

THE

House of Assembly Debates

(OFFICIAL REPORT)

SESSION 1953—54

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, 17th November, 1953.

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

Present:

His Honour Mr. K. N. R. HUSBANDS, (*Speaker*), Mr. J. E. T. BRANCKER, Dr. H. G. H. CUMMINS, M.D., C.M., Mr. A. E. S. LEWIS (*Deputy Speaker*), Mr. M. E. COX, Mr. R. G. MAPP, Mr. F. C. GODDARD, Mr. F. E. MILLER, Mr. V. B. VAUGHAN, Mr. C. E. TALMA, Mr. E. W. BARROW, B.Sc., and Mr. L. A. WILLIAMS, LL.B.

Prayers were read.

MINUTES

The Minutes of the Meeting of the 27th October having been printed and circulated, were taken as read and confirmed.

PAPERS LAID

Dr. CUMMINS: Mr. Speaker, I am commanded to lay Message No. 26 dated the 17th November, 1953, from His Excellency the Governor to the Honourable the House of Assembly informing the Honourable House of grants from Colonial Development and Welfare funds which the Secretary of State for the Colonies has approved.

The Message reads as follows:—

His Excellency The Governor
To
The Honourable The House of Assembly

His Excellency the Governor has the honour to inform the Honourable the House of Assembly that the Secretary of State for the Colonies has approved the following grants from Colonial Development and Welfare Funds:—

For Hospital Development	..	\$108,696
For a new Primary School at the Pine	..	\$ 69,120

2. It will be remembered that in the Five Year Plan of Development and Taxation an amount of \$1,000,000, representing the estimated unexpended balance of this Island's allocation under the Colonial

Development and Welfare Act, was included as part of the sum of \$6,500,000 which might be spent on projects outlined under the heading "B—Available Funds—General".

3. In the 1953-54 Capital Estimates, under the heading "B—Available Funds", a sum of \$250,000 is provided for improvements and extensions at the General Hospital (Head III—Medical, Item 2, General Hospital); and a sum of \$115,000 is provided for the construction of a primary school at the Pine (Head IV—Education, Item 8, Pine Primary School).

4. The grant for Hospital Development was made to cover the cost of the acquisition of Enmore and its conversion and equipment in accordance with the Government's general programme which is now under reference to the Hospital Planning Committee.

5. The reduction in the grant for the construction of a new primary school at the Pine reflects savings, which will result from a modified design that has been agreed with the Building Adviser to the Comptroller for Development and Welfare.

R. D. H. ARUNDELL,
Governor.

Government House,
Bridgetown,
17th November, 1953.
(M.P.—3389/S.5)

Dr. CUMMINS: I am also commanded to lay the Civil Establishment (General) (Amendment) No. 6 Order, 1953.

Mr. COX: I am commanded to lay the following:—

Post Office advances for payment of Money Orders to 30th June, 1953;
Post Office advances for payment of Money Orders to 31st July, 1953;
Post Office advances for payment of Money Orders to 31st August, 1953.

PETITIONS

Mr. HAYNES entered the House and took his seat.

Mr. LEWIS: I beg to present petitions from the Vestries of the parishes of St. George, St. Philip, Christ Church, St. John, St. Joseph, St. Thomas and St. James respectively, praying the House to pass a Bill to authorise them to pay the respective Clerks of the Board of Guardians of the said parishes an increased salary to a sum not exceeding £75 per annum.

The Petitions are respectfully worded and I ask that they be taken as read.

The Petitions were taken as read.

Mr. ALLDER, Mr. VAUGHAN, Mr. SMITH and Mrs. BOURNE entered the House and took their seats.

GOVERNMENT NOTICES

Dr. CUMMINS: Under Government Notices, I beg to give notice of a Resolution to approve the Order entitled the Civil Establishment (General) (Amendment) No. 6 Order, 1953.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' NOTICES

Mr. LEWIS: Mr. Speaker, I beg to give notice of a Bill to authorise the Vestries of the parishes of St. George, St. Philip, Christ Church, St. John, St. Joseph, St. Thomas and St. James respectively, to pay the respective Clerks of the Board of Guardians of the said parishes an increased salary to a sum not exceeding £75 per annum.

QUESTIONS

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

Does Government know that dissatisfaction exists among Civil Servants by reason of the preferment over themselves in the Office of Commissioners of Currency of retired and pensioned Civil Servants, there being present Civil Servants capable and willing to act in such capacity.

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

Whether it is true that up to new Casual Labourers employed by various Government Departments are not in receipt of their "back-pay" consequent upon the Dos Santos Recommendations?

2. If the answer to the above question is "Yes", will Government see to it that such payments in full are made before Christmas 1953?

3. In view of the considerable delay which invariably arises whenever "back-pay" is to be paid to Public Employees, will Government consider a system of payment through a Central Paying Office detached to the Audit Department?

BILL READ A FIRST TIME

On motion of Mr. LEWIS, seconded by Mr. VAUGHAN, the Bill to authorise the Vestries of the parishes of St. George, St. Philip, Christ Church, St. John, St. Joseph, St. Thomas and St. James respectively, to pay their respective Clerks of the Board of Guardians of the said parishes an increased salary to a sum not exceeding £75 per annum, was read a first time.

MOTION FOR ADJOURNMENT OF HOUSE FOR FIVE MINUTES ON SEAWELL CANTEN TENDER

Mr. COX: Mr. Speaker, I am asking leave to move the adjournment of this House for five minutes in order to discuss a question which I consider is of public importance. You will remember, Sir, that I intimated not long ago that I was prepared to raise the question of the awarding of the tender for the running of the Seawell Canteen should the Government think it necessary to do so. In view of the fact that dishonest propaganda—if I may put it that way

—has been spread against Government in its awarding of the tender for the running of this Canteen and in view of the fact that there is the likelihood of further repercussions coming out of it, the Government has decided that the House and the public should know all of the facts on the particular subject.

Sir, in 1941, Mr. Lamming applied to Government for the running of a light canteen at the Seawell Airport to accommodate the passengers passing through there.

Mr. BARROW: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I understand that the honourable senior member for St. Michael is asking leave of the House to move the adjournment of the House to discuss a matter of public importance. Is the honourable member discussing a matter of public importance, or is he giving some reason for the Government doing something. When the honourable member moved the adjournment, I was under the impression that the motion would be on the ground of some grave matter, but judging from the remarks of the honourable member, it seems more a matter of personal opinion between a certain newspaper and the honourable member than a matter of public importance. I do not see why this matter should interrupt the business of this House.

Mr. SPEAKER: The honourable senior member for St. Michael is not moving the adjournment for anything personal. It is a matter of public importance.

Mr. COX: Sir, I would have thought that the first thing any honourable member should do after being elected to this Honourable House would be to learn the Rules of the House. There are plenty Rule Books available. The first thing which the honourable senior member for St. George should do is to learn the Rules of the House so that whenever he rises he would be in order. Your Honour will tell him that a motion for the adjournment of the House to discuss a matter of public importance precedes any other thing. Let the honourable member learn the Rules of this House before he starts interrupting any honourable member.

Sir, I was saying that in 1941, Mr. Lamming asked the Government to allow him to run a light canteen at the Seawell Airport and the Government after considering the question allowed him to do so with the understanding that he would not be allowed to sell spirituous liquors. Mr. Lamming started the operation of that light canteen and soon after he applied for a licence to sell spirituous liquors and as he was not granted such a licence, he ceased to operate the light canteen.

In 1944, he again applied and was allowed to run the light canteen. He has been doing so from that time until now. In 1948 he was granted a licence to sell spirituous liquors. The rent which Mr. Lamming paid at the time for the operation of the canteen was in the neighbourhood of one shilling per month and he was given free electricity, water and everything else.

At this point, I would like to say that from the first time that Mr. Lamming was awarded the contract to run the canteen, he was made to understand that the contract on either side was subject to one month's notice on termination. Well in 1951, after certain reconstruction to the buildings and improvements at the Airport, including the building in which the canteen was housed, the Government decided to advertise for tenders for the running of this canteen. Mr. Lamming and, I think, Mr. A. E. Taylor and Mr. T. Jones submitted tenders. Mr. Lamming's tender was much lower than either of the others. Mr. Taylor's tender was for \$100 a month and Mr. Jones' was in the vicinity of \$85. In view of the fact that the Government was prepared to erect a canteen

for workers at the Airport, no decision was taken on the tenders at that time and Mr. Lamming was allowed to continue as he had in the past.

Sometime in July this year, the Government again decided to advertise for tenders for the running of that canteen. Mr. Lamming and Mr. Jones submitted tenders. Mr. Lamming's tender was for \$60 a month and Mr. Jones' was for \$150. The Government being doubtful as to what the outcome would be, decided to write them both and asked them to submit a price list of the various items that they would sell in the canteen should their tender be accepted and on all items, Mr. Jones' prices were lower than Mr. Lamming's. Despite the fact that Mr. Lamming had been operating that canteen for over six years, the Government felt that it had no alternative than to grant the running of the canteen to the tenderer whose terms were more favourable.

Sir, I am sure that this House and the public will agree that the Government acted as any commercial concern or anybody else would have acted who had something to offer in a similar capacity. Any honourable member in this House, if he could get \$100 or \$150 per month for the rental of a building or a property or whatever the case may be, would decide to rent it to the person who offered that amount rather than to go on renting it to somebody at a much lower figure. The Government, as the caretaker of the taxpayers of this island, therefore decided to allow Mr. Jones to operate a canteen in that premises.

Well, Sir, Mr. Lamming was given notice of this and it does appear after receiving this notice that he began to work in his own interest. I should mention that during the time when Government asked for submission of a price list, it does appear as if Mr. Lamming had a little say behind closed doors and without anybody or the Government asking him anything more, he decided to increase his tender to \$100 per month. Since notice has been served on Mr. Lamming and he has been informed that Mr. Jones has been awarded the contract, it does appear as if he is working on the various airlines representatives so that they can bring what pressure they can to bear on Government.

I want to deny most emphatically that the four members of this House on the Executive, some of whom are connected with the Barbados Workers Union, maliciously decided to give Mr. Jones the contract. We, and as a matter of fact, everybody who had to deal with the matter, were sympathetic towards Mr. Lamming because he was operating that canteen for a long time. As many of you may have read in the Press, the Government was accused of bad faith. As I have said in this Chamber a few nights ago, — and I say it again — so long as a chest is diseased, you must look for phlegm from it every now and again and any Press that is diseased must give off some untoward statement every now and again. Without trying to find out from Government what really happened in this matter, a section of the Press of this island, maligned Government and tried to make it appear that Government had done an injustice to Mr. Lamming who was more or less defenceless. I again say most emphatically that is not the case. As I feel perfectly sure, the House and the public will uphold the attitude of the Government in this matter and will feel that it acted in the best interest of the community. I may say at this stage that if in the past these chaps used to get their friends to appeal on their behalf so as to get them into this

or that whether they paid for it or they got it almost free or for nothing, this Government will not act likewise, but will always act without discrimination in matters of this nature. This Government is prepared, at all times, to decide a case on its merits and act accordingly. That is what the Government has done in this case.

I mentioned not long ago that the Government expected further repercussions and that was why we proposed to raise the question today. I shall let the House know these facts. After Mr. Lamming received the notice from Government, he, on the 2nd November, wrote Government. I shall at this stage, with your permission, read his letter.

Dear Sir,

With reference to your letter dated August 29, 1953, terminating my services at Seawell, I wish to advise that all the scheduled airlines at present utilising Seawell — B.W.I.A., B.O.A.C., T.C.A., S.V.G.A.S., and L.A.V. have approached me for the purpose of continuing my services and hold me responsible for their catering requirements at Seawell Airport.

It is their wish that this work which I have undertaken, be continued on the airport premises or in close proximity to the Terminal Building convenient to both passengers and aircraft.

I hereby make application for—

- (a) that accommodation be provided me from existing buildings; or
- (b) rental of a portion of land for the purpose of erecting a suitable building.

Due to the limited time available and in order not to embarrass my clients, I would appreciate your immediate consideration of this application.

I am,

Yours etc.,

ARTHUR A. LAMMING.

Sir, I am sure none of us would agree to anything of that. In the first place, since August, Mr. Lamming received a letter from Government informing him of its decision and he has taken all this time,—from then until the 2nd November, — now that it is coming closely to the time when the successful tenderer will be taken up duties—the 1st December—to reply to Government. As I understand it, this hurried letter implies that the airline officials want him to carry on his canteen in a building next door to the one in which it is in at present or to rent him a bit of land nearby for him to put a building so as to carry it on. I am sure that all members of the public will agree that you could not on the one hand give a man a contract which when he tendered, he knew was exclusive, or in other words, a sort of monopolised contract, and then allow someone to come in and erect a building in close proximity or to rent someone part of the said building to carry on the same work in competition against the said tenderer.

Since then, Government has had discussions with representatives of the various airlines operating here and this is a letter which they sent Government. I will give the House excerpts of it and as much as I think is necessary to enable honourable members to arrive at a reasonable and intelligent conclusion. The letter was dated 2nd November which is the same date as that of Mr. Lamming's. Portions of it read as follows:—

Dear Sir,

We the undersigned, scheduled operators, understand that there is to be a change in the management at the Seawell restaurant effective from December 1, 1953. This change of what is considered a very important phase of the facilities at Seawell is viewed with concern and is creating innumerable problems with the operators contracting with the present caterer, Mr. Arthur H. Lamming.

Mr. Lamming has proven during the past number of years that he is capable of servicing the needs of airlines at the highest standard which the airlines expect. We therefore wish it to go on record that the services which we presently are receiving, are quite satisfactory and that we desire to do our catering through this gentleman. We are not prepared to experiment at this stage with this highly specialised service, and Mr. Lamming has indicated that he is willing to continue catering to our needs.

In this respect, we are recommending that consideration be allowed him to a half-acre of land or whatever facilities that are required on the premises of the Airport at Seawell as per his application of this date to carry out the necessary duties in connection with the needs of the airlines catering.

Your prompt attention in this matter would be appreciated.

The signatories to the letter were as follows:—

British Overseas Airways Co., Ltd.,
British West Indian Airways, Ltd.,
Per, C. A. JOHNSON;
Branch Manager;

Linual A. V.
Per, M. EGAN for Mrs. VERNON KNIGHT
Agents for Barbados.

Trans-Canada Airlines,
per H. G. BAXTER,
Manager of Barbados.

St. Vincent Government Air Service,
Per, J. A. KINCH,
Messrs. Gardiner, Austin, Co., Ltd.

That is the position, Mr. Speaker, as it stands today.

Well, the Government has replied to Mr. Lamming's letter as follows:

Sir,

I am directed by His Excellency the Governor to refer to your letter of the 2nd November, 1953, asking that accommodation be made available for your catering in one of the buildings or that you be allowed to rent a portion of land at Seawell Airport and to say that it is regretted that after careful consideration the Governor-in-Executive Committee cannot see his way to grant your request.

That is the position as it stands today.

No doubt, Sir, there has been quite a lot of lobbying going on after this decision had been taken by Government, and so much so, as to make the Airways representatives so prejudiced that they are not even prepared to give the new tenderer a fair trial. I understand in all British justice—and I have good reasons to believe it—that you are never condemned before you are tried but in this case the individual is condemned before he is tried. As you

may remember, there was a letter in a section of the Press about this matter stating that Government had done this and that. Because of that and subsequent events which I have just informed you, the Government has decided to put its case before this House and the public. The Government, at all times during consideration of this matter, felt sure that it has acted wisely and intelligently and that this Honourable House and the public will uphold its decision. At this stage, I would like to hear an expression of opinion by any other honourable member or members who may so desire to do so.

MR. BRYAN entered the House and took his seat while Mr. Cox was speaking.

Dr. CUMMINS: Mr. Speaker, in order to give honourable members the opportunity of discussing this matter, I rise to second the motion for the adjournment. I would only say that all that the honourable senior member for St. Michael has said on the matter is quite true. The Government, as guardian of the property of the people of this colony, was in duty bound to accept the highest tender for operating a canteen at the Airport, and more so after spending money on reconstruction of the premises. Of course, I am not speaking from the legal side when I said that Government was in duty bound to accept the highest tender; I am speaking from the moral side. Let me remind this House that the Government has just spent a lot of money at Seawell on the Terminal Building as well as other buildings and it is the duty of the Government to try and recoup as much as it can from any service carried on at Seawell. As is known, the Government has increased the landing fees. I do not know exactly what the figures are, but I do know that since the improvements there, the landing fees have been increased and Government has advertised for tenders for the running of a canteen service there and has accepted the highest tender in order to recoup as much as it can from that source.

One phase of the matter that influenced the decision of the Government was the fact that Mr. Lamming's tender at first was for \$60 per month, but for some inexplicable reason, he came back and asked that his tender be taken as \$100 instead of \$60. The Government felt that there was some leakage somewhere and believes that there was somebody somewhere who was trying to tell Mr. Lamming he would get it never mind who submitted tenders. As I have said, the fact of the chalking upwards of the tender of Mr. Lamming a few weeks after his tender was received was a phase which the Government did not like. It looked somewhat irregular. This Government has its reputation to safeguard and on all occasions this Government would maintain its reputation.

