

THE

House of Assembly Debates

(OFFICIAL REPORT)

SESSION 1953—54

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, 20th October, 1953.

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

Present :

His Honour Mr. K. N. R. HUSBANDS, (*Speaker*), Dr. H. G. H. CUMMINS, M.D., C.M., His Honour Mr. A. E. S. LEWIS, (*Deputy Speaker*), Messrs F. L. WALCOTT, F. E. MILLER, J. C. MOTTLEY, E. St. A. HOLDER, V. B. VAUGHAN, C. E. TALMA and Mrs. E. E. BOURNE.

Prayers were read.

MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting which was held on the 22nd September, 1953, having been circulated, were taken as read and confirmed.

DOCUMENT

Mr. SPEAKER: I have the honour to inform the House that I have received a Copy of Resolution No. 11 of the House of Assembly of British Guiana addressed to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, the U.N. Human Rights Commission, the Government of Bermuda and the Legislatures of other Caribbean Colonies. That Resolution has been signed by the Clerk of the Legislature. It reads as follows:—

BE IT RESOLVED:—

That strong protests be sent to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, the U.N. Human Rights Commission, the Government of Bermuda and the Legislatures of the other Caribbean Colonies against the treatment meted out to Sir Frank and Lady McDavid as a result of the present practice of racial discrimination in Bermuda, with a request from this House that steps be taken to secure its discontinuance.

Messrs. SMITH and BRYAN entered the House and took their seats.

NOTICES

Government Notices were given as follows:—

Dr. CUMMINS on behalf of Mr. ADAMS: Resolution that the sum of \$2,750 be advanced from the

Public Treasury (to be subsequently refunded from Loan Funds) and placed at the disposal of the Governor-in-Executive Committee to supplement the Estimates 1953-54, Part II—Capital, as shown in the Supplementary Estimates 1953—54, No. 14 which form the Schedule to the Resolution.

Dr. CUMMINS on behalf of Mr. ADAMS: Resolution to place the sum of \$112,055 at the disposal of the Governor-in-Executive Committee to supplement the Estimates 1953—54, Part II—Capital as shown in the Supplementary Estimates 1953—54 No. 15, which form the Schedule to the Resolution.

Dr. CUMMINS on behalf of Mr. ADAMS: Bill intituled an Act to amend the Public Utilities Act 1951.

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

QUESTIONS

Mr. TALMA: To enquire of the appropriate member of the Executive Committee present at the next meeting of this House:—

Is Government aware that certain Factory Workers (including Engineers, Carpenters, Masons and Mason Tenders) who were employed at Searles Factory, Christ Church, during the entire crop season and whose duties were mainly connected with the production, have been denied their Production Bonus?

If the Answer is in the Negative, will Government please cause proper investigations to be made into the duties of the abovementioned employees with a view to bringing these workers in line with their counterparts at other Sugar Factories in this Island?

Mr. J. C. MOTTLEY: To enquire of the appropriate member of the Executive Committee present at the next meeting of the House:—

Is Government aware of the great congestion and inconvenience suffered by the general public at the Government Savings Bank owing to inadequate staff?

2. If the answer to the above question be in the negative, will the Government give this matter immediate attention in order to improve the present situation?

Mr. SMITH: To enquire of the appropriate member of the Executive Committee present at the next meeting of this House:—

1. Is the Government aware that a Petition was forwarded in December, 1952, to the Colonial Secre-

tariat from certain Old Age Pensioners, praying that Government take necessary steps with a view to effecting an increase in the amount of the Old Age Pensions?

2. In view of the present extremely high cost of living and the meagreness of the amount of such pension, will Government without further delay, take the necessary action to provide for a reasonable increase in regard to Old Age Pensioners?

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

Having regard to the settled policy of Government under the present Five Year Plan, and with a view to:

- (a) Bringing a certain measure of relief to the unemployment situation;
- (b) Improving, enhancing, facilitating and extending the Tourist Trade;
- (c) Collecting additional revenue; and
- (d) Generally raising the standard of living.

1. Will Government consider amending the Shop Closing Act, so as to permit "A Shift System" to be instituted in the smaller Stores in the Swan Street, Tudor Street, Lucas and Coleridge Streets areas only during the Tourist Season and on such occasions as Tourist Boats or Planes happen to visit the Island?

2. Will Government see that the shift system is properly enforced through their Labour Department, so as to preserve the present 8-Hour working day period, and create the Shift period from 4 p.m. to 9 p.m., but so that workers might receive full remuneration for the entire eight-hour period?

Mr. J. C. MOTTLEY: To enquire of the appropriate member of the Executive Committee present at the next meeting of the House:—

Is the Government aware of the difficulty experienced during the rainy seasons by the tenants of Dodds Plantation owing to the bad conditions of the roads which they have to traverse to or from their homes?

2. If the answer to the above question be in the negative, will the Government without delay give the matter its immediate attention?

Mr. VAUGHAN: To enquire of the appropriate member of the Executive Committee at the next meeting of the House:—

Is Government aware that all those who are to benefit under the Barbados Mutual Aid and Assessment Assurance Society Act 1951—10 have not benefited?

2. Will Government make investigations into the liquidations of this Society to see that the terms of this Act are complied with?

Messrs. HAYNES and MAPP entered the House and took their seats.

BILL READ A FIRST TIME

On the motion of Dr. CUMMINS, seconded by Mr. F. L. WALCOTT, a Bill intituled an Act to amend the Public Utilities Act, 1951, was read a first time.

Messrs. ALLDER, GODDARD and WILLIAMS entered the House and took their seats.

NATURAL GAS CORPORATION (AMENDMENT) BILL, 1953

Dr. CUMMINS: Mr. Speaker,—I ask leave to take Order No. 2 as the first Order of the Day.

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

Mr. SPEAKER: The first Order of the Day is to resume debate on the second reading of a Bill

intituled an Act to amend the Natural Gas Corporation Act, 1950.

Dr. CUMMINS: The consideration of this Bill was postponed from last Tuesday in order that more information should be obtained with regard to the insurance scheme in respect of the employees of the Natural Gas Corporation. I have tried to get all the information I possibly could get, and in addition to what I told the House last Tuesday, I have discovered that there are 11 employees who would benefit from this scheme and some of them are too old to be employed as quasi members of the Government service. Another reason for initiating a scheme of this sort is that gas is something of a vanishing nature and if it has a short life there might be some difficulty in incorporating the employees of the Corporation in the Civil Service. It was therefore considered advisable—and we have the authority under the Act — to make provision for a pension scheme for these employees.

I have been told that the ages of some of these employees reach as far as 53 and 54 years. Some of them may not be able to benefit from the Life Insurance Scheme and they would be considered for a gratuity from the Natural Gas Corporation Fund. Some of these people who are advanced in age have been employed by the British Union Oil Company and they have been compensated by that Company. As regards the female employees, they will not be considered eligible for insurance until they reach the age of 22 years; I understand that that is the normal practice with commercial companies who insure their employees. It appears to me that these young ladies come in for a short time and then they get married; it is therefore a custom in an insurance scheme of this sort, not to insure female employees under the age of 22 years. I am also informed that when these employees attain that age their previous years of service will be taken into consideration. This information along with that which I gave the House on the last occasion is all the information I have at my command in connection with this Bill.

Mr. LEWIS: In view of the fact that the honourable member had postponed the consideration of this Bill at my suggestion and on the motion of the honourable junior member for St. James, I want to thank him for the additional information he has given. I should also like to ask the honourable member to make sure that the figures in relation to this scheme have been secured from more than one Insurance Company.

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

On the motion of Dr. CUMMINS, seconded by Mr. F. L. WALCOTT, Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair and the House went into Committee on the Bill, Mr. SMITH being in the Chair.

Clause 1, the title Clause, was called and passed.

Clause 2 was called.

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

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

Mr. MAPP: The honourable junior member for the City has made an imputation which I feel should be taken notice of now that we are considering this Clause. The honourable member's imputation was that some kind of discrimination takes place in the matter of issuing these Life Insurance Policies by Insurance Companies: I really hope that that is not so. After all, this is a semi-Government set-up and when it comes to calling upon Insurance Companies to issue these policies, I expect that the Government will be entirely fair and square and

will ask various Insurance Companies to tender for issuing these policies. I hope the honourable member in charge of the Bill will throw some light on that matter: I hope he will make sure that what I have just suggested is done instead of giving all this business to one Insurance Company whereas you may be able to obtain more favourable terms from another Insurance Company.

Dr. CUMMINS: I am not sure if all the Insurance Companies were circularised in connection with this matter, but they were made aware of the fact that a scheme of this sort was contemplated and they were invited to tender. After a long delay only one Insurance Company tendered; since then there was some publication of this Bill in the local Press and another Insurance Company has come into the picture. My information is that the figures presented by this Insurance Company will also be taken into consideration.

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

Mr. MILLER: I am in agreement with the proposal in this Bill but I feel that the Government should be a little broader in this scheme. I am also wondering if the Government will find the money with which to carry out the scheme. We were promised when the release was made to the Gas Company that matters would be brought back up for re-examination. I am hoping that none of my remarks will create any unpleasantness for the Government, but gas is still being sold at a price higher than that of any other imported fuel including fuel from British Guiana.

Mr. F. L. WALCOTT: The price at which gas is being sold is nothing to do with this Clause; the honourable member is out of order.

Mr. MILLER: If you have a Corporation specifically engaged in marketing natural gas and they ask for consideration in respect of a pension scheme for their employees I think we have a full right to discuss the matter I have raised. We are discussing whether the House will agree to this scheme in respect of this Corporation or not. I think that natural gas should pay its own way and I have suggested that something be done by way of a reduction in the price of this fuel.

Mr. F. L. WALCOTT: That is nothing to do with this Clause at all.

Mr. MILLER: I was denied the opportunity of making my explanation on the last occasion when the consideration of this Bill was postponed. For the benefit of the honourable junior member for St. Thomas and the honourable junior member for St. Peter, I will explain that I am only saying that the Natural Gas Corporation have a means of making their own money. If I had my own way I would insure all employees.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: We are discussing Clause 2 of the Bill now.

Mr. MILLER: That is what I am dealing with. I am merely saying that the gas is sold dearer than any other imported fuel.

Dr. CUMMINS: I must support the objection of the honourable junior member for St. Peter. This Clause does not deal with the selling price of the gas.

Mr. MILLER: With unswerving respect for the honourable junior member for St. Thomas I am dealing with Clause 2 of the Bill which says:—

"Sub-section (3) of section thirteen of the Natural Gas Corporation Act, 1950, is hereby repealed."

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The honourable member must show whether that section should be repealed or not.

Dr. CUMMINS: This Clause deals with Sub-section 3 of section thirteen of the Natural Gas Corporation Act; it does not deal with the whole Act.

Mr. MILLER: I do not see why we should want to deny the Corporation the opportunity of making a profit from this business.

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

On the motion of Dr. CUMMINS, seconded by Mr. F. L. WALCOTT, the CHAIRMAN reported the passing of the Bill in Committee.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER took the Chair and reported accordingly.

On motions of Dr. CUMMINS, seconded by Mr. F. L. WALCOTT in each case, the Bill was read a third time and passed.

CUSTOMS TARIFF (AMENDMENT) NO. 2 BILL, 1953

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The next Order of the Day stands in the name of the honourable junior member for St. Peter—To move the second reading of a Bill to amend the Customs Tariff Act, 1921.

Mr. F. L. WALCOTT: Mr. Deputy Speaker,—About a year ago I introduced in this House a Resolution for \$2,400 to be placed at the disposal of the Department of Science and Agriculture for the purpose of dealing with the mealy bug pest which affects sugar cane. Today I can state from evidence and information at my disposal that this sugar cane pest has reached a stage at which it is regarded as being very threatening to the sugar industry. The Entomologist of the Department has recommended that, in order to combat this pest, it is necessary that scientific doses of "Gammexane" should be applied to the sugar cane, and in order to make it possible for a large number of people to be able to do that, it is considered necessary to remove the customs duty on this item. As Your Honour is aware, there are other things in connection with the sugar industry on which a reduction in customs duty is allowed; I refer to items such as fertilisers. As the position is now, we are losing by next year a substantial amount of the sugar cane crop on account of this pest which attacks the root of the canes.

Some planters thought that this pest was the root borer, others thought that it was a question of the ants affecting the canes, but the Entomologist found that it is this mealy bug which is a new species of pest and the treatment recommended is one which, it is hoped, will serve the country well. I am sorry to say it has been reported in the Press that some comment of which I was not aware was made of the Entomologist by Your Honour; however, I do not think it is amiss for me to state that in so far as the Entomologist is concerned, the Government feels that we are still fortunate in having his services at this time. There are other Entomologists in this island, but we are not sure that we would get one of the calibre of the present Entomologist. However, I feel that this Bill is a necessary amendment and what is being asked for is something which any loyal Barbadian would agree to give in order to get the maximum production from our staple industry. I beg to move that this Bill be now read a second time.

Dr. CUMMINS: I beg to second that.

Mr. VAUGHAN: Mr. Deputy Speaker,—It may be presumptuous for a layman to give certain opinions on agricultural schemes in this island where the scientific control of pests is concerned, and I do not speak with any dogmatism. Nevertheless, we must throw out some hints as to the desirability of not accepting every recommendation from these agricultural experts. I suspect that the absence of that natural pen manure to which our fields have been accustomed, has been the cause of some harm being done to the natural soil and although we are all aware of the substantially increased production of cane per acre, the absence of natural pen manure would certainly retard an even greater increase in the production of cane. None of us can tell whether this deep ploughing and turning up of the soil has had anything to do with the present susceptibility of the sugar cane crop to this undesirable pest. Some of us may recall that the deep ploughing of the African soil completely destroyed the Ground Nut Scheme and a lot of money was wasted. I am not objecting to the use of this chemical, but I do say that the absence of natural pen manure and this deep ploughing of the soil are causing the poverty of the soil, and we must not accept everything that the experts say except we are absolutely certain that no harm will be done to the soil. After all, we have been getting pretty good crops without deep ploughing and there is no reason why we should abandon the use of natural pen manure.

I think an Act should be passed requiring that so many cattle be kept to an acre of agricultural land and in that way we may be saving ourselves from a greater deterioration of the soil and ensuring ourselves against these pests. I cannot say that this deep ploughing of the soil is the result of the present state of affairs, nor can the experts say it is not so; but the deep ploughing of the African soil gave a negative result to the production of ground nuts. Who can say that this deep ploughing of the soil has not got something to do with this pest? I say that we must be very careful as to how we treat our soil and not necessarily follow every recommendation of every expert that comes out here. I repeat, I do not speak with any authority on the subject; I am only throwing out a hint that there might be some association between this new pest and the new treatment of the soil.

