

THE

House of Assembly Debates

(OFFICIAL REPORT)

SESSION 1953—54

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, 3rd November, 1953.

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

Present:

His Honour, Mr. K. N. R. HUSBANDS (*Speaker*): Dr. H. G. H. CUMMINS, M.D., C.M., His Honour Mr. A. E. S. LEWIS (*Deputy Speaker*), Mr. M. E. COX, Mr. L. E. SMITH (*Chairman of Committees*), Mr. F. L. WALCOTT, Mr. R. G. MAPP, Mr. F. C. GODDARD, Mr. F. E. MILLER, Mr. J. A. HAYNES, B.A., Mr. E. ST. A. HOLDER, Mr. V. B. VAUGHAN and Mr. C. E. TALMA.

Prayers were read.

Mrs. BOURNE entered the House and took her seat.

MINUTES

The Minutes of the meetings of the 8th, 13th and 20th October, 1953, having been circulated, were taken as read and confirmed.

DOCUMENTS

Mr. SPEAKER: I have the honour to inform the House that I have received the Statement of Revenue and Expenditure of the Highway Commissioners of the parish of St. James for the half-year ended 30th September, 1953;

Also, a Statement of Revenue and Expenditure of the Highway Commissioners of the parish of St. Philip for the half-year ended 30th September, 1953.

Also, a Statement of Revenue and Expenditure of the Highway Commissioners of the parish of St. Philip in connection with tenantry roads for the half-year ended 30th September, 1953;

PAPERS LAID

Dr. CUMMINS: Mr. Speaker.—On behalf of the honourable senior member for St. Joseph, I beg to lay Message No. 25/1953 dated the 3rd November, 1953, from His Excellency the Governor to the Honourable the House of Assembly forwarding for the considera-

tion of the Honourable House proposals for the introduction of Ministerial Status. (Cheers).

Dr. CUMMINS: Also on behalf of the honourable senior member for St. Joseph, I beg to lay a Report of the Auditor General on the audit of accounts of the Colony for the year 1950-51 with comments by the Auditor General.

On behalf of myself, I beg to lay a Report on the treatment of Offenders for the year, 1952.

Mr. M. E. COX: Mr. Speaker,— I beg to lay a Report of the Harbour and Shipping Departments for the year 1952.

PETITIONS

Mr. SMITH: I beg to give notice of a Petition from the Highways Commissioners of the parish of St. Joseph praying the House to pass a Bill to authorise them to raise a loan for the purpose of purchasing a new Motor Road Roller and a new Stone Crushing Plant for the use of the said parish.

Mr. TALMA: I beg to give notice of a Petition from the Vestry of the parish of Christ Church praying the House to pass a Bill to take into account the five years Mr. Ronald Eversley served as Assessor for the parish of Christ Church.

GOVERNMENT NOTICES

Government Notices were given as follows:—

Mr. M. E. COX: Bill intituled an Act to amend the Waterworks Act, 1895.

Dr. CUMMINS: Resolution to place the sum of Four Hundred and Eighty Dollars at the disposal of the Governor-in-Executive Committee to supplement the Estimates, 1953-54, Part I—Current, as shown in the Supplementary Estimate, 1953-54, No. 19, which forms the Schedule to this Resolution.

This resolution, Sir, should have been included in the last resolution which was dealt with last Tuesday but on account of an oversight, it was not included. It concerns with the Government of Jamaica which has extended an invitation to the Government of Barbados to send a Cadet from the Cadet Corps of the Barbados Regiment to that colony to represent Barbados on the occasion of the visit of Her Majesty the Queen. This Government has been asked to pay transportation cost and other things but the Cadet will be a guest of the Army and Air Cadet Force, Jamaica, during his stay in that Colony.

It is therefore my intention to move the suspension of Rules 88 and 89 in order to deal with this resolution.

Mr. ALLDER entered the House and took his seat.

PRIVATE MEMBER'S BUSINESS

Mr. MAPP: I beg to give notice of the following Address:—

*The House of Assembly
To
His Excellency the Governor*

The House deeply deplore the Order made by the Governor-in-Council of the colony of Trinidad titled "The Immigration (Restriction) (Classes of Undesirable Immigrants) Order, 1953, under which classes of persons not being persons belonging to the colony of Trinidad are deemed in economic grounds to be undesirable immigrants, and the intention of which is to tighten up existing restrictions on immigration into Trinidad.

The House view this action as inimical to the best interests of the West Indies as a whole. It strikes a severe blow at the cause of West Indian Federation and is contrary to the spirit shown and the principles agreed upon at the recent London Conference on West Indian Federation.

The House ask Your Excellency to forward copies of this address to the Government of Trinidad and to Her Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for the Colonies.

Mr. TALMA: I beg to give notice of a Bill to authorise the Vestry of Christ Church to take into account the five years Mr. R. Eversley served as Assessor for the parish of Christ Church.

Mr. SMITH: I beg to give notice of a Bill to authorise the Highways Commissioners of the parish of St. Joseph to raise a loan for the purpose of purchasing a new Motor Road Roller and a new Stone Crushing Plant for the use of the said parish.

Mr. TALMA: I beg to give notice of a Bill intituled an Act to amend the Solicitors' Act, 1896.

BILLS READ A FIRST TIME

On the motion of Mr. Cox, seconded by Dr. CUMMINS, the Bill intituled an Act to amend the Waterworks Act, 1895, was read a first time.

On the motion of Mr. TALMA, seconded by Mr. HOLDER, the Bill to authorise the Vestry of the parish of Christ Church to take into account the five years Mr. R. Eversley served as Assessor for the parish was read a first time.

On the motion of Mr. TALMA, seconded by Mr. HOLDER, the Bill to amend the Solicitor's Act, 1896 was read a first time.

On the motion of Mr. SMITH, seconded by Mrs. BOURNE, the Bill to authorise the Highways Commissioners of the parish of St. Joseph to raise a loan for the purpose of purchasing a new Motor Road Roller and a new Stone Crushing Plant for the use of the said parish was read a first time.

