

THE

# House of Assembly Debates

(OFFICIAL REPORT)

SESSION 1953—54

## HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

*Tuesday, 8th September, 1953*

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

*Present:*

His Honour Mr. K. N. R. HUSBANDS (*Speaker*), Dr. H. G. H. CUMMINS, M.D., C.M., Messrs M. E. Cox, F. L. WALCOTT, F. E. MILLER, J. C. MOTTLEY, V. B. VAUGHAN, C. E. TALMA and L. A. WILLIAMS, LL.B.

Prayers were read.

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

### MINUTES

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

### NOTICES

Government Notices were given as follows:—

Mr. F. L. WALCOTT: Resolution to place the sum of \$2,500 at the disposal of the Governor-in-Executive Committee to supplement the Estimates 1953—54 Part I Current, as shown in the supplementary Estimates 1953—54, No. 9, which form the Schedule to the resolution.

Mr. F. L. WALCOTT: In connection with this Resolution I should like to give notice that it is my intention to move for the suspension of Rules 88 and 89 in order to deal with the Resolution in all its stages later in the day. Cyclo-styled copies of the Resolution will be circulated to honourable members. If there is any serious objection to proceeding with this Resolution I will note it, but this is a non-controversial matter. It is important that the treatment for the disease known as "Ratoon Stunting Disease" be ordered in time.

Mr. F. L. WALCOTT: Resolution to place the sum of \$5,500 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. 10 which form the Schedule to the resolution.

Dr. CUMMINS: Of my intention to move the House into Committee of Supply at its next meeting

in order to consider the other money Resolution of which notice has just been given.

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

### SUSPENSION OF RULES 88 AND 89

Mr. F. L. WALCOTT: Mr. Speaker,—I beg to move that Rules 88 and 89 be now suspended.

Dr. CUMMINS: I beg to second that.

The question that Rules 88 and 89 be now suspended was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

### QUESTIONS

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

Is Government aware of the hardships and inconveniences experienced by members of the Government Service in securing suitable premises at a reasonable rental value and distance from their work?

If the answer is in the affirmative, will Government consider clearing the Old Soldiers' Wall Buildings (or Barracks) around the Garrison Savannah for the purpose of placing such Buildings or Flats at the disposal of Government servants; or, in the alternative, in converting some of the said buildings (or Barracks) into Secondary and Technical Schools, (Both for Boys and Girls) for the numerous children in this Island, who are being denied the opportunity of a Secondary or Technical Education.

If the answer is No, will Government please further explain its policy in this regard?

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

Is Government aware of the fact that certain employees, comprised mainly of casual employees, cantoniers &c., have not yet received their backpay?

Will Government please cause the necessary investigation to be made with a view to remedying this grievance.

### COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

Mr. F. L. WALCOTT: I ask leave that Committee of Supply be taken as the first Order of the Day.

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

Mr. SPEAKER: The first Order of the Day now stands in the name of the honourable junior member for St. Peter:—To move the House into Committee of Supply to consider the grant of sums of money for the service of the Colony.

On the motion of Mr. F. L. WALCOTT, seconded by Mr. COX, Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair, and the House went into Committee of Supply, Mr. SMITH being in the Chair.

#### ERADICATION OF RATOON STUNTING DISEASE OF SUGAR CANE

Mr. F. L. WALCOTT: Mr. Chairman, — I apologize to honourable members for having to deal with this Resolution for \$2,500 today. This is a non-controversial matter; it is one of those Resolutions in which honourable members will have particular interest in that it is in connection with the sugar industry. The Acting Director of Agriculture has reported that there is a disease known as "Ratoon Stunting Disease" existing in this island, and it has an adverse effect on the yield of sugar cane. Although this is not the type of pest which will annihilate the whole crop, yet it does affect the yield of sugar cane per acre, and we cannot afford to lose any of our productive capacity in any way. There is a method of treatment for this disease set out in the Addendum to the Resolution — treatment in ovens — and it is considered that we should have these ovens early in October so that the plant cuttings can be treated and be in the possession of planters for the planting season. It has therefore been felt that this Resolution should be passed as early as possible. I hope honourable members will see that this matter is nothing which will create any controversy or long debate. If there is any further information which honourable members desire to have, I shall be willing to give it, but I think I have set out briefly the purpose of this Resolution. I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

Mr. COX: I beg to second that.

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

On the motion of Mr. F. L. WALCOTT, seconded by Mr. COX, the CHAIRMAN reported the passing of one Resolution in Committee of Supply.

Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

On motions of Mr. F. L. WALCOTT, seconded by Mr. COX in each case, the Resolution passed in Committee of Supply was read a first and second time and agreed to.

#### PUBLIC HEALTH BILL, 1953

Mr. SPEAKER: The next Order of the Day stands in the name of the hon. junior member for St. Thomas:— To move the second reading of a Bill intitled an Act to consolidate and amend the Acts of this Island relating to Public Health.

Dr. CUMMINS: Mr. Speaker,— A few meetings ago the Government felt that we would not go on with this Bill at this stage, but on further consideration we have decided to proceed with it. Ever since 1947 it was decided by the Government to make provision for a medical service in this island and to that end we passed a Bill creating the office of Director of Medical Services and subsequently a Hospital Act. Then before the Local Government Bill was brought forward in 1948, the Government introduced a Public

Health Bill. That Bill was passed in this House but before it could be dealt with by the Other Place, the session came to an end and the Bill was not brought back before the House until now. In the meantime we had the Local Government Bill before us and that Bill was passed; it was rejected by the Other Place and was subsequently passed by this House only a few weeks ago. That Local Government Bill is, so to speak, the parent Bill to the Public Health Bill and the Public Assistance Bill. The Local Government Bill creates Councils, and deals with the areas of the Councils, the election of the Councils and so on; this Bill which is now before us is the Bill which defines to a certain extent, the authority of the Council.

The Public Health Bill which is now on the Statute Book is 45 years old and during that 45 years advances have been made in public health — preventive medicine is practically a new science — and consequently Barbados could not prod along with the old Bill which has been on the Statute Book for 45 years; we must have a new Public Health Bill and come in line with modern standards and modern practice. This Bill gives the Director of Medical Services certain powers over the Public Health Committees to which I will come later; this Bill gives the Director certain powers which he does not have under the present Act. Under the present Act the Director can only inspect and make reports and very often these reports are shelved and no notice is taken of them; but under this Bill the Director, while having an Advisory Committee which is expected to advise him, in matters of a technical nature his word will take some precedence over that of laymen. The Director will be responsible for carrying on the public health services when this Bill comes into effect.

Part IV of the Bill divides the island into three areas for the purpose of public health and those areas are the areas which are defined in the Local Government Bill. That is why we thought that this Bill should be postponed until the Local Government Bill was passed, but we afterwards decided to proceed with this Bill and if there were any amendments to the Local Government Bill, this Bill can be amended accordingly. Part V deals with the establishment of Health Centres which are a new Institution to Barbados. We have one Health Centre in operation in St. Peter and that is responsible for the maintenance of public health in the northern parishes. These Health Centres deal with preventive medicine; that is to say, in maternity cases they treat mothers at an early stage. If you have a healthy mother the chances are that she will have a healthy child. During the period of their maternity the mothers will receive advice and treatment at these Health Centres which will help the children to be taken care of from birth until a certain period.

The question of inspection and examination of school children has not been put into practice because the present set-up does not permit anyone to do this work; but when we have new Centres we will be in a position to carry out the inspection and examination of school children which is done in all big countries. We are also envisaging the setting up of clinics and taking preventive measures against infectious diseases. I am reminded that a petition was presented to this House from Vestries asking the House not to pass this Bill, but when we realise what are the functions of a Health Centre we can ignore these obscurantists who had the hardihood to petition this House asking it not to pass this Bill. Can you imagine the set-up in any parish being able to carry out the functions of a Health Centre? They could not raise the funds with which to do that. I only mention that

in passing; we are trying to get away from the Dark Ages.

Part IV of the Bill also makes provision for the appointment of District Medical Officers or Parochial Medical Officers as we now know them. These Officers will still have their places in the new set-up, only that they will be supervised by the Director of Medical Services. Today the Parochial Medical Officers are responsible to nobody; they may be somewhat responsible to the Parochial Authorities, but in general they are not responsible to anybody. Under the new set-up these Officers will be responsible to the Director of Medical Services who will see that they carry out the duties allotted to them.

Part VI of the Bill deals with the Public Health Committees. Under this Bill each Council will have its Public Health Committee and the set-up will be more or less the set-up as we know it to-day. Persons who are not members of the Council can be elected to serve as members of the Public Health Committees; that is as it should be because we still feel that there will be in the various districts people who will have the knowledge and experience of matters in the districts, and they will have the time to be of some service to the public on these Committees. It is therefore provided that two-thirds of a Public Health Committee must be Councillors and the other one-third can be people who are not members of the Council.

Clauses 178 to 181 deal with the powers of the Director of Medical Services in respect of these Councils; he is empowered to inspect documents and he may call upon a Council at any time to furnish him with reports or information on matters as he should specify. Clause 183 gives the Director power to make bye-laws for any purpose for which a Council are authorised to make bye-laws. I know that that is a part of this Bill which is not very popular with Vestries in this island. Heretofore the Vestries have not been subject to any supervision by the Director of Medical Services; each Sanitary Authority was more or less a law unto itself and it has been said that this is a Director of Medical Services Bill because the Vestries have to be subject to certain supervision by the Director of Medical Services.

The Public Health Bill which we passed in 1948 was more voluminous than this one; the reason for that is that when the 1948 Bill was passed there was no Local Government Bill. Consequently certain ideas and principles contained in the 1948 Bill have been taken out of this Bill and incorporated in the Local Government Bill. Such matters like auditing of accounts, matters dealing with employees and so on are incorporated in the Local Government Bill.

I should like to mention that the Government proposes to deal with this Bill in all its stages to-day. At one time it was felt that this Bill should be referred to a Select Committee, but in view of the position as exists with the Local Government Bill, we feel that we can pass this Bill as it is now and any amendments which are made to the Local Government Bill can be made to this Bill. I beg to move that this Bill be now read a second time.

MESSRS. HAYNES and ALLDER entered the House and took their seats while Dr. CUMMINS was speaking.

Mr. TALMA: In seconding the motion for the second reading of this Bill I would like to say that this is a Bill which, on the face of it, commends itself to hon. members. This Bill can hardly be considered to be a Bill of a controversial nature. We are all fully aware of the fact that since the passing of the last Public Health Bill 45 years ago, many advances and innovations have taken place in the scientific world and in matters pertaining to medicine, hygiene and

sanitation. For that reason alone hon. members will be well advised to give this Bill an easy passage. This Bill has already been considered and passed by this House as far back as 1948; it has been dealt with section by section in Select Committee which considered it for many months and now after an interval of five years the same Bill is before us with slight modifications. As we know, this Bill is complementary to the Local Government Bill which deals with local government affairs. I heartily second the motion for the second reading of this Bill and express the hope that hon. members will realise that if the matter of public health is not attended to, great blame will be placed on the Government now in power.

Mr. ALLDER: I am going to make a suggestion which I hope the Government will accept; as a matter of fact, I am moving that this Bill be referred to a Select Committee. This is a Bill of very great magnitude and there are in it many ramifications which the Committee will be able to straighten out.

Mr. HAYNES: I was a member of the Select Committee which considered this Bill in 1947 and if the various sections and implementations are the same as those in the Bill which we passed in 1948, I hope they are all incorporated. As far as I remember the Select Committee went very thoroughly into the Bill and made their recommendations. We had Dr. Weatherhead to give us advice about the Bill and I believe he had a lot of work to do in connection with it. That being the case I do not think there is anything to be said about this Bill except this; I cannot find in the Bill any repeal of the Act which says that the Cholera grounds are not to be used. This is a small point in some cases but it is a big one in others; there is valuable land which is not being occupied to-day simply because it was used as Cholera ground. I took up this matter with Dr. Weatherhead who told me that after four years there would not be any infection from the Cholera grounds; I also took up the matter with Sir Rupert Briercliffe and he said that a period of four years was long enough for any infection from cholera to die down. However, as I said, there is no repeal of the Act which says that these grounds cannot be used.

Another point is this; I believe in centralisation of services. I should like to see all the sanitary staffs centralised just as we have the Police Force centralised. I repeat that if the various sections of the Bill are the same as in the 1947 Bill, I do not think that there is anything further to be mentioned in connection with this Bill.

