

THE

House of Assembly Debates

(OFFICIAL REPORT)

SESSION 1953—54

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, 16th March, 1954.

Pursuant to a summons from His Honour the Speaker under Rule 292, the House of Assembly met at 12 (noon) to-day.

Present:

His Honour, Mr. K. N. R. HUSBANDS, (*Speaker*), Hon. Dr. H. G. H. CUMMINS, M.D., C.M., (*Minister of Social Services*), Hon. M. E. COX, (*Minister of Communications, Works and Housing*), Hon. R. G. MAPP, (*Minister of Trade, Industry and Commerce*), Hon. C. E. TALMA, (*Minister of Agriculture, Lands and Fisheries*), Mr. J. E. T. BRANCKER, Mr. L. E. SMITH, (*Chairman of Committees*), Mr. F. L. WALCOTT, Mr. E. D. MOTTLEY, Mr. F. C. GODDARD, Mr. F. E. MILLER, Mr. J. A. HAYNES, B. A., Mr. J. C. MOTTLEY, Mr. E. ST. A. HOLDER, Mrs. E. E. BOURNE, Mr. E. W. BARROW, B.Sc., and Mr. L. A. WILLIAMS, LL.B.

Prayers were read.

QUESTIONS

Mr. J. E. T. BRANCKER: To enquire of the appropriate Minister present at the next meeting of this House:—

Whether in view of the fact that the Anglican Church costs the Public Treasury of this Island an amount considerably in excess annually of one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000.00), and in view of the fact that persons of all religions, and of no religion at all, of necessity have to contribute to this large sum, will Government state whether it is its intention, in the near future, to take the necessary action to effect the Disendowment of the said establishment?

Mr. HAYNES: To enquire of the Premier:

Is the Hon'ble Minister aware of the great inconveniences caused at the Police Station, District "F" due to the lack of a proper water supply?

Will the Hon'ble Minister state if this inconvenience is to be remedied in the near future?

In view of the fact that the amount of money voted in the 1953—54 Estimates for this purpose has now lapsed, Will the Hon'ble Minister promise to bring down as soon as possible a Resolution to revoke this money during the 1954—55 Financial year?

Mr. J. E. T. BRANCKER: To enquire of the Honourable the Minister for Education at the next meeting of this House:—

Whether it is the intention of Government, during the *current* Legislative Session, to provide children at Public Elementary Schools of this Island with a hot mid-day meal free to all who are unable to pay for it, to the full extent of Government's financial ability?

Mr. J. E. T. BRANCKER: To enquire of the Honourable the Minister for Education at the next meeting of the House:—

Whether it is the intention of Government during the *current* Legislative session, to initiate the policy of giving free education in Secondary Schools in this Colony, by the progressive elimination of secondary school fees in accordance with the Colony's financial ability to do so?

Mr. ALLDER entered the House and took his seat.

ALLEGATIONS AGAINST MR. F. L. WALCOTT

Mr. F. L. WALCOTT: Mr. Speaker, Before you call the order of the day, I would like to draw your attention to a matter on page 679 of the *Official Gazette* which was printed on the 4th March, instant. It concerns the official report of the debates in this Honourable Chamber on the 19th January, 1954 and I was not in my place on that date, I being out of the island. According to the report, the honourable senior member for St. John made some serious allegations against me and I take strong objections to what was said. If I were in my place, I would have been able to reply to the statements made by the honourable member. I, therefore, draw it to Your Honour so that you can take appropriate action. I am registering a strong protest against what the honourable member said.

If I may be permitted, I will read the passage that I am complaining about so that it would be easy for Your Honour to note. It is as follows:—

"The reason why I am so strong against this Resolution, Mr. Chairman, is that when we, members of the working class people contribute our money to give these delegates these scholarships they go abroad and become injected with doctrines which we would have to fight against as a people struggling for our existence. I have noticed that certain trade union leaders, influential as they are, in the West Indies and elsewhere in the democratic world, would not open their mouths to say one word about the removal of African kings who look

"like us. The only thing that can be easily removed by the British Government is a black king, and these black influential leaders of the West Indies would not even—"

Mr. Speaker, I resent that statement and I take strong objection to the words because the honourable member has no foundation for the statement he made.