SUSPENSION OF RULES 88 AND 89

Dr. CUMMINS: I beg to move that Rules 88 and 89 be now suspended in order to deal with the resolution of which notice has just been given.

Mr. Cox seconded the motion which was agreed to.

POSTPONEMENT OF ORDERS NOS. 1 and 2

Dr. CUMMINS: Mr. Speaker, I am asking leave that Orders Nos. 1 and 2 be postponed and Order No. 3 be taken as the first Order of the Day.

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

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

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

Mr. Cox seconded the motion which was agreed to.

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

Mr. WILLIAMS came into the Committee and took his seat.

RESOLUTION TO SEND CADET TO JAMAICA

Dr. CUMMINS: Mr. Chairman, This is a Resolution for \$480 to be granted from the Public Treasury and placed at the disposal of the Governor-in-Executive Committee to supplement the Estimates, 1953-54, Part I—Current, as shown in the Schedule to this Resolution. As I have said earlier, it is to provide passage and other things for a Cadet from the Cadet Corps of this colony to represent Barbados at Jamaica on the occasion of the visit of Her Majesty the Queen to that colony. The Officer commanding the Army and Air Force Cadet Force, Jamaica, has sent the invitation and the Cadet will be a guest of that Force from the 24th of this month until the 7th December following. I beg to move that the Resolution do now pass.

Mr. COX: I beg to second that.

Mr. LEWIS: Mr. Chairman, I would like to know how long ago this invitation was received, because I am not aware that it was made known to the public. I do think it would be a good idea if this invitation was made known to the public when it came. I do not think a public statement has been made about it but I think it is one of those things which should be made public. It should have been made public long before this House discussed it. What I do not understand is why should there be only this restricted military display for the occasion. Why should you not be able to send civil and military representation? Why has representation from the Police Force been left out? Why, too, has there been no invitation for representation from the Boys' Scouts and Girls' Guides, the Church Lads' and Girls' Brigade, and probably a member from the Barbados Youth Movement? It seems to me that if it should be extended to the military institution that it should be extended to these other organisations as well. This seems very meagre indeed.

Mr. GODDARD: I have not risen to oppose the Resolution, but I thought that the honourable mover of this Resolution would have given us some reason for the lateness of it. Sir, it is these sort of resolutions which arrive to this Chamber late that occupies us Tuesday after Tuesday. It is these sort of things that holds this Chamber up Tuesday after Tuesday. Do tell us what prevented this Resolution from being dealt with last Tuesday. What is the reason? Is it the fault of a Department of Government? If it is, we will continue to have this state of affairs as long as we do not take notice of this. If no action is taken, these Departments will continue to hold up these things and members of this House will be called on to meet Tuesday after Tuesday.

This Resolution is the result of an invitation sent from the Officer commanding the Army and Air Cadet Force of Jamaica to send a Cadet from this colony there on the occasion of the visit of Her Majesty the Queen. It is not in our position to send Boys' Scouts, Girls' Guides or any other representative as the honourable junior member for the City enquired if those parties were not invited.

What I do want to know is when this invitation was received and what really caused us from not discussing it when we dealt with a similar resolution last week.

Mr. VAUGHAN: Sir, Although the amount in this Resolution is small, I am going to oppose it on principle. I have not opposed the sending of the two delegates from the Legislature to represent Barbados but I am going to oppose this because I do not see the necessity for it. There must be a limit to this expenditure. We have voted money to send two delegates to represent Barbados and by that we have shown our full responsibility in this matter. I do not see any necessity for sending any cadet. It would only be a waste of public funds and one which we can ill afford to do. Sometime ago, it was thought hard to spend £50 for the upkeep of the Maternity Hospital but we can now pick up \$480 to pay for representation by a member of the Cadet Corps on the occasion of the visit of Her Majesty the Queen to Jamaica although the island is represented already. I am thoroughly opposed to it; I think it is absolutely unnecessary. We have already provided to send delegates. I am not opposed to that; I think that is quite enough. I am not reflecting or criticising what we have done but I do not see the necessity for this additional sum to send any cadet to Jamaica on the occasion.

Dr. CUMMINS: Mr. Chairman, the information which the honourables junior members for Christ Church and the City ask for is as follows:—The letter of invitation from the Officer Commanding the Army and Air Cadet Force, Jamaica, is dated 17th September and apparently, the letter was sent to the Barbados Regiment and received there on the 24th September. It reached the Secretariat on the 7th October and the Executive Committee on the 20th October. Those are the dates on which it reached the different departments and the Executive Committee and honourable members can apportion the blame where they feel it ought to be laid.

Mr. LEWIS: I thank the honourable member for letting us know the dates when this letter of invitation reached the various departments concerned although I do not know where we should place the blame. However, it is not too late for the money to be voted. What I am at a loss to understand is why the invitation was not made public. Is it a military secret because the person invited is a cadet? Why should not the public have been informed as soon as the invitation reached the island? Why the Government or the military did not make it known? As I have said, the invitation should have received some publicity in this island before. The money is not being voted too late for the purpose but certainly this House should have known something about it before as well as members of the public. Some people would probably have been able to ask: who is paying for the cadet and questions similar to that.

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

RESOLUTION TO PROVIDE FOR TWO HOUSE OFFICERS, GENERAL HOSPITAL.

Dr. CUMMINS: Mr. Chairman, This next resolution is for \$2,727 to be granted from the Public

Treasury and placed at the disposal of the Governor-in-Executive Committee to supplement the Estimates 1953-54, Part I, Current, as shown in the Schedule to the resolution. Honourable members will remember that a few weeks ago this House passed an amendment to the Medical Registration Act, 1911, so as to permit two medical graduates before they are registered to serve their period of internship at the Barbados General Hospital. This has been necessary in consequence of the extension of the period for medical status in the United Kingdom to six years. It was formerly five years, but the Medical Register demands that an additional year after, by a medical graduate qualifying, must be spent in a hospital and as honourable members will remember, the Barbados General Hospital has been chosen as one of those colonial hospitals where this pre-registration period may be spent. This resolution is to pay for the salaries and the passages of the two officers who may come to do their period of internship at the Barbados General Hospital. As can be seen the salaries fixed to the creation of the two posts of House Officer at the General Hospital are \$1,680 per annum. Their passages will also be paid outwards from the United Kingdom. This resolution makes provision for the sum of \$1,680 as salary of the two officers for the remainder of the financial year and \$1,047 for the payment of their passages outwards from the United Kingdom. I think honourable members are conversant with matters at the General Hospital and these things and I beg to move that this resolution do now pass.