Sir, with regard to the latest move on the part of the airlines operators, this Government want to bring that phase of the matter to the attention of the public so that the people will be in a position to know what is happening, and perhaps, a little later when the local press comments on the matter and tries to say that this Government is not encouraging the various airways to come to the Seawell Airport, the public would have already been apprised of the facts and will be in a position to judge for themselves. Sir, we did feel that the letters from the Airways Companies and Mr. Lamming coming at this stage, were due to probably some lobbying on the part of Mr. Lamming and with a view of pushing the Government in a false position. Sir, it would be rather ludicrous, if not illegal, for the Government to contract with somebody for the operation of a partic-

ular service at a particular place and then, on the other hand, to allow somebody else to carry on a similar service however limited it might be on the same premises. The Government felt that it would be illegal and immoral to grant the request of those airways companies and because of that has taken the stand as mentioned in the reply to Mr. Lamming's letter and Government is prepared to stick to that decision.

MR. CRAWFORD entered the House and took his seat while DR. CUMMINS was speaking.

MR. LEWIS: Mr. Speaker, I am going to take the opportunity afforded by the motion before the House to warn Your Honour to be careful about the procedure in this House that makes honourable members a party to accusations above which this Honourable House stands aloof. On previous occasions, Sir, the daily newspaper accused the Government of this colony of having in the Colonial Secretariat invalided and inexperienced officers and on that occasion, this House did not enter in that controversy at all. (A VOICE: It did). Sir, this House did not enter in that controversy at all. A statement was brought in the House and laid on the Table and it was actually done during the discussion on a particular bill. This House stands aloof from such matters. I can also remember that on another occasion, the Government brought in a statement in this House and actually quoted from newspapers' reports of the proceedings of this House to accuse an honourable member of not telling the truth. Now, today, you find the Government coming to this House using up its time making this House a party to an accusation on matters which this House stands aloof.

The honourable senior member for St. Michael has moved the adjournment for five minutes on the question of the granting of a tender. The members of this House, evidently, feel satisfied that the Government has acted in good faith and above board and if the Government is using this Honourable House as a forum for explanation of everything which comes out in the newspapers, I would just ask: where are we going to be? We are already accused by the same newspaper of wasting time.

The Government has the opportunity of issuing its statements in the same newspapers. The Government must have condoned the holding of Press Conferences in the Colonial Secretary's Office every other Friday at which these sort of things and explanations could be sent out to the public. The Government should not come into this House and read portions of letters and arm itself with figures, dates and everything else over a statement that can be made public otherwise, nor should it do it in this House before proceeding with the Orders of the Day, particularly when honourable members are enquiring why they have been called out. I think the Government in taking itself so seriously on these matters is really not considering what it is doing to the dignity of this House. No honourable member has thought it necessary to bring this matter to the attention of the House, else, certainly someone would have brought in questions on it. I do not think this matter is of sufficient concern for the Government to use its time in this way. It is a very dangerous thing for this Government to use its time in this way. If newspapers accuse this Government of anything, honourable members should be the judges of whether it is of sufficient public importance as to be aired in this Chamber. At this stage, I am going to warn the Government that I shall take pains to see, should I occupy the Chair that it does not happen again.

MR. SPEAKER: I deprecate the remarks of the honourable member, when he says that he is warning

me of giving latitude to honourable members to use this House to ventilate matters which this House does not question and which appear in the local press. The honourable senior member for St. Michael is making use of a Rule of this House which is extended to every honourable member and that is to move the adjournment of the House for five minutes on a matter of public importance. That is all that concerns this Chair. I do not appreciate the remarks which the honourable member is using. I do not need his warning.

MR. LEWIS: I apologise for any offence which I may have caused Your Honour by my using of the word 'warning.' Sir, I used it in its most inoffensive meaning. I was trying to draw to the attention of the House that the matter of public importance which was brought before the notice of this House was one which had escaped the eye of every honourable member of the House, it being of so little importance and that it seemed as if the Government was making it a matter of public importance.

MR. SPEAKER: I do not think that the honourable member can speak for the other twenty-three honourable members of this Chamber.

MR. LEWIS: Sir, The Government has awarded this contract to someone after advertising in the Press for tenders and after people had tendered for it. If there were anything wrong and honourable members knew, they would have brought in a question about it before now, or they could have exercised their right and moved an adjournment of the House to discuss the matter, if they thought it was of public importance. I am saying that it is not a good thing whenever anything occurs for Government to bring it before the House to make it an unwilling party to the accusations. In this matter, the Government has acted above board and no honourable member has made it his concern at all.

As I was saying, let honourable members of the Government refute in the Press where the accusations were made anything which they thought was unseemly. They should do so in the daily newspaper in which a statement appeared. Am I to understand that the Colonial Secretary is afraid or ashamed to put a notice in the newspapers of this colony, or to write a letter as he has done already, so as to explain this matter if he thinks it wants explaining to the public. Can he not bring it up at a Press Conference to the very people who made the accusation? On a matter of this sort, I believe that the better course to adopt would be to make some written statement which can go out to the public and that honourable members can read and discuss. I think it is a gross waste of the time of this House for the Government to adopt this policy to bring it to the notice of honourable members and the public, when the very Press can be used to vindicate members of the Government.

I am not going into the merits of this case. The Government has acted and we take it that it has acted correctly. I do not like the word 'lobbying' which some honourable members of Government used when speaking on this matter because it is applied to parliamentary matters and therefore it would appear as if some honourable members of this House had been lobbying over that matter. I also think it is a very serious matter for the honourable junior member for St. Thomas to say that there have been some leakages of official secrets. If there has been a leakage of official secrets from the Executive, the Executive should be able to deal with the members but to come into this House and admit that to us is to my mind a very grave disclosure. If I may go back to the awarding of the contract: is it doing the Government any good to come in here and admit that it ac-

cepted the highest tenderer because you are not supposed to do so; you are not bound to accept any tender.

Sir, I will say in conclusion that the place to correct accusations is the place where they originated. This Honourable House has refused to make itself a party to any of the accusations and I think it is very wrong for the Government to use up the time of this House in this manner. As I have said, I think that a properly prepared statement on this question should be published and if it were necessary to be discussed, at least, we should have it in that concrete form first so that we could understand it much better.

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

Mr. BARROW: Mr. Speaker, The honourable senior member for St. Michael said that any member should learn the Rules of the House before coming into this Chamber but I would like to question the propriety of this departure from the closely written routine of this House at this particular stage to move the adjournment of the House on a matter of this kind. The honourable member may not be aware that Rule 40 (b) of the Rules of this House states that any motion for the adjournment of the House shall not be made before a quarter to three o'clock except the consent of the Speaker has been obtained. This Rule was made at a time when the House used to meet at midday and at that time the adjournment for lunch was taken at 2 p.m. and if it met after the interval,—at a quarter to three,—then a motion for the adjournment of the House to speak on a matter of public importance could be moved. Since this House does not meet at 12.15 p.m. or any time like that nowadays, except on special occasions, obviously, the spirit of Rule 43 (b) should be interpreted to mean that members of this House should not move the adjournment for five minutes to speak on a matter of public importance until after the tea interval. It should mean that the routine of this House should not be disturbed until then unless the consent of the Speaker had been previously obtained.

Mr. COX: Sir, I rise on a point of explanation. The honourable senior member for St. George has just read out a Rule which states that the motion for the adjournment should not be made before a certain time unless with the consent of the Speaker. I am sure Your Honour will agree with me when I say that I made the motion with your previous consent.

Mr. SPEAKER: The honourable member is absolutely correct.

Mr. BARROW: May it please Your Honour, I was coming to that part. The honourable member's explanation shows that I was right to interrupt him when I did. It fell on the part of the honourable senior member for St. Michael to explain to the House that he had obtained the consent of Your Honour to move the adjournment at that particular time. That is the point which I enquired. I now take it that the honourable member had obtained Your Honour's consent.

Your Honour has ruled in the interest of the honourable senior member for St. Michael or in the interest of the Government, that this is a matter of public importance and with that ruling I shall not dispute but I certainly would like to suggest that the Colonial Secretary of this island is also the Public Relations Officer and this is a matter which I feel could have been much more suitably dealt with on the occasion of one of those Press Conferences held in the Colonial Secretary's Office than by the moving of the adjournment of this House as has been done. If the Government had

a statement to make, that statement, as has been suggested by the honourable junior member for the City, could have been made much more conveniently at one of those Press Conferences in the Colonial Secretary's Office.

Since the honourable senior member for St. Michael has raised the point of awarding of a contract at the Seawell Airport in this House at this time, and have spoken of misrepresentation by the Press, perhaps, I might deal with misrepresentation by the daily newspaper of this island from a broad view. It is accepted as a statement of fact that the daily newspaper of this island is opposed to the political party which is now in power and speaking for myself, I know that not only the debates which take place in this Chamber are distorted by that newspaper, but sometimes it sets down the antithesis of statements of my party. Its writers also take every opportunity to malign anyone who has our political persuasion at all times. What surprises me is that a little trifle like this, on which it is accepted that the Government has acted wisely, should have caused the Government so much heartburn, when day by day members of this House are maligned by that newspaper; their speeches have not been reported at all—we have no control over that—and when they are reported, they are distorted to the extent that members of the public must get the impression that the members of the Labour Party are the biggest fools under the sun and all that they do is to talk a lot of nonsense. I would say that in every party, you will find members that would blow off a certain amount of hot air in their speeches, but the distortions of members' speeches by the daily newspaper are those which one would not normally expect in the normal course of journalistic reporting. The attitude of its editors and leader-writers is one which would confirm any suspicion of malignity on their part. Writers of that newspaper have accused members of this House of preaching racial hatred when they have never heard anything expressed on a platform of my party at election time or any other time which by any description could be described as racial hatred. That paper also talks of minority groups. Sir, we do not have any Amerindians here and that talk of minority rights and all that kind of thing would make you think that here in this island there are a few people who are entangled among a vast majority group, and as it were, beyond the pale of the constitution and by that, we were not preserving their rights in this Chamber. Sir, there is no such thing as minority groups in this island. The fact that you may belong to a particular party does not mean that you belong to a minority group.

Sir, it was just a week ago that I rose to my feet in this Chamber and suggested to the Government of this colony that the time is passed when there should be people, who are virtually members of the Opposition, sitting in the Cabinet of this island. It was suggested by the Government on that occasion that those people were more or less of little significance and that it was a good idea for the time being to retain the present setup. Here today, we get the honourable junior member for St. Thomas getting up and confirming all the fears that I, along with other honourable members of this House, entertain on that score. The honourable junior member for St. Thomas disclosed that there may have been a leakage in the matter with which we are dealing. That disclosure only confirms the suspicion which I like so many other

people have entertained over the peculiarity of the present setup in the Executive Committee.

Sir, I am not concerned with the merits of the Seawell Canteen contract, because I always was of the opinion that the members of the Government have acted in good faith and in the interest of the community in this matter. I would just say to emphasize my point that it has recently come within our knowledge that a member of the Executive of a neighbouring colony has been accused and arrested for divulging Government secrets to the mercantile community. I make bold to say that that situation will never arise in Barbados because there will be no incentive for the members of the mercantile community to pay the members of the Government from this House monthly, weekly or otherwise to divulge secrets which are germane to the increasing of their profits when they can get those secrets without paying for them. I say so because it is a fact that those people have their representatives at all the meetings of the Executive.

Mr. E. D. MOTTLEY: Mr. Speaker, at this stage, I rise to object to the statement of the honourable member. The honourable member in defending the Executive is referring to the fact—

Mr. SPEAKER: Has the honourable senior member for the City risen on a point of order? Otherwise, he cannot make a speech.

Mr. E. D. MOTTLEY: What I was attempting to say is that the honourable senior member for St. George made reference to what he called a fact that merchants of this colony can get Government secrets free from members of the Executive other than from the Executive members from this House. I object strongly to that statement.

Mr. BARROW: Sir, I will make myself clear. I am saying that members of the mercantile community get those secrets now. I am not saying that they bribe anybody to get them. I am saying that if they want any secrets, they can get them for nothing. I hope the honourable senior member for the City has not mistaken me but I made that statement through the disclosure made by the honourable junior member for St. Thomas in whom I have every confidence for the veracity of his statement. The honourable member said that there has been a leakage and he is not a suspicious man by nature. Sir, the occasion can never arise where members of the mercantile community will feel themselves constrained in the interest of themselves to get Government secrets, because our anomalous situation, where we have people who are in the Opposition sitting in the Cabinet—at one time there were two or three—would prevent that from taking place. Why should members of the mercantile community pay for Government secrets when they can get them?

Sir, I have taken advantage of this opportunity to express my opinion. I certainly sympathise with the honourable senior member for St. Michael, whom I know very well is a very sensitive person and who, probably, is very anxious to see that nothing shall appear in the Press which he thinks ought not to appear.

Mr. WILLIAMS: Sir, I am going to take a different approach to this matter and probably reach the same conclusion as the honourable member who spoke last. Although I agree that the motion for the adjournment was quite in order, I feel that the facts which we have been given by the two honourable members of the Executive were such that the Government, at least the Colonial Secretary, could have given in a Press statement. The facts that have been given by the honourable senior member for St. Michael happen to be the facts which I have heard in other quart-

ers and as have heard, they are not in keeping with what appeared in the Barbados *Advocate*, therefore, I would advise honourable members not to pay too much attention to what appeared in that newspaper. Although this paper can be considered as one of the most influential daily newspapers in the Caribbean, it is known that it has no constructive policy. Let me say at once that I do not mind a paper being Tory—a newspaper should have a particular viewpoint—but the trouble with the Barbados *Advocate* is that it has no policy. What I saw written editorially in that newspaper on this matter, in my opinion, ruined Mr. Lamming's case. That newspaper did not put to the public that when Government opened the letters of the two tenders that the Government after noting their difference, there and then asked the two respective parties to submit price lists, neither did it state that Mr. Lamming later submitted a higher tender than what he made out at first. In putting Mr. Lamming's case, all the newspaper editorially tried to make out for him was that he had ordered an entire new lot of equipment for the giving of a better service. It went on to state that Mr. Lamming was given a bad break after he had been operating there for so many years. The newspaper avoided letting the public know that Mr. Lamming knew that his tender was for a certain time and that it could be terminated at a month's notice on either side.

As to the position which this matter has reached within the last two or three weeks, as has been explained by the honourable introducer of the motion, it is clear that the airline operators have joined in a policy of non-cooperation. I have been made to understand that one of the Canadian airline firms has been asked that passengers who now stay overnight here should proceed direct to Trinidad. However, be that as it may, I do not see the reason why the Government should get cold feet and bring this motion in here. Did its members think they did not have the backing of this Chamber? I do not think they should feel that way.

Although I am in agreement with what the last honourable member said as regards the question of official secrets, I do not think that the honourable junior member for St. Thomas indicated that the leakage came from the Executive Committee. Surely the tenders could have been opened by some person in the Colonial Secretary's Office, because they were addressed to that department. I do not think that the honourable junior member for St. Thomas went so far as to say that the leakage occurred in the Executive Committee. I would not go so far as to say that all the people on the Executive Committee or on the various boards of this island are so depraved as to attend meetings of those particular boards having their own interest only in view. I would not put it higher than that, but I do know from personal experience that some members of such boards do attend meetings to push their own interest.

Sir, I feel that the Government has nothing to fear in this matter and that it has acted correctly. Even if it has gone one stage further to the extent that Mr. Lamming is lobbying the various airline companies, it must be said that the Government has taken the correct stand.

I would however say again that it is right for the Government to bring this matter to the attention of this House in the way it has taken, but I still think that the Colonial Secretary is paid for carrying out certain duties and a matter like this could have been dealt with by a full press statement or by a circular. I do not think the position is so serious as to warrant it being discussed here, even with the added information which the Government has given today. I do not

think it has reached the stage where any crisis would result and an ordinary statement from the Colonial Secretary in the absence of an information Officer could have served as well. I will not go as far as to say that the House should not discuss it. We can discuss it because the Seawell Airport is a revenue department of Government and the matter we are dealing with is a revenue matter of that department.

Dr. CUMMINS: Before another honourable member adds to this debate, allow me Sir to explain a point made by me earlier. I did not say definitely that there was a leakage. I said that the way in which Mr. Lamming increased his tender, may be considered that there was a leakage.