Mr. VAUGHAN: I rise to second the motion of my colleague that this Bill be referred to a Select Committee. I feel that a Bill of this importance has not been dealt with as comprehensively as would merit the position of the honourable mover both as a member of the Government and professionally. The honourable senior member for Christ Church who seconded the motion for the second reading of the Bill rather surprised me by the flimsiness with which he dealt with such an important Bill. I will refer to a document of the Caribbean Commission, which is the property of the House. The matter of public health is not a matter concerning purely what is being done in this Bill before us; as a matter of fact, this Bill in its provisions, is more restrictive than constructive, and the lack of imagination shown as regards public health in this island is surprising. To mention one thing which vitally concerns public health in this island—something of which any member of the Government in this House and every Barbadian should be ashamed—infantile mortality. The rate is the highest in the area and one of the highest in the world, and in this Bill we have no reference to any specific

means of lessening this unnecessary slaughter of the innocents. The infant mortality rate per thousand births in Barbados is 133; in British Guiana, 77; in British Honduras, which is considered to be a backward community, a swampy fever-ridden hole, the infant mortality rate is 107; in the Leeward Islands, 110; in Jamaica, 87; in Trinidad, 75; in Dominica, 91; and so on. We have the highest infant mortality rate and there is not a single thing mentioned in this Bill specifically for the control of this terrible evil. We accept year after year and decade after decade, this slaughter of the innocents; we are now introducing a Public Health Bill and nothing specifically is mentioned as regards this dreadful problem. I quote from the Caribbean Commission in connection with housing and health in the Caribbean; it gives information concerning the connection between bad housing and disease. It says that the shortcomings in housing can be summarised under six heads, and the first is the poor condition or absence of privies. Everybody knows that throughout the country areas the condition of privies lends itself to disease—enteric fever and everything else. Is there any mention in this Bill of any proposal for an island-wide construction of privies as has been done in some areas in the Caribbean even with borrowed funds, as recognised by the World Health Organisation, rather than tolerate this menace to the health of the community? The next head is the lack of facilities for the disposal of refuse. Well, there are a few dust bins in some districts—not in all; there is no specific provision for remedying this evil.

The third head is the bad drainage of areas. Swampy areas exist in all the villages and that state of affairs can be remedied by a public health service. Then there is the next head — inadequate water supply. When you have one standpipe to serve one hundred houses, that is an inadequate water supply. The next head is overcrowding in individual homes; you have small hovels throughout the length and breadth of the country. Overcrowding is appalling in certain villages in this country; the average is four people to a room. Imagine honourable members having to live under such conditions and how comfortable they would be! If they had to live under such conditions they would not think anything of a Public Health Bill which had the lightness which accompanies this Bill to-day. Despite what anybody might think, the housing policy is a total failure in comparison with the problem which has to be faced: if you need to build 300 or 500 houses a year in order to reduce the housing problem within a reasonable time, to build 50 houses is a joke. We have got to find a means of reducing the cost of house construction in this colony. I do not know the mystery in it, but in the whole Caribbean area our housing policy is the most expensive. The infant mortality rate is due to diarrhoea, enteritis, pneumonia and bronchitis, all of which is connected with inadequate housing. This Bill concentrates on the power which is given to the Director of Medical Services over the Councils; I am sorry I do not know the position as regards the Director of Medical Services in this colony and his power over local government, but this proposal seems entirely wrong to me. No Director of Medical Services should have any control over the Councils; his functions where the Councils are concerned must be advisory; the only Authority which should have any control over the Councils is the Governor-in-Executive Committee. The political Institution must be the boss, not the technical officer in the service of the Institution. The local authority must be subject to the Governor-in-Executive Committee; that is in order.

The last head is congestion in urban and rural slums. All the illnesses from which we suffer are more or less man made. There are no malarial diseases or yellow fever to attack the children; it is a question of poverty. If a Public Health Bill must have any meaning there must be the beginning of a reduction in the rate of infant mortality, and there is nothing in this Bill to induce one to believe that it will have that result.

I repeat that all these diseases can be controlled by effective public health administration, but this Bill lacks the provisions for that control. Housing is a major problem and the housing policy as existing in this island at present is totally inadequate. To pursue politics with any adequate command of the problems which exist takes time for research and I would have liked to have more time to look up more statistics in relation to public health in the Caribbean area in order to drive home my point. In a healthy colony like this such diseases can be entirely eradicated by means of an adequate public health policy; but that needs money and the Government should borrow money to make what I have said a possibility. Let us eradicate these evils once and for all; in a healthy country like this where we are surrounded by supposedly less educated people than ourselves, the fact that the people in the territories surrounding us can look upon their health statistics with more pride than we can look upon ours, is something of which all of us should be ashamed. The fact that in poor communities the infant mortality rate is below that of Barbados is something to which we should pay attention in our budgets; I fail to see anything in this Bill to show that the Government is even attempting to concentrate on the evils I have mentioned. There is therefore considerably more information which must be given in connection with a Bill of this sort before it will meet with my approval to be dealt with by this House in all its stages to-day. Personally, I would have liked to go into fuller research as regards public health conditions obtaining in practical countries in order to make a much further and more adequate statement than has been attempted here to-day.

Mr. MAPP: I really cannot see the arguments of those honourable members who say that this Bill should be referred to a Select Committee; as a matter of fact, the honourable member who seconded the motion for referring this Bill to a Select Committee showed by his speech that his chief fault is that he has not really studied the Bill although it has been before the House for such a long time. There has been a lot of sound and fury signifying nothing from the last honourable member who spoke; the honourable introducer of this Bill has gone over the principle of the Bill for about the third time in bringing it to this Assembly. The last honourable member who spoke seems to think that my colleague was not full enough in his explanation of the Bill, but it seems to me that he wants somebody to teach him what he should learn for himself. I do not see that my colleague could have done more than he has done already, that is, to explain the principle of this Bill in as full detail as possible. We have already gone through this Bill in Select Committee and I cannot see why there should be any further delay with it. Everything that the honourable junior member for St. John has said about our public health system and in so far as figures are concerned about the infant mortality rate, is perfectly true, and that is why we should go ahead and get through with this Bill as soon as possible. It is through opposition like that of the honourable member to the Local Government Bill and this Bill that we are at this stage to-day in so far as public health is concerned.

The honourable member is so vitally concerned with public health that he has done everything he could do to delay the passing of the Local Government Bill; let us not forget that this Bill is in conjunction with the Local Government Bill which was opposed by the honourable member who is now concerned about public health in this island. It is for the people of this island to open their eyes and see who is delaying the progress of the island. Let us come down on the side of progress; do not let us oppose the Local Government Bill and then appear to be in favour of this Bill because the two Bills are bound together. Historians have represented the position in Barbados where public health is concerned and they have told us that our infant mortality rate is the highest in the world; we only have to look through the Maude Report to see why we are so backward. We have been told that our public health system is deplorable and it is due more to the blessing of God than to our medical authorities that we have not had any more serious epidemic here than we have had; but we cannot by the wave of a magic wand or by the passing of this Bill create a Utopia. It is a fact that our health system needs to be modernised, but we do not want to put off the day when the slaughter of the innocents will cease. That is what the honourable member is trying to do.

Mr. VAUGHAN: On a point of explanation. My colleague made a motion for referring this Bill to a Select Committee—not for the postponement of the Bill.

Mr. MAPP: This Bill has been referred to a Select Committee about twice already. Certain things have been altered, it is true, but there is nothing to merit this Bill being referred to a Select Committee. If the honourable member looks through the Maude Report he will see that reference has been made to some of the shortcomings he mentioned, and this Bill is the result of the recommendations of Sir John Maude. I really cannot see the House entertaining the suggestion that we should postpone the consideration of this Bill. Where does the honourable member find in this Bill that the Director of Medical Services will dictate policy? Of course when we have the Ministerial system a Minister will be put in charge of health matters in place of the Director of Medical Services.

There is only one matter I would like to draw to the attention of the honourable introducer and it is that Clause 131, which deals with unsound food, is a bit arbitrary. In Jamaica, for example, that provision is not so arbitrary; the owner of an animal intended for food is given the right of appeal against an order of the Medical Officer of Health, but the appeal has to be made within six hours. This Clause directs that if any live or dead animal appears to be unfit for food it shall be destroyed. Very often doctors disagree on these matters; what may be unfit for food in the opinion of one person may not be unfit for food in the opinion of another person. I think we should follow the Jamaica Act and allow the right of appeal against an order of the Medical Officer of Health. That is the only Clause which I feel should be amended so as to make it appear to be less arbitrary; I feel that that would be much better for the Bill as a whole, rather than make it appear that you are doing something which could be avoided. I shall deal with that point when the Bill reaches the Committee stage.

Mr. BARROW entered the House and took his seat while Mr. MAPP was speaking.

Mr. CRAWFORD: I do not think it is quite fair to accuse an honourable member of being opposed to progress when he is merely attempting to suggest general lines along which improvement in our public health should travel. The main criticism

of the remarks of the honourable junior member for St. John is his approach to public health in general; the honourable member did not confine his remarks to the Bill which is before us, he has attempted to give the Government suggestions along which they should travel if they are interested in fundamental reforms in the public health of the country. The honourable member has suggested that the Government should take steps to reduce the infant mortality rate which is pretty high, and you cannot accuse him of any retrogression because of his general approach to the matter of public health. We welcome the Bill before us and wish for it better luck on this occasion than it had on the last occasion; we welcome the proposal to establish Public Health Centres which, we are told, will concentrate more on preventive than curative medical attention. We would appreciate if, in this Bill, some attempt were made to extend at these Health Centres or at the General Hospital, the dental and optical free services to the poor. I repeat that merely to suggest other lines of public health reform does not mean that you are opposed to the Bill; I think that the honourable junior member for St. John is as anxious as anyone else in seeing this Bill become law; he is as anxious as anybody else in getting the entire public health set up as up to date as possible. There is no denying the fact that there was some need to consolidate the law relating to public health in view of the proposed reform of the local government system; it is obvious that there must be certain reforms in the administration of public health in so far as it concerns local government bodies. What this Bill seeks to do is to give local government bodies the power, under the public health system of the colony, which the Vestries now have; that is to be commended and it is hoped that this Bill will have a speedy passage through both houses of the Legislature. We are very anxious to have more Public Health Centres established; we see the importance of getting some more of these Institutions functioning as soon as possible, especially bearing in mind the limited services which are afforded at the General Hospital and at the Parochial Almshouses.

In my own opinion, more importance should be given to the new approach to the treatment of diseases which is making the emphasis on preventing disease rather than curing it after it has set in. We have to bear in mind that public health is of just as much importance as education. It is of no less importance than education. If you have a healthy community, you have a wealthy community. Let us too bear in mind that it is the obligation of the Government to provide facilities for extending and making its public health services as effective as possible and to the same extent as it would provide facilities for education of the community. We have our limitations of course. As a matter of fact, in our community, for instance, we in the Western world have been unable to develop to the same extent as the Orientals the system of preventive medicine whereby you pay a doctor when you are well and when you get ill he pays the fine. There is still a lot of leeway to be made up between that system of the Orientals and ours. However, I think that the new approach contemplating on preventing illness rather than curing it is eminently desirable and it is needed in a country as this where we have to thank God over our health more than our medical services. That observation is by no means original. In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I hope this Bill will have a speedy passage through this Chamber and through the Other Place so that it might become the law of the land in the not distant future.

Mr. ADAMS: Mr. Speaker, I want only to refer to one or two things because I know that the honourable junior member for St. Thomas will doubtless reply to the criticisms made as regards to the medical aspect. I am appealing to the honourable junior member for St. John although I know it is hopeless for me to do so, I will still appeal to him not to make those rash statements which we in this Chamber have come to know are mere oratorical statements of his, but which because some people may read them in the newspapers and they being statements which are made on the floor of the House, and reproduced in the Press, the public will take them on their face value in case they are not contradicted. I am not trying to prevent him from putting his point of view; he can make his point but he should make it accurately. When he is sweeping in his condemnation to the extent as saying that we are idling; we are doing nothing substantial as regards building houses for the people, you must get up and point out to the people how inaccurate his statements are.

Mr. VAUGHAN: I rise on a point of explanation, Sir. I said that we are doing nothing in comparison with the problem that exists; if you need 500 houses and you build 50, you do not touch the problem. That is what I said.

Mr. ADAMS: Sir, I was about to quote that part of his address. We have in this island a tremendous amount of financial commitments, yet there is no other island in the West Indies that has done what Barbados has done in regard to the Labour Welfare Fund. The honourable member knows that. It goes out to the world by his inaccurate statements that all we are doing is to build fifty houses a year, yet the honourable member knows that over \$5,000,000 has been spent. Whether this money has accrued by luck or otherwise, by increased money for sugar, Canadian exchange, and so on, we have specifically done more in this respect than what has been done in other parts of the Caribbean area. The honourable junior member for St. John has also made the statement that it is a mystery to him why our building cost is the highest in the Caribbean and nothing has been done by us to reduce the cost. Imagine his saying that when he knows that we are experimenting with different materials side by side to see the effects and which will cost the less. An expert on housing—somebody who is the second top official in the Housing Department in Washington—when he happened to be out here and we were discussing with him aided self-help housing, gave us many ideas. He returned and saw what we were proposing to do and said that we were proceeding on the right lines. The honourable member knows all of that, yet makes the statement that we are doing nothing to reduce the cost. He further says: "Puerto Rico is doing that; Antigua is doing that; why is Barbados not doing it?" What surprises me about his statements of this sort is that they are made in the presence of people who know what the honourable member is given to, and there must be occasions when he must think that one of us is going to reply to him and show how inaccurate his statements are.