Mr. COX: I beg to second that.

Mr. LEWIS: Mr. Chairman, Honourable members will remember when we were discussing this question a few weeks ago, I asked the honourable junior member for St. Thomas what were the terms under which these House Officers would be coming out to the colonies, especially to Barbados. I wanted to know what were the terms of conditions and employment and whether or not we would have to provide them with furnished quarters. In short, I wanted to know if this island would have to provide them with everything in addition to allowing them to qualify. Of course, the \$140 per month which we propose to pay them does not seem to me to be a lot of money.

The next thing I would like to know something about is whether these House Officers will be given a medical title. Is the designation "House Officer" given only to these medical graduates coming to Barbados or will they be given that designation outside of Barbados also? I am wondering whether they could be called "House Medical Officers" whatever that may mean. Would this designation to be given them one of which they would be proud to have?

However, I would like to know what are the further terms and conditions that will be given these House Officers because while it may be quite right that we give them some training and probably they may be able to give some assistance, we may later be told: "After all, it was only your ignorance in not being able to perceive that you must have them on the spot; therefore they must have a house and servants and other allowances. You can not expect them to pay for that." It is for this reason that I would like to know what is the total liability now.

Mr. GODDARD: While the subject matter is nothing new to honourable members, the paying of these House Officers a salary and their passages from the United Kingdom is something new; we are breaking new ground in that respect. What I would like to ask is: How many of these house officers are to be accommodated at the General Hospital? Would the number fluctuate? What is the maximum we are allowed to carry? I would like to know these things

for future reference as I expect that more than these two will be applying from time to time. I would also like to know if provision of residences is made for them inside of the General Hospital or across the road. The reason why I ask that is because I see trees are being cut down on the Government property of Stockton across the road. Are those trees being cut down in preparation for the building of staff quarters? Let us have some indication why those trees at Stockton are being cut down and the place being cleared. I do know that we have been told previously that flats would be built over there for the accommodation of the medical staff of the General Hospital. Could not the bringing in of this resolution be taken as an opportunity to inform us of any recent decision of the Hospital Board?

Dr. CUMMINS: Sir, I would like to find out if the honourables junior members for Christ Church and the City were present on the date when this House considered the amendment to the Medical Registration Act. They asked the same information then, if I remember correctly and they got it. (A VOICE: No. We were not told that.) Nevertheless, I will repeat what I said then. These medical graduates who will be coming here as House Officers are not medical officers because they cannot be registered until they have completed at least a year of internship at an approved hospital. You cannot therefore term them as medical officers until they have completed that year of internship. Secondly, the salary for those officers is fixed at either \$1,200 without cost of living allowance but plus board and lodging and free laundry, or \$1,680 without cost of living allowance and without board and lodging. The latter is the one which they will get as can be seen from the schedule to the resolution. For the sake of uniformity, this salary has been adopted throughout the West Indies. As can be seen also from the schedule, their passages will be paid from the United Kingdom to the colony. They are also entitled to two weeks' leave with pay at the end of each six months. As to the number, we will only be entitled to take two at a time at the General Hospital. They cannot come in any greater number because the licensing bodies have apportioned them to each hospital and the Barbados General Hospital is only entitled to carry two; hence, provision is made for the salaries and passages of two.

As far as the cutting down of trees at Stockton, I think the honourable junior member for Christ Church if he is not a member of the St. Michael Sanitary Commissioners is a member of the Christ Church Sanitary Commissioners and in that position he should know that in the rainy season attention is being paid to the clearing of underbrush and trees in order to prevent the breeding of mosquitoes as much as possible. I am surprised to hear that honourable member asking such a trivial question. However, there are other purposes for which it is cleared and for which this House will know later on.

Mr. CRAWFORD came into the Committee and took his seat.

Mr. LEWIS: Mr. Chairman, I would be the first to offer apology if the honourable junior member for St. Thomas had given that information on the last occasion but that has not been the case. Even the information given now that there is an alternative salary should have been noted in the addendum. I do believe that the honourable member intended to give on the last occasion the information he has now given but forgot to do so. However, with reference to the salary we will have to pay these House Officers as well as their passages outwards from the United Kingdom, the great difficulty about the matter is that we will very likely get good value for our money

although the passages may be more than two outwards every year.

(A Voice): We may not get two officers every year.

Mr. LEWIS: I understand that this colony may not get two House Officers every year. Be that as it may, I think when we get them, we may just as well be contented with them as we are with the medical officers which we get coming out here.

Mr. WILLIAMS: I do know that when the honourable introducer of this resolution was introducing a similar matter as this some time ago, he did explain that the whole position with regard to qualifying for the medical profession in the United Kingdom had been altered in order to make provision for the additional year of internship of the graduate at a recognised hospital. I do know that position had been reached on the continent, in Canada and in the United States long ago. We have this departure here today in view of the fact that we are now getting two of these medical graduates to serve their period of internship at the General Hospital. Unhappily for them, they will not be able to register as medical practitioners until they have served this period of internship. I think a resolution such as this can only help alleviate the conditions prevailing at the Barbados General Hospital and as such, I think members of any political party should vote for it.

However, I cannot see this resolution, by what it purports to do, would be of any help to the General Hospital if two English medical graduates are sent to serve their period of internship here, because it is human nature to want the best for oneself, and presumably, if an English medical graduate studied at Guy's Hospital, unless he was actually compelled to serve his period of internship at our General Hospital, even although he would be getting \$140 per month, he would rather spend his internship at a hospital in the United Kingdom. This scheme will however help the West Indian medical graduate greatly from the point of view of his probably running short of money while completing his study in the United Kingdom and in that position he can return to the West Indies and while serving his period of internship get a little money. Even with the first class passage given to the young English medical graduate who may have a taste for adventure, I do not feel many of them would like to serve their period of internship other than in the United Kingdom. On the other hand, I think that many West Indians who are just above the average in financial position would prefer to spend their period of internship in an English hospital so as to get the wideness of the tuition which would be given them there, the opportunity and all that goes with it. That is how this resolution strikes me.