Mr. MILLER: Sir, what I gather from the discussion, and especially from the statement of the honourable senior member for St. Michael, leads me to believe that there was really nothing wrong at all in the actions of Government in this matter. As I understand it, when the time was ripe for Government to ask for tenders to operate this canteen at Seawell, it advertised for tenders and Mr. Lamming and another person submitted tenders. It is true that the Government, or anybody else for that matter, can accept the highest or any other tender, but it is reasonable to expect that the Government should accept the highest tender. The honourable senior member for St. Michael further said that after some months, it received a letter from the unsuccessful tenderer asking that concession be granted him to construct and operate a canteen somewhere in proximity to the Airport. I do not think that his letter could be entertained. It would not be fairplay in business when two people submit tenders and as soon as one has been granted the tender, for the other one to ask that he be given a concession so as to enter into competition with the individual that was granted the contract. I think this is the very thing that the Government wished to avoid. When Mr. Lamming wrote a letter on the 2nd November asking for these concessions, I really feel that it was undignified, to say the least. I also feel that the airlines operators were out of place when they joined together and wrote a similar letter.

If the Government feels that recent development may lead to what may be regarded as a crisis, it is in its right to bring the matter before this Chamber. I am not defending the Government, but I feel that what was written by Mr. Lamming in one letter and by the airlines operators in another, is a matter for the public to know. The contractors for the operating of the Seawell canteen will be using facilities which have been subscribed by the taxpayers of this colony so no one should tell the Government what to do about it unless it was done in an underhand manner. The Government has awarded the contract to the individual submitting the highest tender and we believe that the Government has done so in good faith. Sir, I do not see the reason why any group of airline officials should address a letter like that to Government, particularly after such a long time of their knowing that Government had made the award of the contract. I do not see why should any group of airline officials try to flout decisions of any government.

Mr. GODDARD: Mr. Speaker, — I feel that this matter could have been brought to our attention by means of a Paper or Report or at a Press Conference rather than in the way in which it has been brought this evening. No one from the House has criticised the Government on this matter. Criticism appeared in the Press, and if the Government thought it necessary to make their position public they could have done it by means of a Press Conference or in some other way. But

we have been here discussing this question for two hours. I can understand coming here from Tuesday to Tuesday if the Government has something of importance to do. I understand that everytime we meet it costs the taxpayers \$280.00. On the last occasion that we met the Leader of the House assured us that the Government had money resolutions which they wanted considered, and that we could come today to consider them. The honourable member is out of the island at present, and there are no money resolutions for consideration. There is nothing to do, and the Government, instead of adjourning the House for a proper period has brought us here to sit into the late hours. We are like empty pails keeping noise.

Mr. ALLDER: Mr. Speaker, I do not share the views of the honourable junior member for Christ Church that we have nothing to do and that therefore we are only like empty pails keeping a lot of noise. The status of this Chamber cannot be so reduced. The honourable member must know that it is the privilege of democracy for those who represent the masses to come to the Assembly as often as possible to discuss matters with the hope that they will result in the efficient and successful running of the state. If it were necessary for us to come here everyday there would be nothing wrong with that. If you meet for only two hours you will get people saying that you do not do anything; on the other hand when you meet every Tuesday and sit for a long period someone is going to say that you are wasting the taxpayers' money. Of course the honourable member's commercial domains are so extensive that a minute spent here might mean the loss of thousands of dollars. But there is nothing to compel him to come here.

I do not share his views, sir, nor the views expressed by some other honourable members. At one time we hear the argument that the Government does not take us into its confidence; that things are done over our heads; that we are a legislative body responsible for the expenditure of government funds. Now you are getting honourable members jumping to the other side of the fence because it suits them now to do so, and you have them saying "we are too big for a question like this. Carry it into the backyard and deal with it." I would like to say that I hope the Government will take us into its confidence more often than they have been doing in the past. We should not be above dealing with anything, no matter how great or how small.

I am saying that this is a matter which comes within our purview, and I appreciate the action of the Government. The past contractor was getting away with murder for a long time. For one shilling a month he was getting free water, light and certain equipment. I take it that the Government furnished that place there. He had furniture, water, light and all sort of facilities. He has been getting away with murder for years — since 1941 I have been told. I will say this: Any contractor is a bad contractor who seeks Government's approval to run a service which caters to the public and starts off with discrimination in dealing with the public. Discrimination is something which all of us should be against. It is all right for some honourable members if the gentleman treats them well; but we have to think in terms of the general public. You get people going up there to see their relatives off; they go up there and are not given attention or equal treatment that people of greater affluence get.

The next point is the question of the legality of the handling of this question by the Government.

If someone has made a higher tender he must be considered. There is one thing which I do not appreciate. I feel that the Government should still have used its discrimination as regards the amount offered by the higher tender. Although it is true that he said \$150.00 a month, I still feel that it is a little high; and the Executive Committee, although taking the higher tender into consideration, should still have said that they felt it was worth only \$100.00 a month. Apart from that I think that the Government acted wisely.

As regards the point made about the various airways companies trying to bring pressure to bear, I am sure that many of the representatives of these companies know that in their own countries greater bodies than they cannot attempt to bring pressure to bear on their respective governments. They should be told clearly that their only business is to attend to the arrivals and departures of passengers by their respective airlines, and that the administration of the colony rests with the Governor-in-Executive Committee and the Legislature. They should be told that neither the Government nor the Legislature would countenance any interference in local matters. They should be told so in strong terms. That is why we have reached a stage where we must eliminate this pressure group business. If I were on the Executive I would suggest that a strong letter be written to the headquarters of these Airways Companies, and that the local representatives who attempt to muddle in local affairs should be withdrawn if they think they can bring pressure to bear on the local administration. I can only hope, sir, that the Government remains strong in this matter, and that the successful contractor will give of his best and not allow the slightest semblance of discrimination to develop.

Discrimination is the worst feature of any public service. We have suffered from it too much in the past, and we must see that it is killed entirely. I approve the actions of the Government in this matter, and I feel that the Government is justified in bringing it to us. I have heard some people say that the past contractor has committed himself to certain expenditure. That is his private business. Government cannot peep behind a man's blind and see what he is doing. We must not forget that this individual was enjoying thousands of pounds worth in property owned by the taxpayers and that the taxpayers were getting nothing in return for it.

Mr. E. D. MOTTLEY: Mr. Speaker, — As far as the procedure in bringing this matter to our attention is concerned, I do not see the necessity for having brought it before the House in this manner in the absence of an enquiry, or questions from the Opposition, or from the backbenchers, as it is the habit of backbenchers to ask questions. I do not profess to be any parliamentary expert, and therefore where the point is concerned I do not speak dogmatically. But on the face of it it strikes me that way.

As regards the main point I will say this at the beginning. If Mr. Lamming had been paying \$60.00 a month for Seawell and the Executive had refused an offer of \$150.00 I would have said hard things. I would have accused them lock stock and barrel. As far as the Airways Officials are concerned I remember that about ten years ago in this country some young and aspiring businessmen were coming up. The established business people saw the higher commercial ability of these men; they did not like it, but there was nothing they

could do about it. However much the Airways or the people who are in charge of the Airways may want to impress upon you that they have a contract with Mr. Lamming I say that is a matter for them. I go further and say that they must be an incompetent lot of people in charge of the Airways for them to have entered a contract with Mr. Lamming who did not have a lease, but only a monthly tender.

As regards the fact that Mr. Lamming only paid 1/- a month, I have no criticism to offer on that. It was a new venture and no one knew whether it would succeed or not. But now that conditions have improved and people have seen the trade up there I think Mr. Lamming is a fool or an ignorant businessman not to realise that other business people in town would be watching the improved conditions at the airport and would realise that there would be more trade. What I am hoping is that Mr. Lamming was given an opportunity to tender in the same way as Mr. Jones. But if Mr. Lamming had offered \$60.00 and Mr. Jones had offered \$150.00 a month, and the Government had given Mr. Lamming the contract, the accusations that would come from this side of the House would be so strong that I do not think the Government would be able to stand up. So I say I hope that Mr. Lamming was given every opportunity to tender in the same way as Mr. Jones. As regards the Government granting Mr. Lamming a piece of land at Seawell to compete with Mr. Jones I do not think that the Government would be able to answer the criticisms that would be made if they did that. If Mr. Lamming came into Coleridge Street I could find a spot at Seawell for him; but he would have to pay a lot for it. The Government could not attempt to rent Mr. Lamming a spot at Seawell to compete with Mr. Jones. In my opinion, Mr. Lamming is either stupid or is a businessman without actual ability not to realise that the up and coming businessmen in that line of business would be watching to see the business done at Seawell and would offer the Government a good price so as to be able to get the contract. But it is no use crying over spilt milk.

I personally feel, sir, that the Government has nothing to answer for renting this place at \$150.00. But because an editorial appears in the "Advocate" criticising the Government on this matter that is no justification for bringing it before the House in this manner. If you are running a Government you must expect criticism. But do not take this Chamber as the place in which to reply to editorials, because you are privileged to say here things that you could not normally say. I think that as regards a statement which came down from the Government replying to another matter on a past occasion I registered my objection to the Leader of the House for making an explanation here on that matter which had nothing to do with the House. The members of the Government who brought this question today must have been instructed to do so. But I counsel them that in the future they should not take up time of the House with such matters. If one tender offered \$60.00 and another offered \$150.00 I do not see how the Government could have done otherwise than they have done. Government, or anyone in public life should not be above criticism. On the other hand the honourable junior member for Christ Church suggested that merely coming here Tuesday after Tuesday to receive a statement like this or to do small time business is not good enough. Of course you get honourable members who want to tell you that you

are being paid. My reply is that I was here before members were paid, and I will continue whether we are paid or not. It costs you \$280.00 everytime you meet here. That is all well and good. Some members say meet every Tuesday; every day. When the Leader and other members of the Government are away from the island on other business, that is counted as a holiday for them. I do not mean that the Opposition is demanding any holiday. But think of the way in which the expenses of the Legislature have gone up in the last ten years. When you come in here and discuss only a matter like the one we are now discussing it costs you \$280.00. You must think of your expenditure. If you look at the Order Paper it is difficult to see the reason for coming here every Tuesday. Perhaps it would be better to meet day after day and clear the Order Paper.

But whatever the newspaper may have said I am bound to say that the Government has nothing to be ashamed of in the matter. I do not think that anyone could criticise them. What else could they have done? But as I have said, I feel that it is really unnecessary to bring this matter here in this way. I hope that in the future the Government will not pay any attention to an editorial of this nature. If you are in Government or in public life you can make up your mind that you will get criticism. I recall the article in the *Advocate* now. If the article had accused them of doing something wrong—

Dr. CUMMINS : I do not think that the honourable member was here when this matter was introduced by the honourable senior member for St. Michael. It was never said that we paid any attention to the editorial. The honourable member said that since the airways people had come into it it had put a different complexion on the matter.

Mr. E. D. MOTTLEY : That makes the matter worse, when we are told that the Government is studying what the people who run airways say. That is worse than replying to articles in the Press. It seems to me that the Government has more regard for a few stupid people who run airways than for the Press. The honourable member is telling me that they have only come here with this statement because people from B.W.I.A. or B.O.A.C., or T.C.A. or L.A.V. tell you that they have a contract with Mr. Lamming. I want to say that I cannot imagine any official of a reputable airways company getting into a matter of this sort. I do not know whom the honourable member calls an official. I do not know if a man getting \$100.00 for representing an airways company here is an official. However that may be, I want to say that the days are long past when any of these people could expect the Government to give preference to Mr. Lamming who could not see that that business place was worth more than \$60.00 when an up and coming business man could see that it was worth \$150.00.

I insist, however, that the Government did not act rightly in bringing this matter to this Chamber. If the Opposition or even the backbenchers of the Government Party had criticised the Government on the matter it would be a different thing. Do not let us make airways representatives feel that you are afraid although your actions were above-board.

Now when it comes to racial discrimination in handling people at Seawell I want to say this: I do not look at the matter from the point of view that a particular firm may not discriminate against me. I want to say too, as I have said already, that although my political views may conflict with those of a lot of my friends on the other side, when it comes to my views on racial discrimination we are like the fingers on one hand. We cannot be separated. And whenever

any side is prepared to protest and fight against racial discrimination I am lining up on that side whether it is the Government or the Opposition. Let me say this: I believe the honourable junior member for St. Thomas will agree with me. I have travelled by P.A.A. and I have travelled by B.W.I.A. and I will say here and now that I hope that the Government in replying, especially to B.W.I.A. will mention this: there is serious racial discrimination going on in the case of B.W.I.A. which masquerades with Mr. Wooding as a director and which cannot find between Jamaica and Barbados one single coloured girl to employ as a stewardess on that line. Of course they can take Mr. Wooding and fool people with that. I am going to say this: Some of the most crude and uncultured white women are selected from these West Indian colonies and they go out of their way to embarrass coloured people by requesting them to make out their forms so as to see if they can write, while they (the stewardesses) make out other people's forms for them. I once told one of those embarrassed people, "give it to me; I will make it out for you." I get very sensitive when it comes to that sort of thing. Whenever I see someone who looks like me and who cannot write, and I see someone from the other side trying to show him up I feel it very strongly. I have seen it happen at Barclays Bank.

I hope, Sir, that the honourable senior member for St. Michael is listening to me. I have travelled by more than one airway line, and the honourable junior member for St. Thomas has travelled recently too. One cannot help noticing the decent and unbiassed manner in which stewardesses of other lines handle people as against the manner in which certain people are handled by the uncultured and illiterate white women that B.W.I.A. picks up. I have wanted to say this for a long time. I will lick up and break down anything like that. When it comes to political views I will fight you every day; but when it comes to racial discrimination line me up by your side. So when you are writing B.W.I.A. you can tell them how we feel on racial discrimination. I have got up in Queen's Park and said that I could not agree with any company—whether it was Radio Distribution, Barclays Bank or any other bank—which was not prepared to hire coloured people. I do not see why B.W.I.A. cannot find decent coloured people to employ, people who I am sure would handle passengers better than some of the crude white women that that company employs. I have seen incidents happen on this line; incidents of racial discrimination. I have notes of the dates and I have notes of the flights. I say, Sir, that when you get out of a Pan American plane after having been attended by a Pan American stewardess and then have to be attended by some of these people whom B.W.I.A. employ—purely on pigment—the difference is like that between cheese and chalk.

We in the West Indies who want to see cordial relations existing between all the peoples of the West Indies must put our foot down on this kind of thing. If B.W.I.A. has a director who does not have the guts or courage to say what I have said, I have the courage to say it to-day, and will say it over and over again until there is a change in the set-up.

Mr. COX : Mr. Speaker,—I must thank all those honourable members who have expressed approval of the Government's action in this particular matter. Reference has been made to our fear of the *Advocate* etc. If we were afraid of the *Advocate* or anyone else we would not be in here today. As far as I am concerned I do not know anything about fear at all. And I know that this Government does not know anything about fear. When the time comes we fight our enemies and beat them too. Therefore, it is not a question of

being afraid of the *Advocate*. We know the *Advocate's* policy if it has one. But as I said, Sir, in view of the fact that there is a likelihood of some repercussions coming up since representatives of the Airways have come into the matter we feel that the House should know what is going on.

I must thank the honourable senior member for St. John. He made a very good point when he said that the Government is often accused of withholding information from the House, and now that we have brought information we are told that the House is too big for such a matter. It does not suit these big boys. As far as the criticisms of the honourable junior member for the City are concerned, all I have to say is that as soon as that honourable member gets into power he can run his Government as he thinks fit; but as long as we are running the Government we will run it as we feel it should be run.

There is one thing which I want to make crystal clear, and it is in connection with a statement made by the honourable senior member for St. George. He said that if I had informed the House about this statement when I had acquainted Your Honour about it, he would not have objected. But of course further in his speech the honourable member spoke about some members having to get some hot air off their chests; so perhaps he was trying to get off a little when he said what he did.

Again, sir, I want to thank the House for upholding the action taken by the Government and I beg leave to withdraw my motion.

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

MOTION TO EXCLUDE THE ADVOCATE REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. VAUGHAN: Mr. Speaker,—I beg to move the adjournment of the House for five minutes in order to discuss a matter of public importance. The Press, sir, with its influence is probably the most powerful weapon in democratic communities. It is, to say the least, particularly unfair, extremely unjust, wicked and dangerous, for any newspaper which is supposed to be publishing a debate which took place in a political Assembly which controls the destiny of a colony to use the privilege of the House in its reporting to issue a very prejudiced report.

At this stage, sir, I move that the House adjourn for half an hour.

Dr. CUMMINS seconded.

The question was put and agreed to and Mr. SPEAKER adjourned the House accordingly.

RESUMPTION

On re-assembling:

Mr. SPEAKER: At the adjournment the honourable junior member for St. John was addressing the House.

Mr. VAUGHAN: Mr. Speaker,—I am making a motion that the representatives of the "*Advocate*" newspaper be excluded from the debates of the House for one month as a protest against the very inaccurate, and misleading reports which they make Tuesday after Tuesday of the speeches of honourable members of this House, and in particular for the very prejudiced report which was made of the debate on Ministerial Status. According to that newspaper I did not make a speech in this House on Ministerial Status. The speech of every other honourable member was reported; but where I am concerned there was not a single word or sentence of

my speech; and the fact of the matter is, Mr. Speaker, that among the many speakers—

Mr. SPEAKER: May I point out to the honourable member that he has made two motions? The first was to move the adjournment of the House for five minutes.