Mr. J. C. MOTTLEY: I rise to support the passing of this Bill, but there is some doubt in my mind as to whether this Bill is the remedy for this pest. I want to draw to the attention of the Government that if this pest is so dangerous, provision should be made whereby peasants whose small holdings will be attacked by this pest, and who will not be able to procure this insecticide like the big plantation owners, will be assisted in getting it. I believe that the honourable introducer of this Bill should give us some more information about this matter. I would like to suggest to the Government that they institute some scheme in co-operation with the Managers of the District Agricultural Stations so that this insecticide could be obtained by the small holders. The plantation owners can control this pest, but some assistance must be given to the small holders otherwise the whole scheme will be nullified. I am sure that holders of four or five acres of land will not be able to procure this insecticide. I maintain that a concerted effort should be made whereby the big estate owners and the small holders will co-operate so that this pest can be tackled and destroyed.

Mr. MILLER: I would like to support this Bill as it is. It is fortunate that we still have with us an Entomologist who has several years' experience in this study. Entomology happens to be one of those weird studies which involve the best years of a man's life. It is unlike the type of science where you can switch off to several branches; entomology is constantly bound up with one particular line of culture. It is fortunate that our present Entomologist is willing to stay with us; whether it was possible to get a new man for this job or not, the question is how many years would he take to catch up in the job? I have been wondering whether or not we would have to launch a campaign against this particular insect, the mealy bug. I am in agreement with the remarks of the honourable junior member for St. Philip. Let us take the rat nuisance; the plantation owners could afford to buy the rat poison and destroy the rats, but the rat nuisance would be renewed at the plantations because the small holders could not buy the poison.

I am glad to see that in Clause 2 of this Bill mention is made of fungicides; we have been suffering from fungus disease and no particular attention has been paid to that matter. It is fortunate that in this Bill we are asking for relief of the customs duty on fungicides. I am supporting this Bill and I hope that the Department of Agriculture will make this insecticide available to people whether they are able to buy it or not.

Mr. ADAMS entered the House and took his seat.

Mr. CRAWFORD: I want to emphasize the suggestion made by my colleague and endorsed by the honourable junior member for St. George. These insecticides are relatively expensive and it does appear to me as if the Government might well act upon the suggestion which has been made and provide a good quantity of insecticides at each Agricultural Station for the assistance of small holders. It is true that what we are doing here would be reflected in the cost of this insecticide, but I am wondering whether a mere removal of the customs duty on the insecticide would be sufficient to bring it within the reach of the small holders. If it is important to remove this pest from the plantation canes, it is just as important to remove it from the small holdings, and any assistance which is given to peasant holders would be appreciated.

Mr. F. L. WALCOTT: The proposal of the Government is to reduce the cost of this insecticide to the people who have to use it. The Government already has at its disposal the means of giving the peasants information; it costs the Government money to have the Peasant Agricultural Instructors and they are there for the benefit of the peasants. Then there is the Peasants' Loan Bank at which loans are made for obtaining fertilisers and so on, and if there is the suggestion that the Government must buy this insecticide and give it to the peasants, that is a different issue. As I have already said, the Government proposes to reduce the cost of this insecticide to the people who have to use it; this is something which they are applying to their land and they will sell their canes on a basis on which they can get the best price for them. I am not capable of replying to the scientific arguments which have been propounded.

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

On the motion of Mr. F. L. WALCOTT seconded by Dr. CUMMINS, Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER left the Chair, and the House went into Committee on the Bill, Mr. SMITH being in the Chair.

Clause 1, the title Clause, was called and passed.

Clause 2 was called.

Mr. F. L. WALCOTT : I beg to move that Clause 2 stand part of the Bill.

Dr. CUMMINS : I beg to second that.

Mr. LEWIS : I wonder if the Governor-in-Executive Committee should have the power to add to the list of these items which are brought in free of customs duty. The next thing is that under this Clause the Comptroller of Customs has to certify that insecticides, fungicides and other substances are imported exclusively for use as remedies for diseases of plants or for combating insect attacks in plants. I am wondering if medicine is included in these substances; the Clause is rather wide.

Mr. F. L. WALCOTT : Ordinarily the Government would have sent down an amendment to this Act in respect of "Agroicide 20" (Gammexane), but the Secretary of State for the Colonies objects to putting into the Act names which are only commercial names. "Agroicide 20" or "Gammexane" are names which can be changed and it was thought that they should not be put in this Bill because they would not mean anything as far as the Secretary of State for the Colonies is concerned.

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

On the motion of Mr. F. L. WALCOTT, seconded by Dr. CUMMINS, the CHAIRMAN reported the passing of the Bill in Committee.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

On motions of Mr. F. L. WALCOTT, seconded by Dr. CUMMINS in each case, the Bill was read a third time and passed.

HAWKERS REGISTRATION (AMENDMENT) BILL, 1953

Mr. F. L. WALCOTT : I ask leave to take Order No. 5 as the next Order of the Day.

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

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER : The next Order of the Day also stands in the name of the honourable junior member for St. Peter :—To move the second reading of a Bill intituled an Act to amend the Hawkers Registration Act, 1904.

Mr. F. L. WALCOTT : Mr. Deputy Speaker,—This Bill is one of the measures in respect of miscellaneous taxation and of which notice was given in the Five Year Development Plan. What this Bill proposes to do is clearly seen; at the beginning of this century a hawker, pedlar or itinerant trader paid a licence fee of one shilling and over the last 50 years nothing was done with regard to increasing this fee. It will be seen that in the Five Year Plan the sum of \$160,000 has been earmarked for the erection of District Markets so as to provide better accommodation for hawkers and pedlars. However, the Government is not asking for the increase of the licence fee based alone on providing better accommodation for these people: it is our general revenue policy and it is considered by the Government that an increase in the licence fee from 1s. to 2s. could not be regarded as unreasonable or that it would impose a hardship on hawkers or pedlars. The community has been called upon to pay increased prices to hawkers, the general

standard of living has increased and it imposes a harder financial responsibility on the Government.

I cannot speak with much assurance about the year 1904 because I happened not to see the light of day then. There is no record to show what the position of itinerant traders was in 1904, but the situation today is that the stage has been reached where these people enjoy in this island a privilege which they cannot enjoy elsewhere. I speak of the Caribbean area; I doubt whether in this area there is any itinerant trader who can pursue that calling on a registration fee of 1s. That is the meagre fee on the payment of which many people can drive around and carry on a portable store; that matter needs to be regulated and this is the opportunity for regulating it. We propose to make the registration fee for these itinerant traders the amount of \$50. If you want to assess these people, you do not know what profit they really make, but in respect of those of us who work for a salary our income tax can be taken out. Those of us whose incomes are known have to pay income tax and these people whose incomes are unknown pay no income tax and they are not called upon to pay any trade tax; they are really in competition with other people who have to meet overhead expenses—the employment of clerks and so on. I want to say that if these people choose to make their living in that way, they must contribute something to the State. It is thought that these increases in licence fees should be made so that the Government can get the money with which to carry out many of the needy things which we are called upon to carry out in Barbados. I beg to move that this Bill be now read a second time.

Dr. CUMMINS : I beg to second that.

Mr. GODDARD : I am in agreement with this Bill. I think it is well known to all of us that there is developing or has developed in this country a number of itinerant vendors who travel throughout the length and breadth of this country selling items to agricultural workers on very easy terms as a catch but at a very high rate of interest. They go into Bridgetown and buy all sorts of material, and they are seen particularly on Sundays collecting their 2/- pieces when everybody else is at home. Other colonies in the Caribbean have taken steps by means of imposing a licence fee on these vendors so as to protect legitimate business from this sort of trade and we are now about to do the same thing. We are proposing in respect of these itinerant vendors a licence fee of \$50, but I think the amount should be \$100; these people are not under any control because no Price Control Inspector can catch up to them. They have their own means of selling their goods and the sum of \$100 is not too large a fee to get out of them. I note in this Bill that these itinerant vendors will be allowed to pay a proportionate part of the licence fee if they apply for the licence late in the year; I say that the licence fee should be \$100 a year if an itinerant vendor takes out a licence in December just as in the case of a liquor licence.

With regard to the hawkers, I do not agree that when they are applying for their licences they should have two letters as to good character; anybody can write a letter and then these poor people will go to persons who will charge them \$1 or \$2 to write a letter for them. If any fault can be found with these hawkers let them be prosecuted before the Police Courts and be fined. I would not allow any cancellation of hawkers' licences unless there is a habitual offence with these people, and I would strike out the necessity for these people to have two letters as to their good character before they can get their licences.

As regards the second Schedule to the Bill, I think that the Government has not made it wide enough; in that Schedule the Government has only set out cotton, woollen, linen and other piece goods and garments of any other kind whatsoever other than those specified in the first Schedule. Today there are many other materials on the market such as nylons and rayons and every day something new is being brought out including plastic cloth and these things should be included in that Schedule. Years ago I have seen itinerant vendors offering precious or semi-precious stones for sale and such articles are not in this Schedule. If these things are not included in this Schedule these itinerant vendors can be exempted from paying anything at all. I think that the Government needs time to consider this matter and it would be wise for us to refer this Bill to a Select Committee in order to get more information in connection with the matter. This is an important Bill; it is that for which the public has been asking for a long time, and therefore let us deal with it properly now. However, when we go into Committee on this Bill there are some amendments which I would like to propose.

Mr. CRAWFORD: The argument in favour of itinerant vendors is that they extend credit facilities to poor people who, normally, cannot get credit from the business places in Bridgetown. It is, of course, to be admitted that in some instances the people pay for these credit facilities, but the point is that they do get these facilities. It is up to the Government to see to it, especially now that this increased fee is proposed, that the prices at which these itinerant vendors sell are subject to proper control. I am not opposing the suggestion that the fee should be carried up to \$50, because if these people are doing business in competition with established business places which have to pay their staff, rent and so on, it is right that they should make some contribution to the revenue of the country. I only want honourable members to bear in mind that it is claimed that these people are serving some useful purpose and they are therefore entitled to some consideration.

There is a type of itinerant vendor against whom I think we should take greater steps; I refer to Assyrians who come in here in appreciable numbers around the month of February and by the month of May they are gone. They bring in a lot of woollens and they fleece the public; they buy suit lengths for \$10 each in Trinidad and sell them to the country people for \$40 and \$50 each. In the case of these itinerant vendors the licence fee should be something like £50. I am not referring to those who live in the island—those who live here and resort to this business so as to earn a livelihood; I am not suggesting that they should be further penalised in this Bill; but there are those who come here only during the crop and fleece the workers and every step should be taken to have them under proper control. They are a menace to the community; they perform no useful service, they contribute nothing to the revenue of the country besides paying a few dollars at the guest houses, they reap a harvest and then clear out. I suggest that the permanent itinerant vendors and the small business places should be protected from such people.

When it comes to the ordinary hawker or pedlar, I have no knowledge as to the reason which prompted the Government of 1904 to charge this registration fee, but I am doubtful as to whether it was a question of getting revenue at all; I have the impression that it was a question of registration. Some honourable member has said that because of praedial larceny it was necessary to have a check as to people who are legally entitled to hawk articles

along the street. It was rather amazing to me today to hear the honourable junior member for St. Peter speak in terms of increasing the registration fee for hawkers. Hawkers in the main are poor people; the average hawker who sells okras or potatoes is just eking out an existence. I have seen some of them with a few mangoes and oranges and I wonder how they make out; the fruit is spoiling in the trays and I wonder how they get money to buy fresh stock and live in the meantime. I do not think we need penalise these hawkers by increasing the registration fee by another shilling. If the original idea was getting revenue I should be glad to hear it, but the very wording of the Act does seem to imply that it was primarily a question of a form of registration, that you should have people of fairly good character to go around and sell articles as against the praedial larcenists who would go around and sell articles without being registered and who would pursue their calling as they like. In respect of this Five Year Plan the Government is apparently saying: "We will tax all and sundry and we are going to increase the taxation on those who are already taxed." The honourable junior member for St. Peter said that the Government needs this money to do needy things; well, you could argue that *ad lib*. You may have needy things to do in the Five Year Plan or other Plans, but it can be argued that you can waste this money. You are paying leave passages and high salaries and if you can do those things you can allow a poor hawker to get her licence for a shilling. If you can find money for the one, you need not, in my opinion, further penalise the other.

I do feel that there is a case for making your itinerant vendor who sells cloth and all sorts of things, contribute to the revenue of the colony; some people carry on this business because they have no other means of employment, but they are carrying it on. Admittedly they pay no trade or income tax and if we can get this money from them I think we are entitled to get it; but let us leave out the poor hawker. Let us continue to have her shilling as a registration fee and if she overcharges anybody, her licence is there and she can be checked upon and be prosecuted if necessary. I am of the opinion that this registration fee is merely for the purpose of checking upon a hawker and not as a means of producing a few more dribbling shillings in the Treasury. What does a few more shillings from hawkers mean to a Government which can spend \$2,000 a year on leave passages or afford the salaries which are being paid in the Government service today?

There is one further point. This Five Year Plan proposes certain new types of taxation and increases on existing taxation, and it is a well-known fact that from some of this new taxation you are getting more money than you anticipated you would get when you levied the new taxation. Let us take the increase in the water rates, for instance; almost every taxpayer today has found that his water rates are more than what we were led to believe they would be by the remarks which were made when the Bill was introduced here and supported by honourable members. From the increase in the water rates alone you are getting much more than you contemplated you would get under the Five Year Plan. I presume the idea was to get what you could from the rich first and then the small fry could come in after; but there should be some stocktaking as you go on. Because you want more money to squander you need not necessarily go on to inflict all the taxation proposed in the Five Year Plan. I should be particularly surprised if the revenue from the increased taxation on liquor and tobacco is not more than what was anticipated in

the Five Year Plan and what it was anticipated would be collected as a result of the legislation which was passed in this House. In any case, there should be some frequent stocktaking or check as to our financial position. I do submit that although it was suggested in this famous document—the Five Year Plan—that hawkers should pay their share of increased taxation, we need not include them today. If we find that we need this money we can come back at them, but give them a chance now.

Mr. ALLDER: Unlike some of the Vestries, I feel that we, as the representatives of the people, should show a greater sense of responsibility and levy taxation equitably, not partially or punitively. Because of the pressure which some merchants in Bridgetown have been bringing to bear on the Government to take action against itinerant traders, which action, in part, is necessary, we have a Bill like this which involves Barbadians who are unable to bear any increase in their licence fees. Some time ago when there was a large influx of Indians and Jews to this island for the purpose of itinerant trading, I brought forward an Address here having the object of limiting the number of these people coming to this colony. At that time the Government did not show any particular appreciation as far as that Address was concerned or as far as their responsibility in handling the matter was concerned.