I am going to vote for it because it might be of some use to a West Indian or a Barbadian who may want to come here and do his period of internship probably through straightened circumstances. I sincerely hope that some good will come from it.

Mr. BRYAN came into the Committee and took his seat.

Mr. ALLDER: Mr. Chairman, We are always ready to accept every new scheme which is suggested to us and very often after we have accepted such schemes we find out that they are not as well as we thought at first. Personally, I do not see any benefits to be derived from this scheme at the General Hospital, particularly from the point of view of the patients who may go there. It may be of some benefit to the medical graduate. All it seems to me is that this change which has been brought about by the various universities in England was

done merely to get certain hospitals in the colonies to take on some of the responsibility which those universities had been carrying. I would be quite willing to give my support to the additions to the existing staff at the General Hospital if the two medical graduates were qualified medical men capable of carrying out medical practice at the institution to the people who may go there. This scheme is just an experiment and I hope it will not be dangerous to the people who may go there for treatment. I am fearful that after those medical graduates come here and are made House Officers that they may be given responsibilities which they will not be capable of carrying out. I can very well imagine one of these House Officers will be put in charge of the Casualty Department at the Hospital and his will be the experience of receiving and attending to patients for the first time. I can well appreciate and I think all honourable members also appreciate that that department calls for the giving of careful examination and diagnosis. Because of that I am afraid that if these House Officers are left alone to do things which more experienced medical officers should be doing, the ultimate result would be that they would become a liability not only to the institution but to the colony as well.

I am saying that if we are to increase the medical staff at the General Hospital, I would prefer to have an addition of two qualified medical practitioners and to give them a salary which is considered adequate for doctors in the medical profession. What we are doing now is just only taking a chance and accepting something which I feel the medical centres in London should be carrying on themselves. I do not see any benefit whatsoever from it. It is just an experiment which might well result in chaos. I am very scared of this scheme and I hope my feeling would be somewhat alleviated after these medical graduates come here and take up their positions.

Mr. BARROW came into the Committee and took his seat.

Dr. CUMMINS : Mr. Chairman, I just want to say that it is amusing to sit down and hear the vapourings of some minds who are ignorant of things on which they are talking. The honourable senior member for St. John has just treated this Committee to a distortion and what his fears will be because of the proposed coming of these two gentlemen to the General Hospital.

First of all, let me again tell this House that this pre-registration period of internship of medical graduates is now being demanded by all the licensing bodies in Great Britain. Before this, a medical student could qualify after a period of five years when he would get his degree and be registered, and thousands of such medical practitioners immediately after they had been registered, have come to this island and practised at the General Hospital. I do not know that we had when such medical practitioners were appointed here all the chaos which the honourable member fears. All that has happened is that the licensing bodies are saying that before a medical graduate can be registered to qualify him to practice, he must go to some registered medical hospital which has been approved by those bodies and serve a year of internship. If that were not so, the medical graduate would pay his registration fee then and come down as a medical practitioner. Mr. Chairman, for all these years, that type of medical practitioner has come to this island and has gone in the Casualty and all over the General Hospital and done their work. I see nothing to fear about it at all.

In answer to the honourable junior member for St. Lucy when he said that some of our sons would rather stay over in London hospitals and get their further training, I would like to tell him that our medical students who are now trained at the University College of the West Indies will have to do this period of internship also.

Mr. WILLIAMS : Sir, when I made my remarks, what I was envisaging was the position within the set-up of the scheme with regard to the medical training which a medical graduate would receive, and that is the reason why I said that the period of internship in approved West Indian Hospitals would benefit the West Indian, though I did not see it benefitting the English graduate. I had that in mind when I spoke of the benefit which it would be to medical graduates of the West Indian University.

Mr. ALLDER : Mr. Chairman, I feel that my vapourings as far as this matter under discussion is concerned are justified, and often, minds ignorant of certain things are justified in dealing with them because their fear can point to something worthwhile. It is known in the history of medical science and in this island that experienced medical practitioners of long years standing have caused untimely deaths to some of their patients and that is why I fear the giving to the medical graduates who may be interned here of responsibilities which matured medical officers should handle themselves. The honourable junior member for St. Thomas likes all honourable members to accept everything he says; he does not like you to question anything he says.

Mr. LEWIS : I rise on a point of order. Mr. Chairman, I think the time when objection should have been raised against these medical graduates serving their period of internship at the General Hospital was when the Medical Registration Act was being amended. I do not think objection should be raised now that we have agreed to take them and are providing money to bring them here and pay them a salary.

Mr. ALLDER : Sir, I am not criticising the principle of the appointments. All I am doing is making the suggestion that care should be taken when these medical graduates come here to see how they perform their duties and to see that they are not saddled with responsibilities which should be delegated to an experienced medical practitioner. Honourable members are aware that many cases have been diagnosed wrong by even experienced medical practitioners and I remember very well the honourable junior member for the City on several occasions making statements of some faulty attendance of medical officers at the General Hospital and other institutions in the island. A case comes back to my mind of some lady radiographer of whom it was stated that she showed a certain amount of irresponsibility which patients paid for by an increase of physical suffering. I think that it is very timely that we make sure that these youngsters whoever they might be, that may be instituted at the General Hospital, are not given more than they really can do.

Mr. TALMA : The honourable member who has just sat down missed the point. As I understand it, these House Officers will be fully qualified on paper. In other words, they would be occupying a position which they would have normally taken up as Medical Officers at the General Hospital had they not been called upon to serve this period of internship. In other words, they would be already certificated if they were not called upon to

serve this period of internship. This question of being apprehensive does not arise because in the past men of similar stamp and status have acted as doctors at the General Hospital. They are doctors in the true sense of the word but who are now called upon by regulations to spend this year of internship. There is no question of fear. The honourable senior member for St. John may be trying to show that he is taking an interest in the public in this respect but the point which he is trying to make out does not arise.