BILL TO AUTHORISE B.S.P.A. TO CONSTRUCT PIPELINES

His Hon. The SPEAKER: The order of the day stands in the name of the honourable Minister of Agriculture: Second reading of a Bill to authorise the Barbados Sugar Producers' Association to construct and maintain one or more pipeline or pipelines for conveying vacuum pan molasses from a point ashore to vessels in the harbour.

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Mr. Speaker, This Bill is to authorise the Sugar Producers' Association of this island to construct and maintain one or more pipeline or pipelines for conveying vacuum pan molasses from a point ashore to vessels in the harbour. As the objects and reasons of the Bill set it out, at present, vacuum pan molasses is exported by tankers by a company which is the only company with facilities for bulk storage and shipment of this product. The Barbados Sugar Producers' Association considers that it should be in a position petition with a view to obtaining better prices for this product as well as increasing the volume of the export trade and thus avoiding what is now a loss in the valuable industry.

The Association is negotiating with the British Union Oil Company, Limited, for a sub-lease of part of the lands at Needhams Point now held by that company under a lease from the Government, for the purpose of erecting thereon a terminal station for the storage and shipment of vacuum pan molasses. As it is, however, necessary for the Association to get legislative authority in order that it may construct a pipeline and other works for the purpose of conveying vacuum pan molasses from the terminal station to vessels in the harbour, this Bill by Clauses 3, 4 and 6 seeks to authorise the Association to carry out the necessary work of construction and maintenance.

To ensure that the operations of the Association will not interfere with the amenities of the harbour, this Bill by Clause 5 seeks to provide that before commencing any work of construction, the Association shall submit plans for the approval of the Governor-in-Executive Committee, and by Clause 7 that the Association will, when operating the pipeline, take precautions to prevent pollution of the waters of the harbour.

Clause 8 seeks to exempt the Association from payment of harbour charges in respect of its permanent installations and by Clauses 9 and 10 power is given to the Governor-in-Executive Committee, in certain cases to terminate the concessions granted to the Association by this Bill, and to require the Association if need be to remove its installations.

Clause 11 seeks to enable the Association with the approval of the Governor-in-Executive Committee, to transfer their rights and liabilities to some other person. As the lease held by the British Union Oil Company Limited, will expire on the 1st January, 1970, this Bill by Clause 12 seeks to provide that the privileges and concessions which it seeks to confer on the Association will terminate on the same date.

At this stage, Mr. Speaker, I would like to say that the Association is not allowed by its constitu-

tion to carry out any business and a company called The Barbados Molasses Terminal Limited comprising of members of the Barbados Sugar Producers Association has been formed to carry out the operators. In fact, members of this Association are forming themselves into a company to be known as the Barbados Molasses Terminal Limited, which is going to carry out the business owing to the fact that the Barbados Sugar Producers' Association cannot transact any business.

In so far as the question of displacement of labour and matters like that which I know honourable members would like to hear something about, without attempting to appease honourable members, I can assure them that the scheme will provide employment for between 48 and 54 people permanently and probably, another 24 temporarily while the installations are in the course of construction. I can also say that displaced coopers will be given preference after completion of the building programme. At least twelve of them will be permanently employed from the initial stages. The present scheme is a pilot scheme and it will provide for the shipping of 800,000 gallons of vacuum pan molasses. If the venture is successful, it will be expanded so as to allow for the shipping of as much as three million gallons.

Sir, allow me to point out that there will be no displacement of labour as a result of this venture inasmuch as vacuum pan molasses has not been shipped in drums for quite a long time now. It is usual to ship it in bulk by the Dominion Molasses Shipping Company, which I mentioned earlier is the only company here with facilities for shipping it in bulk and honourable members must have seen on many occasions the tankers, "Athelbrook" and "Athelruby" in the inner basin of the Carriacou receiving it from the tank just ashore. I wish to assure honourable members that it is hoped that there will be increased trade in vacuum pan molasses as a result of this venture. I would also like to point out that the reason why it was necessary for honourable members to meet to-day was because the Barbados Sugar Producers' Association wanted to see this Bill passed at an early date. This Bill, if passed, would mean increased dollars to the island, not only to the prospective shareholders of Barbados Molasses Terminal Limited, but also to the revenue of the island as a whole. I do not think that there are any more points to be explained. The Objects and Reasons of the Bill set it out very clearly. I hope honourable members are satisfied with the explanation. I beg to move that the Bill be now read a second time.