The honourable member has also attacked the question of the lack of water supply. I am sorry that my colleague from St. Joseph is not in his place to hear this. Honourable members may have read a short article in one of our West Indian newspapers which stated that the inhabitants of a rural village in England recently protested to the local council against their having to drink lemonade because their water supply came from a pond from

which cows were also drinking. You may say that England is wealthy, up-to-date and all the rest of it, yet there are some of its inhabitants in rural districts who still have to get their water supply from ponds. I am not saying this in defence of this island's water supply or that our people should drink water from ponds, but when honourable members say that Barbados is the worst place in the Caribbean, we must remember that some of the most up-to-date places also lack some of the most necessary amenities. With regard to our water supply, one must imagine that the honourable junior member for St. John is walking around with his eyes shut. He appears not to see the pipelines lying along the road and some being put in the ground. Even if he does not see all this and he reads his newspaper, he will discover what progress is being made with regard to the island's water supply. Only a few days ago, a report from the Waterworks Department published in the Press, pointed out what extensions were being carried out after regretting the loss of water to a district owing to a burst main.

Sir, I only rose to make these few points owing to my position as Chairman of the Housing Board. I have no desire to say anything more because I am sure the criticisms will be replied to by the honourable introducer of this Bill.

Dr. CUMMINS: Mr. Speaker, There is hardly anything to answer. With regard to the point which was raised by the honourable junior member for St. Andrew with regard to the use of cholera grounds, I will draw to his attention and to the House that with the passing of the Public Health Bill, one of the amendments in the second Schedule will be the repealing of the Public Health Act of 1908 which contains sections dealing with this particular item. No mention having been made in this Bill of those sections, therefore they will go by the board. It is thought, because the law has been in force for sometime, that the cholera grounds can never be used again but this is not so. With the repealing of the Act of 1908, the different parishes will be free to use, sell, or occupy the cholera grounds.

With regard to the criticisms made by the honourable Junior Member for St. John, I will just say a few words. He expects that in a bill of this sort, that you have to put in a section to cover every phase of sanitary services in the island. The honourable member is mistaken. However, I was at pains in my introductory remarks to mention that one of the functions of the health centre will be for maternity and child welfare. The honourable member just repeats parrot phrases. It is known that Barbados has the highest infantile death rate in the Caribbean. When the honourable member gets up and mentions that, he has mentioned nothing new. It is true that he also mentioned about the houses and the diet of the people, but he does not remember that Barbados has the densest population in the West Indies and that one of the concomitant evils of this density in population is overcrowding. When we get our health centres and they begin to function, they will deal with all that. The honourable member also said *ex cathedra* that in the infantile diseases, pneumonia and bronchitis were due to poor housing. I will not answer that. The expert has spoken *ex cathedra*. The honourable member also criticised the clause that the Executive will have some control over the Health Department. That will be so because the Government envisage that it will have to give these authorities some financial assistance, and if that will be the case, natural-

ly, Government will have to know how that money is being spent. I will only say that if poor housing was the only cause of pneumonia, bronchitis, and so on, the wealthy people would not be afflicted in that manner because they do not live in poor houses.

Sir, I just mentioned those points to dispose from the minds of those who heard the honourable junior member for St. John this wrong impression that the Government is doing nothing as regards to the high infantile death rate of the colony. As I have said, one of the functions of the Health Centres will be to give maternity and child welfare to the people of the island who want to avail themselves of it.

Mr. SPEAKER: The question is that this Bill be now referred to a Select Committee.

Dr. CUMMINS: Mr. Speaker, I am not presuming to correct you, but can you put the motion for this Bill going to a Select Committee before it has passed its second reading? I think your motion is a bit premature.

Mr. SPEAKER: For the benefit of the honourable junior member for St. Thomas and those other honourable members who think that the motion that the Bill be now sent to Select Committee cannot be put first, I will read the following from May's on Parliamentary Procedure:—"An amendment urging the setting up of a Select Committee 'to consider the subject matter of a bill might be moved and carried, if the House were averse from giving the bill itself a second reading and so conceding its principle.'" I will in explaining, point out, that as some honourable members are against the second reading of this bill, that is the condition why this matter is referred to the select Committee first.

The question that this Bill be referred to a Select Committee was then put and resolved in the negative on the declaration of Mr. SPEAKER "I think the *Noes* have it."

The question that the Bill be now read a second time was then put and resolved in the affirmative on the declaration of Mr. SPEAKERS "I think the *Ayes*" have it".

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

Dr. CUMMINS. Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that you do now report progress and ask for leave for the Committee to sit again.

Mr. Cox seconded the motion which was agreed to.

Mr. CHAIRMAN reported and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

Dr. CUMMINS: I beg to move that this House do now adjourn for half an hour.

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

On re-assembling,

Mr. SPEAKER: On the adjournment, the House was in Committee.

Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair and the House resumed in Committee on the Bill, Mr. SMITH being in the Chair.

Clause 1 was called and passed.

Clause 2 was called.

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

Mr. COX: I beg to second that.

Mr. ADAMS: Mr. Chairman,— Some amendments will be necessary to some of the paragraphs under this Clause unless the Maude Bill is put on

the Statute Book. Inasmuch as that Bill has not yet been passed by the Other Place, I am proposing certain amendments to the particular paragraphs. I think we should take the amendments bit by bit.

In the second paragraph of the interpretation of the definition "area" it reads as follows:—

"Area" means one of the three areas into which "the Island is divided for the purpose of local government under section two of the Local Government Act, 1951."

I am proposing that the words "for the purpose of local government under section two of the Local Government Act, 1951" be deleted and the words "under section ten of this Act" be substituted therefor.

Dr. CUMMINS: I accept this amendment.

Mr. ADAMS: Lower down, the interpretation of the definition "Chief Sanitary Inspector" reads as follows:—

"Chief Sanitary Inspector" means a Chief "Sanitary Inspector nominated for a Council in accordance with section fifty of the Local Government Act, 1951."

I am proposing that the words "section fifty of the Local Government Act, 1951" be deleted and the words "any law in force in the island constituting such office" be substituted therefor.

Dr. CUMMINS: I accept this amendment.

Mr. ADAMS: Lower down the interpretation of "Council" reads as follows:—

"Council" means either the Council of the City "of Bridgetown or the Northern or Southern District Council constituted under the Local Government Act, 1951, and references in this Act to a "Council mean the Council for the Area in which the "subject matter of the reference arises or occurs;"

I am proposing that the words "constituted under the Local Government Act, 1951" be deleted and the words "as constituted under any law in force in the island" be substituted therefor.

Dr. CUMMINS: I accept this amendment.

Mr. ADAMS: Lower down, the interpretation of the definition "Health Officer" reads as follows:—

"Health Officer" means a medical officer of "health nominated for a Council in accordance with "section fifty of the Local Government Act, 1951;"

I am proposing that the words "section fifty of the Local Government Act, 1951" be deleted and the words "any law in force in this island constituting such office" be substituted therefor.

Dr. CUMMINS: I accept this amendment.

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

Clauses 3 to 9 were called and passed.

Clause 10 was called.

It reads as follows:—

"10. (1) For the purposes of public health administration, the island shall be divided into three "areas consisting of the City of Bridgetown, the "Northern District, and the Southern District as "defined in the Local Government Act, 1952."

(2) Subject to the provisions of this Act, "it shall be the duty of the following authorities "to carry this Act into execution, that is to say—

(i) in the City of Bridgetown, the City Council;

(ii) In the Northern and Southern Districts, the Northern District Council and the Southern District Council respectively."

Dr. CUMMINS: I beg to move that Clause 10 stand part of this Bill.

Mr. COX: I beg to second that.

Mr. ADAMS: Mr. Chairman, Before this Clause is passed, I am moving an amendment for the deletion of the last eight words of sub-section 1, and that the following be inserted as sub-section (2):—

“(2) The boundaries of the three areas are set out in the First Schedule to this Act.”

I am also proposing that the words “consisting of” in line 2 and 3 of sub-section (1) be deleted and the words “which shall be known as” be substituted therefor.

Sub-section (2) becomes sub-section (3).

Dr. CUMMINS: I accept these amendments.

The question that Clause 10 as amended stand part of the Bill was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

Clause 11 was called.

It reads as follows:—

“11. (1) The Governor-in-Executive Committee is hereby authorised to establish from time to time at such places in the Island as he may determine centres for medical services and education in health matters to be styled Health Centres.”

“(2) The cost of establishing and maintaining any Health Centre shall be met from funds to be voted from time to time for the purpose by the Legislature.”

Dr. CUMMINS: I beg to move that Clause 11 stand part of this Bill.

Mr. COX: I beg to second that.

Mr. J. C. MOTTLEY: I would just like to draw the attention of this Committee to an anomaly through this Clause. Here this clause empowers the Governor-in-Executive Committee to appoint these Health Officers to these Centres. I think that should be the function and duty of the various Councils because these Councils will have the authority to direct and govern their own health officers. According to the Vestries Act, the Vestries appoint Parochial Medical Officers for the parish and these Councils should be placed in the same position as the Vestries.

Mr. ADAMS: The honourable member is directing his criticisms against the wrong section. He is referring to the appointment of Health Officers; this section deals with the establishment of Health Centres.

Mr. J. C. MOTTLEY: I am sorry, Mr. Chairman.

The question that Clause 11 stand part of the Bill was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

Clauses 12 to 57 were called and passed.

Clause 58 was called.

Dr. CUMMINS: I beg to move that Clause 58 stand part of the Bill.

Mr. COX: I beg to second that.

Mr. ADAMS: Before you put the question, Mr. Chairman, I hope the honourable junior member for St. Thomas will accept this suggestion of mine. Where clauses are grouped together under one head, as in the next instance where Clauses 59 to 64 are grouped under the head “Removal of refuse, cleansing of ashpits, etc.” that the Clerk should call them together instead of calling them one by one. These clauses can very well be put together; it will save time.

Dr. CUMMINS: I accept this suggestion.

The question that Clause 58 stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

Clauses 59 to 64 were called and passed.

Clauses 65 and 66 were called.

Dr. CUMMINS: I beg to move that Clauses 65 and 66 stand part of this Bill.

Mr. COX: I beg to second that.

Clause 66 reads as follows:—

“66. It shall be the duty of a Council to make adequate provision for the cleansing and disinfecting of all sanitary conveniences of the several public elementary schools within their area and for the removal therefrom, whenever necessary, of all dirt and filth, (and for keeping them in a clean, inoffensive and sanitary condition). In cases where there is installed at any such school a sanitary convenience on the water-borne system the cost of the water used in connection with such sanitary convenience shall be borne by the said Council. For the purposes of estimating such cost in any such school where water is also used for other purposes and no separate meter is installed for measuring the amount of water so used shall be deemed to be one half of the total amount of water used by such school for all purposes.”

Mr. GODDARD—Mr. Chairman, in this clause, the responsibility for looking after these sanitary conveniences is now being shifted from the Headmaster of a school to the Council. This clause states that it is the responsibility of the Council to look after these matters. In the existing laws the headmaster is responsible for the cleaning of the toilets of these schools. I am speaking of the actual supervision. I feel it is the responsibility of the head-teachers to see that these toilets are kept in sanitary conditions. They have the discipline over the children using them. If you shift responsibility you will not maintain the sanitation that is desired. I do not think you will get improved conditions by this shifting of responsibility. At any school you will have some children who will resort to all sorts of tricks. What authority will a Council have over those boys or girls? A council may appoint a janitor to a school, but suppose some difference of opinion arises between the children and him and the head-teacher does nothing about it, what will the Council do? I feel that the headteacher should be responsible for the keeping of these conveniences in sanitary condition.

Dr. CUMMINS: It is true that there is a change over of this responsibility from the head-teacher to the Council but I think the honourable member will remember that it is the policy of the Government to put a water-borne system in all schools and that is being done. At any rate, I think the honourable member has made a good suggestion and I will take note of it.

The question that Clauses 65 and 66 stand part of the Bill was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

Clauses 67 to 70 were called and passed.

Clauses 71 to 74 were called and passed.

Clauses 75 to 84 were called and passed.

Clauses 85 to 98 were called and passed.

Clauses 99 to 100 were called and passed.

Clauses 101 to 105 were called and passed.

Clause 106 was called and passed.

Clauses 107 to 110 were called and passed.

Clause 111 was called and passed.

Clauses 112 to 119 were called and passed.

Clauses 120 to 128 were called and passed.

Clauses 129 and 130 were called separately and passed.

Clause 131 was called.

It reads as follows:—

(1) An Inspector may, at all reasonable times, enter any premises and inspect and examine, and may in any street or other public place inspect and examine—

(a) any article, whether solid or liquid, intended for the food of man and sold or exposed for sale or deposited.

in any place, or in course of transmission for the purpose of sale or of preparation for sale; or

- (b) any live animal or dead animal or part thereof intended for the food of man which is sold or exposed for sale, or deposited in any place, or is in course of transmission for the purpose of sale or of preparation for sale.

(2) The proof that any article or live animal or dead animal or part thereof was not sold or exposed or deposited or in course of transmission for any purpose mentioned in sub-section (1) of this section or was not intended for the food of man, shall rest upon the person alleging the same.

(3) If any article or live animal or dead animal or part thereof as aforesaid appears to the Inspector to be diseased or unsound or unwholesome or unfit for the food of man, he may seize and carry away the same himself or by his assistants, and may cause the same to be destroyed or may order the same or any part thereof to be kept apart and dealt with according to his directions: Provided that if the Inspector be not a registered medical practitioner or veterinary surgeon, or a person possessing a Certificate of the Royal Sanitary Institute denoting his competency for the inspection of meat, he shall have no power to order the destruction of any such article or live animal or dead animal or part thereof.