The question that the 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 and Mr. Speaker resumed the Chair and reported the passing of two Resolutions in Committee.

On separate motions of Dr. Cummins, seconded by Mr. Cox in each case, the Resolutions were read a first and second time and agreed to.

LEAVE TO TAKE ORDER NO. 5.

Dr. CUMMINS: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave that Order No. 5 be now taken as the next Order of the Day.

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

RESOLUTION TO APPROVE CIVIL ESTABLISHMENT (LEAVE PASSAGES) No. 2 ORDER, 1953.

On the Order being called:—

Resolved that the House of Assembly approve the Order entitled "The Civil Establishment (Leave Passages) (Amendment) No. 2 Order, 1953," made by the Governor-in-Executive Committee on the 22nd day of October, 1953, under the provisions of Section 3 of the Civil Establishment Act, 1949, and that the Legislative Council be invited to concur herein and, if concurred in,

Resolved that His Excellency the Governor be asked to assent and take the necessary steps to give effect to this Resolution.

Dr. CUMMINS: This, Sir, is a Resolution which is asking this House to give approval to certain amendments to the Leave Passages Order. The amendments have arisen as a result of the Dos Santos Report causing certain categories of Civil Servants to have their salaries increased. Honourable members will remember that previously the minimum salary for a Civil Servant to qualify for leave passage was \$2,160 per annum but owing to increase in salaries as has been mentioned, certain other categories of Civil Servants have been increased to \$2,160 per annum. If this Leave Passages Order is not amended, naturally, that category of Civil Servant who has been given such increase will qualify for leave passage. For this reason, this Resolution seeks to approve an amendment to the Leave Passage Order so as to make its provision applicable to officers in receipt of a basic salary of not less than \$2,280 per annum.

On the other hand, there are still certain categories of officers who by long years of service should benefit by the provisions of this Order of Leave Passages, but would not be able to do so because their salaries have not been increased. There are amendments therefore to make it applicable to those officers. They are set out as follows:—

- (a) in the case of an Assistant Secretary or school teacher (honours graduate), basic salary of not less than \$2,160 per annum;

- (b) in the case of a person appointed to the post Vicar of the Anglican Church or Master of Water Boats prior to the date of the making of this Order, basic salary of not less than \$2,160 per annum.

Now Sir, I know that honourable members will feel perhaps as I do feel, that Vicars of the Anglican Church should not share in the provisions of this Leave Passages Order but the fact remains that they still draw their salary from the Treasury, and as long as they get their salary from the Treasury, they will have to be treated as Civil Servants for certain benefits although they themselves will tell you that they are not Civil Servants. I do hope that the day is not far off when these clergymen will cease drawing their salary from the Treasury. When that day comes they will have to provide leave passages and the other things for themselves.

I will repeat that the Government has thought it wise to amend this Leave Passage Order through the increase of salaries paid to certain officers of the Civil Establishment as a result of the implementations of the Dos Santos Report and because it is felt other officers who formerly qualified but have not got any increase of salary should still share in this benefit. I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

Mr. COX: I second this resolution though with some reluctance, and largely because of one of the reasons given by the honourable mover of the Resolution. While as a matter of principle and because it is true that on account of Vicars drawing salaries from the Treasury, they are Civil Servants and should qualify for leave passages, I do not remember ever regretting anything which I have done as I regret having to support this resolution on account of the inclusion of Vicars. I will say no more than I hope in the near future a Bill will come down to this House having as its objects the disestablishment of the Anglican Church.

Mr. ALLDER: Sir, for once, I have been given the opportunity of appreciating everything which the honourable senior member for St. Michael has said. I hope he will give this Honourable Chamber several such similar opportunities of his convictions. I am going to say that from the day Leave Passage Order was brought up in this Chamber, I thought it was unnecessary and something which this community would not be able to maintain. I think that the cause for the introduction of leave passages has passed already. It was stated that there was some difficulty in getting specialists to accept appointments here without certain attractions,—leave passage being one of them—but I am sure that every officer whom you can consider as a specialist can be counted on the fingers of both hands and to extend this Order to include all and sundry officers in the Civil Establishment is totally unnecessary. More than that, it is biting off more than you can chew.

I am hoping, Sir, to see a definite turn about by this Government on this question of Leave Passages. It not only involves the colony to expenditure of large sums to pay for the benefits of the officer and his immediate relatives but it also involves the colony by the increased expenditure which it has to pay out to the persons who have to be employed to fill the positions of those officers who are given leave. I always believe in doing things when they are of necessity; I do not believe in following blindly what other countries are doing. I hope the statement made by the honourable senior member of for St. Michael will be upheld not only by himself but by the other members of the Executive and in

the not distant future some thing more practicable will be done in this matter.

Mr. E. D. MOTTLEY entered the House and took his seat.

Mr. CRAWFORD: Sir, the honourable introducer of this Order has appealed to honourable members to give it their approval and the honourable seconder of the motion has given a sort of qualified support to the Order itself.

Mr. COX: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, I never did that at all. I merely dealt with priests benefitting from the Order. I am not opposed to Leave Passages. I said that I could not see the justification of giving priests leave passages.

Mr. CRAWFORD: The honourable member did not allow me to complete my statement. I was going to say that the honourable seconder of the Resolution had given a sort of qualified support to this Order itself in so far as certain of its applications are concerned. Indeed, although strictly speaking, the salaries which these ministers of the Anglican Church draw from the Treasury put them in the category of Government Employees who are entitled to leave passages under the existing legislation, it seems to me no reason why in view of the special conditions which priests are employed that they should not be excluded from the benefits of the Leave Passage Regulations. These priests are given certain conditions of service that are denied other members of the Government Service and it seems to me that a case could have been made out to exclude these Vicars of the Anglican Church rather than including them in this Order.