Hon. R. G. MAPP: I beg to second the motion.

Mr. WILLIAMS: Mr. Speaker, I am going to do nothing to prevent the Barbados Sugar Producers Association from putting up their pontoons because I think we have all agreed to the allowing of all equipment necessary for the exportation of fancy molasses. As far as I am concerned, I have placed that position clearly before this House and without any beating around the bush. What worries me more than anything else is why have we been brought back here to-day to deal with this Bill. On the other hand, we had the assurance that provision for an Inspector of Friendly Societies would not be put in the Estimates, yet that was done after the majority of members of this House had left the Chamber on the last occasion.

Hon. Dr. CUMMINS: I rise on a point of order, Mr. Speaker. Nobody ever gave the assurance that the provision for that inspector would not be put in the Estimates. I said when we dealt with that matter on the first occasion that I would defer it as a result of points which were raised so as to carry

it back to the Executive for further consideration. I never gave any assurance that provision for such an inspector would not have been put in the Estimates.

Mr. WILLIAMS: What I would like to say about this Bill is that this is nothing to cheapen the price of molasses because that is controlled by the world market price. What we are doing when we pass this Bill would cheapen our local cost which would mean that the exporters would be able to sell at a more competitive price. What is worrying me about this whole affair is that I cannot find out anything in connection with what is being done for displaced coopers. I do know that it is a difficult proposition to find work for them, but up to last Friday some of those coopers came to me and asked me what is being done to assist them. It is not good enough to say that some gentleman happens to be a member of some board and fails to make recommendations. If you constitute a Board under an Act, the Board is only delegated with certain powers but it is still the responsibility of the Cabinet and the duty of the Minister in charge to make a statement on what is taking place. I am therefore asking the hon. Minister to tell us something of what is happening in this respect. To-day, I heard coopers from the Sherman's area were asking for relief. It is true to say that the position in regard to this matter is being controlled by the Act of 1953 to amend the Barbados Fancy Molasses Production and Export Act, 1937, where one of the provisions is the securing of alternative employment for those displaced by bulk shipment. I am not querying that; I know that there was the inevitability of our bulk shipping fancy molasses, but as a responsible member knowing that must take place, I must ask what is being done for these starving, hungry coopers who are around the place. What must I tell them when they come to me? I can get no authoritative statement on the matter. If Government carry out some varied programme of works, I do not think it would be difficult for some of them to get something to do. I suggest that Government start at once with some of the schemes which it has set down in the Estimates for 1954-55.

Sir, I am not going into the Objects and Reasons of this Bill as I consider it to be largely a question for the Barbados Sugar Producers' Association to determine. In conclusion, I would say that it is a wonderful idea to do all we can to encourage the Fancy Molasses Industry. We have already passed a bill making certain provisions for the encouragement of the industry and now this Bill is before us to help the exporters of vacuum pan molasses.

Mr. E. D. MOTTLEY: The objects and reasons to this Bill are very clear and I suppose as soon as we have finished discussing it, giving our views and criticisms, it will pass as the honourable junior member for St. Lucy intimated. I believe all of us consider ourselves as responsible members, therefore, none of us would think of stalling the wheels of progress. I say none of us because I am very pleased to see that some members of the Government have ceased to play politics when it comes to dealing with matters of serious concern. I recall when this question of the shipment of molasses in bulk was first brought up in this House, I said to turn back bulk shipment would be to turn back the hands of the clock and the shipping of it in bulk must evolve just as when the more enterprising members of the community went about putting down sugar factories and doing away with their windmills. I think I was among the few who had the honesty to express that view because at that time, everybody seemed to be playing politics, forgetting that they were dealing

with an industry which like most industries, more modern facilities for the handling of it were brought about so that it could be produced at a cheaper rate and if other people in other countries were taking advantage of those modern facilities, the people of this country would be forced to do the same so as to bring their business in line with the others. This Bill seeks to give exporters of Barbados who on the whole contribute their quota by way of income tax, the opportunity of shipping molasses in bulk. I may say that I believe every right thinking Barbadian would regret very much that bulk shipment which would result in displacing local labour must be brought about so as to be able to compete with other foreign manufacturers of the product but be that as it may, it must be done.