(4) The expenses incurred in destroying any such article or live animal or dead animal or part thereof as aforesaid, or in having the same kept apart and dealt with according to the directions of the Inspector, shall be a debt due by the owner and may be recovered on the information of the Inspector in a summary manner before a Police Magistrate from the owner or from the person who is in possession of such article or live animal or dead animal or part thereof.

(5) If it appears to a Police Magistrate that any article or live animal or dead animal or part thereof which has been seized or is liable to be seized under this section is diseased or unsound or unwholesome or unfit for the food of man, the person to whom the same belongs or did belong at the time of sale or exposure for sale, or deposit or transmission for the purpose of sale or of preparation for sale, or in whose possession or on whose premises the same was found shall be liable to a fine not exceeding twenty-five dollars for a first offence or to a fine not exceeding one hundred dollars for a second offence or to a fine not exceeding two hundred and fifty dollars for a third or subsequent offence, for every such article or live animal or dead animal or part thereof, or if the article consists of fruit, vegetables, corn, bread, or flour, for every parcel thereof, unless he proves that at the time he sold the said articles or live animal or dead animal or part thereof he did not know and had no reason to believe that it was in such a condition.

(6) Where it is shown that any article or live animal or dead animal or part thereof liable to be seized under this section, and found in the possession of any person, was purchased by him or consigned to him from another person for the food of man, and when so purchased or consigned was in such a condition as to be liable to be seized under this section, the person who so sold the same shall be liable to the fine mentioned in sub-section (5) of this section, unless he proves that at the time he sold or consigned the said article or live animal or dead animal or part thereof, he did not know and had no reason to believe that it was in such a condition.

(7) Where a person has in his possession any article which is diseased or unsound or unwholesome or unfit for the food of man, he may, by written

notice to the Council, specifying such article and containing a sufficient identification of it, request its removal, and the Council shall cause it to be removed; and such person shall pay to the Council a reasonable sum for such removal.

(8) In this section "Inspector" means a Council, the Director, or a Health Officer, or any person or persons authorised by them or either of them.

(9) Nothing in this section shall affect or be construed as affecting any provision of the Market and Butchers Act, 1890, or of any Rules or Regulations made thereunder, or the exercise of any powers conferred by or under the said Act upon any person; and where any provision of the said Act or of any Rule or Regulation made thereunder is at variance with any provision of this section, the provisions of that Act or of such Rule or Regulation shall prevail."

Dr. CUMMINS: I beg to move that Clause 131 stand part of this Bill.

Mr. COX: I beg to second that.

Mr. MAPP: Mr. Chairman, I wish to speak on this clause with particular reference to sub-paragraph 3 where it is stated that if any article or live or dead animal or part thereof appears to an Inspector to be diseased or unsound or unwholesome or unfit for the food of man, the Inspector may seize it and destroy it. What I would like to see added to this clause is a sub-paragraph which would give the owner of the live or dead animal the right to appeal to the Medical Officer of Health.

Sir, I think it is a good democratic safeguard because all of us at times disagree, even the best of experts, and while one expert may come to the conclusion that the meat is totally unfit for human consumption, another expert may differ. This subsection (3) as it stands is a bit arbitrary because the owner has to accept a verdict which he cannot kick against even though there might be the possibility that he may be given the benefit of the doubt by some other medical expert such as the Chief Medical Officer. I think we should add to this clause so as to give the owner the right to appeal against the decision of the inspector. We must consider that this owner will be losing his meat and consequently, losing money.

I have not prepared an amendment but if my colleague is sympathetic with the idea of an appeal, I feel that it can be amended in accordance with the Jamaica Act.

I may say that there are some honourable members who think that it is unnecessary but it has been told to me by a sanitary inspector who knows his stuff that he has known cases where some opinions as to fitness or unfitness of meat were considered baseless by other expert opinion. In cases like that, I feel it is a good democratic safeguard to give the owner the right to appeal, especially as he stands to lose by the animal being destroyed. I do not know if my colleague will agree to an amendment. If he agrees, he can have it amended at a later date.

Dr. CUMMINS: I will promise the honourable member to put his idea to proper quarters for consideration.

Mr. BARROW: Mr. Chairman, I notice from the wording of the particular clause that the powers given to the inspector are discretionary. In the other less enlightened islands of the West Indies, it is compulsory for anyone slaughtering cattle for meat for human consumption to notify the appropriate department of health so as to have the meat inspected before it is sold to the general public. In this Bill, as far as I have perused the different clauses, there is no provision for compulsory inspection. I do not know if Government thinks that this compulsory inspection can better be regulated by bye-laws. I feel that any person who is going to slaughter an animal should notify the appropriate authorities and that the animal should be inspected be-

fore it is slaughtered. As we all know, anyone who has a pig, a sheep or a goat, can now send around and tell his friends: "Will you engage two or three pounds of meat from me? I will be killing a pig next Saturday morning." Some animal is slaughtered on that date without any inspection whatsoever. There should be some provision for inspection of that animal. That person should notify a qualified inspector in order that the inspector may go around and have a look at the meat to see whether it is fit for human consumption. In all the smaller islands of the West Indies which I am acquainted with, an inspector has to visit the stall, house or backyard of every little butcher in every little village on Friday nights or early Saturday mornings and inspect every animal just before it is slaughtered. A butcher cannot sell to the public or distribute to his customers before he obtains a certificate of inspection. I think we are very lax in this colony when it comes to the question of food inspection. I feel we should have in this Bill some stronger stipulations about the inspection of meat and as long as we leave it to the inspectorate at the discretionary level instead of making it mandatory and having penalties attached for non-compliance with the food regulations the whole thing will be nonsense. In this Bill we are just giving an inspector discretionary powers to go around and make an inspection whenever the spirit moves him. We want to take much stronger measures. I hope we will put in some provision making it compulsory for inspection of all meats. The owner should be placed in the position of compulsory notification to the Public Health Department when he is about to slaughter an animal so that the inspector can go out on bicycle, or by motor car, or whatever means of transport which Government provides for them, and inspect the animals to be slaughtered. This should be done island wide.

Mr. Chairman, even if it be you, who wants to kill one of your very fat looking pigs on one of your estates, so long as you are going to distribute some of the meat to your friends for human consumption, you should notify the Public Health Department that you are going to slaughter that animal and on what day you are going to do so. There is no provision for this in this bill.

I hope the Government will investigate this particular matter and check up on our particular provisions in this particular clause side by side with clauses dealing with this matter in Acts of other islands in the area. I think the Government will discover that in those islands there are clauses which make it compulsory for people who are butchering meat for human consumption to notify the Health Department.

Mr. TALMA: Mr. Chairman, While I would like to endorse the remarks of the honourable member, I would like to point out that under sub-clause (5) of this particular clause, ample provision is made whereby any person who offers for sale meat which is diseased is liable to a fine not exceeding twenty-five dollars in a Police Magistrate's Court. What I am about to say is that although it is desirable to have compulsory inspection, yet it may work a hardship on people in the country districts. Although we may be very anxious to protect the health of the community yet we also must think of the convenience of the average person. The fact remains that at any time an inspector can go on a premises and inspect meat which is offered for human consumption. With regard to the penalty, I think ample provision is being made in sub-clause (5).

Dr. CUMMINS: Before the question is put to the Committee, I would like to assure the honourable senior member for St. George that his point will be put to the proper authorities for consideration. I think it can be covered by regulations.

Mr. SPEAKER: Mr. Chairman, I remember during the war years that this Government in order to ensure that young animals were not being slaughtered for food supply, made it obligatory for inspectors to visit all premises of butchers in the rural areas on the night before the slaughter so as to ensure that this was not done. If as a war measure the public could be prevented from slaughtering young animals, I think the health of the public can be protected from meat unfit for consumption by having inspectors in the same way. I remember very well that an inspector was detailed to visit my area for that purpose during the war years and I think that method can be adopted in this respect.

Mr. BARROW: Perhaps, I have spoken at too great a length and some members may not have grasped fully what I have said. There is ample provision in section 131 for destruction of animals which are diseased but not for compulsory inspection of all animals before slaughter for human consumption. If we take fish as an example, the present state of affairs is that all fish which passes through the Public Market is inspected but as you know, this is only a fraction of what is caught. Now, the position in regard to meat is that people in the country districts where it is not inspected as it is in the City are more likely to have meat that is diseased than in the City and it is no secret that more diseased animals can be sold at will in the country districts than in the City. All that I am suggesting is that this Clause should be strongly worded so that a butcher in any part of this island who is selling meat for human consumption should notify the Public Health Department whenever he has an animal to slaughter and that an inspector should see such animal before it is slaughtered. Of course, we can easily see that the question of fees may arise. It will mean that anyone slaughtering animals for human consumption will have to pay a small fee but they will be only paying for a certificate which they can put up in the stall.

Mr. GODDARD: Although I know it would be difficult, I strongly support the remarks of the honourable senior member for St. George. At present, all the meat that is slaughtered at the Public Market in Bridgetown is inspected, but this is not the case with meat which is slaughtered elsewhere. It is a known fact that animals thought to be diseased are taken in the country and slaughtered so as to avoid the eyes of the inspector in the market. If that is a known fact, a measure of protection should be afforded the members of the public who live in the country districts.

I do know that it is common practice to kill hundreds of pigs at Easter and Christmas and you may say that there may not be enough inspectors to go around on those occasions, but still, if we are going ahead to improve the health of the community by this Bill, we should offer some means of protection from unsound food to those people in the country districts. Not only that, but animals can be slaughtered in the country districts and then brought to Bridgetown although as the law stands if you kill animals outside of the limits of Bridgetown and bring the meat in Bridgetown to be sold you can be prosecuted. I do not see any provision made for closer supervision of this matter. I feel that you should have an inspection of any animal that is to be slaughtered for human consumption shortly before it is killed. I strongly support the views expressed by the honourable senior member for St. George because I know that what he says happens in this island.

The question that Clause 131 stand part of the Bill was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

Clauses 132 to 134 were called.

Dr. CUMMINS: I beg to move that Clauses 132, 133 and 134 stand part of this Bill.

Mr. COX: I beg to second that.

Clauses 132 to 134 read as follows:—

132. A Council may provide such public baths and washhouses as they may consider expedient.

133. (1) Subject to the provisions of this section, a Council may make such charges for the use of, or for admission to, any baths, washhouses, swimming bath or bathing place under their management as they think fit.

(2) One month at least before fixing any charges to be made under this section, the Council shall publish by advertisement in local newspapers a notice stating their intention to consider a proposed table of charges and naming a place where a copy of the proposed table may be inspected at all reasonable hours by any person free of charge.

134. (1) Subject to the provisions of section one hundred and eighty eight of this Act a Council may, and if so required by the Director shall, make bye-laws for the regulation of any baths and washhouses under their management, and for the regulation of persons resorting thereto, including the exclusion therefrom of undesirable persons.

Any such bye-laws may empower any officer of such Council to exclude or remove from any baths or washhouse under the management of such Council any person contravening or failing to comply with any of the bye-laws applicable to the premises in question.

(2) A printed copy, or abstract, of the bye-laws relating to any baths or washhouse shall be exhibited in a conspicuous place therein.

Mr. VAUGHAN: Mr. Chairman, I am entirely opposed to these sections. Section 133 makes it mandatory upon Councils to charge for use of baths and things of that sort. Why should you make a charge for a villager to go to a public bath and make himself more sanitary by bathing? (A Voice: It happens now). If it happens now, it is wrong.

Clause 134 states that a Council may make bye-laws for the regulation of any baths and washhouses under their management, and for the regulation of persons resorting thereto, including the exclusion therefrom of undesirable persons.

Sir, that word "undesirable" is an English word which according to Barbadian slang can mean anything. Who is to determine a person an undesirable person? A person may be termed "undesirable" because he is dirty; he wants a bathe. Again, if a person behaves badly you should not prevent him because he smells badly. Do you mean to say that he should not be allowed to bathe because of that in your public bath? A person in charge of a bath may be objectionable to a person who wants to bathe in your bath and that may prevent that person from getting a bathe there. I am saying that anybody should be permitted to take a bathe at a public bath. No restriction should be put against them. You should see to it that everybody would know that a bathe is a natural thing to take. Do not put restrictions on people who want to bathe at a public bath. That is nonsense.

I am moving the deletion of Clause 133, subsections 1 and 2, and Clause 134.

Mr. ADAMS: Mr. Chairman, surely the honourable member knows that in practice in big countries a person is deemed undesirable who indulges in sexual offences and who in order to get an appropriate person walks around public baths.

Mr. VAUGHAN: If the honourable senior member for St. Joseph owing to his professional

practice knows of undesirable malpractices going on around baths, I do not know anything about it.

Mr. WILLIAMS: Mr. Chairman, as far as baths are concerned, all over the world it is known that undesirable malpractices go on. However, we are not considering that now. The question is why should we have a slavish copy of what is done under section 222 of the English Act. I have just been told that the St. Michael's Vestry charges persons for baths. The question therefore resolves itself in whether we should continue to charge for baths. I hope that sometime or the other we will get spring baths. If what is told me is a fact and the people are availing themselves of this amenity, I cannot see any real contention that you should not charge for baths.

The question that Clauses 132, 133 and 134 was put and was resolved in the affirmative without division.

