might again be visited by disaster, the Government has been paying attention to increasing the amount allocated to this fund. In the memorandum to the Estimates for this year we were told that provision had been made for an initial contribution of \$150,000 in order to augment this special reserve fund. In addition to providing for a major calamity we were told there was urgent need to have this reserve as a Revenue Equalisation Fund so as to avoid, as far as possible, any reduction of the public services in bad years. If you have a hurricane, Mr. Speaker, which caused considerable damage, in order to prevent any depletion in the Public Works for that year, you would have this Reserve Fund in order to offset any extraordinary damage which might occur, and to enable Government to meet it. This year we allocated \$150,000. I do not know whether the Govern-

ment proposes to allocate a similar amount every year. Now the implementation of the Address introduced by the honourable junior member for St. Andrew would take \$120,000 a year. It does appear sounder to expend \$120,000 on insurance when you do not know which year calamity might occur, than merely to put \$150,000 a year to a fund which would take over 30 years to accumulate to the average amount needed to offset the damage which you might suffer in any one year as the result of a hurricane. And the moment you take out this policy you will be guaranteeing yourself to the extent of \$20,000,000. Anyone can see that a scheme of this sort, in its actual operation, will need detailed work. But it is easily practicable. It is true that some of these 40,000 houses may be owned by people who could insure them. But looking at the matter from a general point of view, I do not think that it is as impracticable as I myself was first inclined to believe. After some of the speeches made earlier some of us

who may have doubted the practicality of the scheme should have realised that it is more practicable than it appears to be at first sight.

Mr. SPEAKER: The question is that this Address do now pass. Honourable members in favour will they please say "aye" and those against will they please say "no". I think the "ayes" have it. I will ask the honourable junior member for St. Andrew to present the Address to His Excellency the Governor.

ADJOURNMENT

Dr. CUMMINS: Mr. Speaker,—I would suggest that the Order Paper remain as it is. I beg to move that the House do now adjourn until this day week at 3 p.m.

Mr. COX: I beg to second that.

The motion having been put and carried *nem. con.* Mr. Speaker adjourned the House accordingly