However, Sir, my Address was passed by this Chamber and the then Acting Governor regarded it with favourable comment, but I presume that the Executive comprised of the same honourable members who have brought down the present Bill did not feel that any action should have been taken against the large numbers of those particular persons who were coming here. I can well remember the honourable senior member for St. Joseph saying that those people were coming from some country within the British Commonwealth, therefore, he could not take any action against them, and also because Barbadians emigrated to countries abroad. Well Sir, those persons have continued to come in larger numbers and have caused greater competition, especially since they have obtained business houses in Bridgetown. The Government has decided now to deal with them, not by refusing them entry but by imposing taxation on those carrying on business. Everybody realises that these people can afford to pay the increased taxation in this Bill, but by your doing so, you are adopting a policy in the same manner as if you had a dozen useful things in one container and because two become bad, you decide to throw away the container with all of them. That is bad legislation. What are you doing to get rid of these couple of strangers whom you are saying is fleecing the public? What you are doing is going to injure a lot of honest Barbadians who cannot get employment but are fighting to eke out a living in this respect. There are hundreds of Barbadians who because they cannot get employment but have previously accumulated a couple of dollars, who buy a little merchandise with it and take it around on cycle or by motor car to people to get a little profit from it. Many of them take around their goods on foot. When you pass this Bill to impose a licence of \$50, you are not imposing it only on the few strangers but also on a lot of Barbadians who have started to do the same sort of thing and I believe that you do not desire to hurt these poor Barbadians by this tax. I have often heard the statement that it is better to allow a thousand guilty persons to go free than to punish one innocent person. You are acting contrary here. In your trying to tax a couple of Jews, Syrians and Indians, you are injuring hundreds of Barbadians.

Sir, it is not a question that because you see a Barbadian salesman driving in a motor car that his business is a flourishing one. It may be to the contrary. Many times, their motor cars have to be taken away in order to pay their debts. What is more is that they are doing a good job. They have a system of clothing hundreds of agricultural workers who would not be able to put on proper clothes but for that system. Everybody knows that because Barbadian workers are poor, nobody is willing to credit them—not even with a cent in biscuits. Not one of these poor workers can come in Bridgetown and get sufficient credit to purchase a shirt. To get credit in Bridgetown, you have to be an established person of the community. These salesmen take their merchandise to the country districts and credit these poor workers with the goods. When they do so, they do not know whether they will get all the money back. Often, these salesmen are robbed. Although these salesmen do not have the means of opening a store in Broad, Swan or Roebuck Street, the Government still collects taxes from them for they purchase a motor car to carry on their vending. When they use their car, the Government collects taxes by way of customs duties on oil and gasolene. You must look at both sides of a case.

I am sympathetic with the remarks made by the honourable senior member for St. Philip on behalf of hawkers around the streets. If Government wants money, it should look to proper sources which are capable of bearing an increase in taxation. Government should not try to impose further taxation on an already miserly section of the community. Sir, when you see a woman with a tray, the contents of it does not exceed a dollar. It is not unusual to see that woman sitting for sixteen to twenty-four hours in the hope of selling out the stock. I am sure that many honourable members in this Chamber would not like to be out as late on nights as these women who sit around hawking their wares. There must be something which drives them to work for so long hours without adequate compensation. These people work for little because their turnover is a small one. It does not permit them to go home and enjoy a good meal. What I would advocate to the Government, as I have done in the past, is to explore the possibilities of the several other avenues from which it can get the increased taxation it wants and tax that source.

How much more money can Government get from these poor, half-starved hawkers around the streets? If there are 200 women hawkers around the streets of Bridgetown, the shilling more which you are going to impose on them would bring to the Government an amount of taxation negligible as regards to the increased hardship which it would impose on those people. I would like to know what kind of administrators are the members of this Government. They do not weigh the pros and cons, or the merits and demerits of a case. They do not consider these things. If they did, they would not bring in this Bill. Sometime ago, I brought in an Address in this place asking Government to send down legislation to tax the luxurious yachts and pleasure craft which lie off the Aquatic Club and which the Police have to maintain vigilance over. Those yachts cost between £1,000 and £5,000. The so-called Socialists in this Chamber say they cannot tax those yachts because the owners of them cannot bear further taxation; but this Government is asking a woman with 50 cents in rotten limes in a tray to pay a shilling more for a licence! This Government is saying so when it refuses to tax the luxuries of the rich who can afford to pay further taxation. I would have preferred to see Government if it wanted more revenue to have

brought in a Bill to tax golf balls and golf sticks or expensive fishing tackle.

Another thing. If the Government wants more revenue I can tell its members where to get it from. Government can get increased rents from those people living. Many of them live in those Government buildings while at the same time they own houses which they rent out for much more than what they pay. Of course, I am fully aware that you are going to say that you have recently increased those rents. But by what percentage have you increased them? What are those people paying as compared with what they are collecting from other people who rent their houses? Are the rental agreements for properties of the Government comparable with the rental agreements of private persons who rent out their properties? No. There is no comparison at all. Well then, let the Government put the rents of its properties almost to the basis of similar properties owned by private persons. Government refuse to ask for more rent for its properties which it should receive but wants the ordinary woman with a tray to pay 100% on the tax which she is at present paying. Certainly the Government can be more sympathetic to these people who walk around with a load on their head. These people are not sitting down in comfortable chambers as some honourable members waiting for a client to come in to charge a fee. These hawkers have to walk from house with heavy loads on their heads to eke out a living. I see many of these women hawkers passing my door at 5 o'clock in the morning on their way to the City. Some hop lorries as agile as men in order to get to town quickly with their wares. I say it is all well and good to be governors but it takes a lot more than that to be good administrators.

Sir, you may bring in legislation which will be passed by this House but before you bring it in you should consider whether it is passed by this House if it will work a hardship on any section of the community. This Bill if passed by this House will work a hardship on a section of the community. It is laughable to hear that Government is increasing the licence fee of hawkers because it wants more money. The amount which will accrue to Government by so doing will be small but the imposition will create a great hardship.

I hope the Government Bench will take into consideration the comments made by the honourable junior member for Christ Church on this amendment to the Act which states that every person desirous of exercising the trade or calling of a hawker or pedlar or itinerant vendor shall in every year apply to the Accountant General and on presentation of a certificate of good character signed by two known and respectable persons and on payment of a fee shall be registered. Like the honourable member, my feelings on this matter are similar. I cannot understand the reason for all of this certification. If a person commits himself, the law is there and invariably, he will pay the penalty if he is found guilty. In the course of my daily pursuit, I am worried by butchers who although they were butchers for the past 20 to 25 years must get my signature in order to renew their licence. I feel that is wasting time, not only the time of the people who make the recommendation but of the high-salaried Government servant who looks into the matter well as that of the butcher. All that it does is to make the particular person subservient to the person who certifies for him. That should not be so. You should not do things that will compel people to remain in a servile position. How do I know when a butcher comes to me for a recommendation that his character

is good? Many times I give the man a recommendation because I know that if I do not give him, he will not be able to pursue his honest calling. Why should you force butchers to get this certification? I feel it is unnecessary and I am surprised that the present Government with its so-called socialist outlook is still perpetuating this sort of thing. As I understand it hawkers were able previously to go to the Treasury at their leisure, pay a shilling and get a licence. Now this Government which talks of the dignity of the individual, whoever he may be, is stipulating that a person cannot go to the Treasury and take out a license unless that person gets two discreet persons to recommend him.

Sir, this bit of legislation is nonsensical and useless in a progressive day like this. The present Government should not insert it on the Statute Book. I give notice now that at the proper time, I will move the deletion of this sub-clause. Many times these people just worry businessmen who are sometimes too busy to attend to them. As a result, these people are insulted very often in getting this unnecessary certification. I am hoping therefore that this sub-clause will be deleted and that the Government would see the folly in this suggestion. I am also hoping that honourable members would see the wisdom in my pressing for this deletion.

Mr. BRANCKER entered the House and took his seat while Mr. ALLDER was speaking.

Mr. TALMA: Mr. Deputy Speaker,—I beg to move that this House be now adjourned for half an hour.

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

REPLIES LAID

On resumption,

Dr. CUMMINS: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am taking this opportunity to lay replies to Question No. 21 standing in the name of the honourable junior member for St. Lucy.

GOVERNMENT NOTICE

Mr. ADAMS: Sir, I am asking leave to give notice of a resolution which unfortunately was not available earlier in the day.

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

Mr. ADAMS: I beg to give notice of the following Resolution:—

Resolution that the sum of one thousand six hundred and forty dollars be granted from the Public Treasury and placed at the disposal of the Governor-in-Executive Committee to supplement the Estimates, 1953—54, Part 1—Current, as shown in the Supplementary Estimates, men 1953-54, No. 16.

Dr. CUMMINS: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I ask leave to include this resolution of which notice has just been given with the two other resolutions of which notice was given earlier in the day.

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

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: When the House was adjourned it was giving consideration to the Bill intituled an Act to amend the Hawkers Registration Act, 1904. The honourable senior member for Christ Church moved the adjournment and is at liberty to address the House.

Mr. TALMA: Mr. Deputy Speaker, While agreeing with many of the remarks made by certain honourable members of the Opposition, more espec-

ially with that of the Leader of the Opposition, who is my colleague, yet I would like to make the following observations. The intervention by Assyrians, Jews and Indians in business in this place has brought relief to many poor persons in the country districts and has taught many people of this country to be thrifty. But with all that, I still agree that these itinerant traders or vendors should pay their due portion of taxation so as to subscribe to the General Revenue of the colony. The attempt to make it burdensome or excessive, in my view, is unfair. I say that for the simple reason that Barbadians are found all over the world and in many cases they are doing well. In view of that, we in this Chamber should not be petty minded, nor should we try to cramp healthy competition.

If as has been suggested in this Bill, the itinerant vendor is called upon to pay a fee of \$50 or a proportionate part for the number of months he would be actually trading in the colony, that can hardly be termed unreasonable or excessive, but I will suggest that if that trader or vendor is actually domiciled in the colony, and carrying on a staunch business, he should not be called upon to pay this sort of tax, but should be regarded as a local trader and should pay the same tax as is imposed on local traders. What I want to stress is that those foreign traders who have been granted the right to live here and have made Barbados their home should be regarded in like manner as local Barbadian traders and no excessive fee which would bar thrift and competition should be imposed on them. In this respect, I also think of the hundreds of Barbadians who are also trying to eke out a living by peddling and doing itinerant trade. I believe that the imposition of a fee of \$50 to be paid in one instalment might cause a hardship and I would suggest that it could be paid in two instalments. I therefore hope the honourable Leader of this House would take this point in view. We should never try to throw dozens of people who are trying to employ themselves out of business nor should we prevent them from practising thrift. I am afraid that if this Bill is passed as it is so that the itinerant vendor would be called upon to pay his licensing fee of \$50 at one time, many of them would go out of business and a grave hardship would be done to them and all those people whom we are trying to help.

There is another point to my contention. I hope that my suggestion would not be taken to mean that the shopkeeper who pays his trade tax should pay anything further. The small itinerant vendor who will be called upon to pay a licensing fee of \$50 may be paying more than the small shopkeeper who is carrying on a comparable business, but while this may be so, we should not strive to drive anybody out of business. We therefore should be very careful in what we do with respect to this phase of the situation.

In so far as the hawkers are concerned, I know it is very easy to make a vote-catching speech but I do not intend to do so now; I will attempt to do something which I consider to be of a constructive nature. I do not consider that this Chamber is a proper place to make vote-catching speeches. As this Bill sets it out, the fee hawkers are called upon to pay is a registration fee. That means that it is a nominal fee for registration purposes. It is a fee which is paid not merely to collect revenue but to check on the people in the business and to exert a certain measure of control over them, if necessary, for the benefit of the community. This nominal fee has been increased from 24 cents to 48 cents.

It works out to four cents per month so that this increase can hardly be termed unreasonable. Although it may be termed a 100% increase, yet it must be borne in mind that the wages of almost everybody have increased more than 200% since the time when hawkers were called on to pay a registration fee of one shilling. This increase to forty-eight cents is not exorbitant, therefore, there is no point to get in here and make people believe you are sympathetic to hawkers by saying that this increase is exorbitant when in truth and in fact that is not the case. We should not expect one class of people to pay all the taxes. If the person of a small income is made to pay something within his reach, he should be proud to contribute his little something so as to justify his citizenship and to realise that it is contributed for the purpose of his enjoying some benefits from it.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I think I have covered all the points which I wanted to make and I hope that Government will pay some attention to them.

Mr. MILLER: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am just worried on one or two points. I feel perfectly sure that it is an oversight when this Government inserted in this Bill that every person desirous of exercising the trade or calling of a hawker or pedlar, or itinerant vendor shall in every year apply to the Accountant General and on presentation of a certificate of good character signed by two known and respectable persons and on payment of the fee shall be registered. I believe this may be a good thing for itinerant vendors who have to secure a hawker's licence for the first time but I think it is unnecessary to do so afterwards. I hope Government will give some attention to this sub-clause. I believe it is an oversight and I feel some amendment should be made to it.

With regard to the question of the itinerant trader or vendor paying a registration fee of \$50, I feel quite strongly about it. I agree with what the Leader of the Opposition said about it and am satisfied that his attitude and approach to the question was the correct one.

Now, with regard to the question of hawkers having to pay a shilling more to obtain a licence to sell their goods, I have listened carefully to some lively speeches by honourable members on it, especially that of the honourable senior member for St. John. He referred to these people as humble, weary traders. He really tried to make honourable members view these people sympathetically when he said so, but is there any justification for his statement? Let us examine the case of the bread cart man. He is a hawker and pays a shilling for a licence at present yet he is a man capable of earning \$20 a week from this calling to support his family. Then there is the hawker who sells potatoes with a mule cart. He too is only asked to pay a shilling to register for his employment. So too is the fish vendor and the other petty vendors. Now, these people are asked to pay an increase of a shilling, and the 48 cents which they will now be asked to pay annually for a licence is less than one cent per week. Can you say with any justification that this fee is unreasonable? No. It is unreasonable for any honourable member to get on the floor of this House and say that it is asking too much to ask a hawker to pay less than one cent a week to be recognised as a trader. It is reducing that type of trader to something cheap and lower than what he is. As I have said, many of those hawkers take care of families and take care of them well. If we are responsible members of this community, we should not refer to these hawkers as people who are unable to pay one cent a week to be registered as a trader.