Mr. VAUGHAN: It was not seconded.

Mr. SPEAKER: The honourable member must ask leave to withdraw that motion.

Mr. VAUGHAN: I am asking leave to withdraw that motion.

There being no objection leave was granted the honourable member.

Mr. VAUGHAN: As I was saying, sir, where the debate on Ministerial Status was concerned there was not a single word or sentence of my speech. I spoke after the honourable senior member for the City and immediately before the honourable senior member for Christ Church. The speeches of both of those honourable members appeared, but mine did not. If that is not prejudiced reporting, nothing else can be described as prejudiced reporting.

This is the second occasion on which this has happened to me. On the first occasion I was going to make a protest; but I let the matter pass. But on the present occasion the issue was so important that I think the motion which I have just made is justified. As I have said, I think that the Press is a particularly powerful weapon in a democracy. It is now rivalled by the Radio; but it is more powerful than the Radio; and it is quite unfair to a politician's future for the Press to give him inaccurate reports or no reports at all. I think that it should be remembered that the Press is here at Your Honour's sufferance and at the sufferance of the House, and if the House rules that they should not be here they cannot be here. The Press should be fair enough, and since we allow them to come here they should be responsible enough to report speeches made in this Chamber fairly and accurately.

What I would like to say is that in my opinion the "*Advocate*" has not got a sufficiently educated staff to report certain speeches properly. A reporter who is sent to report political debates must not only be able to write a little shorthand. He must be educated in the English language. When you say that sugar is king, he must know that you mean that. He must not think that you have said that sugar is pain. That is what I have been reported as saying on one occasion—that sugar is pain; and there are many such inaccuracies in the reports of speeches of honourable members from time to time. It is no fault of ours if the "*Advocate*" is too cheap to employ educated people to be trained as reporters; but it is unfair to any member of this House that he should be inaccurately reported. A politician's future depends largely on the Press reports he gets.

I was the only member who spoke really critically of the Ministerial Status proposals, and that was all the more reason why my speech should have been reported. If my political fortunes could have been damaged by that report I would have had to be satisfied. If my future success in returning to this House could have been obliterated by that report I would have had to be satisfied. But I should have been reported so that my constituents would see what views I took on that important issue. It was palpably a prejudiced report which may be very damaging to my political future. As I have said, sir, this is the second occasion on which this unfair and unjust action has been taken where I am concerned.

The Press, at least in large countries — and it may be so here too—can make or break governments. Public opinion is influenced by the Press and the

Press has been known to break governments in Great Britain time and again. The Press can also break a politician. It can destroy him in several ways; by omission as well as commission. I look upon this matter very seriously. We are supposed to be living in a democracy. I think that this little community is one of the last remaining democracies in the world right now. The responsibility of the Press is also a democratic issue, perhaps more than that of any other organ.

I say, sir, that it is a privilege for the Press to come to this Chamber. They come at our sufferance, it is well to let them know that they must not be taking sides on political issues in this Chamber. I do not accuse the Editorial and Management side of the *Advocate* on this occasion. I do not think they would be so petty as to deliberately leave out a speech that any honourable member makes in this Chamber. But reporters can be influenced, and they must not deal with honourable members according to their political likes and dislikes. When we discover that they are doing that, it is time for us to make a most active protest.

The "Official Gazette" in which the speeches of members are reported seldom reaches any but a few in the constituency which a member represents. It never reaches down to the lowest of the people on whom political support rests. Therefore, for those people in the parish of St. John I have said nothing on Ministerial Status. Probably five or six months from now that speech will appear in the "Official Gazette". Look at the expense I would have to go to have that speech published or to have single copies of it distributed in my constituency when the speeches of all other honourable members appeared in the *Advocate*.

I have seen certain speeches made in this Chamber made nonsense of by the reporters. They are not only uneducated, but they are unintelligent; because there are certain things I see reported in that paper which no member of this House could ever say, so nonsensical they are. If the reporters are not unintelligent, I can only assume that they do these things out of deliberate spite. I have seen reports of speeches made in this House that are so disgustingly distorted that it would have been impossible for any member to have spoken like that. It would be much too damaging to his own career. I have seen it written that we keep meetings so late that the reporters go to sleep. The *Advocate* does not need to keep a man here for eight hours; let them get sufficient staff so that the reporters can change off.

In a democracy the Press is a powerful organ, wielding public opinion and influencing the outlook of the people of the country. It is therefore an absolute essential, if public life is to go on as it should, that there should be accurate reporting by the Press; and if through lack of education or lack of intelligence or for any other reason, reporters who are sent here to report the speeches made in this Chamber make inaccurate reports it is time that a protest be made in this House. To leave out a speech altogether is to make a prejudiced report. If five members make speeches and only four are reported it is a prejudiced report. To talk about the "Official Gazette" is nonsense. It does not reach the masses of the people. I agree that the newspaper is a private organ; but it is not private in the sense that one's motorcar is private. A newspaper undertakes a public responsibility the moment it attempts to report anything of a public nature. There should be no taking sides where a newspaper is concerned. There should be no private issues. It is not true to say that a newspaper can report what it likes, and not report what it does not like.

The newspaper is one of the most important organs in a democracy. If for any reason the Press ceased to appear for a week the confusion in the public mind would be great. It is the only thing that thousands of people in a community like this read. Some of us read various kinds of literature, but thousands only read the newspaper. So you will see the great influence which the Press wields on the minds of people. When I say that the Press has a public responsibility you will see that that is actually so.

I say again, Mr. Speaker, that not one word, not one sentence of what I said on that important issue appeared in the "Advocate". According to that newspaper the honourable junior member for St. John had nothing to say on Ministerial Status. I am appealing to the members of this House as a brother member to put party politics above this issue and to think of it purely as members of the House. I ask them to support me in my protest through the motion that I have made.

Dr. CUMMINS: Mr. Speaker,—The honourable member's motion has not been seconded. May we go on to Government Business?

Mr. SPEAKER: If the honourable member's motion is not seconded the House will go on to Government Business.

Mr. AILDER: Mr. Speaker,—I am going to second the motion because I feel that it deserves to be seconded. I was only waiting to see how courageous the representatives of the people are, and the attitude displayed shows that if we do not have the courage to do a thing which is justified because of the fear of endangering our self-interest, then the interest of the constituents is at stake. I willingly second the motion made by the honourable junior member for St. John. I do it not because I want to be vindictive where this newspaper is concerned, but because I agree that the Press is a most important instrument in the communal life of this island, and it should be impartial. I endorse most of the remarks which the honourable junior member for St. John has made. I deprecate the partiality of this newspaper which I have noticed on occasions in the past when it comes to publishing news of public importance. What the honourable member has recently suffered from as regards the exclusion of his contribution to the Ministerial Status debate I have also suffered from in the past.

I am going to say right now that such an important organ as the "Advocate" should not allow any politician to suggest to it that a particular member's speech should not be published; and that has been done to me in the past. After I had made a speech on one occasion a member of the Government was overheard to say that the paper—I take it that he meant the "Advocate"—must not publish my speech. Where the "Advocate" is concerned it has gone out to many minds that not only the paid directors and staff have an influence on its policy; but that even individuals far removed from the Directorate can suggest what its policy must be. I do not know if that outside influence only affects the reporters here or if it is agreed to by the Directors of the "Advocate". But I must say that it leaves a bad taste where the public is concerned. The "Advocate" should be told what views the people hold as regards its policy.

I agree with the honourable junior member for St. John that while many of us cannot claim to be literary geniuses, it is appalling to see what is sometimes represented in the columns of the "Advocate" as having been part of honourable members' speeches. It does have a bad effect on the minds of the public few of whom can claim to be men of letters well informed enough to be able to read between the

lines and to realise that so and so could not have been said; and therefore this word must be wrongly spelt, or that word might not belong to this context. Most people in this colony take up a newspaper and just lap up what they see in print. They do not know better; and they can do no more than accept what they see in print before them. Therefore the responsibility is that of the "Advocate" to see to it that all words are properly spelt, and that words are not put in places where the speakers did not intend them to be put.

In the report of my speech on the Five Year Plan I noticed a couple of errors which I feel that an important publication like the "Advocate" should never have allowed to come before the public eye. It is either dangerous inefficiency or wilful intention to victimise some of the members of this House or to distort the proceedings of this honourable chamber. Why I feel that the "Advocate" should be more careful —

Mr. SPEAKER: In accordance with certain usages of Parliament I must stop the honourable member. The usual practice has been that if a member makes a complaint referring to a misrepresentation he has to produce a copy instantly or he must be stopped by the Speaker. I must therefore ask the honourable member to desist from that theme in his speech.

Furthermore, with regard to the honourable junior member for St. John who made the motion and who is making a similar complaint, I must disallow his claim until a newspaper showing the absence of his speech is produced to the House. Unless that is done there can be no further debate on the matter, and I will therefore have to call on the Government to proceed with its business. I am sorry that embarrassment has come upon the mover but I must adhere to custom.

Mr. ALLDER: I do not know if it is permissible for me to refer to the debate —

Mr. SPEAKER: By virtue of the ruling which I have made the honourable member cannot speak on the motion because there is no motion now before the House.

Mr. ALLDER: I hope to resume the debate as soon as I have the necessary documents.

Mr. SPEAKER: With my permission you may. I must now call on the Government to proceed with their business.

ORDERS 1 AND 2 POSTPONED

Dr. CUMMINS: Mr. Speaker,—I am asking that Orders Nos. 1 and 2 be further postponed and that I be allowed to take Order No. 3, standing in the name of the honourable senior member for St. Joseph, as the next Order of the Day.

There being no objection leave was granted the honourable member.

BILL TO AMEND PUBLIC UTILITIES ACT

On the order being called for Dr. Cummins to move the second reading of the Bill intituled an Act to amend the Public Utilities Act, 1951, to make provision for the appointment of assessors and for other matters:

Dr. CUMMINS: Mr. Speaker,—I am quite sure that it will be fresh in the minds of honourable members that in 1951 this House passed an Act to provide for the regulation of public utilities. Although that Act passed both Houses of the Legislature it was held up for the consent of His Majesty because certain companies, especially the Electric Company, contended that Section 3 of that Act as it was passed by this House would debar them from raising capital in England at a time when the com-

pany needed capital to extend its plant and to carry out certain alterations.

The Act was considered by the Secretary of State for the Colonies and at one time was the subject of discussion between representatives of the company, the honourable senior member for St. Joseph and Hon'ble H. A. Cuke member of the Other Place. Things went so far that Her Majesty was advised to withhold her consent. The Electric Company complained that Section 3 of the Act did not give their shareholders enough support, so to speak, and that the shareholders in England would not have enough confidence in the Company. I think too that at that time there was some talk about nationalising the Electric Company, and that might have had some influence on the actions of the Directors of the Company.

This situation lasted all through 1951/52 and it was only in August this year that this Bill was assented to. It was only assented to on the condition that the compromise which is set out in this amendment be sent down to the Legislature. The compromise, sir, is that provision will be made for a panel of assessors, and if the services of these assessors are required, two assessors would sit on the Board—one assessor representing the company and the other representing the consumers. But it was specifically laid down that these assessors would be there solely in an advisory capacity, and would have no power to vote. I think, sir, that emphasis should be laid on the question of not being able to vote.

As I have said, the Bill passed this House on the 19th of June, 1951, but was only assented to on the 1st of August this year. Therefore, a period of a little over two years elapsed before it was assented to.

In addition to the provision that the assessors should sit on the Board there are also other amendments sought to sections 32, 35 and 36 in order to provide a time limit for compliance with the order of the Board, and generally for the more effectual enforcement of orders.

Section 32 has to do with the decisions made by the Board. It reads:

"After the conclusion of the hearing, the Board shall make an order and a certified copy of such order shall be served upon the person or company against whom it is made, and notice thereof shall be given to the other parties to the proceedings."

You will notice that no time limit is mentioned in Section 32 and similarly it applies to Sections 35 and 36. Section 35 provides for the enforcement of the Order on the management of a business of utility. There again, the time factor is not mentioned in Section 36 which provides for the dissolution of the public utility after any default; therefore, these amendments are considered vital to this Act. These are the facts. I now beg to move that this Bill be read a second time.

Mr. COX: I beg to second that.

Mr. CRAWFORD: Sir, it is unnecessary to review the history of this bill except to support the honourable introducer who said that it gave rise to much controversy and although it was passed since August 1951 it was only assented to this year. The honourable introducer also said that at the time when it was passed, there was some talk about nationalisation of the Electric Company and that talk may have given rise to certain feelings on the part of the directors of the Electric Company.

Sir, we should be concerned with this matter because although the honourable member put it so mildly and inoffensively as to say that there was

some talk about nationalisation, we know that the results of that talk of that public utility have been disastrous to the public of Barbados. We know that electricity is of vital concern to the people of this country and by the company refusing to extend its service through the threat of nationalisation hanging over its head and the threat obtained in the Bill as passed by the Legislature, have caused distress among a large section of people who up to this time cannot get lighting facilities. It has also caused distress to another section of people who because construction of houses has been reduced through the owners' inability to get electricity, naturally those people — artisans and unskilled labourers — have been deprived of employment. It is true to say that there has been a cessation in the building industry and that has been created by the impasse to which the honourable introducer of this Bill referred to as some talk about nationalisation. Sir, there was more than some talk about nationalisation. The Government Party made it perfectly clear that it was going to nationalise all public utilities. It expressed the opinion that it was going to nationalise the Electric Company and actually told the public at the last election that if that party were returned to power, within six months it would nationalise the Electric Company. Because of that, it is a classical understatement to say that there was some talk about nationalisation which may have worried the minds of the directors of the Electric Company. That is a classical understatement because the fact remains that there was a definite and expressed intention by the Labour Party to nationalise public utilities. The Electric Company therefore had that statement as an excuse for expanding and to make it worse, the company claimed that the terms of the Public Utility Bill which was passed subsequently by the Legislature aggravated the situation so far as it was concerned. The company claimed that it had two threats—the Public Utility Bill and nationalisation—and because of that, it was not going to take steps for expansion until the situation was improved.

Sir, I am saying that this difficulty should not have been allowed to remain for so long with such a threat to industry and with such loss in employment. I have said nothing about the curtailment which ensued in industrial expansion, but it is common knowledge that since existing industrial concerns were not in a position to get electric power that no new industry could be set up under these conditions. This is a serious state of affairs for any country that is undeveloped and in which there is a great need for industrial expansion both to private employment and to the increasing of the national income. It does seem to me, therefore, that the step which the Government is taking today could or should have been taken sometime before in order to improve the situation and to bring about the results which it is hoped that this Bill would bring about. If the Government was forced to compromise on the issue, there was nothing to gain by delaying on its decision to compromise especially when the community was suffering as a result of the prolonged delay. If Government was forced to back down from carrying out its promise of nationalisation and then with its compromise of the Public Utility Bill, it found that even that was not in the best interest of the community, and because of that, it was also going to back down from that also, it should back down gracefully and as quickly as possible so as not to prolong the suffering which its previous action had created.

One more point and it is this. I have said before that in this matter of public utilities in Barbados, the sugar industry of this colony should be declared a public utility. Since I have made that statement, a number of events has transpired which makes it even more important for the sugar industry to be declared a public utility and to be operated under the terms and conditions of the Public Services Committee which would have to operate under this Act. I need not reiterate all the reasons for the suggestions that the manufacturers of sugar should be included in the Schedule of this Act, but I certainly do feel and am perfectly convinced that the time will come when it will have to be done. The Government is now considering this matter of public utilities and there is no reason why now we are amending the original Bill that provision should not be made for the inclusion of the manufacture of sugar under the schedule of this Act. It is merely another example of putting off for deeming as unnecessary a step which we are bound to take. Just as to a large extent this delay in making a compromise interfered with the economy of this country, so too would the refusal of including the manufacture of sugar as a public utility service is going to interfere with an important section of the economic life of this country.

Mr. MILLER: The honourable introducer of this Bill has moved amendments to Public Utilities Act and I regret very much that he has found it necessary to do so. I feel today just as I felt when that Act was introduced in this Chamber. I never agreed with that Bill. I felt that Government should not back down from nationalisation; therefore, these amendments further reduce any hope that the community would have of nationalisation of any public utility. It is unfortunate that this is so. When you think of creating a panel of persons to be nominated by the Government to take complaints against the Electric Company, when at the moment that company is guilty of every offence and every complaint under the sun, the provisions of that amendment nullifies the usefulness of such a Bill. It is regrettable that these amendments should be made to the Bill.