Mr. BARROW: In countries which have similar legislation there are baths under the control of the Councils and fees are charged for the use of those baths. I have had the experience of having to pay for a bath in a very enlightened country: I was asked whether I wanted a first, second or third-class bath. You have to pay a fee for the baths dependent upon the three different standards of baths. I do not think that there is anything wrong in giving a Council discretionary powers to charge a fee for the use of the baths; I think the people of St. George should pay a nominal fee for the privilege of having the amenities which the people of other parishes enjoy through the bounty of nature.

Mr. CRAWFORD: The people of this country want an available water supply in their houses; I do not think that there is a public bath in the whole of Port-of-Spain. There is not a house in Port-of-Spain in which water has not been installed. I think that water should be made more generally available and people will be able to use their own baths. Let us keep before our minds' eyes the day when we will be able to dispense with these public baths because we will have made water so available to people that we will not need these baths. It is only the poor sections of the community who resort to the use of these baths, or people who live in districts where the water supply is limited. I do not see why the use of these baths should not be made free: the expense of these baths is so comparatively low that I do not see any reason why the policy should not be that no charge be made for the use of them.

The question that Clauses 132 to 134 stand part of the Bill was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

Clauses 135 to 146 inclusive were called.

Dr. CUMMINS: I beg to move that Clauses 135 to 146 stand part of the Bill.

Mr. COX: I beg to second that.

Mr. J. C. MOTTLEY: This part of the Bill deals with common lodging houses and barracks. In the rural areas there are many rooming houses which are rented to the public, and this part of the Bill says that these houses must be registered and so on. I should like to know if a fee will be charged for the registration. Today any person who has the necessary finance will purchase one or more of these houses and rent them out. In Clause 144 mention is made of the cancellation of registration if the keeper of a common lodging-house is not in the opinion of the Council a fit and proper person for the purpose. I would like to know who would be considered as a fit and proper person to keep a common lodging-house. I am not saying that there should not be some control over the running of these barracks, but in

trying to correct one evil you may be creating two or more evils. I do not think we should make these requirements without due consideration of what is involved. Clause 144 says:

"The Council, if at any time they are of opinion that any person registered as the keeper of a common lodging-house or barrack is not a fit person for the purpose, may cancel the registration."

I think that that Clause is a bit arbitrary; there are many of these rooming houses which are serving a good purpose. I repeat: we have to be careful that in correcting one evil we do not create two or more evils.

The question that Clauses 135 to 146 stand part of the Bill was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

Clauses 147 to 206 inclusive were called and passed.

The First Schedule was called.

Dr. CUMMINS: I beg to move that that be the First Schedule to the Bill.

Mr. COX: I beg to second that.

M. ADAMS: I think it is necessary for us to have the First Schedule to this Bill the same as the First Schedule to the Local Government Bill setting out the boundaries of the various districts. I therefore beg to move as an amendment that the First Schedule to the Local Government Bill be the First Schedule to this Bill.

Dr. CUMMINS: I accept that amendment.

The question that the First Schedule to the Local Government Bill be the First Schedule to this Bill was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

The two Schedules of the Bill were re-numbered accordingly and passed.

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

Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

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

#### PUBLIC ASSISTANCE BILL, 1953

Mr. SPEAKER: The next Order of the Day also stands in the name of the honourable junior member for St. Thomas:—To move the second reading of a Bill intituled an Act to make provision for the relief of the poor in this Island.

Dr. CUMMINS: Mr. Speaker — This is the second Bill which is complementary to the Local Government Bill: this Bill makes provision for administering poor relief in this island. We had on the Statute Book a Poor Law Act which was more honoured in the non-observance than in the observance: it made provision for the Poor Law Inspector to inspect Almshouses and such places where poor relief is administered, but that provision was not observed. This Bill makes provision, first of all, for the establishment of a Public Assistance Board: that will be a central Board nominated by the Governor. That Board will consist of a chairman and six members; the chairman and three members will be appointed by the Governor and the other three members will be appointed by each Council. The Councils will be represented at the Central Board. This Public Assistance Board will have certain functions to carry out and those functions are set out in Clause 7 of the Bill. The Board may make regulations for executing the powers vested in it under the provisions of the Act and it may make regulations in particu-

lar for any of the following matters:—(a) the building, altering or enlarging of public assistance institutions; (b) the preparation of public assistance institutions for the reception of poor persons; (c) the management, care and employment of persons wholly or partly maintained by public assistance; (d) the government and use of public assistance institutions; (e) subject to the provisions of this Act, the guidance and control of the Councils and their officers so far as relates to the management of the poor and public assistance and prescribing their duties; and (f) prescribing standard rates of benefit for public assistance throughout the Island.

The last of these matters is the one which requires some emphasis by this House. Heretofore this assistance known as poor relief varied from parish to parish; each parish gave what it thought best, not often according to the circumstances of the person, and very often the relief was coloured by the attitude of the Board towards the applicant for relief. This Public Assistance Board will set the standard of poor relief throughout the island: I think that that will be an improvement of the position as it exists today.

Under the Public Assistance Board you will have your Public Assistance Committee and that Committee will consist of members of the Council. Each Council will have its Public Assistance Committee who will be responsible for the administration of public relief and other things required under the Act in each area. That Committee will appoint a Guardians Committee which will correspond with the present set-up, each parish having a Board of Guardians. The Guardians Committee will serve in the parish and will be responsible to the Public Assistance Committee of the whole area. In connection with the Guardians Committee provision will be made to the effect that one member of the Committee will be a person who is not a Councillor, but the other two members of the Committee shall be members of the Council. Provision will be made for what is now known as the Poor Law Inspector: provision will also be made for appeals from the Guardians Committee to the Public Assistance Committee. Anyone who applies to the Guardians Committee for relief and is not satisfied with what is done, can appeal to the Council Committee. That is the set-up as we envisage it.

Clause 20 set out that the Guardian Committee shall, subject to the provisions of the Act and to any regulations made thereunder which apply to such Committee and to such general or special restrictions or conditions as the Council may from time to time impose, perform the following duties:—(a) cause the circumstances of every recipient of, and of every applicant for, public assistance to be enquired into: (b) determine the nature and amount of the assistance, if any, to be given to every applicant and any conditions or provisions to be attached thereto: (c) enter into agreement with a recipient of assistance or any other person for reimbursement to the Council of the whole or any part of the assistance expended by the Council on assistance for such recipient: (d) set to work any able-bodied person who has no means to maintain himself and uses no ordinary and daily trade of life to get his living by: (e) maintain adequate records of applications for public assistance and reports and the decisions thereon and (f) make to the Council a report on the business performed and decisions taken by the Guardians Committee together with a statement of the money received and the expenses of such Guardians Committee, such report to be made at such intervals as the Council may direct, but in any

case at least once in every month. That is a departure from the present arrangement.

Under Clause 29, the Public Assistance Committee will have power to make loans to the poor of the parish; we do know that during the out-of-crop season many people are unable to support their families for a week or two and these people can go to this Board and make loans with the agreement that when the crop starts or in such a time as they can repay these loans, they will repay them. That is a new departure; it prevents a person from going hat in hand and begging the Guardians Committee to help him with money so as to get something for his family. He may be turned back and the assistance withheld; but with a provision of this sort, he can make a loan from the Committee against such time as he works or is able to repay the loan. Those are the main features of this Bill. I beg to move that this Bill be now read a second time.

Mr. COX: I beg to second that.

Mr. CRAWFORD: The proposal in this Bill is to have a central Public Assistance Board which will set a standard throughout the island, then a Public Assistance Committee and a Guardians Committee, but it does appear to me that there is an unnecessary triplication. I think that in actual practice somewhere along the line, one or more of these Committees will be found to be redundant. As regards the question of loans, that is an innovation; I do not agree with it all. The hon. introducer says that it is a safeguard to give people financial assistance out of the crop; the mere fact that the loan will be administered by the Public Assistance Committee will cause a stigma to be attached to this assistance. You should either have an Unemployment Insurance Scheme from which a man can borrow money and still maintain his self-respect or a special Unemployment Assistance Scheme for workers in the sugar industry. The proposal here must have the stigma of pauperisation attached to it, and you will find that the average self-respecting agricultural worker will not go to the Poor Relief Authorities either for monetary assistance or for a loan. Is it beyond the ability of the Government to set up a comprehensive Unemployment Insurance Scheme for workers or an Unemployment Insurance Scheme specially for the sugar industry from which the factory or plantation worker can borrow money from funds which he has assisted in putting there, and at the same time maintain his self-respect? In Puerto Rico out-of-crop assistance is given to the sugar workers from the Unemployment Insurance fund and there is no question of paying back any money; people contribute to the fund during the crop, the fund is provided and they are entitled to assistance of that sort when they are not working.

This Bill has a 19th century atmosphere attached to it; the old stigma of granting poor relief assistance and that sort of thing is something which we should have passed. We have no right mixing up Unemployment Insurance with Poor Relief: that is utterly antiquated especially if it is designed to help sugar workers. The sugar industry admits of a proper basis of organisation and in respect of any industry which admits of a proper basis of organisation along the lines I have suggested, we can do better than this. The fact is that here there is only the question of a loan and you cannot mix up Unemployment Insurance with a loan. It is a waste of time to consider Unemployment Insurance in the form of Poor Relief Assistance.

Mr. ADAMS: The hon. member in charge of this Bill is capable of replying to those points; I only wish to ask the hon. senior member for St. Philip if he has been sleeping for the last 18 years. There

has been any amount of controversy over the use of the word "almshouse" and things of that sort. After a great deal of controversy and after consideration of many alternatives, the term "public assistance" was hit upon in England so as to try and get away from the use of the term "poor law administration." One would have imagined that the hon. member would have congratulated the Government on the use of the term "public assistance" which has been hit upon as the very thing which expresses everything in reality without using the term "poor law administration"—a term which will make a man feel that he is allied to the almshouse or work house.

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. COX, Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair, and the House went into Committee on the Bill, Mr. SMITH being in the Chair.

Clause 1 was called and passed.

Clause 2 was called.

Mr. ADAMS: I suggest that we postpone the consideration of Clause 2 and other Clauses which refer to Wards as mentioned in the Local Government Bill. We will have to deal with any amendments which are made to the Local Government Bill and we can then deal with the Clauses which we have postponed. In short, we will have time enough to finish this Bill because the amendments of the Other Place will be before us. I also suggest that we deal with this Bill in sections as we dealt with the Public Health Bill. I beg to move that the consideration of Clause 2 be postponed.

Dr. CUMMINS: I accept that motion.

Clauses 3 to 12 inclusive were called.

Dr. CUMMINS: I beg to move that Clauses 3 to 12 stand part of the Bill.

Mr. COX: I beg to second that.

Mr. MAPP: In Sub-clause (1) of Clause 3 it is set out that three members of the Public Assistance Board are to be appointed by the Governor, but I think the word "Governor" should be changed to "Governor-in-Executive Committee." I feel that the Governor should consult the other members of the Executive Committee in this matter. I beg to move that wherever the word "Governor" appears, it be substituted by the words "Governor-in-Executive Committee."

Dr. CUMMINS: I accept that amendment.

The question that Clause 3 as amended to Clause 12 stand part of the Bill was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

Dr. CUMMINS: I ask leave to postpone the consideration of Clause 13.

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

Clauses 14 to 17 inclusive were called and passed.

Clauses 18 to 22 inclusive were called.

Dr. CUMMINS: I beg to move that Clauses 18 to 22 stand part of the Bill.

Mr. COX: I beg to second that.

Mr. ADAMS: I beg to move that Clauses 18, 20 and 22 which refer to Wards be postponed.

Dr. CUMMINS: I accept that motion.

The question that Clauses 19 to 21 stand part of the Bill was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

Clauses 23 to 25 inclusive were called and passed.

Clauses 26 to 37 inclusive were called.

Dr. CUMMINS: I ask leave to postpone Clauses 27 and 28.

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

Dr. CUMMINS: I beg to move that Clauses 26, 29 to 37 stand part of the Bill.

Mr. COX: I beg to second that.

Mr. GODDARD: By granting loans under this Bill you are only changing the method by which loans are obtained now. Everyone knows that in the hard season the shopkeepers carry those people who are in need of supplies. As soon as an organization is set up for making loans it will be inundated with requests for loans which, as I have said, are now normally met by shopkeepers. As to the repayment of the loans, if you make a loan to anybody the money is recovered in the Petty Debt Court; and if this organization makes loans to people it should be put on all fours with the private lender.

Mr. CRAWFORD: I have no quarrel with the term "public assistance"; you can call it anything you like—public assistance, poor relief or anything else. What I want to know is this; how, in actual fact, will this Act operate? Is this the correct step to take at this time? If you authorise the Poor Relief Authorities to make loans to people which they have to repay after the crop or they will be put into the Petty Debt Court, you will have to make unlimited funds available to these people; you will have the entire working population asking for loans. Imagine the Poor Law Guardians of St. Philip being authorised to make loans to unemployed people! You will have a long queue every week, and people will want to beat you if they do not get any money. Unless the Guardians are very careful in making loans, people will take away more than they will earn in the crop. I repeat that the correct way to deal with this matter is to have an Unemployment Insurance Scheme under which a man knows he is entitled to so much a week without any question of repayment. When it is widespread knowledge that the Guardians Committee is authorised to make loans, unless you make the facilities of Barclay's Bank available to people, you are bound to have a lot of confusion. How is this Act going to work? The Government only have limited funds but they say that this money will be loaned; I say that unless they have the facilities of a bank a few Guardians are bound to be killed. I would not be a Guardian under these conditions no matter the payment a year. Under this Bill, as soon as the crop starts a man who has borrowed money has to repay it: you go to his employer and tell him to stop the loan out of the worker's money; I say that the employer will be beaten. However, we will see how this matter works out in actual practice. I quite agree with the principle of giving unemployment relief but I say that the approach to the matter should be different. Let us work on a proper basis and have a Contributory Unemployment Insurance Scheme; it is easy to work out a scheme which is on a sound basis. In the same way that Friendly Societies can pay so much benefits and so much bonus, I think we could work out a scheme whereby the worker contributes so much and the Government contributes so much. That entitles the worker to so much during the hard season or when he is unemployed.