Sir, I am nothing to do with whether an itinerant vendor or trader is an Indian, Jew, Assyrian or Barbadian. What I am concerned with is whether this type of vendor can pay \$50 for a licence. In my view, I will say: Yes. I do feel however that the fee could be divided to be paid in two instalments. I do agree that these traders are doing a good job by taking their stock of goods to the country and dishing it out on easy payment terms. There is no doubt that wherever you see canes and sugar factories, you are bound to see impoverished people and to sell those people goods on easy payments can help them to get something but you cannot lose sight of the fact that among those vendors are the cruel, savage ones who exploit the people. I feel these itinerant vendors can pay a registration fee of \$50. It is not a question that you will be penalising them when you ask them to pay that amount. I believe they can pay even \$100. As I have said, these itinerant vendors,—some of them,—are doing a good job. They go around by motor transport or motor cycle to collect a shilling and that entails some expense but it must be remembered that these vendors do not have to pay rent, light or water rates for business premises as other traders do, and obviously, these itinerant vendors compete with the other recognised traders. I am satisfied that these vendors can pay \$50 as a registration fee.

Before I sit down, I will again ask Government to pay some attention again to the question of asking these people to get two recognised persons in the community to certify them before they can get a licence when that itinerant vendor, pedlar or hawker may be a recognised trader already. There is something wrong with that sub-clause. There is some mistake with the drafting of that section.

Mr. E. D. MOTTLEY: Even at the risk of bringing down the wrath of some honourable members on me, I am going to say at the outset that this Bill should go to Select Committee. As it stands, a carriage and pair of horses can be driven through it. For some time now, there has been much correspondence in the Press with respect to the keen competition meted out to merchants in Bridgetown by these itinerant traders, therefore, it is apparent that something should be done about the matter. As this Bill is drafted, I do not think that it will meet the purpose for which it is required for the simple reason that its chief aims are to get some sort of revenue from traders who come into this island from foreign countries for a brief period of time with their goods and others who buy goods in Bridgetown at the usual wholesale price or retail price less 10 per cent. and sell for spot cash or by the giving of a limited credit.

I think I have some experience of these itinerant vendors because there are about 100 of them who are rated in St. Michael by the St. Michael Vestry. These vendors are not rated on any returns because they do not submit any, but it is felt from the business which they do that they can net \$500 profit a year and that is the amount on which they are rated. By that rating, they pay to the Parochial Treasurer of St. Michael a tax around \$70 each. The people who pay this tax are for the most part Indians, Syrians and Jews and very few, if any, of the other people come under that category. Why I suggest that this Bill be sent to Select Committee is because there is nothing in it to prevent one of these itinerant vendors taking out a trader's licence and having seven others to work for him. Of course, it may be suggested that there is a way to circumvent that, but it is a most difficult thing to do when one of these vendors, who may be an

Indian register as a trader and then take two, three or four others with him styling them as his sons or brothers, one calling himself Rabbi Singh, another Jubi Singh, and so on. There is nothing to prevent one of these vendors from taking out a licence and then having others to work for him and that is why I say that a carriage and pair of horses can be driven through this Bill. I therefore suggest to the Leader of this House to see that point—one which has given the Vestry of St. Michael some difficulty already.

It might be argued that all those people who are working for one of those traders must be registered. That is what I think it should be too, but I throw out the suggestion for what it is worth. I am only bringing the experience which I have gained in dealing with the matter to the notice of honourable members.

As far as the Second Schedule of this Bill is concerned, the honourable member in charge of it knows quite well that the items listed are just a few of the things which these itinerant vendors offer for sale. There are several other things which these itinerant vendors offer for sale in competition with business houses in the City and because of that, I think this Schedule should be further considered. For instance, I think that nylon and silk should be included in the list of items. I do not know if the honourable mover of this Bill would contend that cotton and woollens would be sufficient to cover all goods in this line. As I see it, there are many loopholes in this Bill which I am prepared to draw to the attention of honourable members if it is sent to Select Committee. I see no harm in having this Bill sent to Select Committee and I will move such a motion but with no view of keeping it back. I am sure that deep down in the hearts of honourable members, they do not want to create any hardship on any Barbadian who want to do this kind of work during the crop time.

As I recall, the honourable senior member for St. John said that there is an influx of Indians and Assyrians who are doing this type of business and I take it that the whole idea of this Bill is to collect some revenue from these people who earn a lot of money from the people in this colony and whom I believe with the exception of the few who pay a trade tax to the St. Michael Vestry pay no tax at all. Very few of them pay income tax; I do not think the number of them who pay income tax will amount to 2 per cent. What you find is that within a period of two or three years these people earn as much as will cover their return passages to India and other parts of Europe where they came from, besides being able to live in their way of living and more than that, on their return here, they are able to bring along one or two others with them. There seems to be no means of making these people pay income tax although I believe there should be, because of the fact that those living in St. Michael can be found to be recorded in the Trade List of the parish. It is therefore abundantly clear that with a little extra work at the Income Tax Department, these people could be found and asked to make a return. Apparently, it is not done. I do not believe that any honourable member would like to see anything done which would create a hardship on anyone who is trying to earn a livelihood and that is why I urge that this Bill should be sent to a Select Committee. I feel something should be done to get revenue from those people who come here for a short period and earn a lot of money and leave afterwards without contributing anything to the colony. I do agree with the honourable senior member for St. John that some come and contribute some

good to the community, but you cannot lose sight of the fact that some of these Indians, Jews and Assyrians come here with their commercial skill, make money, make it quickly and take it away and they are not the few. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I think you would recall one of them who was about to leave the colony and on a search made of his person by the Police at the Customs, many million francs were found on him. That man was able to gather all that money from some sort of stout and other drinks which he made here.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I will agree that a Bill of similar nature is absolutely necessary because with the commitments of the colony, at present, it is necessary to get revenue from every possible source. Everybody should be made to contribute their portion to the social development of the colony; nobody should be allowed to go 'Scotch free'. But in seeing to that, we should not enact any legislation which would create any undue hardship on anyone. I, therefore, beg to move that this Bill be sent to Select Committee.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I am afraid that I cannot entertain that motion at this point. It is usual to let the second reading of the Bill to pass and then move that it be sent to Select Committee. I would like to assure the honourable senior member for the City that he will have the opportunity of moving that motion after the second reading of the Bill has been passed.

Mr. SMITH: I never expected that this Bill would have taken so long before passing its second reading. However, I must say something on it. I am not going to say anything against the amounts that are set out in the Bill to be paid for registration because, I think, we all have agreed with this increased taxation when we passed the Five Year Plan. Sir, it might appear to be a high increase when a hawkers' taxation has increased from one shilling to two shillings but when you think of it, in its right perspective, it is really only one cent a week that these hawkers are asked to pay and I think any of them can pay that. I do not see anything onerous in that increase.

Relative to the itinerant vendors, I am not in favour of increasing them from \$50 to anything more as was suggested by some honourable member. These itinerant vendors are very helpful to the poor people of this colony because in their service to these poor people, they take a lot of risk. Sometimes they lose their money. Sir many of these poor people wear out completely the goods that they had bought from these vendors before they finish paying for them. Some do not pay at all. I was therefore very surprised to hear this afternoon the honourable senior member for St. John praising these vendors so highly because, not long ago, he wanted Government to push them out of business.

Mr. ALLDER: I must give an explanation to that point, Mr. Deputy Speaker. The address which I moved in that respect was to stop them from coming to the island in the numbers that they were arriving, but I do not believe in trying to get at them by imposing unjustifiable taxation. The taxation imposed upon these people is nothing but a punitive measure and it is going to affect Barbadians as well.

Mr. SMITH: Sir, I feel this \$50 fee for registration of an itinerant vendor is quite sufficient. I am not in favour of making it one cent more because these people are not helping themselves alone; they are also helping the people of this country. Regardless of the place where these vendors buy their goods, whether they buy them in Bridgetown or whether they bring them in when they come here, they distribute them to these poor people at great risk, and I

see no reason why you should cripple them by imposing a registration fee higher than that set out in this Bill. If I may give an instance of the help these itinerant vendors are to people in the country, I will tell you that I know a woman who had triplets and the only time that she saw her way to send them to school was when these vendors came along and credited her with cloth. She told me the story that many a day she hid from the "ecolie" man that sold her the cloth because she was unable to pay him. There are hundreds like her in the country. Sir, I say that we should encourage these itinerant vendors from abroad and do everything in our power to help them. We should not tax them any more that we have in this Bill. We should not do anything to prevent them from vending their goods because if the business people of this country had adopted the same attitude to vending as these people, they would not have been able to get into the business. The business people of the island left this big opening and these itinerant vendors came in and filled it. The risk they take upon themselves, business people of this colony would not take. I would include myself as one of those people who would not take such risk. I will never cast one vote against these foreign itinerant vendors because while they are helping themselves, they are helping my poor countrymen.

Mrs. BOURNE: As far as these itinerant vendors are concerned, like the honourable junior member for Christ Church, I feel that Government is very lenient with them and that they can pay more. I do not quite agree with the remarks of the honourable junior member for St. Joseph or the honourable senior member for St. John. As a matter of fact, from the remarks of the honourable senior member for the City, these people who are carrying on trade in Bridgetown are asked to pay \$70 by the Vestry of St. Michael as trade tax. I feel the Government is very lenient with the others who do the country vending. When you consider this matter carefully, you will see that these itinerant traders are travelling island wide and from the amount which they charge for their goods they are making tremendous profits. I am in a position to say that in some cases the profit which they make is in the vicinity of 400 or 500 per cent off the goods which they buy. I have been privileged to be in a Broad Street Store to see a certain Indian purchasing pieces of material and was further privileged to see that same person offering a piece of the same material to a woman who lives next door to me and he sold her at a price which was 400 per cent. over that which it is sold for in Broad Street.

Sir, these foreign itinerant vendors may feel that they are helping the poor people by selling them something which they can pay for by instalments, probably staggered over a year, but I think the profits made by these vendors are out of proportion to the help which they give to these poor people. Each and everyone of these poor people helps to bear one another's burden when these vendors go around and collect so much from one person and so much from the other. I can assure you that these foreign itinerant vendors get all the money they credit to these poor people because the people have superstitious feelings about them. They feel that if they do not pay their debt to those vendors that something wrong will happen, so those vendors lose little or nothing. I am inclined to agree with the honourable junior member for Christ Church who said that \$50 is not enough to ask those itinerant vendors to pay to trade. As regards to what the honourable sen-

ior member for the City said as to what those Indian traders were rated by the St. Michael Vestry, I do not see any reason why those who travel island-wide vending should not pay a similar registration fee. I do not see the reason why the parish of St. Michael should benefit and the Central Government should not benefit also from those who go around vending. Those who go around do not collect money from their customers in St. Michael alone; they collect their money from customers island-wide. I feel that these itinerant vendors should be made to pay a fee into the Treasury. Sir, you must also take into consideration the fact that the influx of these itinerant vendors has driven many established country traders in merchandise out of business. The various parishes used to collect taxes from the local traders in merchandise but they collect nothing now from these foreign itinerant traders.

Sir, I notice that this Bill seeks to amend the Hawkers Registration Act, 1904, so I take it that since 1904 hawkers were asked to pay one shilling annually for a licence to do their business. We are now in 1953 asking these people to pay two shillings and I do not feel that this increase is unreasonable at all. If my sister were a hawker, I would tell her that this new fee is a small amount to pay, particularly if you take into account the business that hawkers do today. A hawker came into my garden sometime ago and I sold her some peppers at 36 cents per hundred and I was privileged to see her selling them at two for three cents in Busbey Alley.

What I would like the Government to do is that just as it has called on the itinerant vendor to pay a greater fee than the hawker; so too should it make the merchant who carries on a liquor business in Bridgetown pay a greater liquor licence fee than the small licensed liquor dealer in the country. The small shopkeeper who can only sell a gallon of spirituous liquor a day should not be called on to pay the same fee for a licence as the big merchant in Bridgetown that sells gallons per day. This is by the way.

Sir, I do not think I should hold up this debate any longer. I am prepared to support the Bill. If \$50 for a registration fee for an itinerant trader is thought inadequate and it is deleted and \$100 substituted, I am prepared to vote for that amendment.

Mr. HOLDER: Sir, I have listened rather carefully to the debate on this Bill and I would just like to refer to itinerant vendors. It is a well-known fact that the merchants of Barbados never went out of their way nor do they intend to help the poor man to get his clothing by similar means to the setup of these itinerant vendors, therefore, when these itinerant traders came to the island and started that sort of business they did a good job and were a good help to poor people. It may be said that these itinerant vendors go to Bridgetown and buy an article for three dollars and then sell it for a great deal more than that but must take into consideration the easy payment terms by which the poor people pay for these articles, and according to the honourable junior member for St. Joseph, some do not pay at all. Because of that, I think that \$50 for a registration fee for itinerant vendors is quite good. It should not be more.

What I would like to draw to the attention of Government is that there are a few itinerant traders who arrive in the colony during the early part of the year to sell goods during the crop time and leaves around July and August. I would like to know if the Government can impose a special tax on those vendors—something like £50. Personally, I feel that they are the ones who are a menace to the community. I feel that they should not be

allowed to land and I draw it to the attention of Government with the hope that it will take the matter up.

With regards to hawkers, it is almost 50 years that they were called on to pay one shilling for a licence. The hawker wants the same rights and the same protection by the Police as any other trader. He can pursue his calling from January to December with this licence for two shillings according to this Bill. It works out to less than one cent per week and I see no reason why he cannot pay this small fee. As the honourable senior member for St. Andrew has said, this fee of two shillings will create no hardship on any of them.

As I have said, I rose merely to draw attention to this certain type of itinerant vendor who looks like a Portuguese, who gets around in a motor car and just freezes poor people.

Mr. BARROW: Mr. Deputy Speaker, As the honourable senior member for the City has said, I too feel that this Bill should be sent to Select Committee. I therefore rise to second the motion made by that honourable member. I will give my reasons.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: It is not clear to me whether I should accept this motion at this time. At any rate, the honourable member may proceed.

Mr. BARROW: Sir, it is my intention to second that motion, though my reasons for doing so are not altogether the same as those which were put forward by the honourable senior member for the City. It is my personal feeling that this matter is of no great urgency because on an enquiry made on my behalf as to the amount of revenue that is likely to accrue in the Treasury from the change in registration fees, no answer seems to be forthcoming but I have been indulging in research of another nature which I shall disclose later on.