According to the objects and reasons, provision is made for a panel of assessors to be settled after consultation with the public utilities. Whenever the Board or any party so requests, two assessors are to be nominated for the purpose of a particular proceeding, one is to be selected from the panel referred to and the other is to be selected as representing the users of the public utility. The assessors should have technical knowledge of the subject they are to look into. This is where you are reducing this Act to a farce. This is unfortunate and what is more is that it is making a reality of the idea in the minds of the British directors of this company and a few members of the British Parliament that this company does not enjoy a sense of security. As it appears to me, we are just wasting time. Everywhere in this world when you threaten a company with nationalisation, its usual reaction is to capitalize. I must admire the position of the Electric Company in this community. Imagine that company up to this day still enjoying the privileges of the Master and Servants' Act. All that old type of legislation has not been amended, but we are amending this Public Utility Act of 1951. I really feel that we are wasting time.

Sir, electricity from its first beginning, when it was invented, the inventor thought more on what what it would mean to human beings; how he could accomplish something and pass it on to the benefit of every man. It is a regrettable state in which we

have found ourselves through the actions of this company. As the honourable senior member for St. Philip has said, by its action in lying low it has caused a deliberate shut-down in the construction of buildings in this community. Again, there is no place in Christendom that charges so much per unit as what is charged by the company that is operating here. I am one of the people who use a lot of electricity. I know what I pay for electricity for the amount of business which I operate with it. I have a reason to say that the charges per unit are the highest in the world and I see no reason why I should curry favour that remark, especially when I know that the industrial development of this country is bound up in what the industry is going to pay out for electricity.

Sir, just fancy that we are put in this helpless position that we must accept these amendments because the English directors of this company aired this matter, because they could do so, with the Colonial Office. It is unfortunate that the Colonial Office should be able to dictate our terms in this matter. Even with these amendments, there is no hope for development in our industries as a result of electricity. There is no hope that in our time, this company will extend its services. It is in their own interest to extend their service but they are not doing so. All over the country, housing development is subdued owing to this company refusing to extend its services. All over this country, you will find individual homes denied the right of a refrigerator through the lying low policy of this company. A refrigerator is not a luxury; it is something for the preservation of food.

Sir, the Government is helpless to-night. I feel that these amendments should be denied sanction because there is no hope, because no promise has been given to the people that this will cause the company to expand its services. As I have said often and often again, this public utility should be owned by the Government. Everywhere in the West Indies, electricity is owned and operated by Government. It is so owned in St. Lucia, Grenada and Jamaica. In this country, it is owned by Englishmen, with a few token shares given to some influential people of this colony and when that was done, it was because those people controlled the Legislature. This is a disgraceful thing and it lacks all inspiration. It has happened all through the ages. A half century ago, an English Company came here, bought a few miles of pathway and started a train service. In that company were a few Barbadians with token shares. The way in which it started, it was bound to fail and when the shareholders realised that it was failing they passed it on to the taxpayers by getting the Government of that time to take it over. Two years after, the railway passed out. That is the type of nationalisation that we have had. It has proved justifiable when the Government of that day took over the Waterworks. Had it not been that the water service was taken over then, I am sure that you would have had to buy water at a premium to-day. Sir, these amendments should be denied sanction because there is no hope. This is a joke.

Mr. HAYNES : I look upon this Bill as one of the important measures that has come before us for some time. I was not a member of this Chamber when the Public Utility Bill was passed but I appreciate it because I have always looked at Public Utility Boards as if they were clubs.

When these amendments came into my hands, I took the trouble to go to the Manager of the Electric Company and asked him whether the change would allow the company to expand its services. I pointed out to him that there were electric poles in the parish

of St. Andrew that were put down for many years and were actually rotting without an inch of wire attached to them from the time they were put down. He said that the company could not raise one penny to spend on the copper that would be needed to run the wires. I further asked him: Is this Bill any use to you? In replying, he said he did not know. If that is the case, this Bill will be passed and this island would be in the same predicament as before with regard to electricity. The honourable senior member for St. Philip made an excellent speech about electricity. While it is true that telephone is essential, it is not as essential as electricity. You can get along without a telephone, but you can get nowhere without electricity.

I hope the two honourable members of the Government who are present will take this matter up with the Manager of the Electric Company and find out if this Bill is really no help to the company. I would like an answer from the Government, because what I was told worries me, the answer coming as it were from the head of the spring. I would like to know if what I heard is so, what is going to be the position? Are we going along in the same way having poles all along the highways but with no wire on them? In the parish of Christ Church, there is the excellent district of Silver Sands, but it has no electricity. We all know that the tourist industry cannot be properly set up before you have adequate electricity. Is not any action taken over the Electric Company as was suggested by this House in an Address which was passed unanimously? We have been waiting too long for adequate electricity. We would have to pay a lot more money for the concern the longer we wait than we would have paid if we had bought it over then. I ask again if there is any truth in the statement that this Bill would not help the Electric Company. Although we are doing something as regards appointing a very strong Public Service Commission under this Bill, would it not help that company? Regardless of whether the Government takes over the Electric Company or not, I would like to see electricity apportioned to the various districts all over the island. If the company cannot do it, let it go out of business. As the honourable senior member for St. Philip has said, our development has absolutely been nullified and stultified through lack of adequate electricity. I am hoping I will hear some reply from the honourable junior member for St. Thomas as regards whether the amendments to this Bill are as was asked by the Electric Corporation.

Mr. BARROW : Mr. Speaker, I would like to make a motion for the postponement of consideration of these amendments to the Public Utility Act of 1951. It is my opinion that the Public Utility Bill will link along with the Majira and famous escapes in history, it being the biggest flight from socialism that one ever saw.

Dr. CUMMINS : On a point of order, Mr. Speaker. Is the honourable member in order to discuss the principle of the Bill. The principle of the Bill has been discussed since 1951. The honourable member has begun by discussing the principle of the Bill. This Bill deals with certain amendments to the principal Bill.

Mr. SPEAKER : I think the honourable senior member for St. George should listen very carefully to what is being said at this stage. It concerns him.

Dr. CUMMINS : For his benefit, I will repeat that the principle of this Bill was accepted by the House in June, 1951, therefore that is not before us now. What is before this House is certain amendments to certain clauses of that Bill. If the honourable senior member for St. George is going to raise the question of whether we should have a Public Util-

ity Bill or not, I would say that he is out of order to do so.

Mr. SPEAKER : I would like to inform the honourable senior member for St. George that he cannot criticise the principal Bill.

Mr. BARROW : Sir, I beg to differ from the honourable junior member for St. Thomas because the whole object of these particular amendments is to alter and that is the ordinary terminology which I should use. These particular amendments alter the whole spirit of the Bill which was passed by this House in 1951. It is for that reason I said that the Majira and Famous Escapes of history would take second place to this escape from socialism and flight thereof which we are doing by bringing in these amendments. It is nothing short of a flight from socialism—from the beginning to the end. As honourable members will see from the terms of the amendment itself, it substitutes the word 'panel' for 'Board'.

Mr. SPEAKER : If the honourable member is prepared to argue that these amendments cut across the principal Bill, I am prepared to see to it that the honourable member does not criticise the principal Bill. Is the honourable member saying that these amendments cut across the principle of the Bill?

Mr. BARROW : Sir, the Public Utilities Bill of June 1951 was not passed by this House but by a previous House. No House can bind a subsequent House to accept what was done by that House, therefore, I am within my rights to comment on these amendments and on any previous legislation which was not passed by this House. This Bill was passed in June 1951, and although the Governor has no reserve powers by the constitution, high pressure groups in England made Her Majesty the Queen reserve her assent to it. Because of certain directors in an English Company having certain interest in that Bill, Her Majesty the Queen exercised her prerogative and although it was passed by this Legislature in June 1951, it was not assented to until about twelve weeks ago.

Mr. SPEAKER : I must let the honourable member know that he must pay attention to the Rules of this House. I do not see any rule which refers to another session. Rule 123 is as follows :—

"No member may reflect upon any vote of the 'House, except for the purpose of moving that such vote be rescinded.'"

Mr. BARROW : Mr. Speaker, just as a matter of interest, I respectfully submit that with that Rule *ipso facto* to the House, it will be fictitious to suggest in this House or for any member of the House of Assembly to get up and make any amendment to the laws. I suggest that the very fact that you can introduce an amendment or repeal a Bill that is passed makes that Rule —

Mr. SPEAKER : Then and only then is it in order.

Mr. BARROW : I am going to move an amendment to the amendments to the Public Utilities Bill of 1951.

Mr. SPEAKER : The honourable member is out of order.

Mr. BARROW : Sir, do you mean to say that I am not entitled to move an amendment to any motion which seeks to amend a Bill which has been passed by a previous House. I beg Your Honour to reflect. That will stifle the whole system of democratic debate.

Mr. SPEAKER : What question is the honourable member speaking on now?

Mr. BARROW : I am speaking on the motion which was moved by the honourable junior member for St. Thomas.

Mr. SPEAKER : Do proceed with that.

Mr. BARROW : It was my intention to proceed with that when Your Honour stopped me.

Mr. SPEAKER : You cannot go back to the Public Utilities Act of 1951 and criticise it.

Mr. BARROW : Your Honour the heading of this Bill is a Bill intituled an Act to amend the Public Utilities Act, 1951, to make provision for the appointment of assessors and for other matters, and you cannot discuss the amendments effectively, or with any benefit to the public, without referring to what the previous state of affairs was under the Public Utilities Bill of 1951. Here you are amending something and I am entitled to draw the attention of honourable members—not necessarily to reflect on the principal Bill—to what is the position under the original Bill and then discuss the merits or demerits of the amendments proposed. It will be completely obnoxious if one cannot do that.

Dr. CUMMINS : Your Honour, is the honourable member in order?

Mr. SPEAKER : I am giving all the latitude to the honourable member until he will have no latitude at all.

Mr. BARROW : Mr. Speaker,—The very first thing I said was that I was going to move a motion for postponement of consideration of these amendments and my main reason for doing so is that these amendments are a complete departure from the original Bill, not only in the wording but a departure from the spirit of it. Surely I am in my rights to comment on the original Bill in relation to the fact that the present amendments are a complete departure from the principles of the original Bill. I do not see how that can be a reflection on a vote of this House. Personally, I cannot see why you cannot debate on anything that has been done by a previous House.

Mr. SPEAKER : If the honourable member is laying down rules of procedure for this House, he would be disallowed from doing so.

Mr. BARROW : Certainly, Sir, you can debate on anything that has been done by a previous House. As a matter of fact, how can you repeal an Act, as was done recently in this Chamber, unless you reflect on a previous law that was made? If Your Honour deems it as either contrary to the Rules of this House or a question of public policy, I will take my seat.

Mr. SPEAKER : I do not want the honourable member to think that I am in any way trying to prevent you from debating the amendments which are before the House.

Mr. BARROW : I have no further desire to do so, Your Honour.

Mr. E. D. MOTTLEY : Mr. Speaker this Bill which seeks to amend the Public Utilities Bill, 1951, is one which no honourable member should comment on adversely. When the principal Bill was first discussed, I think it was accepted with the spirit of compromise in that the Government having to back down from its policy of nationalisation, had brought it into being as a half-way measure. This Bill was brought in because the Government had part of its platform on nationalisation of public utilities, but my party objecting to nationalisation, said that instead of nationalisation it would agree to a form of control over public utilities by which the Government could have a voice in regulating the profits of the particular companies, the prices charged customers, as well as in the regulating of the conditions generally under which those companies should be run. It was in the spirit of compromise which I think is the essence of democracy that the Government accepted this Public

Utilities Bill. If I am correct, I said then that there were many sections in the Bill which may make directors of such companies say,—bearing in mind that existing Public Utilities in this colony were English companies and as such there was no hope or chance of their seeing what was going on,—that we were taking away their rights. It was no desire of us to take away the rights of those companies.

I feel that we should enter a compromise by which we can have further improvements and developments on the conditions that existed in the past. This Bill would improve the conditions. If I remember correctly, I said then,—and I still feel the same way today,—that there should be no control over a private company until Government definitely decided that it was going to take over that company and nationalise it. I am mindful that at the time that it was not a question of nationalization; that question not arising owing to the fact that Government saw that there was no money in the Treasury to pursue nationalization and to do the other social activities which were more pressing. It was true however to say that the debate on the Bill revived that. My views on nationalization are known by every honourable member, and I hope the time will never be ripe for the Government to nationalise. Let Government remain a silent partner and draw all their taxes from these companies. That is my view.

If I may get on with the subject matter of this Bill, one wonders if these amendments will bring about a change in the entire situation. What are the facts? The Public Utilities Bill, as the Deputy Leader told us, was passed in 1951 and for some reason or the other, instructions were issued afterwards and Her Majesty the Queen refused to assent to it. It was drawn to Her Majesty's attention that there would be grave danger if she assented to it without common agreement between those two companies and the Government of Barbados. Well these amendments have come forward within a few weeks after the Bill has been assented to.

The facts are simple. With existing conditions, there is not the wherewithal—the money—to buy out the Electric Company which is the public utility company to which we are directing our attention. We are not so mindful of the rest—the telephone, gas, transport, or radio distribution as some people claim to be a public utility. As it strikes me, if you are not going to nationalise, or you cannot do so at the moment, the Government or any Government in power would be stupidly strongheaded if it attempted to block legislation to allow an existing company the facilities to raise the necessary funds to carry out improvements to its plant. What the honourable senior member for St Philip said is true. My own experience is that a number of people not only in industrial concerns here or the number of artisans and unskilled workers that have been denied employment through the unavailability of electricity in certain places, but also other people have refused to invest in this island because they could not get electricity in sufficient quantity to carry on their businesses. I maintain that electricity is not a luxury. It is a necessity. Anything which can be used to save human life ceases to be a luxury and it can safely be argued today that in operating theatres in all parts of the world, electricity is considered in the saving of people lives.

The reason why I supported the Public Utility Bill is because I feel that somebody besides the private enterprise should have a say in determining to what extent the profits of that private enterprise should be. I shall address the following remarks to the Gov-

ernment. The honourable junior member for St. Andrew mentioned that it was within his knowledge that if this Bill was passed as it is, that the amendments did not meet the approval of the directors of the Electric Company. It was said when the Bill was passed in 1951 that the company could not raise money on the English market owing to a clause in the Bill. I may say that I was shown an advertisement in the *London Times* to raise money on the English market for that company and was told that nobody would lend owing to the facts which were stated. I think the honourable junior member for St. Thomas will bear me out when I say that before you can raise money on the English market, you have to set out all the relevant facts in a newspaper.

I hope the honourable junior member for St. Thomas will assure this House that these amendments deal with what is absolutely necessary for this company to get ahead with improvements to its plant. I hope it is not as the honourable junior member for St. Andrew inferred. I think it would be mere stupidity if these amendments would not allow that to be so. Government has been big enough to say that it has not abandoned nationalisation, but it does not see the possibility of carrying it out in the immediate future. I will therefore ask honourable members to bear in mind this question: Is not it absolutely necessary for Government to present a workable Bill which would allow the shareholders and directors of these public utilities companies to get further shareholders for their respective companies so that the inhabitants of this colony can get the benefits afforded by the company? Let Government then tax the company for all that it is worth.

Sir, I was amused as I sat and heard the honourable junior member for St. George in his tirade about nationalisation. It is amusing to hear those professed socialists speak. I do not think that they have heard the Leader of this House say "We are not masters in our own house." At any rate, I am glad that the Government is not so short-sighted as to pay much attention to their speeches. Sir, if it is not possible for the Government in the not far distant future to bring in a Bill for nationalisation, then I must respectfully submit that it would be infinitely better to bring about a workable compromise. I understand that these amendments will bring about a workable compromise. If the Government knows that this is not so, let us know if it would not be possible after these amendments are made to the bill for the electric company to get the money it needs on the English money market. I would put it this way. There is no financial, economic or technical specialist among the four members of this government. I do not think the members of this Government will be annoyed if I say that they are ignorant of the financial implications or the technicalities of a public utility. Like myself, they are ignorant, therefore, they must be advised. They need not take views from the conservative elements or from the directors of the electric company. This government can get those views from the socialist representatives in England. If this bill is not workable, may I ask in your conservative opinion, is it not wisdom to bring in something that is workable so as to let this company develop? It is of great importance that you bring in such an amendment.

I am supporting these amendments today. When the Public Utilities Bill was brought in here I went most carefully into it and on the word of the Leader of the House, it was agreed, by members on both sides that the Bill was the answer to the question

and was a compromise. Hence, I hope these amendments will make it workable. I do not believe, in my life time, or possibly in the life time of any member of this House that we are going to see a Bill for the nationalisation of the electric company or any Public Utility company. Therefore I support these amendments with the fullest sense of my responsibility and pride. I say pride because I am mindful that the honourable senior member for St. Michael has opposed me in political speeches when he said that if the Labour party came into power, they would nationalise the electric company within six months. It is now six years since the Labour party came into power and it is unable to nationalise any Public Utility company. As I have said, I do not think we will get nationalisation in our life time. I hope this Bill will be workable, and the electric company will be able to get the money it wants to extend its services. Without that, nothing can be done.