Mr. ADAMS: I should like to explain that public assistance in England is not just Unemployment Insurance: Unemployment Insurance has to be contributed to by the state. What we have here is nothing to do with Unemployment Insurance; we cannot afford to have Unemployment Insurance and therefore we have to adopt some method whereby people will get help. We cannot make any more gifts; our experience has been that fishermen,

labourers and other people do their utmost to repay their loans. I do not mind if the honourable member objects to the use of the term "public assistance," but when he says that the proposal here savours of the 18th century, I will inform him that this method of using Public Assistance Bodies in England helps people with loans. A man may occupy a house and cannot afford to pay the landlord; but the Public Assistance Body pays the landlord for him, and that is accounted as a loan. Although a man is receiving pay during unemployment, he gets a loan. We cannot afford to have Unemployment Insurance which will have to be on a contributory basis; the Treasury is not bottomless. We cannot afford to contribute the amount which the Government would have to contribute in order to make Unemployment Insurance worthwhile.

Mr. CRAWFORD: In order to administer this Act the Treasury would have to be bottomless.

Mr. ADAMS: Does the honourable member think that anything we do by way of a loan is without a ceiling? We have to say whether we can put aside an amount for these loans and whether we agree to do it or not.

Mr. WILLIAMS: I think that Clause 33 is really a childish Clause. It says:

"All assistance given to or on account of a wife shall be considered as given to her husband, and all assistance given to or on account of any child under the age of sixteen, shall be considered as given to the father of the child, or to the husband of the mother, or if the mother of the child is unmarried or a widow to the mother of the child as the case may be.

Provided that—

(a) nothing in this section shall discharge the father, grandfather, mother or grandmother of any child from liability to assist and maintain the child in pursuance of the provisions of section five of the Settlement of the Poor and Bastardy Act, 1897."

Under Clause 5 of the Settlement of the Poor and Bastardy Act the grandparents and other relatives can be called upon to support the child.

Then sub-clause (b) says:

"(b) where the husband of a woman is beyond the seas or in legal custody or in confinement in the Mental Hospital or is living apart from her, all assistance given to her or her child shall, notwithstanding her coverture, be considered as given to her in the same manner and subject to the same conditions as if she were a widow without prejudice however to the liability of her husband in respect of the assistance granted to her."

It seems to be hardly necessary to put in that Sub-clause.

Mr. COX: I could not sit here and allow the speech of the honourable senior member for St. Philip to go unchallenged; I think the Honourable member made a very unfortunate indictment against the working-class people in this island when he said that if you make these loans to people they will not repay them. The honourable member also said that the Guardians will be in danger even to the extent of losing their lives when calling upon these people to repay the loans. That is the type of remarks which has been made for many years.

Mr. CRAWFORD: On a point of order. The honourable member is the only person who could make that deduction from what I said. I am saying that since no ceiling was fixed, the Guardians Committee would find it hard to tell a man that he cannot be given anything more.

Mr. COX: I am not misquoting the honourable member; he said that he would not be one of those Guardians.

Mr. CRAWFORD: Because of the difficulty in satisfying people. Every week they will come for loans and you therefore have to explain that there is a ceiling. The Guardians who are empowered to make these loans must be in trouble.

Mr. COX: I am sure that every honourable member who has listened to the honourable senior member for St. Philip will agree with me that he made a serious indictment against the character of the people of this island; that is the type of remarks which were being made by the rich people of this island against the poor for many years. When the question of making loans from the Labour Welfare Funds was being discussed I heard the rich people say that if you lend people this money they are not going to repay it; but the people have given the lie to that statement by repaying the money much better than what was thought. For a responsible individual to make a statement such as that the honourable senior member for St. Philip has made is not good and it is a reflection against the character and integrity of those honest people who have given their all to this country.

Mr. TALMA: I regard this Clause 29 as a welcome innovation in any piece of legislation passed in this Chamber within living memory: it is an innovation which should have been commended, especially when account is taken of people who are endeavouring to get small loans. Honourable members know how difficult it is for people to secure a small loan and here provision is made by way of legislation to assist small people. No specific reference is made to agricultural labourers; the Clause says:

"Any assistance or the cost thereof, given to or on account of any person above the age of twenty-one .....

This Clause specifically points out that any person who is out of work and is in need can be assisted and that is going further than anything which has been passed in this House. To suggest that we should not pass legislation to enable poor people to raise small loans in times of need is contrary to all the promises which were held out at election time.

We find the Opposition pursuing an obstructionist policy in relation to this matter. They are saying: "Do not do what we are doing: let us fall back on something which may never happen, and say that what is being done now is impracticable and confusion will arise." It will suit the Opposition who are devising all such ways and means to undermine the present *status quo*. We have all made promises to help the poor and now we are trying to do so, it is very disappointing to hear an honourable member suggest how dishonest the people are and how many lives will be lost if money is loaned to people; all sorts of obstacles are brought forward to smash the plans for assisting the poor. I cannot subscribe to such a policy; people are repaying their loans to the Peasants' Loan Bank very readily; our experience has been that people repay their loans willingly and quickly. I cannot subscribe to the view of any honourable member who says that these people should not be helped with small loans in the hard times because they are untrustworthy or unscrupulous or dishonest and will not repay the money I must compliment the Government on doing something which has never been attempted in the past. I feel that in the Regulations which will be made the question as to the amount of the loan and so on will be settled; the question of lending money at random does not arise.

Mr. CRAWFORD: I hope the honourable member will not be disappointed in his ambitions. Imagine the honourable member accusing somebody of political strategy. His entire career was made out of political strategy. He hopes now to get one of the ministerial posts.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Will the honourable Senior Member for St. Philip please keep to the substance of the debate?

Mr. CRAWFORD: Sir, I was only suggesting that when you hear the honourable senior member for Christ Church singing another tune in here, you will know that he is a disappointed would-be minister.

Mr. TALMA: I rise on a point of order. Let me tell the honourable member that whether I get anything or not, it is no business of his; I do not want any post in the Congress Party.

Dr. CUMMINS: Mr. Chairman, I think it is time that we put a stop to this crossfire. I rise to say. . . .

Mr. CRAWFORD: Sir, I am on my feet. I only gave way to the honourable member because I thought he rose at a point of order.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: But I saw you sit.

Mr. CRAWFORD: I beg your pardon. I thought the honourable junior member for St. Thomas had risen at a point of order and I sat.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The honourable senior member for St. Philip may proceed.

Mr. CRAWFORD: I merely began by telling the Committee what attention should be given to the honourable senior member for Christ Church. What I want to say is this. You must have a mentality like a corkscrew or you cannot understand the English language so as to be able to distort what I said as has been distorted by the honourable senior member for Christ Church. In reality the distortion was not originally on his part. He merely followed the senior member for St. Michael. He could be excused but the member for Christ Church surely has a better understanding of elementary English words.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I cannot allow that.

Mr. CRAWFORD: What I said here, I thought I put it so clearly that it should have been understood by every honourable member around the table. With regard to the actual impossibility and impracticability of giving assistance by way of a gift and assistance by way of a loan, my argument all along has been, as the honourable senior member for St. Joseph has understood it to be, is to make your unemployment assistance a matter of a gift and not a loan whereby you might have to recover from the person in the Petty Debt Court or by the employer stopping it out of the person's wages. What is going to happen is that no person is going to get a loan *ad lib*, but as the honourable senior member for St. Joseph knows the amount of money which will be given to the Council for this purpose will not be able to meet the demands which will be made against it. Naturally where this scheme will break down is when a person comes to understand that his neighbour has been awarded public relief as a free grant but his is merely a loan. This comes naturally as the result of mixing your public assistance with your pauper relief.

I said that in Puerto Rico you have an unemployment relief scheme in the Sugar Industry which entitles the workers to a certain amount of money every week. I think it is 15 shillings per week for the factory workers and three dollars per week for those who work on the plantations. The labourers are not called upon to pay it back. There is not such a thing as you cannot get your relief; it is yours; nobody can sue you for it; nobody can tell

your employer to stop it out of your wages. How can you be mixing up this with your poor relief fund? You must go to the Poor Relief Authorities to get this loan; it is the same place where others go to get their poor relief; therefore, if you have to go to the Poor Relief Authorities for it, what else can it be but poor relief? Why should you be called upon to pay it back? Some people will be getting theirs free because of the fact that they are too poor; some people are going to say: "Mr. B. got his free; I am not going to pay back mine." The fact that some will be getting theirs free is bound to cause resentment in the minds of those who can only get a loan. As a matter of fact, if you take this scheme of loans out of the hands of the Guardians Committee, you will have a better chance of working it. Remove it entirely from the Guardians Committee. It seems to be the essence of ignorance to have the same Committee administering free relief along with relief by way of a loan. I cannot imagine any honourable member in this House having so obscure a mentality as not to be able to appreciate what is occupying my mind on this matter. I have absolutely no intention of joining issue with anybody who feels that they should distort what another person has said but I will ask them to have sufficient honesty of purpose not to distort what I have said. The honourable senior member for Christ Church, perhaps, thinks he has more ability and knowledge of this matter than even the introducer of this Bill, but I will ask him to disabuse his mind of the address which he heard before from the honourable member for St. Michael, to read the Bill, recall what I said, and he will see that for nothing at all.

Mr. TALMA: Mr. Chairman,—I rise at a point of explanation. The honourable senior member for St. Philip is suffering from a misapprehension when he says that nobody but the agricultural workers will be granted a loan.

Mr. CRAWFORD: When I said sugar workers, I was only quoting the honourable junior member for St. Thomas who in his speech said sugar workers. I do not mean that only sugar workers should get a loan. I said, and I think everybody will remember, that workers in an industry like the sugar industry permit of easy organisation and permit easily to the formulation of a scheme for unemployment insurance. It is therefore easier to organise these people in the sugar industry because they lend themselves to a proper scheme of insurance in comparison with artisans who are not in an organised industry. I only quoted sugar workers to demonstrate my contention that an Unemployment Insurance scheme could be put into force for those who work in a given industry. As I was saying, I see no earthly reason why your loan should be mixed up with public assistance.

I would like to find out from one of the two honourable members whether the dole in England in the 1930's or the W.P.A. in America under President Roosevelt was administered by the Poor Relief Authorities. I do not think so. I do not care how intelligent a worker may be, he is bound to be confused when you are granting a loan and dishing out your regular poor relief together at the same time at the same place. Bear in mind also that you are putting this on the Statute Book and you do not know who will be entrusted to operate it. It is highly possible that the honourable senior member for Christ Church will be a Guardian.

Mr. TALMA: Mr. Chairman, I rise to ask the honourable senior member for St. Philip to withdraw that statement.

(A VOICE): That's nothing. It is quite alright.

Mr. CRAWFORD: Sir, it is quite possible that the honourable senior member for Christ Church may be a Guardian when this Act comes in operation and it is possible that he may not be as liberal as he is now because of failure of his ambitions. It is also highly possible that the administration of these boards may at any time to come fall into the hands of your former ruling classes. It must be remembered that all of us have to pass on. Mixing up these two things is bound to work to a disadvantage.

In so far as practical purpose is concerned, all it would do is three things: (1) mislead the public; (2) cause an amount of dissatisfaction when it comes to repayment of loans because some will not be repaying from the same source; and (3) the reactionary Poor Law Guardians under these provisions will give out money as loans which they should give out free, and will put people in Court for it or call upon the employer of the person to pay it back out of the person's wages. I think anybody can see the disadvantages in working these two schemes together.

Mr. VAUGHAN: I am glad to see that the desperate social plight of the people in this colony over the period which is traditionally known as the "hard times" has at long last touched the consciences of members of the Government and that they are at last aware that there is a desperate problem of poverty and want by the people during a substantial period of the year. I am glad to see that there is an attempt to answer this problem, but as usual, Government is futile in its attempt to answer this problem as it is in answering any social problem in this colony.