Sir, if you put a levy of one shilling more on hawkers of this island, I do not know whether the aggregate amount to be received from such taxation would be in excess of \$1,000. That in itself is not an argument which can be used against supporting this Bill because every little bit helps and I think, all of us subscribe to the principle of everyone sharing in the burden of taxation. I do not think that anyone in his right senses with the exception, perhaps, of the honourable senior member for St. John is going to suggest that the imposition of an additional shilling on the registration fee of a hawker is going to create a hardship to pay but on the other side of the matter I am wondering whether the increase would be of any benefit to the Government if you look at it from the point of view of printing the Bill for the promulgation of these taxes, the change in the stamp of the licence and the purchasing of a new die or dies to show that the licence has been paid by a particular person. I am wondering whether all of these little things which will have to be done to put into effect the change would not amount to far above what you will receive from the imposition of this additional tax. I am not giving a notion one way or the other but these are some of the observations which I feel should be weighed and I presume that some are weighed already.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would like to ask your indulgence to point out that we are amending the Hawkers Registration Act, 1904, and to ask honourable members whether they feel like me that it is high time that we amend the Act so as to prevent these hawkers from breaking the law. Now, the idea of a hawker or pedlar is someone who goes from door to door peddling or hawking

merchandise. It is an occupation which big people in the United Kingdom unlike people in this country pursue. At any rate, what I want to bring to your attention is that a hawker is someone who goes around and who is always on the move.

The Hawkers Registration Act, 1904, states:—

"It shall not be lawful for any person registered under this Act to sit in any road, street, square, lane, or alley for the purpose of disposing of any goods, wares, articles or merchandise."

Here we are for the last three hours debating whether we should increase the licence for hawkers from one shilling to two shillings when over 90% of them exercise their calling sitting in the streets, roads squares and lanes. In the parish of St. Michael, there is no place for them to go to prevent them from walking around. There is a lack of market facilities and as a result, hawkers are forced to sit down in alleys, streets and by-ways to dispose of their goods. In my view, most all the hawkers who used to go around with fish, eggs, and things of that nature in trays have finished doing so. The people who buy from them now go to them, so you will see that these hawkers are actually forced to break the law by sitting down in alleyways, and so on, to carry on their calling. To the best of my knowledge, it is illegal for a hawker to vend certain articles because under the Act those articles are not allowed to be taken around from door to door while offered for sale. What I want to stress to all honourable members is that something of far more importance than what is contained in this Bill needs to be done, either by way of providing adequate market facilities for the consumers and the hawkers so that the hawkers would not need to go around. Something should be done to take them off the streets so that they would not break the law. There could be some amendment to the Act so as to declare certain streets or places market places for hawkers to vend their wares. If I should name a few places, Busby Alley, Baxters Road, the Rains Chapel Street are places where hawkers congregate to dispose of their goods but according to the law these people are forbidden from doing so. If the Police made cases of all these lawbreakers, thousands would be prosecuted weekly. I feel a new necessity has arisen since the consumer is prepared to go to a place where all these hawkers congregate in order to get a wider and freer range of choice. There is the necessity for market places for these hawkers. The market places would also facilitate the collection of taxation from these hawkers.

The second point which I would like to bring to the notice of this House is that I entirely agree with the honourable senior member for St. Philip when he pointed out that itinerant vendors fall into two or more distinct categories. Although aliens form the greater part of the people in this calling, yet there are Barbadians—and the Barbadian womanfolk too—who go around either walking or by motor vehicle, pursuing this business. We have a resident population of aliens—using that word in its widest sense—who have made their homes in Barbados and are carrying on this sort of business in stores in Bridgetown and are contributing to the island by paying trade tax and employing local workers. We have here also a second class of foreigner who visits the island seasonally. I want to say right now that I am not carried away by anything which anybody might say unseemly about Indians, Jews or Assyrians because I believe that those people have better characteristics than the average-typed Barbadian, Trinidadian or West Indian for that matter. This practice of exploitation is no more inherent in a Jew,

Assyrian or Indian than in a Barbadian, Trinidadian or West Indian for that matter. It is purely a characteristic of an individual depending more or less on the person's environment. Some people in the biggest metropolitan countries reach the most skill in it.

We are faced with the fact that there are certain traders who come to this island only when money is circulating; that is some indication of their business acumen. These people are not subject to the payment of trade tax because they are never here for the Vestries to catch up with them and they tend to give shorter conditions of credit than the itinerant vendor who is resident in the island will give. They are by reputation—I cannot say I can prove it—more rapacious in their dealings with their customers than the Indians. In the neighbouring colony of Grenada they have passed legislation which imposes on people of that nature something like £100 before they can even start business.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I do not think that that applies to itinerant vendors; that applies to visiting commission agents.

Mr. BARROW: I speak subject to correction, but I think you will find that that provision has been made to apply to the people of the description I have in mind. I am not in favour of excluding any itinerant trader from coming to this island seasonally or otherwise, provided that he conforms to all the immigration formalities and comes up to the requirements as regards character and so on. I certainly think we could fix the licence fee for itinerant traders in different categories and make the tax much higher for those people who have not got to pay any trade tax.

I do not see my way to subscribe to the suggestion of the honourable senior member for St. Andrew that we should take out more than \$50 from the local resident people; I do not think that there is one Broad Street merchant who has to pay out 25% of his profits in the form of a trade tax plus licence or companies tax. If, as the honourable junior member for St. Joseph and other honourable members have pointed out, these people are performing some kind of service to sections of the rural community in this colony, I do not see any reason why we should penalise the local resident itinerant trader.

I am not going to have any pity for the merchants in Broad Street or in any other part of Bridgetown. Before the trade of itinerant vendors became popular in this island any merchant in Broad Street, if the necessity existed for giving long-term credit and taking goods to the consumer rather than waiting for the agricultural worker who drew his wages on Friday or Saturday to come into town and purchase, could have done those things. If that necessity existed I submit that the merchants have not come out and done what I understand they are doing now. If a man is foolish enough to pay \$40 spread over a period of five years for something which he could get much cheaper, that is his business; that is a question of a private contract and you cannot prevent people from buying any commodity on such terms as they think fit. The Broad Street merchant or other merchants in Bridgetown must put better credit facilities at the disposal of the people. I do not think that the finger of moral indignation should be pointed at anyone who goes out and gets profit on a free contract. If a person prefers to buy a \$60 suit from an itinerant trader rather than from a Broad Street merchant the Broad Street merchant should be the last person to drag morals into this matter because it is a question of a private contract; that person buys that suit because it gives him a feeling of self-respect. If the Broad Street merchant can

offer better credit facilities do not tell me that the average worker would not go into Broad Street and buy his goods. When the Chamber of Commerce drag morals into this matter I think they are exposing their own lack of initiative, because they should have extended their credit system island wide. The whole position in Barbados is that when you go into a store in Broad Street the people there think they are doing you a favour in selling you something; they will carry on their conversation and unless you shout at them and say: "Get me so and so" you will have to wait for a long time. The general attitude is that these people are doing you a favour to sell you something; if the employers were not making too much money already they would change these employees and having reached the extent of the market in Bridgetown they would go to the country and put credit facilities at the disposal of the people there. I do not want anybody to appeal to me that it is an immoral thing to go out and charge 300% on the price of an commodity which you can get cheaper in Broad Street, it is not only people like me but the man in the street with whom I partly associate myself, who is beginning to notice that the people in Broad Street think they are doing you a favour when they sell you something.

My last point is this: Sub-clause (4) of Clause 2 says this:—

"Every person registered as a hawker or pedlar shall exercise his trade or calling in respect of all or any of the articles set out in the First Schedule to this Act and not otherwise."

Then a list of items is set out in the first Schedule. I do not believe in that kind of legislation at all. We are not omniscient; we cannot possibly sit down and think of all the commodities which a hawker might want to sell. There is a well-known rule that if you set out certain things which a hawker might sell and a person sells anything else, he will be excluded from that classification. You have these items set out in this Schedule; potato slips and onions, for instance, are not included in the general Clause and you may find a man selling these items and he could say: "I do not come under the classification of a hawker." Another man may be selling knife boards and I could sit down and write out a list of items which are not set out in this Schedule. If you do not remember everything you should not put anything in the Bill; if you sell a flashlight you are not a hawker, and exercise books, pencils and slates are not included in this Schedule. The items set out in this Schedule are:

Bread, Cakes, Mauby, Vegetables, Fruit, Confectionery, Poultry, Fish, Ice Cream and Ices, Soaps, Candies, Ribbons, Laces, Buttons, Pins, Threads, Needles, Combs, Toothbrushes, Toothpaste, Toothpowder, Spoons, Strainers, Shoe polish, Boot and Shoe Laces, Cigarettes, Matches, the products of local handicrafts, and any liquor not being a spirituous liquor not containing any admixture of any spirituous liquors.

Only the people who sell those items are hawkers; everybody knows that hawkers sell a lot more things than those which are enumerated in this First Schedule.

When it comes to itinerant traders it is felt that they only sell cotton, woollen and other piece goods and garments of any other kind whatsoever other than those specified in the First Schedule. If you say that the importation of tin, copper and lead is prohibited in Barbados, that does not include gold, platinum and silver. I want to make myself clear; if you say that the importation of tin, copper and lead and you do not say any other metal is prohibited, that would not include gold and silver.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I feel that the honourable member has said sufficient to indicate what he means.

Mr. BARROW: I am just giving certain pointers as to why I feel that this Bill should be referred to a Select Committee. If you put cotton, woollen and linen articles in the Schedule that would not include silk, and that means that a man could sell silk with impunity; that provision would include everything of the nature of cotton, wool and linen, but no provision would have been made for materials like nylons, rayons and so on, which are being brought into the market from day to day. I think it should be made specific in the Act that if you are selling any of these materials you are an itinerant trader and you must pay the licence fee. Itinerant traders also sell perfumes and perfumes are not included in either of these Schedules; as a matter of fact, there are some itinerant traders who manufacture perfumes and essences and sell them to shopkeepers. It is for the reasons I have enumerated that I think this Bill should be referred to a Select Committee; I have not been talking out of sheer frivolity or for the amusement of honourable members.

Mr. F. L. WALCOTT: I have listened to many speeches in connection with this Bill and they have been political speeches in the main. The majority of honourable members have come down on the side of the itinerant vendor; some honourable members agree that he should be charged what it is proposed to charge him for his licence and others agree that he should be charged more, but the hawkers are a substantial number of people and you cannot pass legislation affecting a substantial number of people who have put honourable members here. For the benefit of honourable members who have done some research and for those who have not done any research, I will remind them that at the beginning I said that this was a matter which was considered in the light of the Five Year Plan and that what the Government had before it was the policy of building District Markets. In the Five Year Plan honourable members will see that the Government has earmarked the sum of \$160,000 for the erection of these Markets. When the honourable senior member for St. George said that we are not paying attention to these necessary things he was not taking things in the true perspective. The Eagle Hall Market is a beginning; we are not originating anything to-day when we say that we propose to increase these fees for hawkers and I do not know whence anybody could get the suggestion that the Government has proposed this Bill on moral grounds. Itinerant vendors are charging people three times the amount for which they buy commodities and the Government is now proposing this increased licence fee in respect of these people; the Government's position is that you cannot tax the people whose business you cannot see and you find it difficult to charge these itinerant vendors. Is it fair that some people can trade and pay no taxation whereas other people are paying taxes?

The honourable senior member for St. Philip wanted to show where, in the first instance, it was a question of registration in respect of hawkers; but when you register you still have to pay a fee for registration. Even doctors have to pay a registration fee; it is only the lawyers who get away in this island.

Mr. CRAWFORD: On a point of order. I did not say that people should be registered free; I emphasized that the question of registration was from the point of view of having your name there in contradistinction to what the honourable member said about the registration having been introduced from the point of view of getting fees.

Mr. F. L. WALCOTT: I said at the beginning that I cannot say what was the reason for registration in 1904 because I was not on the scene then; I said that this increase in fees has arisen out of the Five Year Plan of Development and Taxation. I said that the Government was proposing this Bill as a means of raising revenue; I will point out to the honourable member that the question of registration is still connected with the fee because a medical practitioner still has to pay a registration fee of a guinea. There are other fees which this House has to consider; it is not the intention of the Government to bring forward all its taxation proposals at one time because we must have the set up to deal with that.

As to what the honourable junior member for St. George and others have said, let us examine the position quite dispassionately. How can you begin to talk about a poor hawker? I know something about the income of some of those hawkers; there are men who push bread carts and who work for considerable incomes. The registration fee is less than one cent a week and you can consider what a hawker pays to go to Kensington when intercolonial matches are being played there; he pays more than two shillings. People have to pay in consideration of the services they enjoy. I see that the honourable senior member for St. Philip has tabled an Address relative to a comprehensive system of social security which will entail the provision of a large sum of money per year; can you not realise that the Government needs every penny it can get from every source? (Mr. CRAWFORD: What about leave passages?) The point is that no honourable member in this Chamber can say that a hardship is being created on hawkers when the registration fee is less than a cent a week. To say that a hawker cannot sell her oranges is no argument because if you go to Baxters Road you can see a lot of empty rum shops but the licence fee is £10 per annum. I go further; I know a man will buy a bicycle for about \$90 so as to hawk fish, and can you say that such a man who has to pay 2/- a year as a licence fee is at a disadvantage when a fishmonger today pays more than 2/- in order to sell fish in the market? When you hear this outcry as if the Government is bringing down some weight on the hawkers, hon. members will see that that is not so; this proposal is nothing which the members of the Government did not anticipate.

The honourable junior member for St. George fell into the trap of—

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I am appealing to honourable members to consider that the honourable junior member for St. Peter is replying to criticisms of a Bill which he has introduced in this House and those honourable members who made the criticisms should be able to hear the reply to them.

Mr. MILLER: I would like the honourable member to explain something about the trap into which he said I fell.

Mr. F. L. WALCOTT: I was referring to the point about the certificate of character; that provision is in the old Act.

Mr. MILLER: I was enquiring whether a person should be asked to get two persons to sign a certificate of character every year.

Mr. F. L. WALCOTT: I have heard the honourable senior member for St. Philip advocate that people should plant more vegetables and so on, but the honourable junior member for St. Joseph will tell you that one of the evils facing a man who plants vegetables is predial larceny. The provision we have here is to give people security, to prevent them from being stopped by policemen when they go

around; what is wrong with this provision? It is normal for a person to have a certificate of good character before he can be employed; are you doing a person any hardship if you make this provision? I cannot see that. If a boy is sitting the Barbados Scholarship he has to present a certificate of good character.

The honourable senior member for St. John is famous for using every philosophical rendering he can find, but when you bring him down to earth you will find that he makes the same speech he always makes. As far as the honourable junior member for Christ Church is concerned, he will see that besides cotton, woollen and linen articles mentioned in the Schedule, it is also a question of other piece goods and garments of any other kind whatsoever. The hon. senior member for St. George referred to potato slips not being mentioned in the first Schedule, but it is a question of what is meant by vegetables: it is true that there are islands in which there is a rigid sticking out for certain things. When honourable members look at the first Schedule to this Bill I wonder if they really feel that the people themselves would regard this fee of 2/- as an imposition which they cannot afford!