Mr. WILLIAMS: Although I was not a member of this Honourable Chamber in 1951 when this Public Utility Bill was passed and so far did not take part in the speeches made on it, I would say, if I were probably in here that the Bill was a *volte face* from nationalisation or any socialist principle. It is definitely a *volte face* from nationalisation. The facts as they appear to me are that it may have been possible in 1951 for the Government to acquire the Electric Company, the contention at that time being that if the Government bought it, it would be buying a virtual rubble heap. If the Government did not acquire it at that time, it cannot acquire it in the next 10 or 15 years because looking at the last trading report of that company, as far as I can see, the company's assets have risen upward. Certainly, the Electric Company has put down during that period two or three generators and I am sure that the Government finances are not in any better position today than it was then. Unless we strike oil in such commercial quantities that our revenue can equal that of Quebec, I do not see it being able to take it over. As it appears to me, this company should not have been overwhelmed by any threat or fear that nationalisation would come about. What worries me more is that there is a very dangerous clause in the Public Utilities Bill—Clause 24—under which the company can exercise a *laissez-faire* and do nothing at all unless they can foresee some economic reward for it. In other words, you leave it to the better judgment of the company to say whether it is justifiable to carry out any new development. I think that state of affairs is very perilous indeed.

I sincerely hope, although it can be said that nationalisation was never attempted by this Government that for all practical purposes the Electric Company would take it that the threat of nationalisation has been removed and would do all in its power to raise the money which it needs for improving its services. I certainly hope that sooner or later a certain amount of development will take place so far as the Electric Company is concerned. At the time of the Coronation, that company was able to supply electricity to carry out all the illuminations that actually took place in the island. After the Coronation, every body thought that certain extensions would be carried out. It is true that a certain number of consumers' licences have been granted. It is hoped that before the natural gas wells run low that the Electric Company will be in a position to supply current for industrial purposes. I sincerely hope that these amendments are agreeable to the representatives of the company and are what they agreed to

when they were here on a visit a few weeks ago. I do hope that this midway position which has been created will enable the company to go ahead and that a certain amount of developments will follow in which the general public will stand to benefit.

Mr. MAPP: I beg to move that this House be now adjourned for three quarters of an hour.

Mr. TALMA seconded the motion which was agreed to and Mr. Speaker accordingly, adjourned the House.

On re-assembling,

Mr. SPEAKER: When the House adjourned, the honourable senior member for St. Thomas moved the adjournment.

Mr. MAPP: Mr. Speaker, I really did not intend to say anything on this matter but what drew me to my feet were the remarks of the honourable member who supported the Bill. The honourable senior member for the City remarked during a cross passage that this Bill would assist matters but as a compromise it did not go far enough and that Government should be more liberal. Of course, he did not say to whom but he went on to say that Government should bring in a further amendment. It is true, Sir, that he spoke more or less in parables and was only generalizing. Personally, I do not know what he was driving at; but it really has surprised me that this compromise is not acceptable to the Electric Company.

Dr. CUMMINS: On a point of order, Sir, I did not say that. It is just the other way. I said both sides agreed to the amendment.

Mr. MAPP: I said that was the inference made by the honourable senior member for the City. The inference was that the compromise did not go far enough and the position would remain the same way. The inference from his remarks was that the company was not satisfied with the compromise and would like Government to give a freer hand. I did not hear the speech of my colleague but his denial shows that there was some agreement on both sides. It leaves me in a dilemma because on the one side, we have people who profess to know the views of the company saying that the compromise does not go far enough and on the other side, we have the Government saying that there is common agreement.

Mr. SPEAKER: Is the honourable member referring to people?

Mr. MAPP: I said that we had honourable members and people who should know the views of the company, or who were expected to know, saying one thing while Government was saying another.

In passing, I would first like to say that I quite realize that the Government faced a serious problem from the start. Reference was made to nationalization by some honourable member and of this Bill being a flight from socialism, but while this House appreciates the fact that it is a back down from nationalization, honourable members should still ask themselves, if a Bill like this has been delayed for two years by the Queen-in-Council and reserved by the Colonial Office, what would have happened to a Bill of a more radical nature; let us say one for the nationalization of the Electric Company? Sir, I can well imagine what would be the fate of such a Bill.

Sir, some honourable members talked about nationalization. I feel that they are not facing facts. As a Labour Party, I feel that we should not depart too easily from the principle of nationalization, but we must realise what is the position of the Government. At the same time, I do not adhere to the talk about driving away capital because that capital which those honourable members are talking about is put up by people who do not care at all about the interest of the people in Barbados. I have no doubt whatsoever that if that company was not

capitalized by English people that this Bill would have already been enacted. The very fact that it is owned by English shareholders should make this House aware of the difficulties of taking any drastic measures.

(A VOICE): I do not agree with that statement. Take the B.U.O.C.

Mr. MAPP: I do not think that B.U.O.C. was in the same position. The blame was put squarely on the shoulders of B.U.O.C. It was not a question of nationalization at all. As I have said, I quite foresee the difficulties but I do not see why we should be distracted by the argument that the talk of nationalization drove away capital and prevented the Electric Company from expanding. If every honourable member will remember, in the Chamber of Commerce, not one voice has spoken in favour of that company; everyone has condemned and criticised it. Not only in the Chamber of Commerce, but members of the Other Place have criticised that company and called it Public Enemy No. 1; therefore, even among the capitalists of this colony there has been a constant cry that the Electric Company has not performed its functions properly and that the island has been hit hard by the company's failures and that something should be done to bring that company to a realization of its failures. Let me say that it is no labour cry so far as acting against this Electric Company is concerned. It is no partisan cry; all elements of the island that have any concern with the economy of the island have been telling Government over and over again that it must take strong action against that company. If the Government has had to turn off its course and to alter its decision, it has, I hope, done so in the interest of the people of this island.

Sir, it would be a sorry thing if this House does not agree to this amendment. It would get us no further if we do not agree to this amendment. It would mean further delay to the principal Bill which has already been delayed since 1951. I therefore cannot see wisdom in either postponing or not agreeing to these amendments tonight. I hope what the Government said over these amendments to the Bill is correct and not what the honourable senior member for the City said. I hope that these amendments will get us somewhere and the stalemate will not be prolonged. I hope that the directors of this company in England will see that the Barbados Government is willing to compromise although it is fed up over the action or inaction of the company, and as a result, its temper is fast rising. Sir, far from asking for a further compromise, I think this company should realise that it has offended us and is still offending us. It is not doing what it should do. It is not carrying out its responsibilities to the public of Barbados. Therefore its directors should attempt to act within the spirit of this Act and accept the decisions arrived at in the amendments set out in this Bill.

Mr. TALMA: Mr. Speaker,—I would subscribe to the view that the Government is definitely deviating to some extent from its settled policy of nationalisation as mentioned by certain honourable members who have spoken prior to me. But although that may be the case, and although the Government is deviating from its policy of nationalisation, the amendment as proposed in this Bill can be regarded as being the closest step to nationalisation which is possible under the present circumstances. This amending Bill is undoubtedly a matter of expediency and has been sent down as a case of compromise. I regard it as a compromise which should have taken place many months ago. In the interim, many hundreds of people have suffered as a result of the

unsettled policy where the Electric Company is concerned, and as a result of the threat of nationalisation which cannot be implemented, but which instilled fear in the minds of the English shareholders of the company and made them desist from putting more capital in the company for the extension of the plant. The position is that the colony's electric service was at a stalemate and hundreds of people have stood to lose.

As far as the consuming public is concerned, however, this Bill does not give them any protection, in my view. Having an expert as an assessor sitting on a board and giving his views, but without the right to vote, does not carry the consuming public any further. So from that point of view I do not consider that the Bill is worth the paper on which it is written. It does not give the public any protection. The assessor will be an expert; but the expert views which he puts forward need not necessarily be accepted and implemented. Still, Sir, if this amending Bill will cause the English shareholders to have greater confidence that there is no threat of nationalisation around the corner owing to the Government's lack of funds, or owing to the fact that it is difficult for the Government to raise a loan on the English market as has been mentioned by the Leader of the House, it will still be good from the point of view of the English shareholders that this Bill should be passed to satisfy them that the Government is acting above board and that bona fides can be placed on the agreement which has been signed in this respect.

I do not care, Sir, to go into the little details which have been thoroughly explained by the honourable Deputy Leader. But the fact remains that if these assessors are appointed, one to represent the consumers, and they do not have the right to vote, merely the right to advise, it is not good enough. But it is as much as the company or the English shareholders would agree to. I repeat, sir, that if the passing of this Bill will cause the English shareholders to believe that they have scored a victory over the Labour Party, and that the Party are desisting from their threat to nationalise the company, if they believe that they have scored this victory—and it appears to me that they have—they will no doubt set about to improve their plant, realising that for another 25 or 50 years they will have the monopoly they now have. They will extend their service to the community, and that is what we want. So we hope that they will satisfy the needs of the community to some extent, despite the high prices which they charge.

I speak now on my own behalf. Knowing that the Electric Company is a private concern, I have never during my electioneering promised the people to give them electric light overnight. The company is a private undertaking over which the Government has no control; and in the absence of being able to borrow a very large amount of money, or diverting large sums from other purposes which are more urgent, I do not see how Government could nationalise the Electric Company overnight. I am happy to see that the Government has been discreet enough to bow on this occasion and accept something which is acceptable mainly to the shareholders of the company, because some benefit will still be derived for the taxpayers and the community as a whole. I commend the Government for accepting the inevitable for the time being in the absence of being able to float a large loan on the English market; because it must be remembered that the shareholders of the Electric Company are the same capitalists whom you may have to approach to borrow money to nationalise the company. It would be a very awkward position

Mr. ALLDER: Mr. Speaker,—The members of the Government have got to cease talking nonsense about nationalisation. They know that such statements have nearly brought about economic chaos in this colony. (A MEMBER: Not true). They know that they have neither the courage nor the means, nor the capacity to nationalise the electric company nor any other industry, and yet Government members still persist, for political reasons, in talking about nationalisation. I am saying, sir,—

Mr. MAPP: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker. Is the honourable member implying that when we raise the point about nationalisation it is purely for political reasons?

Mr. ALLDER: Everyone other than the shareholders of the Electric Company has accepted the Party's statements about nationalisation as being based purely on political grounds. The honourable member knows that. They make those statements purely on political grounds, but the statements do a great deal of harm.

Mr. SPEAKER: The honourable member knows the rule about imputing motive.

Mr. ALLDER: I am merely appealing to them that since they have no real desire to nationalise anything, to desist from repeating it over and over again. We have been told by those who know that the reason why we have been forced to endure the hardship which was placed upon us, the reason why people could not get current from the Electric Company, was because of the threat, the meaningless threat of the Labour Party on this nationalisation question. I am saying that inasmuch as this meaningless threat has imposed hardships on us in the past, if it is continued it will continue to impose hardship on us.

The main reason why I rose to my feet, sir, was because I heard the honourable member say that the Government had not changed its views. I hope that the honourable member realises that what he says is being taken seriously. It has been taken seriously in the past, and if one applies any commonsense to it one will see that the honourable member is making statements which will drive fear into the hearts of those who have it within their power to expand their industry and give greater service to the people. The whole shortage of electric supply from which we are suffering is based on the threats made by the Labour Party. It is time that they stopped making those threats, because the threats have no meaning at all, and they know it. But the statements alone can cause a good deal of harm. If you have no cause to make a statement, do not make it; especially when you know that it will put fear in the minds of those who can do greater harm to the community. The honourable junior member for St. George said that every accusation made against the company was justified.

Mr. MILLER: On a point of explanation, Mr. Speaker. What the honourable member is saying bears no relation to the truth.

Mr. ALLDER: I took the trouble to write what the honourable member said. He said that every accusation made against the company could be justified. He said that the Electric Company was guilty of every complaint. For my part I feel it is not the company who is to be wholly blamed. Every investor looks after the interest of his business and if he sees anything which would threaten the interests of his business or industry he is justified in withholding the service offered by the industry; especially when threatened meaninglessly by the members of the Government. If a threat was

made against the small concern that is owned by the honourable member he would try to protect his interest; and that is why I say that the Electric Company is probably justified in doing what it has done. I repeat, that members of the Government should stop making meaningless threats which have done great harm in the past and will continue to do harm in the future.

Mr. LEWIS: Mr. Speaker,—Honourable members are really at a disadvantage in discussing so many amendments to this Act because it is not in the Laws of the Island for 1951, and it is only with great difficulty that you can find it now. It was passed by a previous House, and it is very difficult for honourable members to get a copy of the Act, and to see how these amendments fit in. I would like to remind the House that it is the Public Utilities Act that we are amending, and not the Electric Company Act. The next thing is that originally the idea of setting up a Public Utilities Board came from the Opposition, and it was accepted by the Government for what reason I do not know. The first time we knew that the Government had accepted it was when we heard it mentioned in a Speech from the Throne. We abandoned the principle of nationalisation at least temporarily then.

It strikes me that it is only the Electric Company which took exception to the Public Utilities Act as it was passed. All the other companies have been able to raise capital for expansion. That has been particularly noticeable in the case of the Telephone Company. I wonder if the honourable junior member for St. Thomas could give me some information. (When the original Bill was going through the Legislature no one thought that it was necessary for it to be reserved for Her Majesty's pleasure. At least no one said that. But the moment it was actually passed we heard that since it is a Bill which affects foreign companies it was necessary for it to be reserved. I have never heard that before it was passed. I heard that the Governor has no reserve powers; but it seems to me that he can reserve Bills for the pleasure of the Sovereign and so delay legislation passed by this House.

When it comes to the question of foreign companies I would like to know how it is that the Barbados Telephone Company becomes a foreign company in Barbados; and the same thing applies to the Barbados Electric Supply Corporation. In that respect I would like to tell honourable members that they should not allow themselves to be carried away by certain people who would like them to nationalise this company. You will find that it is probably because they have no shares in it. But they do not really agree with nationalisation. As regards the Electric Company not being able to raise capital, since this Bill was passed they did not need to raise one brass farthing outside of this colony. They could not expand fast enough to absorb the money they are getting out of the Public Treasury. They would have to employ too many people. Since this Bill was passed they have been supplying current for the lighting of Seawell Airport and for pumping all the water, and that represents a revenue to raise which they would have to supply light to each of the 220,000 people of the island, if the Government was wise enough to generate its own electricity at these places.

I repeat, sir, that it struck me as strange that when the original Bill was before the Legislature we were told nothing about it being necessary to reserve it. It was not mentioned by the Crown Law Officer in the Other Place. Only after the Bill was passed did we hear about it. I wonder if it will be a similar thing where this amending Bill is concerned. I feel that

when a Bill of this nature comes before the Legislature we should be told that it is one of the Bills which should be passed but that it will not be assented to because there is some objection. I am saying that, because this Bill was not rushed through the Legislature. At least it was not rushed through the Other Place. It took considerable time. It was at that stage that companies like the Electric Company and the Telephone Company or any body of persons should have sent in to the Legislature their objections to the Bill and the grounds of their objections. It seems to me that a company like the Electric Company, merely because it is an English company can have some influence on the signing of legislation in this colony by Her Majesty's representative. That strikes me as being a very peculiar state of affairs. I do agree with the honourable junior member for St. Thomas that there was some slight talk about nationalisation at the time.

Dr. CUMMINS: Mr. Speaker,— I will try to reply to some of the points made by honourable members. As far as nationalisation is concerned, most members seem to feel that nationalisation is dead. That is their opinion. The Labour Party has said that for tactical reasons nationalisation is shelved. The Labour Party believes in nationalisation to-day just as much as when the Party came into existence. But, sir, it is a good general who knows when to retreat. A good retreat is a good stroke for victory. The Labour Party believes in nationalisation as much to-day as it ever did.

I distinctly said in my opening remarks that these amendments were agreed to by both parties. There were more than one set of discussions between the company's representative, the honourable senior member for St. Joseph, the Hon'ble H. A. Cuke and the Secretary of State for the Colonies. As a result of those talks the company have agreed to these amendments. The company said ever since at the beginning of this business that they could not raise capital in England because of the operation of Section 3 of the original Bill. They said that because of Section 3 the English shareholders would be unwilling to put money into the company for expansion. If we amend Section 3 I take it that the company would be in a position to raise capital, and if they do that, they will be able to expand. Not only that, but also as regards Section 24 of the Act. Because when the Act is in operation, that section gives power to the Board to call on any Public Utility Company to expand. Therefore it is not a question that after we pass these amendments a company can still sit and do nothing. We will have a wide awake Board which will call on the company to expand in any direction that seems reasonable. (A MEMBER: In St. Andrew too?) An honourable member on my left asks if in St. Andrew too. Surely the company can be called upon to extend its service in St. Andrew.