A conservative estimate of the unemployed in this country for the 16 weeks in each year is around 20,000. This is the number of people who are unable to find any work to do. The problem would have been more acute had it not been for the social conditions among the poor of the negro race. These people believe in denying themselves to help their suffering brother and that is the reason why the problem is not more acute. Now this Government is considering to relieve these people by a so-called loan. Government is only doing it for propaganda purposes. You will soon hear the people saying: "The Government will soon be lending us money when we are out of work." But how long will this continue? It will continue for only two or three weeks; then Government will say that the fund has exhausted. I am saying that less than three dollars per week to be given to a person will be nothing: it will be the next thing to nonsense to give less than that amount. If you give this minimum of three dollars to the 20,000 who are unemployed, it will work out to almost a million dollars annually. I am saying to let Government administrate their finances in such a way that this money should be given as a gift to the people. This is my suggestion. I know it is much too liberal for this Government. Members of Government are afraid of giving away money, even to a suffering people. Oh no! That cannot happen in Barbados. The mentality of the old conservative Barbadian is still in this Government. I am sure that you can administrate your fiscal policy that a million dollars from your revenue can be put aside every year for your "hard times" period to be given away. All over the civilised world, money from taxes is given away in the period of want. I am saying that this million dollars should be set aside for this purpose from our 13-million dollar revenue. This colony has reached such a state that this has become an absolute neces-

sity. There is no encouragement to industrial development; there is no provision for increased employment as year succeeds years, therefore the only thing you can do if you wish to prevent misery is to decide in your mind to take this step. When you do so, you will be really taking from the rich to add to the poor; you will not merely be soaking the rich and turning around and drowning the poor. Sir, this bold social step must be taken because our conditions are incomparable with other places. Our population is 1,200 to the square mile and as years succeed years the problem will become more acute. We must take this bold step now. We are facing a crisis now. We have not got to face a crisis. The crisis is not in the future; our crisis is here now. It is up to the political instrument in power to solve it and to make it easier.

Sir, I know the mentality of my people. What is happening in this country is that the people have been so subservient to their former rulers of oppression that they have conditioned themselves to the acceptance of all sorts of oppression, customs and habits that even now that their own people are in power and continue that indifference and oppression, they accept it because they are conditioned to it by their former rulers. I am warning members of Government if they think their distortion of what the honourable senior member for St. Philip said concerning this clause will bring them gain and serve as propaganda for their followers that their followers are decreasing daily. We on this side of the table will not allow the people to be blinded any longer. The people are going to find the answer. This Government by this Bill will be granting guardians a sum of money to lend 20,000 people. What solution is that to the problem with which we are faced? All over the world there are social security schemes. Social security means more than free public assistance and loans. It means helping the people to live who cannot help themselves through the lack of employment. Sir, you cannot help our people to live by giving them two or three shillings a week. I say three dollars is little. As far as these people are concerned, we have to decide to set aside from the revenue of the colony a substantial sum to meet their problem.

Looking around this Table, I see some honourable members who have travelled widely. Have they learned anything from the social relief schemes of the various countries where they have visited and lived? Have any of them sojourned in Sweden even if it be only for a short time to learn something of the social security schemes of that country? Sweden is a shining example of social security schemes. Is this all that this Government can pick out to bring for social security of the people of this colony—a glorified Poor Law Act which is suited to the Elizabethan times? Sir, let this Government bring in a real social security scheme. Let this Government put on the Statute Book a social security scheme that can have a social meaning to the lives of the thousands of families who face this "hard times." Our people have given that period of unemployment that name. It comes between June, July, August and September. Let this Government make provision for these sixteen weeks in which these 20,000 people are unemployed. When this Government does so, then it will be doing something.

Mr. CRAWFORD: I will just like to add one final point to those which I have made already. Sir, even if these loans are to be of any magnitude; even if we take half of the figures which the honourable junior member for St. John quoted,—10,000 people unemployed at \$3 per week for three months, that will work out to a sum of \$14,000 a year—don't you

see that it will be nonsense to pay out this money only for mere unemployment? If you can find money to meet these loans, that sum of money will constitute the Government's share of a proper Government Unemployment Insurance Scheme. In other words, if you can find money to really offer some assistance then you can find money to give you a proper Unemployment Insurance Scheme, I say again what is contained in these clauses is a real farce.

Mr. BRANCKER: Sir, In view of the hour and other considerations, I beg to move at this stage that you do now report progress and ask for leave for the Committee to sit again.

Mr. BARROW seconded the motion which was agreed to.

The CHAIRMAN reported and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

On motion of Dr. CUMMINS, seconded by Mr. Cox Mr. SPEAKER adjourned the House for three quarters of an hour.

On re-assembling.

## REPLIES TO QUESTION NO. 2

Mr. ADAMS: Mr. Speaker, Before the House resumes in Committee, I am asking leave to lay replies to Question No. 2, standing in the name of the honourable senior member for Christ Church. I may say that I forgot to lay them at the last meeting of this House as well as earlier today.

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

## HOUSE RESUMES IN COMMITTEE

Mr. SPEAKER: When the House adjourned, it was in Committee.

Mr. MAPP: Mr. Speaker, I just want to point out that the honourable members who spoke from the Other Side are labouring under many delusions. I cannot find out from where they got this unemployment insurance idea. It can only be attributed to the fact that it has been mixed up in their minds with what we are dealing with in this clause. These honourable members seem to fail to understand that this clause is making provision for the granting of loans to the unemployed workers in the unemployment season. The honourable senior member for St. Philip believes that unemployment insurance can be easily brought about in Barbados, or that it can be brought about by a mere stroke of the pen but he is entirely mistaken in his view. I too, am in favour of working out an unemployment insurance scheme but I cannot see how it can easily be done in an island like this where you get a lot of casual employment. I know that it will take a lot of hard thinking to work out even a small scheme. If you give the honourable senior member for St. Philip, who is enthused over the scheme, the opportunity of working it out, I doubt whether he will achieve any part of it in a decade. Let us consider the type of unemployment insurance that exists in Canada which you can call a very advanced country. It is not the type of unemployment insurance that should be carried out in an advanced state like that; it is a far different system to that which is carried out in other advanced countries; but owing to the difficulty of carrying out a proper system in Canada, that country has to be content with the simple system it has. I cannot therefore see the reason how the honourable member should mix up unemployment insurance with what this clause purports to do. Later on, the honourable member will have ample opportunity to dilate on unemployment insurance when he moves the passing of an address which he has brought forward on the subject.

Speaking on poor relief, I really cannot see how the two systems,—that of granting a loan and that of a gift—got mixed up by honourable members. Even in Great Britain today, there are the two systems working alongside each other. In Great Britain you have an unemployment scheme and public assistance. Loans is a form of public assistance. The honourable senior member for St. Philip feels that these loans will be dished out willingly by anybody and so long as you have reactionary poor law officials that the whole thing will collapse. How does the honourable member anticipate that? I do not see those reactionary people of whom the honourable member spoke being put on those poor law boards. Under the Housing Loan Scheme I do not think that the honourable member or any other honourable member will deny that this loan scheme is working admirably. The Manager finds no difficulty in getting people to repay loans. Section 31 of this Bill specifically states:—

“Save as in accordance with the provisions of this Act and of any regulations made hereunder and subject to any bye-laws made by the Council under this Act, it shall not be lawful for any Public Assistance Officer or any other person to purport to grant or to give any assistance under this Act to any poor person except such as may be authorised by the Guardians Committee.”

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Is the honourable member going back to clauses which have already been dealt with?

Mr. MAPP: The Chairman seems to have no knowledge of what is going on.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I will ask the honourable member to withdraw those remarks.

Mr. MAPP: If the remarks are offensive to the Chair, I withdraw them. As I was saying, Clause 31 makes adequate provisions. The honourable senior member for St. Philip was caught on the wrong foot by the honourable senior member for Christ Church when he said that the Guardians Committee will take vengeance on these poor people in his opening remarks. When the honourable senior member for Christ Church took him up on that point and exposed his whole attitude to that clause, the honourable senior member for St. Philip came back at the end of his speech, realising that he had made a wrong impression and tried to correct it with an air of righteous indignation. He seems to lose sight of the fact that there should be this little safeguard to the granting of a loan; he loses sight of the fact that specific provisions should be made to cover these loans. The honourable junior member for St. John then said that if this Treasury could afford to lend out nearly a million dollars, let us budget so that we can give it up.

Sir, if you are going to have, so far as loans are concerned, the laying down of certain conditions, can the honourable senior member for St. Philip imagine these people will be so foolish that they will not know how to differentiate between giving poor law or loaning money? I must say that far from honourable members criticising Government in this respect, we should congratulate Government on taking this bold step by bringing this colony into line with what is happening in countries abroad. I think provisions like what is contained in this clause will be very helpful to persons in the country area. In the case of sudden death or anything of that sort, a person can go to a Council and borrow some money to assist him until he is able to pay it back. I really do think that the honourable members who spoke on this clause from the other side of the Table are not taking their work seriously by their opposition to this clause.

Mr. BARROW: Mr. Chairman, Section 29, which purports to give assistance by way of a loan seems to have caused the most heartburn. This section is modelled on Section 49 of the 1930 Poor Law in England. I would like to say before I go any further what were the conditions operating in the United Kingdom in the year 1930. As a matter of fact, there were special conditions which operated at that time, which it is hoped will never recur again. In that year, there was a world-wide depression as a result of which over 11 million people were unemployed in the United Kingdom; there fore in 1930 when this Poor Law Act was brought about in England, it must be viewed under the conditions that were prevailing at that time. As one honourable member put it, there was operating at that time a labour system of doles. There was no attempt at that time to mix up this dole with National Insurance. As a matter of fact, there was no National Insurance at that time. As to whether it is advisable at this stage of our development to insert what I would call a Poor Law Amendment Act, but which we call A Public Assistance Bill—because we socialists in the twentieth century are very sensitive about the word ‘poor’ which speaks of charity which we resent and for good reasons too—so as to make provision for the granting of loans is a thing which I think we will have to consider very carefully. I must confess that I am not satisfied one way or the other whether we should do so. I am completely neutral on the point. I do not think this Public Assistance Act obtains in Trinidad, Jamaica, or any other British West Indian Colony. What I do know is that between 1930 and 1948 there has been an upsurge on this question. There is no doubt about it, much has taken place during the nine years from 1930 to 1939 on this question in the United Kingdom. We then had World War II and then at the end of the war we have had full employment in the United Kingdom and from 1946 to 1948 we have seen a great revolution in national thinking culminating in National Insurance Bills which have been hailed triumphantly by socialist members as the break up of poor law.

This Public Assistance Bill so named for reasons which I heartily agree, succeeds something which we had before. So far, it is one step forward in the breaking up of the old poor law in Barbados, but I would like to make it abundantly clear that public assistance in any scheme is not usually exclusive measures because in the United Kingdom when it had the National Insurance Bill it did not have any such bill as an Unemployment Insurance Bill. The National Insurance Bill, took care of sickness, widows and orphans’ pensions, retirement pensions, unemployment, maternity and death. I would like to say that under the unemployment scheme under the National Insurance Act, before you can qualify for any benefits you have to be a worker paying contributions, so, surely conditions in Barbados are not on a par with conditions in England.

I would like to go back here a little to say that a gentleman by the name of Sir William Beveridge was the main architect of the scheme which saw the break up of the Poor Law in England. He said that there were three planks on which he based his proposals for National Insurance and the first was a state of full employment because unless you had full employment you could not make provision for public assistance. We in Barbados, have started at the end by bringing in first this Public Assistance Bill. We certainly at some stage later in our development should introduce a measure by way of industrial development to ensure full employ-

ment because under those conditions we can then proceed to get a system of national Insurance and unemployment benefits.

On the question of the nomenclature of this Bill it does not make it an Insurance bill or an Unemployment Bill; it is still a bill substantially to aid the poor of this island and for which we are calling a Public Assistance Bill. As I have said, we do not believe that we should in this year of grace describe any assistance to the less fortunate members of the community as poor relief because that name sounds unsavoury.

I come back to the point of loans. My objection to clause 27 is this. As I have said, I am not satisfied as to the desirability or undesirability of the granting of loans. As regards to the working of the clause, I am not at all happy because it seems to me that it is a bill for the relief of the poor and the Board of Guardians will have power to deal with any disbursements which they may have paid out in the past as a loan, but which the recipient may have thought to be otherwise. The act is worded in such a way that the Board may at any time decide *ipso facto* perhaps, three or four years from the date, and say: "We gave Thomas Jones ten shillings; he has not repaid it; we will collect it." It is unfortunate the way in which the section is worded because the Board of Guardians can declare when a disbursement is a loan. Of course, the Bill makes it clear that it is still poor relief but I am saying that a man may be entitled to a loan to build a house and only by this measure can Government come to his rescue. As I see it, different people will look at this clause in different ways.

Mr. ADAMS: Mr. Chairman, I think an explanation would help the honourable member. Let him read section 29 carefully. Regulations will have to be made first and passed by the two houses of the Legislature on what things will be considered loans.

Mr. BARROW: As I have said before, the honourable senior member for St. Joseph looks at it in one way. I am still saying that any section worded like section 29 is capable of very wide interpretations. What the honourable senior member for St. Joseph seems to be suggesting is that at any time the Board is going to make a loan to a particular individual it has to pass regulations which must come to this Legislature first for approval.

Mr. ADAMS: Mr. Chairman, I must interrupt the honourable member again. I said that it is impossible for the Board to function except under regulations. The Board cannot pass any specific regulation for a specific purpose. Before the Governor can bring this Act into operation, regulations will have to be made and passed by the Legislature and that will be done before anybody is appointed or the board begins to function. You must have regulations first. How can any Guardians Committee sit down and say: "I am going to make out a loan for somebody" except it is guided by regulations. I may say that even the best lawyers may misread something; and *prima facie* they do not see eye to eye on it. I must, however repeat that a Guardians Committee cannot function except by regulations.