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I am appealing to honourable members for the last time. I would like to remind them that if I consider that there is a state of confusion I have the power to adjourn the House. If the Reporter is unable to hear the honourable member who is speaking it will be impossible for him to carry out his duties.

Mr. F. L. WALCOTT: This Bill was never intended to work against Indians, Assyrians or anybody else; this legislation was sent down to apply to everybody. You do not want people to be in unfair competition with others who have to comply with a Schedule; you try to provide markets for people because you do not want them to be haled before a Police Court before you have made the necessary provision for them. An honourable member says that because the Barbadian is thrifty you are making him pay \$50 for a licence. I hope that one of these days the Government will make it possible for people's income tax and death duties to be made known and you would see how poor some of the poor people are. It is amazing to find that some people will remain in a one-door shop but they will build \$14,000 houses; if they are doing such bad business how can they build such houses? I cannot see that the payment of \$4.00 a month will create any hardship on these people; are they in any worse position than people who open business and pay rent and taxation? I feel that this whole measure is a reasonable one when you consider the things which are needed.

This island is going to be faced more and more with greater commitments for extending the services we have, and I do not see that if this Government can get every penny from every available source, why we should fail to do so. I feel that this licence fee is not any imposition on the people who have to pay it. I am here because people like myself have put me here and I can go back to the people and say why we have done such a thing. If you want improvements in a community you have to pay for those improvements.

The honourable senior member for St. John talks about putting taxation on owners of pet cats and dogs; well, one of these days we may be able to tax them.

Mr. ALLDER: On a point of order. I did not make any reference to taxing the owners of pet cats and dogs.

Mr. F. L. WALCOTT: The honourable member said that the Government should follow what he proposed some time ago: he proposed that we tax the owners of pet cats and dogs and yachts. We are not going in for anything maritime yet; we are keeping more on the shore. When we find that the need is so great that we have to rope in pet cats and pet dogs we may even have to tax a man on owning his fourth hat. I would like to let honourable members know that what is before us now is not the end of miscellaneous taxation; we are coming down with taxation in respect of liquor licences, and there is the question of stamp duties and so on, which has to be examined. Those are things in respect of which the net will be thrown out to bring in taxation. I can tell honourable members that we do not propose to collect anything near what we have proposed in the Five Year Plan; I hope I have made my points clear if not to the satisfaction of the House, to my own satisfaction.

Mr. VAUGHAN: We have heard a lot about itinerant traders offering competition to established businesses without paying proper taxation, but how long has the Government tried to protect established businesses against competition? Competition is the essence of private enterprise and the Government should be the last people to try to put forward the argument about putting a tax on itinerant traders.

Mr. F. L. WALCOTT: On a point of order. The Government has never said that this legislation is a means of protecting people against competition: we say that we are proposing this licence fee in respect of these itinerant vendors because established businesses are taxed and you cannot tax these itinerant vendors.

Mr. VAUGHAN: That is the essence of what I said. In a congested area like this, the greater the number of people who can employ themselves, the better it is for the progress of the community. Where there is rampant unemployment you may find a man possessing 50 cents and that is the foundation of his employing himself; when you impose a licence fee of \$50 on that man, do you not see the terrible restrictive policy in that? If you want to stop these Assyrians or Indian traders from exploiting, as you claim, the small people in this country, then you should hit them at the immigration source; let them pay a substantial sum for entering the colony. As to the hawkers, the addition of the licence fee of a shilling will not make a hawker poorer, but how much richer will it make the Government? The hawkers render invaluable service to this country; Mr. Halcrowe says that they are valuable distributors of agricultural products in this country and I maintain that it is not necessary to include them in the collection of this \$200,000. They should be left out if it is for no more than the bad psychological effect; the community is being given the idea that the Government is out to collect money from the small man no matter what he suffers. In a community which is as congested as Barbados is, the man who tries to employ himself is an asset to the people, and the Government should encourage him, not put anything in his way. I know a young man who collected \$6 or \$7 and he is employing himself up to now; he buys vaseline and other items and goes all over the country and sells them. Under this Bill this young man will have to come under the heading of an itinerant trader.

There are people who have less than \$50 employing themselves and here we are going to cause additional unemployment; these people are going to be pushed out of the effort which they are making in trying to make a living for themselves. I have been wondering how they manage with the small capital on which they work, but they go through. A hawker walks miles from Bridgetown to the country to buy potatoes; these people spend hours in the fields and they miss buses because people are late in selling these vegetables and then they have to walk back home or hire a car or one of the vehicles which we see on the roads. The idea in this Bill is entirely wrong. I cannot at all sympathise with this outlook in respect of taxation; another Budget Day has not yet come for the Government to know what they want to collect. If they go on from week to week trying to do nothing but collect taxation, they will find that they will have brought such a restriction on productive effort that they will collect much less than they calculate to collect. That will certainly happen; any economist will tell you that you can push taxation too far and defeat the very object at which you are aiming. I am a prophet tonight and I say that the Government is going to drive the small people and some of the large ones to restrict their productive efforts, and when the efforts of these people are restricted the less the Government will get. That policy is an absurd one; at election time they withdraw the licence in respect of fishermen through a Bill they put forward.

Mr. F. L. WALCOTT: On a point of order. The Government never withdrew any licence in respect of fishermen because they never proposed any such licence. The fishermen never had to pay any licence fee at all.

Mr. VAUGHAN: However, I advise the Government to pay attention to the Control Office and see what is happening. The import licences and quota system are confined to a few businessmen; when a small man wants to invest in a new business, say in drugs, and he applies for a quota, he is told that the quota is full. Some big firm has all of it; that is scandalous discrimination and the system still obtains; it is discrimination of the worst sort. People who would do business are prevented from doing it through this quota system.

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

Mr. F. L. WALCOTT: At this stage, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I beg to move that this House do now adjourn for three quarters of an hour.

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

On re-assembling,

Mr. F. L. WALCOTT: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I do not propose, at this stage, to proceed with the Bill which we were considering before the adjournment.

REPRESENTATION OF THE PEOPLE (AMENDMENT) BILL, 1953.

Mr. ADAMS: Mr. Deputy Speaker,—I ask leave to take Order No. 4 as the next Order of the Day.

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

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The next Order of the Day stands in the name of the honourable

senior member for St. Joseph:—To move the second reading of a Bill intituled an Act to amend the Representation of the People Act, 1901.

Mr. ADAMS: I suppose that this will be my shortest speech on the floor of this House in my political career. The "Objects and Reasons" of this Bill are sufficiently clear and sufficiently full. In anticipation of any objection real or otherwise, which is going to be made, I will say that this Party now forming the Government has, for a number of years, not at the last Election alone, pointed out that the usual period of the life of the Legislature was five years; that as we develop more and more towards self-government and had the Party system of Government, the Party which put forward a programme was justified in asking the people to give it sufficient length of life to enable it to carry out that programme. I hope the House will forgive me for saying what is elementary, but the life of the House being five years does not prevent the Governor, although he would hardly do it without the advice of four members of this House — it would be a very unusual thing but there would be nothing to prevent the Governor from dissolving the House if, in his opinion, a stage was reached where, although we had a majority which always put through Bills, we no longer had the confidence of the people and it might be thought fit to have an election. In Great Britain Her Majesty the Queen would do it on the advice of her Ministers: when we have Ministerial Status it is reasonable to suppose that either the British or the Dominion system will prevail and that the House will be prorogued or dissolved only on the advice of the Ministers. I say that and I again ask the House to pardon me for saying what is elementary. A five-year House does not mean that it will always run its five years; if ever there was a Party which had a mandate for introducing a Bill of this sort, we have had it because in our printed policy programme before 1951 we mentioned it and in 1951 at the last Election we repeated it in our manifesto which we have been faithfully following since our return to power, and in every parish and practically every night on which a meeting was held. I say that in anticipation of those who may not have heard of it. I have seen it stated in the Press in connection with the Local Government Bill, by somebody in public life that this matter was not discussed during the election campaign; a more stupid and inaccurate statement is hardly possible to conceive. Like this Bill now before the House we had discussed the "Maude" Bill and we had told people over and over again that if we got back into power, three major matters would be brought forward—the "Maude" Bill, a Bill for the extension of the life of the House and Ministerial Status. (Mr. E. D. MOTTLEY: And nationalisation). We said we have never abandoned our policy of nationalisation and we do not abandon it; whenever it is expedient, whenever the time for nationalising this, that or the other arrives, we will carry out our policy. It is not a matter of pure ideology; this Party has never abandoned its belief in nationalisation. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I beg to move that this Bill be now read a second time.

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

Mr. VAUGHAN: It would be dishonest in me as a politician not to say that such a Bill will benefit me, because next year I would have to face another election; but if this Bill is passed that election will be delayed for two years. Nevertheless, I want to register my strong objection to this Bill. I repeat in three years' time all these politicians, if they are honest, will see that such a Bill will benefit them, because the less the delay the shorter time

they will have to face an election. Some politicians would like to be here for longer than five years, but the principle of representation is that you must face the electorate as often as is conveniently possible and propitious. The British Labour Party was elected for five years but before that time expired they voluntarily asked that Parliament be dissolved and that another election be held. It has been said and written and published that Mr. Churchill wants an election soon but he denied that, of course.

The honourable senior member for St. Joseph has said that the proposal in this Bill was an election issue, but I was not aware of that. I have my ear to the public ground and I hear complaints daily. If the Government of this country was widely popular, of course I would endorse the five-year life without hesitation or criticism, but the position is exactly opposite. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am telling you this; it looks to me that the present Party in power, being aware of its unpopularity, has brought down this measure as a means of maintaining itself in power. The members of the present Party in power are not as blind and as deaf as they appear to be, and they are aware of the rumours of their unpopularity; under these conditions, this Bill is an undesirable one. If the present Government were showing the people that benefits were being brought to the country or if there was any widespread effort to make conditions better, then that would have been a different matter; but some undesirable legislation has been passed since this Government has been in power.

The first objectionable legislation which was passed was the Revenue Equalisation Fund Bill the object of which was to invest money abroad. That legislation was definitely unpopular; with an undeveloped country like this, with thousands of people unemployed, they take the surplus which has accumulated over a number of years and invest it abroad, and at the same time they invite capital from abroad. The next issue was the substantial increase in the already substantial salaries which were being paid in a community like this.

Mr. ADAMS: On a point of order. Is the honourable member in order in constantly attacking legislation which has been passed by this House?

Mr. VAUGHAN: Now we have a Bill to increase the length of the legislative session. This is a legislative Chamber; I am giving the reasons why I feel that the length of the session should not be increased, and the only way I can give those reasons is to cite measures passed by this House and which were unpopular. I am not criticising the House: I am citing measures which have been passed but which we know are unpopular with the people of this island.

Mr. ADAMS: I must object to the honourable member's constant breaking of the Rule. I draw Your Honour's attention to Rule 123; no member may reflect on a vote of the House.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: With reference to the honourable member's point of order I must say that I regard the Bill which is now before the House as an unusual one to be brought before any Legislature. The extension of the life of the House for a period without an election must be an unusual thing for any Legislature to be considering. I therefore feel that any review of the work of the Legislature during the period for which it has been working is in order. The honourable junior member for St. John is merely saying that certain legislation has been unpopular and when he says that, I do not construe that to mean that it is a reflection either on the integrity of honourable members or on the sincerity

of their action. So far as the honourable member has spoken already I do not intend to apply this Rule strictly.

Mr. VAUGHAN: As I was saying, Sir, I am aware of legislation which has been passed by this House that is very unpopular among the masses of the electorate. If I may state some: The Revenue Equalisation Fund; the increase of salaries for the higher Civil Servants; the Five Year Plan with its additional taxation; the increase in water rates for household service as accrued from the Five Year Plan; and Leave Passages. All of these, Mr. Deputy Speaker, are measures which have been passed by this House but which are very unpopular with the masses.

Mr. F. L. WALCOTT: On a point of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Can we take it that a member is in order in this Chamber when he says that legislation which has been passed by this House is unpopular? We cannot reduce the debates of this Chamber to street arguments. When a measure passes this Chamber it ceases to be unpopular; if it were unpopular it should never have been passed by this Chamber.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I will once again let the honourable junior member for St. Peter know how I view this matter. Any parliament tests the popularity of the legislation which has been passed by it by seeking the vote of the electorate—that is by a general election, or a vote of confidence may be moved inside the Chamber by the party in power. Since this Bill is one that postpones a general election, I think that the honourable junior member for St. John is in order to do what he has done so far. If he goes beyond that, I will regard it as a reflection on a vote of this House.

Mr. VAUGHAN: As I have said, there are more important parliaments than this which have been elected for five years but which do not necessarily remain in office for that time. I need only remind this House that previous to the last General Elections in the Mother Country, the Labour Party which was in power for five years only remained in office for a little over a year of its term when it went back to the country. It is said that Sir Winston Churchill, Prime Minister, at the last Conservative Party Conference at Margate, hinted that the party would go back to the country during the autumn of next year.

Mr. BARROW: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would like to know whether the honourable member is reflecting on the Prime Minister of the Mother Country because I can only gather that from his statement.

Mr. VAUGHAN: Mr. Deputy Speaker, one-third of the representatives of Congress in the United States of America have to face the electorate in their particular State biennially—every two years—though the Party in power is returned for a four-year period. The present length of Session for this House of Assembly is three years. At first, it was for only a year; then it was increased to two years and during the last session to three years. If the honourable senior member for St. Joseph felt so confident that his party would be returned to power, he had the opportunity during the 1948-51 Session to pass legislation to extend the life to five years. Everybody would know that this session would be for five years. What happened then? During the 1948-51 Session, the same party that is in power now was in power then and legislation was passed to increase that session from two years to three years.

Sir, what we are really doing now is appointing ourselves to a longer session than we are morally entitled to. Sir, I live among the electorate of this

country; I do not live in any ivory tower; I am an ordinary citizen as anybody else and on account of that, I meet all kinds of people who talk with me and ask me questions over everything political. By my conversations with these people, I can tell you that this five-year proposal for the life of this House is the most unpopular proposal coming from the Government. I am aware of the grave unpopularity of this measure which we are introducing here to-night and I have reasons to believe that the party in power is also aware of this unpopularity. Under the circumstances, I cannot see how it can be morally right.

Sir, if I will not be called upon to face the electorate next year when this Session ends, it would be easier for me but my integrity is something which I will not let slip for anything else. I have been a member of this Chamber before and my integrity made me resign my seat. I know that many decent citizens would not stand on our platforms to become members of this Chamber because of the policy of some honourable members. I am saying that honourable members on the Other Side of this table must have been also aware of the same feelings among the electorate of which I am aware. I do know that there is a certain section of the electorate that is praying for this three-year Session of this Assembly to end. People have asked me: "Are there no means of getting rid of the members of this Government before the time is out?" I tell them that the power still rests with the Governor to dissolve the Legislature under extraordinary circumstances and perhaps, if they were sufficiently organised to express publicly their dissatisfaction with the present Legislature that the Governor might take that step. Sir, if there is only one honourable member to vote against this Bill, I will be that member.