The honourable junior member for St. George made a very good speech, but he spoiled it. He said that the expert assessors could only give advice, but they could not vote, and he expressed the view that they should be given the vote. We think differently, and so does our legal adviser, the Attorney General; and the companies themselves are satisfied with that. The assessors will be there in a technical capacity to advise the Board. When it comes to the remarks of the honourable junior member for the City about these reserve powers the honourable member should know—he is quite conversant with the constitution—that the Governor here has a right to refer to the Colonial Office any Bill which he thinks he should refer. The Secretary of State for the Colonies has

the right to refer any Bill he thinks he should refer for Her Majesty's assent. That has ever been so. This Bill was a question between the Government and public of Barbados and the shareholders of the company who are in England. Naturally, if they think their interests are being threatened the English shareholders will appeal strongly to the Colonial Office to protect them. The Secretary of State for the Colonies has taken a hand in the matter since July 14th, 1952; or probably earlier than that. There were consultations between the Colonial Office and the Barbados Government. It subsequently happened that the honourable senior member for St. Joseph and honourable Mr. Cuke were in England and they met around the table and came to certain agreements.

I am not at all apprehensive that when this Bill is passed it will not improve the situation. As a matter of fact the company itself has given these amendments its blessing. I am not apprehensive that this Bill will not redound to the very good benefit of Barbados and the consumers of electricity, and that the service of the company will not be expanded throughout the island.

The question that the Bill be read a second time was put and agreed to without division.

TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES

Dr. CUMMINS: Mr. Speaker,— The Chairman of Committees is absent. I move that the honourable senior member for St. Thomas be Chairman of Committees for the rest of the day's sitting.

Mr. Cox seconded.

The question was put and agreed to without division.

On the motion of Dr. CUMMINS seconded by Mr. Cox Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair and the House went into Committee on the Bill, Mr. MAPP in the Chair.

Clause 1 of the Bill was called and agreed to.

Clause 2 was called. It reads as follows:—

2. The Public Utilities Act, 1951, (hereinafter referred to as "the principal Act") is hereby amended by adding the following section immediately after section three thereof:—

"3A. (1) There shall be constituted a panel (hereinafter referred to as "the public utilities panel") consisting of not more than six persons to be nominated by the Governor after consultation with such public utilities as he shall see fit.

(2) Whenever for the purposes of any particular complaint, hearing or other proceeding of the Board, the Board either upon application by any of the parties or otherwise so requests, or the Governor thinks it expedient, there shall be added to the Board two assessors nominated by the Governor, one selected from the public utilities panel and the other selected to represent the users of the Public Utility concerned. In selecting such assessors, regard shall be had to the particular class of case or proceeding to be heard so that, as nearly as the circumstances may permit, the persons selected as assessors shall be conversant with and have knowledge of the technicalities that may arise in considering such particular complaint, hearing or other proceeding.

(3) Any assessor so appointed shall, for the purposes of such complaint, hearing or other proceeding in respect of which he may be so appointed, and subject to the provisions of this Act and of any regulations made thereunder, exercise all the powers and functions of a

member of the Board except that the decision of the Board shall be the decision of the members only excluding any such assessor, or of a majority of such members, as the case may be."

Mr. LEWIS: Mr. Chairman, — I would like to enquire if the Government decided to have a permanent panel. If a particular question arises it seems to me that the Government should appoint those persons who know something about the question. But it seems to me that you are creating a permanent panel. Perhaps I am wrong.

Dr. CUMMINS: It seemed advisable to the Government that there should be always a panel on hand. But whenever a dispute arises, the two assessors will be appointed. That strikes me as being a better system than to have a haphazard panel appointed every time there is a dispute, there being the possibility that you may not be able to put your hand haphazardly on the people of the necessary calibre.

Mr. LEWIS: I made the point because in Clause 2 (2) of this amending Bill it says that whenever any particular question arises the assessors should be appointed in such a way that as nearly as circumstances permit, the persons selected as assessors shall be conversant with and have knowledge of the technicalities that may arise in considering such particular complaint, etc. You have a restriction on the number of the panel, and it may just happen that outside of that panel you may have the most knowledgeable person in the island at the time.

Clause 2 was agreed to without division.

Clauses 3 to 8 inclusive were called and agreed to.

On the motion of Dr. CUMMINS seconded by Mr. Cox Mr. CHAIRMAN reported the passing of the Bill in Committee, and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

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

Dr. CUMMINS: Mr. Speaker,—That is the end of Government Business for today.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS.

Mr. TALMA: Mr Speaker,—I am asking leave that Order No. 22 standing in my name be taken as the next Order of the Day.

There being no objection leave was granted the honourable member.

On the Order being called for Mr. TALMA to move the second reading of the Bill to amend the Solicitors' Act, 1896:

Mr. TALMA: Mr. Speaker,—The object of this Bill is to regularise the Solicitors' Act of 1896 which is entirely out of line with similar Acts in all the other colonies of the Caribbean, and even the English Solicitors' Act. In the local Act the intention of the Government of that day was to assist solicitors' clerks and to subsidise the fees paid for their examinations. There was a time limit of nine years imposed, during which time the clerk was expected to pass his final examination, as such examinations were a burden on the Treasury. The object of this Bill we are now discussing is to allow the clerk at his own expense even after the expiration of nine years, to offer himself as a candidate for any subsequent examination, it being no charge on the Treasury. That is the practice in all the other islands of the Caribbean, and in England, and it is the recognised practice in all recognised universities. If one goes to Inns of Court and takes 10 or 15 years to pass

the final examination, it is all right. There is no time limit. You can go on attempting it until you die.

In the past if a local clerk was not successful in passing the preliminary examination in a period of nine years he could apply for, and would be granted permission to sit it the next year. So too in the case of the intermediate examination the Chief Justice could issue a dispensation by which leave to sit again the next year was granted. But in the case of the final examination there was no question of a dispensation by the Chief Justice. The clerk would have to apply to the Governor-in-Executive Committee which would grant an extension of a year or two as they thought fit. Examination fees continued to be a charge on the Treasury. According to the provisions of this amending Bill the examination fees will not be a charge on the Treasury. The clerk will sit the examination at his own expense.

I see no reason why honourable members should not attempt to bring the local Solicitors' Act into line with the English practice. There is no question of creating any charge on the Treasury, and I would counsel honourable members in the interest of future articulated clerks, who probably through illness or for some other justifiable reason have not been successful in passing their final examination within the specified period of nine years, to lend their support to this Bill which will do a great deal of good and remedy a situation which has long been in need of review.

Mr. BRANCKER: Mr. Chairman,— I beg to second the motion of the honourable senior member for Christ Church. I think that the honourable member has put the case very fully for the passing of the second reading of the Bill. As a matter of fact there is hardly an examination in the world in which one is not allowed to sit the final, or any other examination until one is successful. As far as the Bar Final is concerned one may sit as many times as is necessary in order to get through. Every legal practitioner knows cases of people who have sat a half dozen or perhaps a dozen times, and eventually those people who have sat the examination so many times have turned out to be sounder than some of those who got through at the first attempt.

This amending Bill will apply not merely to one or two persons, but to quite a number of people who for various reasons have not got through their final examination and who are prepared to bear the expenses of their own examinations. There is this other aspect of the matter that the Solicitors' Profession is undoubtedly one of the most lucrative professions in the island, if not in the entire Caribbean. It is a matter of common knowledge that there is no solicitor in Barbados working for less than £1,500 a year. Some of them even work for more. In order to acquire this lucrative profession it is reasonable that the expenses should be borne by the candidate. If it were a profession from which there was little benefit to be derived, the expenses could be regarded as being extremely heavy. But the profession is second to none in the remuneration which it affords.

Some of the practising solicitors would like to make the profession a closed shop as in the case of surveyor; but I believe that the majority of them do not charge the parents of clerks any fees for the period of clerkship. This amending Bill is for the benefit of the clerk who is willing to pay his own examination fees in the circumstances stated. To acquire this profession is the open sesame to a healthy

income, security, a home, a bank account, insurance policies etc.

In seconding the motion I commend this Bill to honourable members. It will remove a hardship which has existed in the past, and it will also put an end to the trouble which Legislatures in the past have had in dealing with private Bills. There was a private Bill passed for Mr. George Sidney Hawkins. He did not sit the examination and would have had to get another Bill brought to the Legislature if he had the temerity to do so. This Bill will deal with such future cases. I think it is a perfectly reasonable Bill and it should have easy passage through the House.

Mr. WILLIAMS: Mr. Speaker, — I am in agreement with the principle of this Bill. However, I will say that I have tried to get the views of the more liberal members of the Solicitor's Profession, and they all see the point that I am going to make now. Section 2 of the Bill under discussion contains this proviso: "Provided that the limitation as to time in this Clause shall not operate in case the articulated clerk is willing and ready to pay all the fees and incidental expenses incurred by such examination."

I would like to find out if this provision is from the inception, and then two years for the intermediate, and then 18 months for the final, and in case the clerk cannot take the final examination, not more than five years from the passing of the intermediate — not more than nine years altogether. I would like to know if that is meant, or whether it is intended that the clerk should do his articles, get his subsidy for the five years and then go through.

I would also like to advise the people in that profession that the profession is of a very high standard, and this should not be used as any half way house for a chap to get through his examinations.

Mr. LEWIS: Mr. Speaker, — I understand the reason for this Bill. I have been in this House at a time when special Bills had to be passed to enable a man to take this examination if he had failed it after five years. But, sir, I am hoping that the honourable introducer of this Bill would in the meantime just look up the original Bill, so that when we get into Committee he may be prepared for anything that may come.

Clause 3 of this Bill says that "this Act shall be deemed to have come into operation as from the date of the passing of the Solicitors' Act, 1896." I do not know that we can say "from the date of the passing". It would, I think, be better to say "from the date of the coming into operation", even though it may appear peculiar to use the words "coming into operation" twice in the same sentence. It would have to be effective from the date of the coming into operation of the Solicitors' Act, not the date of the passing. A Bill is passed by two Houses of the Legislature, and seldom on the same date. The proviso in Clause 2 of this Bill says, "provided that the limitation as to time in this Clause etc." (meaning Section 21 of the original Act). But there are two different times mentioned in Section 21. I am giving the honourable a chance to go through it carefully and to consider whether the clause should not be amended so as to indicate that the time you mean is not 18 months, but nine years. I think that the honourable senior member for St. Lucy who seconded the motion for the second reading of the Bill should be able to assist with that. I make that suggestion because I do not like to see legislation being put in order other than

by this Chamber. Consideration of the Bill could even be delayed for a week so as to put it into proper order.

The next point that strikes me is this: Is there in the Act or in regulations any provision whereby only the Government can pay the fees in the circumstances stated? We are saying here, "provided the clerk is willing and ready to pay the fees." But there may be something in the Act which says that only the Government can pay the fees. There may be another section that needs to be amended too.

Mr. TALMA: I do not think that there is much necessity to reply.

Mr. MAPP: Mr. Speaker, — I beg to move that further consideration of the Bill be postponed.

Dr. CUMMINS seconded.

Question that further consideration of the Bill be postponed was put and resolved in the negative on a division as follows:—

Ayes: Mr. MAPP, Dr. CUMMINS and Mr. VAUGHAN.—(3).

Noes: Mr. MILLER, Mr. LEWIS, Mr. BARROW, Mr. TALMA, Mr. HOLDER, Mr. COX, Mr. WILLIAMS, Mr. ALLDER and Mr. BRANCKER.—(9).

Question that the Bill be read a second time was put and agreed to without division.

On the motion of Mr. TALMA seconded by Mr. BRANCKER, Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair and the House went into Committee on the Bill, Mr. SMITH in the Chair.

Clause 1 was called and agreed to.

Clause 2 was called. It reads as follows:—

2. Section twenty-one of the Solicitors' Act, 1896 is hereby amended by adding at the end thereof the following proviso:

"Provided that the limitation as to time in this Clause shall not operate in case the articulated clerk is willing and ready to pay all the fees and incidental expenses incurred by such examination."

Mr. TALMA: Mr. Chairman, — As a result of the suggestion made by the honourable junior member for the City I am asking leave to amend Clause 2. The amendment is that after the word "to" occurring in the first line of the proviso to Clause 2, the word "time" be deleted and the words "the period of nine years" substituted therefor. That will clear up the thing. It will make it clear that the time meant is the period of nine years and not the period of 18 months. With the amendment I have asked leave to make I do not see any ambiguity in the clause. Honourable members are presuming that I do not know what I am doing. I beg to move that this be Clause 2 as amended.

Mr. MILLER: Mr. Chairman, — I do not know why the honourable member did not allow me to handle the Bill.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The honourable member is not speaking on Clause 2.

Mr. MILLER: I only wanted to say that when I asked the honourable member to let me help him with the Bill he said that it was not a question of engineering.

Mr. LEWIS: I do not see the need for any embarrassment. Honourable members are only trying to be helpful. The honourable senior member for Christ Church has looked up the Act and he has accepted the suggestion which I made. I am asking him further whether there are any means by which an articulated clerk can pay his own fees. I see the honourable senior member for St. Lucy looking up his law. If it is laid down in the Act that the Government has to pay the fees up to a limited time is it possible now to make the provision that the articulated clerk can pay his own fees? It seems to me that if you say

that the clerk is to pay his own fee you will have to take out that part of the Act which says that the Government is to pay it. But if the honourable member is sure on that point I am willing to accept his word.

Mr. TALMA: The answer to that is simple. Between one and nine years the articulated clerk pays two guineas. The Government subsidises him by paying the difference.

Mr. BRANCKER: Section 7 (9) of the Solicitors' Act, 1896, says:—

“(9) No candidate shall be required to pay a greater fee than two guineas for the examination.”

Mr. LEWIS: If it is that the clerk should not pay more than two guineas and the examination costs more than two guineas how will he do it? If an articulated clerk who is by this section denied an opportunity to sit the examination at all, wants to do it, and the cost for him is more than two guineas, and another part of the Act says that on no account must he pay more than two guineas how will he do it?

Mr. BARROW: It is true that the honourable senior member for Christ Church did not express himself very clearly at first. But I think that this difficulty can be got around simply by the honourable senior member for Christ Church inserting at the beginning of Section 2 the words “notwithstanding anything to the contrary contained in any other part of this Act”.

Mr. TALMA: I accept that amendment.

Mr. LEWIS: I would like to make a further amendment, that after the figures “1896” occurring in line 1 of Section 2 there be inserted the words “hereinafter referred to as the principal Act.” Then at the end of the proviso it would be in order to insert the words “notwithstanding etc”.

Mr. TALMA: I accept that amendment.

The question that the clause as amended stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative on a division as follows:—

Ayes: Mr. SPEAKER, Mr. MILLER, Mr. LEWIS, Mr. BARROW, Mr. TALMA, Mr. HOLDER, Dr. CUMMINS, Mr. COX, Mr. ALLDER, Mr. WILLIAMS and Mr. BRANCKER.

Mr. TALMA: I beg leave to amend this last clause to read as follows: “This Act shall be deemed as coming into operation as from the date of the principal Act.”

On motion of Mr. TALMA, seconded by Mr. BRANCKER, the CHAIRMAN reported the passing of the Bill in Committee.

Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

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

LEAVE TO TAKE ORDER NO. 19 OF PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

Mr. BARROW: Mr. Speaker, I ask leave that order No. 19 of Private Members' Business be taken as the next Order of the Day.

Mr. COX: I beg to move that this House do now adjourn until Tuesday, 8th December, 1953, at 3 o'clock p.m.

Mr. MILLER: I beg to second that.

Mr. LEWIS: I understand that the Bill which the honourable senior member for St. George wants to deal with is one of emergency. It is asking for authority to raise a loan to carry out extensive repairs to parochial buildings. As I understand it, the residence of the Parochial Medical Officer has

got into such a state of disrepair that it is untenable and as a result, there is no place for the new P.M.O. that has been appointed to live and take up his duties. Inasmuch as the adjournment will be for three weeks,—until the 8th December next — there will be considerable delay in dealing with this matter. I am therefore asking that this Bill be considered tonight. If it is not done tonight, it might not be possible to deal with it before the Christmas recess and the Bill would have to be re-introduced in 1954.

Mr. ALLDER: Why can't that be done; what is wrong with that?

Mr. LEWIS: The honourable member is terribly ignorant of the facts. If not, he could not ask us “why can't that be done.”

Mr. TALMA: Before you put the question, Mr. Speaker, I am making a special appeal to honourable members to stay on to consider this matter in view of the fact that the greater part of the afternoon was devoted to questions of public importance. In truth and fact, the matters which we dealt with at commencement of the meeting took up very much time. As I understand, this is a matter of urgency. It is to enable the Vestry of St. George to go ahead and get a loan to repair the Parochial Medical Officer's residence. It is impossible for the doctor to attend to the poor of the parish or to give them medical aid without an office. This is no trivial matter, therefore I counsel honourable members to stay and give consideration to it.

Mr. SPEAKER: As honourable members are aware, the motion for the adjournment takes precedence. As a matter of fact, there is no other motion before the House. The question of leave cannot take precedence.

The question that this House do now adjourn until Tuesday, 8th December, 1953, at 3 o'clock in the afternoon was then put and resolved in the negative, the House dividing as follows:—

Ayes: Mr. MILLER, Mr. MAPP, Mr. HOLDER, Mr. COX and Mr. ALLDER.—5.