Sir, it seems to me that this Order is following the well-established pattern of legislation of the present Government where one week we come in here and literally milk the taxpayers as dry as we can and the following week we squander what we milked the week before. In addition to amending the Civil Establishment Order under which leave passages are paid, we are now including a number of Civil Servants such as Assistant Secretaries and School Teachers of a specified basic salary, a person holding the office of Vicar of the Anglican Church and the Master of the Water Boats. Now Sir, what next? In the beginning, the idea was that we had to grant these special salaries and special conditions of service to a few highly technical or professional officers and a few others whom you could not easily find in the market to fill vacant posts. We were told that unless we pay abnormally high salaries and give all sorts of concessions we will not get these few special posts filled. Now that we have got these posts filled we have been asked to give certain other officers these special conditions of service and every week we are going further down the line until today we are called on to give the Vicar of the Anglican Church and the Master of Water Boats and others this benefit of leave passage. It has been argued, and it is true, that certain other West Indian colonies pay leave passages but that argument has been already answered on the floor of this Chamber. We are at the point where we are paying Government servants in comparable posts between Barbados and British Guiana higher salaries than that colony though this is a much smaller colony, but failing to provide the social and other economic services which the other colonies are providing for their people. Can we sit here today and say with equanimity that the Master of the Water Boats and Vicars of the Anglican Church should be given leave passages but our Old Age Pensioners should still receive five shillings per week? Trinidad pays leave passages too. Surely that colony

can afford to pay leave passages, but it pays its Old Age Pensioners seven shillings per week and from next year they will be getting nine shillings per week. We cannot afford to pay our Old Pensioners more than five shillings per week but we can afford to extend leave passages to include these new people in the Order. There are many other instances which one can cite to prove this point. It may be contended that in some respects we are not doing more than other colonies are doing when we pay leave passages but it can also be said that in our doing so, we are leaving undone a number of vital social services.

In my time in this Chamber, I have fought for a lot of causes which appeared to be lost causes. It is true that sometimes I have had to wait for years for the Government of this country and the public in general to endorse some of those suggestions which I had made or the alterations which I had proposed, but I can say that eventually they were implemented. For instance, when we increased the number of Barbados Scholarships to five, I warned that although big countries could afford to do so, this colony could not afford so many, especially in view of the fact that there was no desire on the part of the scholarship winners to serve the colony after he had qualified in the particular line of study which he took. I said so about two or three years ago. Now I see the public and the Press are endorsing this view and in time I imagine that their endorsement would take a more practicable turn. There are many other instances I can quote in support of my argument that many things which I put forward although not acted upon at the time were taken up with alacrity sometime in the future. I want to say today that we are going to be compelled in the very near future to revise this question of leave passages. As a matter of fact, not only in Barbados, but many of the islands which are paying it now. In Trinidad, British Guiana and even Jamaica, it is feared that they cannot continue to pay it. As a matter of fact, in the last year or so, there has been a rush on the part of the Civil Servant who has qualified for leave passage to take advantage of the offer as soon as it is due owing to his fear that this benefit would be shortly withdrawn. It has also another aspect to it. In a number of West Indian Islands the benefit of leave passages has put many officers who have qualified for it in a lot of trouble. Consider an officer getting \$2,160 per annum or \$180 per month with probably a wife and children and having to pay house rent. What money has he got left after paying for those things to finance a tour to Europe even although he is given his passage? When we give him leave passage we put him in a lot of trouble. In Trinidad, those officers are borrowing money to finance their tour; some sell their car and come back and borrow money from the Government to buy another car. Some of these officers do all sorts of things merely to take advantage of this tempting offer which you are giving them.

Dr. CUMMINS: On a point of Order, Mr. Speaker. Is the honourable member in order? It seems to me that the hon. member's argument is against the principle of Leave Passage which this House has already adopted. Should the honourable member now be arguing against the principle of Leave Passage? This resolution has nothing to do with the principle of granting Leave Passages; it is just making amendments to the principal Order.

Mr. BRANCKER entered the House and took his seat.

Mr. SPEAKER: The amendments to the Leave Passages Order qualify more people to benefit from it. I have been listening to his arguments carefully and I think his arguments are on the right course.

Mr. CRAWFORD: Sir, I am particularly careful to see that I do not overstep my bounds. The amendments to the principal Order seek to include Assistant Secretaries, School Teachers of a certain basic salary and Vicars of the Anglican Church. These people were not included before and I am saying rather than extend the principle downwards we should be curtailing it. When I was interrupted, I was endeavouring to point out that the officer getting \$180 per month with a family to support, given the benefits of leave passage, could only involve him in financial trouble in order to take advantage of it. Sir, if we do not look sharp, with these additions to those benefitting by leave passage; when the whole thing gets into motion, it will cost more than the amount of thousands of dollars which we estimated it would cost annually. I do not think anybody in this colony would object to paying his taxation, if we are spending it in a justifiable manner. The honourable member on my left, the junior member for St. John, a fortnight ago, strongly criticised the proposal to increase the licence fee for itinerant vendors to \$50 a year. The House by a majority endorsed the proposal. Those members who criticised it then would have felt quite well if they saw that money being expended on vital matters for the good of the colony, but when you come in here and give Anglican parsons who have absolutely nothing to do, who get free houses to live in, very often, free public utility services like water and light paid out of Church funds; can those members who criticised the measure to increase the taxation on itinerant vendors feel pleased to see what would be gained by such taxation expended in this way. Can they feel pleased to see these fat, well-paid, indolent ministers of the Anglican Church get free passages paid for themselves and their wives to Europe at the expense of the poor taxpayers of this country? I do not see the justification for including these Vicars of the Anglican Church in this Order for Leave Passages.

In the same way that we have postponed, until God knows when, the disendowment and disestablishment of the Anglican Church, so the question of leave passages for vicars could be postponed. If the Vicars of the Anglican Church want to go on vacations let them appeal to their congregations as is done in churches in the U.S.A., and Canada. The congregations subscribe to the minister's vacation. I have seen it done myself. There is a special Sunday set part for such subscriptions by members of the congregation. The people subscribe willingly when they feel that the minister is working energetically and honestly and taking some interest in their everyday life and activities.