Mr. GODDARD: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am aware that during the last election campaign, the members of the Labour Party night after night told the electorate that if they were returned to power, they would extend the life of the House to five years. It was also written in the manifesto of the party. On the other hand, the party of which I am a member and myself said that if we were given the power, we would resist that. I still hold the feeling that the life of this House should be three years and I am more convinced than ever that this is not the time when the life of this House should be extended. The voting at the last elections was the first time that it was done under Adult Suffrage. Two years have passed and a lot seems to have taken place, therefore, I think it is but right that the electorate should be given an early opportunity of saying whether they thought their choice was right or not. I think the present Government in power would be surprised to know how unpopular it is with the vast majority of the electorate. I get around myself and have found this feeling to exist among the electorate. Even though the party of which I am a member may be small in membership and may not have the organisation as the present Government Party that does not mean that the present Government Party is popular enough to remain in office.

Sir, we have been promised ministerial status for some time now. Up to now the public is unaware of what is happening in this respect. Let a statement come down to this House for members to know something about it. If it is to be postponed, do say so. Let us know something. The public is left in the dark and it does not know whether ministerial status is still to be adopted because of no recent statement on the matter. The public is not at all satisfied with the high taxation that has taken place in all quarters both by direct and indirect taxation, arising out of

the introduction of the Five Year Plan. I am fully aware that any taxation is always unpopular but the people are wondering what the Labour Government is doing about the promises it has made. Despite the high taxation, they see nothing doing. They want to see something more tangible done than what is being done. The Labour Party in its manifesto promised free secondary education. (A VOICE: Read it again). Instead of that, there are rumours of increasing the fees at secondary schools. This is the opposite of what is in the Party's manifesto. The Party in power has also promised a reduction in the cost of living and that has not yet come (A VOICE: What part of the world has there been a drop in the cost of living? Would you tell us?) Sir the public is not satisfied over these things. I will not elucidate on what Government is doing now, but the people feel that things should be done at a quicker pace. The people are willing to support the Government but they cannot support it when nothing has been done. I do not know if the Government realises the large amount of unemployment which is in this country. People are coming back from Curacao, America and other countries as well as many seamen are being laid off ships. The Government has done nothing to attract capital or to encourage new industries. (A VOICE: The report of the Industrial Mission was issued just a few days ago.) The Government is doing nothing to aid the tourist industry.

Sir, I think this is an unfortunate time to extend the life of the House and the greatest point against the extension at this time is that the last election was the first occasion on which thousands of people voted for the first time and I think at the end of three years, they should be given the opportunity of deciding whether they fully agree with their last choice. If after that, the present Government is returned to power, then it can extend the Session to five years. There might be good reasons for doing so.

On the last occasion of the elections, I told the people that I would vote against the extension of the life of the House to a five year period and today my reasons for doing so are better than they were before. Sir, we have sat from Tuesday to Tuesday, yet I think the business of this House could be done more expeditiously and it is little things like this which the people expect Government would have put in order. There are comments by the public on the lateness of the printing of the debates of this Chamber and one of the reasons for this lateness is the time when this House conducts its business. There also is a lack of organisation and method by the Departments of Government owing to the way in which their business comes before the Legislature. If these various departments of Government do not send their business to Government at a proper time, they should be told to do so. We should not have one resolution put before us this week and another next week. Every Legislature has its recesses. This should have its recesses too. Again I say that the people should be given an early opportunity of reviewing their choice.

Mr. CRAWFORD: There are only two points on which the Government can base its claim to the extension of the life of the House for five years. One is the question of its saying that it has a mandate from the electorate and the other is the excuse of having the Five Year Plan to carry out and therefore, the Government should sit in office for as near that period of time in order to see it through. On the question of the mandate, there are some important points which I shall raise.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Earlier in this sitting, I did my best to protect an honourable member from the noise of other honourable members interrupting his speech. That honourable member is now joining with others and interrupting me from hearing the speech of the honourable senior member for St. Philip. I am therefore asking that honourable member to assist me in preserving order.

Mr. CRAWFORD: Sir, as I was saying, on the question of the mandate, if even it is assumed that the electorate gave the mandate to the Government to do certain things, circumstances may arise which in the opinion of the public itself might make it feel justified in recalling that mandate, and then the question would arise as to whether the sovereignty of parliament itself is inferior or subordinate to the sovereignty of the public. Previous speakers have itemised the events in the history of this legislative session that give rise to justifiable doubts as to the continued support of the public to the party in office; therefore, it is safe to assume that since the power of the public is superior to the power of parliament that the Government in its own interests should take the earliest opportunity to test the support of the country before it proceeds to extend its own life. Apart from the fact, Adult Suffrage was only introduced two years ago and this is also the time that the colony is taking a further step constitutionally to introduce ministerial status in the life of its present parliament. With the introduction of these two constitutional changes—Adult Suffrage and Ministerial Status—the public should be given the very earliest opportunity to say whether or not it is satisfied with having the present Government continuing in office. Instead of that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, you have the attempt of this Government, after less than two years in office, after less than two years of government from Adult Suffrage and almost on the eve of ministerial status, to extend its life to five years and in doing so, it is merely sheltering under the idea that it has a mandate from the people to do so. I feel that the best thing which should be done is to await the introduction of ministerial status. As a matter of fact, it is a moot question whether or not the introduction of ministerial status should not be preceded by a General Election.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I believe the honourable member does not recollect that ministerial status had been foreshadowed in this country since 1946.

Mr. CRAWFORD: Sir, even if that may be so; even if it may be claimed that it was the policy to introduce ministerial status, don't you think that the country should be given the right after its introduction to express its opinion on its operation? The way in which we hear this talk of ministerial status, one expected that it would come about before the end of this year. If this is so, do you mean that the public should wait three years before it is given the test to its reaction to its operation? Sir, I think that Government for its own reputation, for its own sense of personal respect, should at least delay the introduction of this Bill until after ministerial status has been introduced and is working for a time so as to gauge the success of its operation and the reaction of the public to it. But what is happening. Long before ministerial status has been introduced; long before it is decided to embark on this important constitutional development, you are safeguarding yourself by extending the life of the House. It is highly questionable to say the least. There can be no justification for it at all. Important measures just as this justify your making an appeal to the public.

Sir, this important change in the constitution does justify an appeal to the public. It is not appropriate, nor should any self-respecting Government attempt to extend its own life sometime before embarking on a change of this sort.

With regard to the excuse of the Five Year Plan, and the claim made that the Government wants to stay in office for as near a period as the Five Year Plan in order to push the plan, all I would say about that contention is that it is good that it is not a Ten Year Plan. Sometime ago, the honourable Senior Member for St. Joseph—and I think one or two other honourable members along with him,—thought of drafting a Ten Year Plan for Barbados. If the Government were so minded to carry that into effect, I wonder whether its members would have asked for ten years in order to carry that plan through. If the Government is so satisfied in its own mind that its performance in the past two years has met with the support of the entire public; if the Government feels that the entire public is so satisfied with the Five Year Plan; if the Government feels that it will operate ministerial status successfully, why is it afraid to go to the country at the end of this three-year period? If Government feels that way, it should have no fear of testing its support by appealing to the public. But it does not seem to think so and it is no wonder that the honourable junior member for St. John has made the charge that Government is afraid to go to the public within the coming year. It is the most natural allegation anyone would make that you want to extend the life of the House because you are afraid to go to the public before the period for which you are elected ends.

Mind you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, this Bill is not for a year's extension; it is an extension of two years. Government is saying that it was given a mandate for five years. On the other hand, I am saying that honourable members on my left and myself were told by the people that we must not support five years. We were told so specifically by the electorate of St. Philip and St. John. The electorate of those parishes made it perfectly clear that they were not supporting any candidate who would have supported a five-year session.

Sir, the Objects and Reasons of this Bill is one of the shortest on record. Even if during the election campaign you mentioned that you were going to extend the period of the House to five years, I still think that the Objects and Reasons of this Bill should be fully set out why you are doing so. Here you have in the Bill presented to the Legislature a mere bald statement just saying that you made that statement during the election campaign. The real purpose of your doing so is not set out in the Objects and Reasons of this Bill—not even for historical record only. What are the reasons for your change from three to five years? If you say that three years is too short for a session; say so and set it down in the historical document but do not merely set down in the document some expression that you repeated on a soap box during the election campaign without enumerating any of the reasons to the claim. It is not good enough, except you want to give the impression that once you are elected, you are prepared to stay in the Assembly as long as you legally should and perhaps, you morally can. One is justified in saying that the present Government must be sorry and has regretted that we are no longer living in the days when the life of parliament was contingent on the life of the sovereign. In those days, if the life of the sovereign was for five or twenty-five years, parliamentarians remained in office during that time.

Sir, I want to submit that in this Bill the Objects and Reasons should at least state some of the reasons why the Government Party made it clear that it was their intention of extending the life of the Legislature. Some of the reasons, if not all, should be stated. It should go on record for posterity to read why the life of the House of Assembly was extended from three to five years during this particular period whether the reasons are logical or illogical. I, personally, have no doubt in my mind that if the Government did not believe the allegations of its unpopularity on the part of the public with its programme that Government would have taken up the challenge laid down by previous speakers and demonstrate without the slightest shadow of doubt that it has the support of the public. If Government feels that the Five Year Plan and all the other legislation which passed this Chamber has the approval of the public, let it demonstrate it by letting the public test the issue. After that, the Government can ask for sanction of a five-year session.

(A VOICE: Do you wish a bigger demonstration than that you saw on Labour Day?)

Mr. CRAWFORD: Anybody Sir, as the honourable member who made the aside knows, can get a big demonstration in Bridgetown so long as he is in the midst of a steel band. If Mussolini, or Hitler, or Stalin, came here with a steel band, they will get a big demonstration despite what the people may think of them.

Sir, this is perhaps the most serious piece of legislation with which we would be dealing for the entire session. We were elected for three years and now we are giving ourselves two more years. Those of us who made it plain that we would not support this measure owe a duty to not only ourselves but to the community to say why we are not supporting it. It is not enough to say that we were asked not to do so. Sir, as I have said, this will probably be the most radical constitutional change that this House will be making during this Session and there is the necessity and the justification for making an appeal to the electorate as soon as possible after these changes have been introduced. It is perhaps very likely that every honourable member of the majority party in this House will feel that it is his duty to support this measure but mere support is not enough. In the interest of the future history of this colony; in the interest of its further constitutional development; if we are to demonstrate that we have a sense of responsibility, it should be the duty of every honourable member of the Government party to say why he supports this action of Government.

Mr. E. D. MOTTLEY: Mr. Deputy Speaker,—Unlike the honourable junior member for St. John, I cannot say that an extension of the life of the House will benefit me. What I will say at the outset is that I am voting against this Bill. As far as I am concerned, there is no difference whether there is general elections next year or next month. I take great pleasure in joining in a political fight; if I am not in a political fight, I feel that there is something wrong. Sir, as far as I am concerned, I am going to be straightforward in this matter. No one can deny that the party in power did say to the people during the last election campaign that if they got in with a majority, they would extend the life of the House to five years. In my campaigning with my party which lost the election, we did say that if we got the majority, we would not do it. Well, the Labour Party was returned in the majority, so that party can say that it has the mandate to extend the life of the House. It was also stated in their manifesto. I at-

tended some of the meetings which the Labour Party held during their electioneering campaign and listened with amusement when they discussed the matter. They said that they wanted more time to carry out the things which they intended to do. Well, the party has the power in its hands; it can give itself more time, but I am reminded of the old story that if you want a goat to hang itself, give it a lot of rope. Give the party in power the rope; let it take more time to do what it wants. Time is a great healer of things. Even though there is a certain amount of unpopularity, whether it is among enlightened public opinion or not as to the extension of the life of the House to five years, it is better to allow the party to hang itself than for any of us to plead guilty of hanging it.

Sir, I am morally bound to vote against this Bill because I campaigned against it. I am fully aware that I would retain my seat in this Chamber if I vote for it, but I would like to see a general election at the end of this three-year period because at the end of every year of a session, I as a true politician, chalk down the likelihood of members of the Assembly who would not retain their seats should there be an election—and make no mistake about it, many of the members whom I have chalked down are not on this side of the table. Time is a great healer. After this colony was granted adult suffrage, there was the feeling that a sort of metamorphosis, a vast change in outlook would have been brought about, but this is questionable. At any rate, the people were asked to vote for such an extension which was in the manifesto of the Labour Party and that party which is the party in power won the election. The Labour Party did get the majority and since the party did state that if it won the election it would extend the life of the House to five years, I personally think that it has the right to extend it because that is what it promised to do. Sir, I feel this way about it. The last elections were the first time that the people of this country chose their representatives by Adult Suffrage. I think that these people should be given the opportunity at some early date to say whether they agree with their choice of the last occasion. However, you cannot expect the party in power, if its members feel that they are unpopular as has been suggested to say: "Let us have an election next year." And for this reason I do not again agree with the honourable junior member for St. John when he said that Sir Winston Churchill will call for a general election next year. I will tell him that so far as events are concerned, the Conservative Party in power in England would not call for an election this year or next year. If the Government's party is unpopular as we are led to believe or if its unpopularity is held by the majority, you would not expect the party to be willing to contest an election next year. It does seem to me to be so after seeing the demonstration in here to-day because by the Government's demonstration, its members do strike me as if they feel that their unpopularity is real.

I am going to record my vote against this Bill. One might ask what good it will be to vote against the Bill, but this is not a dictatorship Government. Part of the democracy of this country is to have an opposition. I am part of the opposition. Even though the sixteen members on the other side of this table may represent the views of the majority of this colony, the views of the minority are still to be represented. I am here to represent that view. If the honourable members on the other side of the table feel that they represent the views of everybody, that is not so; if it were, I would not be here. Sir, as I have said, I am going to vote against

the extending of the life of this House to five years. I am doing so fully conscious of my responsibility and of the trust of the mandate which I came to support. I do not propose to refer at this time to any legislation which has been passed by this House. I do not even propose to refer to the manifesto of the Barbados Labour Party. This is not the time to do so. If reference to those things is made too early, you will give the party in power the opportunity to put its house in order. If you are a tactful politician, you must always leave the reference to the cleaning of the house to the right time.