Mr. BARROW: I consider this section in which the authorities will have power to make disbursements to people as one of the most important sections in this Bill, but I am still saying that the way in which it is worded is capable of wide interpretations. Obviously, you do not make a fresh regulation to suit each case. I am still saying that it does seem to me that this Board can give out money for poor relief and then at a subsequent date tell the person that

it is a loan. My interpretation of this clause may be completely obnoxious to the honourable senior member for St. Joseph, but it is my view. Let me remind this Committee however that I quite agree that the particular authorities do not make regulations to suit each case; they have to make broad and general regulations.

As to the desirability or undesirability of granting a loan, I do not intend to enter the issue on that. However, Section 30 goes on to say that where assistance granted to any person is considered a loan to that person under the Act, or where any agreement or reimbursement has been entered into, any amounts due and owing in pursuance of any such loan or agreement may be recovered on the plaint of the Council in the Petty Debt Court having jurisdiction in the Area of such Council. I interpret this to mean that either they deem you have a loan or you enter into an agreement. A person may say: "I do not want a loan," and section 30 says he can enter into an agreement. I must say again that these sections are worded widely and are capable of more than one interpretation. Of course it will be our duty to say what is their meaning. This is something which we will have to watch very carefully and be aware of.

Mr. WILLIAMS: Before this section is put, Mr. Chairman, I wish to make a contribution to the debate. In the first place, I will say that I do not want to challenge anything which this Chamber has done in the past but it is unfortunate that in most of these Acts there is the tendency of drafting them directly according to English legislation. Any socialist will tell you that matters of public health are very vast and have been subjected to many changes from the Industrial Revolution right up to the Beveridge time of 1946. I will therefore say that anybody who just copies an English Act and puts it into colonial legislation without taking into account the peculiarity of the society of the colony itself is asking for trouble. It is all well and good for a lawyer to say that the particular bit of legislation makes good reading and good sense but because it may be good legislation for England, it does not follow that it would be good legislation for the West Indies.

The point I am worried about is that I am a Barbadian and know Barbados. The position with regard to this section which deals with public assistance by the granting of a loan is that it would take a lot of courage and explanation to get up on a platform in Checker Hall, St. Lucy, and tell James or Hezekiah that if he is broke, he can go to this Guardians Committee and get a loan when Mary, his next door neighbour can show that she got hers as a gift. I think this will be a very difficult thing to put over in a small place like Barbados. I somewhat agree with the arguments of the honourables senior member for St. Philip and the senior member for St. George that this will take a lot of explanation especially in a place like Pie Corner, St. Lucy.

Again, another point is that you have this Act which is deeming to give public assistance by way of a gift and by way of a loan and you do not know what is the qualification in either case. If you can draw a line of demarcation, probably I would feel free about it. I need not repeat the arguments which were put forward by the honourable senior member for St. George. I will only say again that you are living in Barbados and it will be very difficult to explain these two things to the people. It is these little matters which can get

you annoyed when you find it difficult to explain them.

Mr. ADAMS: I rise again only because the honourable member who sat down just now is a lawyer like myself. I cannot think that I have said something which he cannot understand. Under Section (6) and (7) of this Act, it says: "Except where otherwise provided by this Act, all powers conferred or duties imposed by this Act and all other powers and duties aforesaid or in any way relating to public assistance shall be exercised by the persons authorised by law to exercise such powers, under the control of and subject to such regulations as may be made by the Board."

"Provided that this subsection shall not apply to any power conferred or duty imposed upon the Governor-in-Executive Committee."

"The Board may make regulations for executing the powers vested in it under the provisions of this Act and without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing words may make regulations in particular for any of the following matters—

- (a) the building, altering or enlarging of public assistance institutions;
- (b) the preparation of public assistance institutions for the reception of poor persons;
- (c) the management, care and employment of persons wholly or partly maintained by public assistance;
- (d) the government and use of public assistance institutions;
- (e) subject to the provisions of this Act, the guidance and control of the Councils and their officers so far as relates to the management of the poor and public assistance and prescribing their duties;
- (f) prescribing standard rates of benefits for public assistance throughout the Island.

Sir, does not that absolutely support what I have been saying over and over again to the last two honourable members, especially to the honourable senior member for St. George? I have said over and over again that you cannot start to operate the Act without regulations being passed by this House and the Other Place. You cannot have a Board giving five dollars to you and three dollars to somebody else. It will be specifically put down in the regulations. The honourable senior member for St. George was entirely wrong when he said that I too thought section 29 is capable of more than one interpretation. Let me stress again that you cannot begin to operate this Act without regulations nor can a Board make regulations whenever it likes. The Minister of Health or whoever is responsible will make the regulations which will go to the Executive Committee and which in turn will be sent down for approval by both Houses of the Legislature. There will never be the question of whether what you got last week or last month or last year was a loan or was it a grant. The last two honourable members are lawyers and they can read this Act. It is clear as daylight. We must have regulations first and any honourable member can object to the regulations.

Mr. ALLDER: Sir, If the three honourable members who are lawyers and who have just spoken are wrangling over the contents of this Bill then the honourable senior member for St. Philip is doubly justified in his apprehension as has been expressed by him over the Bill. I have been very careful to listen to the various speeches and I have noticed that

the honourable senior member for St. Joseph has also been rather attentive to the points raised by members on this side of the Table. I was hoping to hear from him some expression of appreciation of the points that were raised by these honourable members because, whether the honourable senior member for St. Joseph wishes to admit it or not he must realise that the expressions of opinions on this side of the Table have helped him to see errors in this Bill.

Being on this side of the Table, it is my duty to defend the principles and causes of the members of this side. I am going to say now that if any honourable member on this side of the Table wishes to use this Bill as a means of propaganda, I will give them the material to do so. This Bill with its specific provisions allows Councils to handle poor relief by way of grants as well as to handle loans to the various people. As I see it, it is confusing matters and it cannot have the effect desired. I dislike this clause making provision for loans and regret that there is such a provision in this Bill. You do the people greater harm when you place a charge on them which will prevent them from getting on their feet and that is what this Bill purports to do by this clause. I am not saying that some of these people might not be able to pay back any loans which they may receive but I know that everybody will not be in a position to pay back theirs. Some are not going to pay it back and if they do not, they will be justified in doing so. I make this strong remark because you are disguising this Bill as one which is giving charity but when you are giving out something which is half charity and half repayment, you must create a difficulty. I do not want honourable members to mix up a loan from the Labour Welfare Fund which the workers get with this loan because that fund is so operated that a man can own his house or other property for that matter; therefore, the sense of ownership makes him feel proud whenever he pays an allotment back.

According to the manner in which I view this clause, when a person goes to these Poor Law Guardians or this Committee through hardship and gets some money, you are going to put it down as a loan against that person, but he is going to view it in a different light to when he goes to the Peasants Loan Bank or the Labour Welfare Department to get a loan. This is mere propaganda. The fault lies in this respect. If you suggest that estate workers who during the crop season get what can be called a reasonable wage, should put by a little and you assist them in that respect by sending a travelling bank around to them, how can you encourage that thrift now that you are saying that when they meet hardship during the out of crop season that they can go to this Committee and obtain a loan? The two ideas are incompatible with good reasoning. Another thing is that it seems as if you will be employing more people to run this loan fund than the persons who would directly benefit from it by the loans which they may get. You are also going to hold employers of these people liable for the repayment of loans that were transacted by these people and that is also going to cause confusion. Are you asking employers to go to Police Magistrates' Courts with these people who err in repayment of their loan and are you asking these employers to stand responsible for that loan? I think that is carrying it too far.

I agree wholeheartedly with the remarks of the honourable senior member for St. Philip because I am impressed, as I think many other honourable members are, that the better way would be to bring about an Unemployment Insurance. Along with these shady moves, you get the honourable senior member for St.

Joseph partly hinting in his speech that his policy was to reduce the large number of persons who were now obtaining poor relief. The honourable member actually hinted that was the purpose of creating this loan fund. We, on this side of the Table, laughed when he said so. The honourable member was aware that we smiled when he said so.

Mr. ADAMS: Mr. Chairman, the honourable member is absolutely inaccurate in his reference of me. What have I said, or even remotely hinted as the honourable member puts it, about the policy of this loan was to reduce the large number of people who are now getting poor relief, I do not know. As a matter of fact, I do not know if small or large sums are being paid out under poor relief.

Mr. ALLDER: Mr. Chairman,— When the honourable member was making his speech, a member from this side of the Table, in one of the usual asides, said that if you have the kind of members on the Guardians Committee which were so disposed, you could reduce the number of persons who will get this public assistance free. They will have it given out as loans. The honourable member smiled in a most agreeable manner when that statement was made, so I came to the conclusion that he favoured it.

If we review how much is dished out in poor relief and monthly pensions by the existing parochial authorities, we will see that under three heads in St. Michael's parish, \$110,000 is being spent and that has nothing to do with equipment and maintenance at the almshouse and the extra money given away. The honourable senior member for St. Joseph mentioned the sum of \$50,000 in his speech as that which was likely to be brought down to establish this fund, but even if he comes down with \$150,000 that amount will be definitely inadequate to deal with the situation. I know very well that some honourable members will say that this is a "God send," but that will not be true, I think it will create more hardship. My reason for saying so is if you go around and sum up what all the parishes are giving in outdoor relief you will realise that the Government will not be bringing down a resolution as sufficient as will cater to the people who now get this relief, furthermore as to include borrowers.

There is one thing of which we on this side of the Table can be proud. While our points, trivial though they may appear to be, may cause laughter from honourable members on the other side of the Table, there is yet freedom of speech and we shall never be afraid to express our opinions. The fact of this matter is that it is too confusing. It involves too many defects. Too many things are included and by that it brings in too many persons who should not be included, especially the employers who will have to see that these loans will be paid back. You are making qualified debt collectors of employers because they are now responsible for this, that and everything. They are now responsible for collecting income tax and later on, they will be responsible for collecting small loans. Why cannot we adopt a more modern policy? Why cannot we adopt something which is more simplified; something which everybody can understand its function? I challenge the honourable senior member for St. Joseph to say that if a person were to the bottomless depth of hardship that this Committee will give that person a weekly allowance, whether it be given out as a loan or whether it be given free. You cannot do that. When the honourable junior Member for St. Thomas made his address on this Bill, he did say that agricultural workers in the out-of-crop season will be able to benefit from this scheme, that is to say that this scheme is for agricultural workers. Even if you say that it does not apply to

agricultural workers but involves all the unemployed and destitute in the island there are some whom we might term as "unemployables" and many others who are unemployed all the year round.

I am hoping that now that the Government has heard the various views which have been expressed by honourable members that some modification will be done as regards to the regulations which are to be made to operate this Bill. I would be glad to hear the honourable junior member for St. Thomas promise that will be done. However, it seems to me that regardless of what regulations you may bring down and you do not modify some of the clauses in this Bill, it will still be confusing, because you are going to refer to the Bill. It may be that Government intends to have certain Acts on the Statute Book but wishes that they will be observed in the breach as some of the old Vestry laws which are now observed in the breach. I daresay that things of this sort can definitely be more modified than they are.

Mr. BARROW: There is only one other point I would like to make; in 1951 we passed the Protection of Wages Act and the mischief which that Act seeks to prevent is the making of deductions by employers from the wages of workmen for any purpose. Clause 8 of that Act says this:

"Except where otherwise expressly permitted by the provisions of this Act or of any other Act no employer shall make any deductions or make any agreement or contract with a worker for any deduction from the wages to be paid by the employer to the worker, or for any payment to the employer by the worker, for or in respect of any fine, or for bad or negligent work or for injury to the materials or other property of the employer save when such injury is occasioned by the wilful misconduct or neglect of the worker."

At the time when the Truck Acts were passed in England, they used to penalise the workers by making all sorts of deductions from their wages by way of fines, so that instead of drawing any money at the end of the week, a poor worker might find himself in the position where he owed his employer money. Our Protection of Wages Act, 1951—64, is in keeping with the Truck Act of England. It is true that in Clause 8 our Act does purport to make it permissible for any other Act to state that the provisions of the Protection of Wages Act shall not apply, and there have been several interesting decisions as to the interpretation of Clause 8 of that Act. I think we can get around our present position by stating in this Act that notwithstanding the provisions of Clause 5 of the Protection of Wages Act, 1951, it shall be lawful for the employer to pay to the Council any amount which is owing to them in the regulations made by way of loan. Clause 5 of the Protection of Wages Act says this:

"Except where otherwise expressly permitted by the provisions of this Act the entire amount of the wages earned by, or payable to, any worker in respect of any work done by him shall be actually paid to him in legal tender, and every payment of, or on account of, any such wages made in any other form shall be illegal, null and void."

I would like a check to be made as to this matter and find out whether it would not be necessary for us to say that notwithstanding the provisions of that Clause of the Act it shall be lawful to make deductions from the wages of workers. I can remember a very interesting decision made on this point a few years ago; I think it would be prudent for us to make some note of this matter and make sure that we are not acting contrary to the spirit and the provisions of the Protection of Wages Act, 1951.

The question that Clauses 26, 29 to 37 stand part of the Bill was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

Clauses 38 to 46 were called and passed.

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

Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

#### THE ADJOURNMENT

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

Mr. COX: I beg to second that.

The question that this House do now adjourn until this day week at 3 p.m. was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. SPEAKER adjourned the House accordingly.