In Barbados, Sir, as you are well aware, if the Anglican parsons were to get up in church and appeal for funds from the congregation to go on vacation after doing nothing for 12 months, they would not get enough money to go from Bridgetown to Silver Sands, far less to go to Europe.

We are making absolute idiots of ourselves and squandering the taxpayers' money when we sit down in here and agree to this proposal. It is nonsensical. There are so many things to be done; so many things that we have not attended to. In the Five Year Plan the Government talked about setting up an Industrial Development Board. If they do it next year it will be about eight years after it was first proposed in this Assembly. Do you not think we should be attending to that today? Do you not think we should be trying to find more work for the people to do rather than talking about leave passages for vicars and for the Master of the Waterboat? For the work that vicars have to do one could attend three churches.

Where are we going to stop? There are a lot of people in the Government Service who work harder than these people and who are more entitled to leave passages. I do not know who is the Master of the Waterboat, and I have nothing against him or for him. But in all reasonableness, do you want this House to believe that we will experience difficulty in getting a Master for the Waterboat so that we have to give special concessions to the holder of the post? What I cannot understand is this: From the beginning this question of leave passages has been reduced to an absurdity; and it is now becoming more absurd. If you make the qualifying salary for the beginning \$2,160 it is easy to see that if the cost of living continues to rise and salaries increase accordingly and you allow the basic qualification for being entitled to leave passages to remain, you cannot begin to say who will be getting leave passages five years from now. It is a vicious circle.

From the report of the Turner Committee the mind of the public and the minds of honourable members of this Chamber were impressed with the view that leave passages were for those members of the Government Service whose posts were hard to fill; not because they were getting a certain salary. That was not the principle. In the beginning it was merely a question of filling posts at Harrison College etc. You wanted certain officers and you had to offer special concessions. But the moment you start to apply it to people on the grounds of their being in a certain financial position, or rather drawing a certain salary, and the cost of living and salaries continue to rise you do not know where you will end. You have a perfect example today in the inclusion of the Master of the Waterboat. As I have said, we are making idiots of ourselves, and squandering the money that we get from the taxpayers of this island.

Dr. CUMMINS: Mr. Speaker,—If you will permit me, I will say a few words on this matter before any other honourable member falls into the same trap as the honourable senior member for St. Philip. The honourable member has either not read this Resolution, or is not acquainted with the principle on which leave passages are granted, or is wilfully distorting the question. The honourable member himself was one of those members who objected a few years ago when the Government of that time sent down an Order for leave passages, embodying a few highly placed officials. He was one of those members who objected to it because he thought the local man should benefit.

Mr. CRAWFORD: I was opposed to leave passages on principle.

Dr. CUMMINS: The Government when sending down this Order did not exclude local men. The Government felt that we have men who start from the bottom of the long grade and got to the top after 15 years' struggle and that they should benefit from leave passages. That is the principle on which the Government worked. Today the honourable member is telling us that that should not be so.

Mr. CRAWFORD: I said nothing of the kind. I said that the question arose because of the difficulty in filling highly technical posts in the Government Service. The honourable member himself was on the Turner Committee and that committee recommended that in order to get these posts filled—they were hard to fill at the time—we had to offer special concessions including leave passages. It was on that principle that the House agreed to leave passages. That is the entire principle on which it was based.

Dr. CUMMINS: I was a member of the Turner Committee, and the Turner Committee recommended that men who had reached the top of the long grade should benefit from leave passages. (A MEMBER: That was only a sop). It may have been a sop, but

the Government decided that these people should benefit from leave passages after struggling to get to the top of the long grade. Now we are told that we are putting these people in trouble because they have to borrow money to go on leave to Europe. An officer need not go to Europe. He can go to any part of the West Indies. During the early part of this year we had an officer who went to the U.S.A. You need not go to Europe; but you cannot spend your leave in Barbados.

Now, Sir, the honourable senior member for St. Philip has a short memory. He must have studied the Estimates for 1953-54. To-day he says that \$200,000 was put down for leave passages. If you read the Estimates you will see that the figure is \$50,000 and not \$200,000.

Mr. CRAWFORD: A sum of \$200,000 was submitted by the Government as the estimated cost of leave passages. (A MEMBER: You are wrong). If I am wrong I stand corrected.

Dr. CUMMINS: Every officer who is entitled to leave passage does not press to get it. There is a limit to the number who can get it in any one year. The number is limited not only from the point of view of the finances of the island but from the point of view of the efficient working of the Service. What I want to tell the honourable member is this: He says that we are now bringing in these people. That is not so. These people were entitled to leave passages when the qualifying amount was \$2,160. But since the Dos Santos Report the salary of the top of the long grade has been increased, and the people mentioned in this Order are those who have gone to that sum—\$2,280. As far as leave passages were concerned they were always entitled at the salary of \$2,160. But inasmuch as the maximum has been increased and their salary has not gone up to \$2,280, Government has brought down an amendment Order. We are not now bringing in these people.

Mr. LEWIS: Mr. Speaker,—With reference to the matter of leave passages I do not think that the honourable senior member for St. Philip was right when he said that we are extending it downwards.

Mr. CRAWFORD: I had in mind what the honourable junior member for St. Thomas said. I—

Mr. SPEAKER: The honourable member said that you had said something wrong. I do not think you heard all that he was about to say. I think that you are anticipating what the honourable member is about to say.

Mr. LEWIS: When the honourable member said we were extending the principle downwards he certainly did lose sight of the point made by the honourable junior member for St. Thomas. So that we can get the record straight I will say that in the 1952—53 Estimates Government put in \$100,000 for revision of salaries to people at the top and \$100,000 for leave passages. In the Estimates this year there was \$50,000 for leave passages and \$415,000 for the revision of salaries of those in the lower grades of the Government Service.

Now, it appears to me that because certain names are mentioned in this Order honourable members are taking objection to it; but when they were mentioned only by salary no objection was taken. It was originally proposed to give leave passages to people in a certain grade, getting a particular salary. Salaries have been revised, and the people in that same grade are now getting more money. If you wish to keep the benefit of leave passages to the people in that grade, you will have to amend the Order. There were certain people whose salaries were not increased but who qualified for leave passages under the 1952 Order.