Sir, I do feel that as this is the first Assembly that has been elected with full Adult Suffrage of this colony, every opportunity should be given to the people to go back to the polls at the earliest opportunity to decide whether or not they have confidence in the persons whom they elected on the last occasion. I do not think that this is an occasion for making a lengthy speech. The honourable senior member for St. Joseph said when he introduced this Bill that it would be his shortest speech, as all that it purported to do was to delete 'three years' and substitute 'five years'—that is to make the life of the House two years longer. I must confess that an election campaign is an expensive hobby, but as far as I am concerned, I do like to keep in touch with my constituents. As a matter of fact, my everyday life keeps me in touch with my constituents. I was wondering whether I should have discussed this matter publicly but on reflection, I discovered that it was part of the manifesto of the Labour Party. I again say that since the Government's party has promised to extend the life of this Chamber to five years, it is their duty to carry out their promise.

Mr. ADAMS: Before the question is put, Mr. Deputy Speaker, even if anybody speaks after me, it is only right for me to reply to some of the remarks that have been made. I say emphatically, and meaning every word that I say, that I hope I will never live long enough to be honestly and rightfully accused of representing all classes of the community. How can you represent the factory worker and the factory owner at the same time? I have always denied this statement over and over again, even sometimes on platforms embarrassingly, after some of my colleagues have got up and told members of the public: "Send me there; I am going to do my best to represent all classes."

I hope honourable members will get it out of their heads that using the word 'unpopular' makes a stroke of difference to me. I would hate to be popular with the people whom the honourable junior member for Christ Church represents. The day that honourable member refuses to attack this party, we would know that we have abandoned representing the majority of the people whom we were sent here to represent. When the honourable junior member for St. John says that this Government is unpopular, of course, it is unpopular with the people whom it is taxing. It is unpopular with the members of the Income Tax Payers Association who are the people doing the most talking against the Government. Of course, this Government is unpopular in some quarters but I repeat that that is a tribute to this Government. Let me remind the honourable junior member for Christ Church that Mr. George Hunte, the prime mover of the Income Tax Payers Association, is heard over the radio week after week attacking this Government on its policy and on top of that, he accuses its members in the columns of the *Advocate* of being dishonest, of misusing their power and things of that nature. Members of this Government know that that nature would be unpopular with Mr. George Hunte, but that same writer who does not let up on his attacks of members of

this Government has also written: "I do not see in the foreseeable future the Labour Party losing an election." And that is the trouble with the honourable members who spoke against this Bill. It does not follow that that unpopularity of Government, of which the honourable junior member for St. John has spoken, is with the masses. What the honourable senior member for St. Philip spoke on demonstrating, I wonder if it did not seem very remarkable to him that of all demonstrations by the Labour Party that the demonstration last Labour Day by the party was the biggest since it was in existence. The honourable junior member for Christ Church made some reference about the Labour Party promising free secondary education and that it was in the party's manifesto. If honourable members read that booklet carefully, they would see that the Labour Party have certain principles from which it is not departing, but I have always pointed out on behalf of the Party that we cannot always do everything in a short time or with limited money.

Again Sir, not one honourable member who has spoken against this Bill has said that we waited until after the General Elections to bring in ministerial status. One honourable member has said—and look how illogical is his statement—"Ministerial status will be coming soon. As soon as it comes, give it a trial and then go back to the people."

Mr. CRAWFORD: On a point of reference, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I said that it would not be a wrong thing for this Government to have a dissolution and go to the country before ministerial status takes place.

Mr. ADAMS: Of course, the honourable member said so. I was about to say that the honourable senior member for St. Philip said the exact opposite to what another honourable member had said. What I am stressing is that it is illogical to say: "go on with ministerial status; give it a trial and then go to the people;" and then to be saying: "you should not start now." I was watching and listening very carefully to what the honourable senior member for the City said. His was an excellent performance. His heart and mind and commonsense told him that Government was doing everything right but he had to oppose it, he having in the course of the general election campaign opposed it with his party—though being absolutely sure that his party would not win the elections. However, it was not in that honourable member's party manifesto that they were opposed to the extension of the life of this House to five years; they might not have been opposed to it if they had got in this Chamber. Again I would say that I realise the difficulty under which the honourable senior member for the City laboured when he spoke. His heart, mind and soul told him that this Government has done nothing wrong.

Mr. E. D. MOTTLEY: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I never said so.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The honourable senior member for St. Joseph is referring to what is contained in the Bill before the House. My colleague, admitted that the electorate was well aware that the life of the House would be extended to five years.

Mr. E. D. MOTTLEY: The honourable senior member for St. Joseph says that I said nothing is wrong, but very many things are wrong though I will not tell them now. I am leaving it to the appropriate time to tell them.

Mr. ADAMS: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I said that I watched the honourable member very carefully and you could see that his heart, soul and commonsense told him that Government had done nothing wrong in bringing this Bill because members of the Government party did inform the pub-

lic that if they got the majority they would have done so.

Before I sit down, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I wish to congratulate the honourable senior member for the City for seeming to know what is working inwardly in the mind of Sir Winston Churchill as regards to his calling for a general election in the Mother Country. However, it is not difficult for the honourable member to know because like the honourable Sir Winston Churchill, the honourable member is an extreme right-winger.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the honourable senior member for St. Philip has said that this is the most serious bill that will be introduced this Session but it is not going to be the most serious measure to be introduced during the Session. It is serious only in the sense that any Bill which refers to the composition or the life of the House is a serious bill. I would have thought however that it would have been sufficiently serious for honourable members who had spoken on it to have approached the matter in a constructive way and in so doing, try to say something which might have been helpful, but could they possibly have been serious over this Bill when they said this Government should pass this Bill and then go to the electorate? I think the honourable junior member for St. John made that statement. Why should we go to the electorate after we have extended the life of this House when before we came here, we told them that we were going to do so? I say in answer to what the honourable junior member for Christ Church said in his speech that honourable members will find that this party will try to get through with its most substantial legislation as quickly as possible and in doing so will follow the best traditions of parliamentary government. If at any time followers of this party find that this Government has departed from its promises it is our duty to go to the electorate. I hope that they would never tell this Government that we have done such a thing because we are unpopular with them.

Mr. TALMA: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would like to apologise to the honourable senior member for St. Joseph for speaking after him. I would like to assure him that I had no intention of speaking on this matter at first but on further reflection—and that was when the honourable member was making his reply—I felt that it was incumbent on me to justify the stand which I propose taking in view of the fact that when I entered this House, I came in as an Independent Labour candidate. Sir, I want it to be generally known that I too personally made this extension of the life of the House to five years an electioneering issue telling the electorate that I was in favour of it. I did so on all my platforms and that being the case what I propose doing would be with the full consent and backing of the electorate who returned me to this Chamber with an abundant majority. With that considered opinion and assurance I sit and vote for this measure. (Cheers).

Mr. ALLDER: I hope the honourable senior member for St. Joseph would forgive me for speaking after him but I do so because I am placed in the position where I have to give an account of my stewardship. I too disclosed my position on this matter to my constituents because it was a campaign issue. It is true that the representatives of the present Government are justified in voting for this Bill inasmuch as they told the people that they were going to do so if they were returned in the majority. I like the few honourable members on my left promised that I would oppose this measure. The extension of the life of this House would absolve me of having the trouble to campaign next

year as well as that of every honourable member in this place but I feel that that is secondary to the broader issue as regards to the responsibility of honourable members and their obligations to the people who sent us here.

I do not feel quite satisfied with the extension of the life of this House because I have not been permitted to feel comfortable with what has been done by it. What makes me feel so is the lack of proper discipline on the part of members on the Government Bench, the lack of a proper business approach in handling money matters by the Government and the failure of members of the Government to display tolerance and statesmanship to honourable members on this side of the Table. As an independent member of this Chamber, I hope to see soon a dissolution of this Chamber and our going to the country. While it is true that the extension of the life of the House would prevent me from campaigning next year, yet I hate to think that there will be a perpetuation of the boisterous action by members of Government in this Chamber for a further two years. Honourable members on that side of the table have not displayed that attitude to the business of this Chamber which responsible representatives should display and I know that my opinion is shared by other members of this Chamber and the general public. The honourable senior member for St. Joseph talked in glowing terms of the popularity of his party by the Labour Day demonstration but that demonstration is not a true indication of the popularity of members of the Government party.

I believe that if you take a referendum on this matter, you will find that a very small percentage of the population would vote for the extension of the life of this House but I still believe that it would not mean that the people would not appreciate the life of a Government for five years if the particular government gave service to the people. Honourable members are aware that according to the behaviour of the Government that its strength can only be measured in terms of the lethargy of the people. Honourable members should know that because the people might organise a particular set of people to fight their battles for them, it does not mean that the people who were organised to fight for the rest cannot adopt totalitarian methods, and because of that, it does not mean that this Government is an arbiter of everything which the masses desire. I feel this Government is over-estimating itself. As I have said, I fear more than anything else the parliamentary behaviour of this Government and therefore know that if this Bill is passed that that kind of behaviour would be carried on for another two years.

I do hope that the new power which the Government is adding to itself by ministerial status would cause its members to show a greater sense of responsibility and tolerance not only to members who have different views to Government but to every member of this colony. I do hope that the future actions of this Government will justify the step which it is taking to-night.

The question that the Bill be read a second time was then put and resolved in the affirmative, the House dividing as follows:—

Ayes: Mr. SMITH, Mrs. BOURNE, Mr. MILLER, Mr. MAPP, Mr. BARROW, Mr. TALMA, Mr. HOLDER, Mr. BRYAN, Mr. F. L. WALCOTT, Mr. ADAMS, Dr. CUMMINS, Mr. WILLIAMS and Mr. BRANCKER.—13.

Noes: Mr. CRAWFORD, Mr. J. C. MOTTLEY, Mr. VAUGHAN, Mr. ALLDER, Mr. E. D. MOTTLEY and Mr. GODDARD.—6.

On the motion of Mr. ADAMS, seconded by Dr. CUMMINS, Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER left the Chair, and the House went into Committee on the Bill, Mr. SMITH being in the Chair.

Clause 2 was called as follows:—

2. Section sixty of the Representation of the People Act, 1901 (which relates to the duration of the General Assembly) shall have effect as if for the words "three years" there were substituted the words "five years".

Mr. ADAMS: I beg to move that Clause 2 stand part of the Bill.

Dr. CUMMINS: I beg to second that.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: On the passing of this Clause I would like to know if the honourable senior member for St. Joseph can tell me whether there is any intention, as was the case when the life of the Legislature was extended on the last occasion, to link the extension of the life of the Legislature with the curtailment of the powers of the Other Place. I remember that when the three-year session of the Legislature was brought about, as one might say, through the manifesto of the Labour Party, a period of three years was necessary so that a year might elapse in respect of legislation being rejected. Nothing has been done about this matter and I am wondering if the matter has been shelved or not. The next thing is this; it would be a good idea whether we have a three, four or five-year life of the House, to make it compulsory to have annual sessions. I would like to hear something about that because I feel we should have our annual sessions regulated. I refer honourable members to the items on the Order Paper and they will see that we have two sessions before us to-day; the items will have Session 1951—54 printed on them while the Order Paper will have Session 1953-54 printed on it. At the beginning of the life of the House, nobody knows whether we will have annual sessions or what. There are a number of Boards which are appointed for a session of the Legislature; at least I know one of them in respect of which some trouble has been caused, and I think it would be better for us to know beforehand that there will be session 1951-52, then session 1952-53, then session 1953-54. We will know that there is not a session for the whole life of the House. I think that in England there are annual sessions of the Legislature and we should also have annual sessions here. The last point is whether it was necessary to delete two words from the Clause; on the previous occasion we deleted the word "two" and substituted therefor the word "three" and now we are deleting the words "three years" and putting back the word "years".

Mr. ADAMS: As regards the first point I do not know that this Party has ever linked the extension of the life of the House with curtailment the powers of the Other Place. The late Governor, Sir Hilary Blood, did say what His Honour has mentioned, in the Despatch which was sent to the Secretary of State for the Colonies as regards the Address which was passed by this House in which we said that we should be paramount in legislation, but I do not see the necessary connection between the extension of the life of the House and curtailment the powers of the Other Place. What the late Governor said and the reply from the Secretary of State for the Colonies might be found somewhere, but there is no connection between these two things. If we did not have adult suffrage earlier it was because that did not worry us; if we have not pressed in the last year or so for curtailment the powers of the Other Place it was because they were not troubling us and the

matter was not of a high priority. Honourable members know what we said in connection with the Holidays With Pay Bill when that Bill was thrown out by the Other Place and also what we said in connection with the "Maude" Bill; but there are two separate issues. We intend very shortly to remind the Colonial Office of what they have told us. If honourable members were following what is being done they would know that a Despatch came out here from the Colonial Office saying that they will curtail the powers of the Other Place. That is a part of our policy and it is possible now that we are getting Ministerial Status, to have everything brought up to date; we need to have our business brought up to date here. We should sit two or three times a week and have a recess; if we are becoming up to date in one direction we should become up to date all round. Ministerial Status, the extension of the life of the House and the revision of the Rules of the House—all of these I hope to see come about very soon.

As to the question of having annual sessions, sometimes you have short sessions and sometimes you have long sessions. We can advise the Governor to prorogue the House so as to have annual sessions; it is a question of getting the Estimates Committee working. I entirely agree with His Honour as to having annual sessions but not because of any linking up of the life of the House with curtailing the powers of the Other Place. All these things will be done as speedily as it is humanly possible to do them. Later on when we have discussions as to the Constitution I may be in a position to say what I cannot say now; but we have not dropped one iota from the position which we have taken up.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I thank the honourable member for his reply as to annual sessions of the Legislature. This House has not stuck to having annual sessions; the present Government has introduced two Budgets in one session of the House. In so far as linking up the extension of

the House to three years with curtailing the powers of the Other Place is concerned, the honourable member's memory has failed him; there was a definite linking up of those two things because we were told that before we have a real Parliament Act we would have to extend the life of the House for three years so that such and such a thing could be done, and we would have time for doing so and so. The Labour Party's manifesto said that a necessary thing would be the curtailment of the powers of the Other Place and I know the Colonial Office said that they were ready to do it.

Mr. ADAMS: The late Governor, Sir Hilary Blood, did use that expression when he wrote the Secretary of State for the Colonies, and it was repeated, but I cannot see the necessary connection.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I am saying that at the time when the Bill to have a three-year life of the House was introduced it was said that we will do this thing first and the other thing afterwards.

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

On the motion of Mr. ADAMS, seconded by Dr. CUMMINS, the CHAIRMAN reported the passing of the Bill in Committee.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

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

THE ADJOURNMENT.

Mr. ADAMS: At this stage, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I beg to move that this House do now adjourn until this day week at 3 o'clock p.m.

Mr. F. L. WALCOTT seconded the motion which was agreed to, and Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER adjourned the House accordingly.