Noes: Mr. LEWIS, Mr. BARROW, Mr. TALMA, Dr. CUMMINS, Mr. WILLIAMS and Mr. BRANCKER.—6.

Mr. BARROW: Sir, I am going to ask for a recount.

Mr. SPEAKER: The honourable member is asking for a recount. Do I understand him correctly? Does the honourable member know the count? Five honourable members have voted “aye” and six honourable members voted “No”; Does the honourable member still want a recount?

Mr. BARROW: I was of the opinion that some honourable members misunderstood the question.

Mr. SPEAKER: The question has been decided in the negative, five honourable members having voted “aye” and six honourable members having voted “no”. I now declare the “Noes” have it.

Mr. BARROW: Mr. Speaker, I ask leave that Order No. 19 be taken as the next Order of the Day.

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

THE ST. GEORGE'S VESTRY £6,000 LOAN BILL

Mr. BARROW: This Bill, Mr. Speaker, seeks to authorise the Vestry of the parish of St. George to raise a loan of £6,000 to carry out extensive repairs to Parochial Buildings and to erect a Communal Bath and Latrine for the use of the parishioners. As honourable members will see, the Petition which accompanied this Bill sets out in full the purpose of this loan, but to avoid any misunderstanding, I will state at once that my colleague and I certainly feel that the funds for the building of the latrine can

be acquired from some other source later and perhaps that it can be built at smaller expense than was estimated. Otherwise, this Bill is a matter of urgency. The former holder of the office of P.M.O. of that parish left some months ago and the newly appointed officer to that post is expected to assume duty on the 1st December. Already, there has been a hiatus in the holding of the office since the former P.M.O. left for the United Kingdom and since the present holder has been appointed. This has been caused mainly through the P.M.O.'s residence wanting extensive repairs.

Sir, before I say anything further, I want honourable members to know that I have visited this parochial building and was told that a considerable amount of money would be needed to put it in a proper state of repair, although since it was purchased there have been extensive repairs to it. It is necessary that this further sum be spent in order to put the building in first-class condition and that the taxpayers be not put to a disadvantage. Butts, the name of the P.M.O.'s residence, is an enormous place and the members of the Building Committee of that parish have assured me that they are going to see to it that the barbaric conditions of the past whereby parishioners had to sit outside the building in a little shed with a rotten floor while awaiting medical attention, and then to walk a journey across the yard to get to the surgery of the doctor would not be obtained any more. Engineers have submitted plans for the renovation of that building arranging it to serve both as a residence for the doctor and to house the waiting room for patients and his office and surgery. The plans are open for inspection to any honourable member who may be desirous of seeing them. This building is large enough to provide all that accommodation, it being almost as spacious as Government House. It therefore can accommodate the waiting room, office and surgery for the Parochial Medical officer without any discomfort in his residential quarters.

Sir, let me repeat that before I undertook to bring this Bill in this House and since that date, I paid visits to the premises and I am satisfied that any money spent on it in accordance with the plans will be spent to good advantage but in order to derive the most benefits from that money, it cannot be spent too quickly because the longer the repairs are delayed, the worse will the building deteriorate. At present, the plaster to the ceiling of the roof has fallen off and the whole place is untenable. The Vestry has completely exhausted the funds which were available for the carrying out of repairs to parochial buildings this year.

Mr. Speaker, —I consider it my duty as one of the representatives of St. George, to bring anything in this House which would be beneficial to my constituents. There is no reason why this House should not support a Bill of this nature. The vestry of the parish of St. George is not asking this House for any money; it is asking this House for permission to raise a loan. There is plenty of precedent for the passing of this Bill. On the 12th October last, the honourable junior member for St. Joseph introduced a Bill similar to this for the loan of a sum of \$9,600 for the Vestry of the parish of St. Joseph to carry out repairs—\$7,200 to be spent on the roof of the Rectory. That motion was seconded by the Leader of the House who is the senior member for that parish and it was carried. I was very glad when that Bill was passed because the St. Joseph Vestry will be able to proceed with the repairs to the roof of the Rectory and to the organ of the Parish Church. The honourable junior member for St. James brought in a sim-

ilar Bill for the Vestry of the parish of St. James on that same date and though there was a stormy debate on the issue, the Bill successfully passed this Chamber. I therefore consider that there is nothing unusual in this Bill. As is very well known, the Vestry of St. George is known for its carefulness about spending public monies. I therefore beg to move that this Bill be now read a second time.

Mr. LEWIS: I beg to second that.

Mr. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, Allow me to say a word or two on this affair. I need not second the motion to speak on it. The honourable senior member for St. George, my colleague, misquoted me and said a lot of things that really were not the truth. He began at first by saying that I agreed with him over a matter for which part of this loan is to serve.

Mr. SPEAKER: The honourable member must not make personal references. The honourable member cannot say that another honourable member is not telling the truth.

Mr. MILLER: Sir, if it is incorrect, I withdraw that statement. What I would like to say is that we should not give the Vestry authority to raise that amount of money to spend on repairs to that building. According to the Bill, this loan of £6,000 is to be repaid in twelve years and that means that should the Maude Bill become law in a short time, this Government will be bound to shoulder the debt and I feel that inasmuch as that is so, the repairs to that building can be done by the Public Works Department, or can await until that time when the Public Works Department can carry out the repairs.

(It was observed that there was no quorum and Mr. Speaker directed the Bell to be rung. A quorum having been obtained Mr. Miller continued to speak).

What I would also like to say is that the insertion of the erecting of a Communal Bath and Latrine in the Bill was merely done to eyewash the money to be spent on the repairs to the residence of the P.M.O. Sir, if you had to take down that building and rebuild it, it would not cost £4,500. What is miserable about this whole affair is that there is only a promise for the erection of the Communal Bath and Latrine. There is only a promise that that building will be erected and you have no means of enforcing them to carry out that promise. Sir, imagine the Building Committee of that parish wants all this money to repair Butts and in order to get it they ask the honourable senior member for the parish to inspect the building. The honourable member was persuaded to inspect the building because the Vestry wants to get the Bill passed. It must have been the first time that he ever went to that place. The funniest thing about this matter is that the former P.M.O. lived in that building until he left the colony but since he left it is uninhabitable. Since he left, the whole roof has collapsed and the galvanised sheets taken off as well as the copper gutter taken up. Sir, the statement on this matter by my colleague is something which would irritate a Christian. He said that this is no precedent; all the Vestries that have asked this House for authority to raise loans have got that authority and because of that we must give the St. George Vestry authority to raise this £6,000 to repay in twelve years. Sir, the insertion of the erecting of a Communal Bath and a Latrine in this Bill is only a fulcrum to get this £6,000 to spend on the repairs to Butts. It is four years ago that that Vestry has been planning to erect that social amenity and every time they consider the matter, they say that it will cost too much. On one occasion, they said that they were going to appeal to Government to grant them the

money to carry out the erection. Sir I object to this Bill.

Mr. ALLDER: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move the postponement for further consideration of this Bill.

Mr. COX: I rise to second the motion made by the honourable senior member for St. John. Sir, I do so owing to the fact that the two honourable members for St. George differ very widely from each other on this question. Because of that, I think it is important that we should have this matter postponed and further investigated. It is all well for some honourable member to come here and tell us that the Vestrymen say this and that and that we must agree to what they say, but as I have said on many occasions previously, and I will say so now, this necessary safeguard of Vestries seeking the approval of this House before they can get authority to raise a loan was made in olden days because of the fact that the people did not want vestrymen to do as they like.

Mr. LEWIS: Mr. Speaker, I would like to draw to your attention to the fact that this motion is for postponement and further consideration of this matter and as such, the honourable senior member for St. Michael should not go into the merits or demerits of the Bill.

Mr. SPEAKER: The honourable senior member for St. Michael should only speak on the motion before the House.

Mr. COX: I bow to Your Honour's ruling.

The question that the Bill be postponed for further consideration was put and resolved in the negative, the House dividing as follows:—

Ayes: Mr. ALLDER, Mr. MILLER, Dr. CUMMINS and Mr. Cox.—4

Noes: Mr. LEWIS, Mr. BARROW, Mr. TALMA, Mr. HOLDER, Mr. BRANCKER and Mr. WILLIAMS.—6

Mr. TALMA: Sir, This Bill brought in here is to authorise the Vestry of St. George to raise a loan of £6,000 to carry out extensive repairs to one of their parochial buildings. It is nothing unusual and I do not see why there should be all this talk about it. I do not see how the Maude Bill can affect it. Only a few weeks ago, this House passed similar Bills to authorise the Vestries of St. Joseph and St. James to raise loans to repair their parochial buildings among other things. Both Bills were passed and even the Leader of this House co-operated in their passing. When those Bills were passed, the question of the Maude Bill did not arise. The main thing about these repairs to this building is that there are necessary and expedient so as to prevent destruction. The repairs will be necessary whether the Maude Bill becomes law or not. We must all bear in mind that it is wise to preserve what you have. Whether there is a Vestry system or a Local Government system under which you are operating makes no difference. If these buildings are to be kept in good repair, it is expedient that you must expend money on them and it should be done at the appropriate time. This House should look at this matter in a big and broad way; we should not look at it in a petty manner. We are advancing to nationhood. Let us apply ourselves to matters with that outlook foremost in our minds. It is just a few minutes after 11 o'clock. This is a matter of urgency. I feel that we should co-operate and pass this Bill.

Dr. CUMMINS: Mr. Speaker,—In the first instance, I voted against the adjournment so that this matter could be considered. I have now voted for the postponement for further consideration. I did not have a copy of the Bill before me at first, but now that I have seen one, and with what the hon-

ourable junior member for St. George has said, certainly, I cannot help noticing that there are no separate allocations to state specifically how much would be needed for the erection of the Communal Bath and Latrine and how much for the repairs to Parochial Buildings. I am not happy about that and that is the reason why I voted that this matter be postponed. I would therefore like the honourable senior member for St. George to postpone this Bill and get those facts so that I can vote conscientiously for it. I really cannot vote for it as it stands now as I happen to know something of Vestries. This Vestry, as the Bill stands now, can very well spend the whole amount to be raised by loan on the repairs to that building and then come back and say that the amount was not enough to erect the bath and latrine after carrying out the repairs to that building. I will therefore counsel the honourable member to postpone this Bill and have that question settled.

Sir, if I am in order, I beg to move that further consideration be postponed on this Bill.

Mr. LEWIS: I beg to second that.

Mr. BARROW: Mr. Speaker,—Speaking on the motion for the postponement, I would like to say that members of the Government nor any other honourable member should get up in this House and make statements without the necessary information on them. Sir, I happen to know that the sum of £4,500 will be spent on the P.M.O.'s residence. My colleague informed me that he gave an estimate of two to three thousand dollars for the erection of the bath and latrine, so that you can very well see that £4,500 is the estimate for repairs to the P.M.O.'s residence.

Again, Sir, this bill is only to give the Vestry authority to borrow the outside limit of £6,000; it need not borrow the whole sum, therefore I do not see any reason why this House should postpone consideration of the matter when all the information which should be given, I have in my hands and can be given. I took the trouble of getting all the information that was necessary because I anticipated that there would be some slight opposition.

Sir, I am simply performing my duty as a representative of the parish of St. George and I am asking honourable members again to give this Bill favourable consideration as has been given to similar Bills which recently passed this House. I cannot understand why there should be all these sort of delaying tactics and filibustering over this matter. I do not think it is fair to the taxpayers of St. George and other members of the public. We must presume that the democratic machinery operated in the way it should as regards this measure coming before us. This Bill has been advertised over the necessary period since notice of it was given and there is absolutely nothing wrong with the Bill as it is worded now. If we reflect on similar Vestry Bills which were passed by this House recently, we would see that the honourable junior member for St. Joseph moved the passing of a similar Bill for the parish he has the honour to represent and the Leader of this House seconded the motion.

Mr. SPEAKER: The honourable member should not reflect on the debates of this Session.

Mr. BARROW: I have no intention of doing so, Sir. I am only giving some information. I am not reflecting or throwing any aspersions on them. I am only giving this information for the purpose of pointing out the course that was followed during that debate and the example of the Leader of the House who seconded the motion for the second reading of the Bill. It is true that there were some expressions of views by some honourable members and even with regard to the other Vestry Bill for

St. James, the honourable junior member for St. Peter, although he spoke against it, he seconded it and voted for it. I do not know whether my personality is such that it arises a certain amount of antipathy in the breasts of some honourable members to make them oppose it. If that is so, I would like those honourable members to disabuse such feelings from their minds.

The honourable junior member for St. George wanted to know what would be the lot of the Communal Bath and Latrine. I can assure him that an adequate amount of money has been included for the erection of it and it will be done. Again, this is a matter of urgency because the ceiling of the building for the P.M.O. has fallen and the parish is bereft of medical attention for the poor because there is no accommodation for the doctor who is to take up duties on the 1st December. I can assure my colleague that this building is really in a bad state of disrepair because, in peril of my life, I went as far up as the rafters to inspect the building and saw what was the condition of it. As I was inspecting it with others of the Building Committee, some of the eaves gave away. The place is untenable. I have no brief for the Vestry of St. George but I must state the facts as I know them because I have a constitutional duty to perform.

Dr. CUMMINS: I want to assure the honourable member that I am not opposed to the Bill because in the first instance I voted in order that consideration should be given to it. I have only asked that it be postponed because I feel that the two purposes for which the loan is wanted should be specifically set out. The Bill should state how much is required for repairs to parochial buildings and how much for the erection of the communal bath and latrine.

Mr. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, the honourable senior member for St. George cannot give us any undertaking because he is not a member of the Vestry of St. George. He cannot say one word about the spending of this money.

Mr. SPEAKER: The honourable member cannot be personal in his remarks. He must not do so.

Mr. MILLER: I have no intention of doing so. All I wanted to say again is that the erection of this bath and latrine is being used as a fulcrum by the Vestry to get this money. My colleague is not a member of the Vestry therefore, he cannot have any say in the spending of this £6,000. All I am asking for is an adjournment for the two matters to be specifically set out.

Mr. SPEAKER: The honourable member must speak only on the question of the postponement.

Mr. MILLER: Sir, I am asking my colleague to agree to the postponement so that he would be able to get these two matters set out specifically. We would know that there is money for the erection of the communal bath and latrine.

Mr. SPEAKER: The honourable member is belabouring that point.

Mr. MILLER: Let us have the bath first.

Mr. TALMA: Mr. Speaker,—In my view this Bill is in the nature —

Mr. SPEAKER: The honourable member cannot speak on the Bill; he can only speak on the motion before the House.

Mr. TALMA: I just wanted to say a few words on the allocating of the amount.

Mr. SPEAKER: That is not the motion before the House. There is too much latitude taken already. I will not give any other honourable member so much latitude.

Mr. TALMA: Sir, I am only suggesting that enough information has been given on the face of the Bill.

Mr. SPEAKER: The honourable member is out of order.

Mr. WILLIAMS: Sir, I have never taken part in a Vestry Bill but I find it incumbent on me to do so on this occasion owing to my regretting the turn which the discussion on this Bill has taken. I would like honourable members to look at the bringing in of this Bill as a constitutional duty on the part of the honourable senior member for St. George and his colleague should look at it in that manner. I regret very much the bickering between the two honourable members for St. George on this question. Had there been unanimity among them, this Bill would have been passed already.

Mr. SPEAKER: The honourable member must not speak on the Bill; he must only speak on the motion for the postponement.

Mr. WILLIAMS: Sir, I am agreeing with the suggestion of the honourable junior member for St. Thomas for postponement of this question. The Vestry should be businesslike enough to get their architect to say that it would cost so much to erect the bath and so on and it would cost so much on the other hand to repair that building. I see no earthly reason why the separate amounts could not have been set out clearly in the Bill. It would seem to me that the fear in the heart of the honourable junior member for St. George is a natural fear. I therefore will agree to the postponement so that in the interim the honourable senior member for St. George can get the matter justified.

The question that further consideration of this Bill be postponed was put and resolved in the affirmative, the House dividing as follows:—

Ayes: Mr. ALLDER, Mr. MILLER, Mr. LEWIS, Dr. CUMMINS, Mr. Cox and Mr. WILLIAMS.—6.

Noes: Mr. BARROW, Mr. BRANCKER, Mr. TALMA and Mr. HOLDER.—4.

THE ADJOURNMENT

Dr. CUMMINS: Mr. Speaker, I now beg to move that this House do now adjourn until Tuesday, 8th December, 1953, at 3 o'clock in the afternoon.

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

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ERRATUM

In Debates of meeting of Thursday 8th October, 1953 published in Gazette of 22nd October, 1953 on page 385 please read:

“Mr. LEWIS: Mr. Chairman, the honourable senior member for St. Michael might be able to make out a case *against* the Audit Department but there is a little something which I have heard which would tend to decrease the blame on that Department.”