We are saying let us preserve to them the right by exempting them now from the higher salary.

Mr. Speaker, if leave passages are causing this Government to be embarrassed financially, we will have to be told that by the Government itself, and the Government will have to revise it. I was not in the island when the first Leave Passages Order was brought down. But I understand from the debate which took place that we felt that more people who belonged to Barbados and who were in the Service should benefit. Government kept it back for a long time and then included people up to a certain grade in the Civil Service so as to include a number of Barbadians. We did not feel like giving the benefit merely to high officials, school teachers etc., As far as the Vicars of the Anglican Church are concerned, they were qualified with the last increase in salary and Government is now seeking to preserve the right to them. The arguments that we have heard against that are arguments which should be properly used in discussing the question of the disendowment and dis-establishment of the Church. If we are not prepared to get ahead with that it is no use singling out the vicars for criticism where leave passages are concerned. Their salaries were in the Estimates in the same way as the salaries of other Civil Servants. I think it is time that we should get on with disendowment and dis-establishment and get rid of these anomalies. We cannot say we want certain people in a certain grade of the Service to get leave passages and leave out other people who are also in the qualifying grade. The Vicars are Civil Servants. The Head of the Anglican Church has said that he is a Civil Servant. How can the Vicars say they are not when their salaries are passed in the Estimates in the same way as the salaries of other Civil Servants? You will have to eliminate them from the Estimates of this Island before the arguments we heard this evening can be justified. They are Civil Servants and you cannot make fish of one and fowl of the other.

What I think honourable members should address themselves to are the words in the first line of the definition of "service". It says "at the qualifying salary." When this House passed the original Order which we are now amending the definition was that "service means resident service in the island or on duty outside of the island, including service before the commencement of this Order." What did the people in the Colonial Secretary's Office or the Financial Secretary's Office do? They undertook to break the law passed by this House. They said that you would have to have service for three and a half years, and in some cases five years before you could qualify for leave passage. They are now trying to put it right in the Order we are now discussing. What they did originally was not the law as this House passed it. They are now trying to put it right by changing the definition of "service". You have to threaten to put some people in court, if it were possible, to get things out of them. In this House we catch at straws and leave important things alone. We passed cost of living allowances and back pay and certain people in the Service break the law as passed by the House. Certain people can issue memoranda altering the terms of what we passed. We are insulted; but we do not take that up. We catch at the little straw about giving vicars leave passages although the vicars are getting the same salary as other people in the Service.

Some honourable members feel that if the Church does not go into the Treasury you will get rid of it (the Church) altogether. But I feel that if that happens you will see a far more vigorous

Church in the interest of the people of this island than it is today. (A MEMBER: Do away with the Church and have a Communist state.) If you continue as you are today you may breed any kind of "ism". Some people like to shelter behind supporting the Church and making themselves Christians that way. It only means that they do not want to support the Church out of their own pockets. If they can get christianity cheap by getting someone else to repair the churches they feel it is a good thing. Many rich people could leave the Church well endowed if they had to support it. But they get the taxpayers, irrespective of the religion to which they belong, to repair the churches and put organs in them, and then they sit in the front pew while the other people sit at the back.

I am merely saying, Sir, that if we are going to get rid of the leave passages let us say we do not want them at all. But it is very wrong to say that certain people should not have them when you will give them to other people in the Service getting the same salary. It would be wrong after having said originally that people getting \$2,160 were entitled to it, and then after increasing the salaries to tell them that they had the privilege before but we are now going to take it away from them. A salary of \$2,160 in 1952 may not be the same in 1953; but the people are in the same grade.

There is one other remark that I would make, and that it is in reference to the speech of the honourable senior member for St. Michael. It struck me as strange at this stage of our constitutional development to hear the honourable member say that he was against the inclusion of certain people in the leave passages provisions. Because, according to what we are told, nothing can come down to this House from the Executive unless the four members of the Executive from this House agree with it.

Mr. COX: I was never against the Resolution as the honourable member knows. I merely said, and I say again, that I regret that we had to—

Mr. LEWIS: I am merely reminding the honourable member of what is the position of the Executive. I am doing that so that the honourable member may be more guarded.

Mr. SPEAKER: Agreement or disagreement with something in the Executive is no business of this House.

Mr. LEWIS: If this Order could not come to the House unless all four members of the Ex-

ecutive had agreed to it, and one of those members say that he does not agree with it, am I not entitled to comment on it? It is the first time that I have heard it. However, sir, I am merely saying that I sincerely hope the Government will review the financial position after leave passages have been in operation for some time; and if they find they cannot afford leave passages that they will cut them out entirely or keep them only for certain types of officers whom they cannot get without them. But I do not think it is right to ask the Government to discriminate against employees who are getting the same salary.

Question that the Resolution do now pass was put and agreed to without division.

NOTICE GIVEN OF RESOLUTION

Dr. CUMMINS: Sir,—I am asking leave to give notice of a Resolution of which I did not give notice earlier today.

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

Dr. CUMMINS: On behalf of the honourable senior member for St. Joseph, I beg to give notice of the following Resolution:—

A Resolution to place the sum of \$81,000 at the disposal of the Governor-in-Executive Committee to supplement the Estimates 1953—54, Part II, Capital, as shown in the Supplementary Estimates 1953—54, No. 20, which forms the Schedule to the Resolution.

ADJOURNMENT

Dr. CUMMINS: Sir,—I move that this House do now adjourn until this day week, November 10th, at 3 o'clock p.m.

Mr. COX: I beg to second that.

Mr. LEWIS: Taking advantage of the motion for adjournment, Sir, I wish to say that I thought a member of the Government might have suggested that a Select Committee be appointed to reply to His Excellency the Governor's Message on Ministerial Status which we received today. I say that, in view of the fact that it is such an important Message.

Question that the House do now adjourn until this day week, November 10th at 3 o'clock p.m. was put and agreed to without division, and Mr. SPEAKER adjourned the House accordingly.