As the honourable junior member for St. Lucy has said, I too am wondering why this matter which was on Order Papers of the last few meetings was not dealt with by Government as were some other matters which were dealt with after consideration of the Estimates. I am wondering why we should have been called back to-day to deal with it, but, nevertheless, it is our responsibility and anything for the well-being of the community it is our duty to come here at night or any other time, no matter what the inconvenience may be to us.

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Mr. Speaker,— if the honourable member would just give way, I would explain the reason why honourable members are inconvenienced by coming to-day to deal with this Bill. There was an attempt to deal with this Bill on the last occasion that this House met, but it was discovered after the item had been called that the Bill was not circulated to honourable members and because of that, the Bill was not proceeded with. It is not correct, therefore, to say that Government did not attempt to deal with this Bill; it was printed, but was not circulated.

Mr. E. D. MOTTLEY: I do not think the honourable Minister of Agriculture need reply to my speech until just before the second reading of the Bill. I am sure that there will be much criticisms which the honourable Minister would have to take note of before he replies. I think I started off by saying that we on this side of the Opposition would have criticisms to make though we appreciated the necessity and expediency of the Bill.

Mr. Speaker, I am sure you will agree with me that while this has nothing to do with the Fancy Molasses Industry strictly speaking, one cannot allow this opportunity to go by without making some comment on that branch of the industry. I am not attempting to defend exporters or manufacturers of Fancy Molasses or such persons connected with the industry nor am I attempting to defend members of the Barbados Workers Union who are connected with the industry; in the case of the latter, the honourable junior member for St. Peter is better able to do better than any of us, he having the necessary facts and figures at his disposal; but I must draw to the attention of this House that grave hardships seem to be taking place recently among the workers who are connected with the Fancy Molasses Industry. As the honourable junior member for St. Lucy said, so long as you are in public life, people will be coming to you to tell you things. Within the last five or six weeks, I have been assailed by displaced workers in this industry and they are asking what is happening in their case. It really does seem as if there is some grave dissatisfaction amongst them. Only a few days ago, the Poor Law Guardians of the Vestry of St. Michael had to tell some of those displaced workers of the parish that it was not the

duty of the Vestry to find work for people and that it was not an employment bureau. I think some of them were even given a pittance but it was also told them that the Vestry was only there to help destitute and disabled persons. However, it was a pitiable sight to see stanchion washers and men and women who work in the industry appearing in the office of the Churchwarden of the parish with their children asking for a dole and for employment. It has been forcibly brought to my attention, a few days after the St. Michael Vestry extended to those workers what it considered to be charity, that the amount of \$32,000 has been paid as a cess into the Fancy Molasses Industry Fund. I do not like to say things which might be construed to create any grave dissatisfaction, but if this money is paid into that Fund—and that does seem to be a fact—it makes it difficult for one to explain what is the position. Quite recently, this House passed a Bill which among other things made provision for the securing of alternative employment for displaced personnel in this industry and I was able to hold out great hopes to those people by telling them that Government was making provision to help them but there seems to be little hope because nothing seems to be done about the matter. I know this matter is not directly associated with this Bill but I must take this opportunity to draw it to the attention of the honourable Minister of Agriculture and the other honourable ministers because I have been told that their responsibility is individual as well as collective. I think a matter of this magnitude is of too great importance to those workers and their families to allow it to slip by without saying something.

Sir—When we of this side of the Opposition took the opportunity to approach certain employers of these workers in this town, we were told that not only had they paid in \$32,000 into the fund but that they had also given pensions to some of those workers who had been working with them for many years. I have been asked to mention that because those employers did not want it to be said that all those workers were turned off without any consideration. Personally, I think it is very admirable indeed to have given some of those workers that consideration. I recall when the Molasses Delegation, or the gentlemen who went to Canada on a molasses spree, if I can so term it, left these shores, there were those of us in this House who said that it would infinitely be better to set our house in order than to spend money on sending out that delegation because we were conscious of the fact that no delegation could change the minds of any American or Canadian importer of fancy molasses towards their own profits and to be sympathetic with the interest of Barbadian workers in the industry. We knew nothing could be told those importers to make them pay more for Barbados molasses than they would pay normally for molasses which they could import from Puerto Rico or Cuba. There were no two ways about it. Those of us who travelled realised when we saw boats unloading in the Thames or New York or at St. Johns or the St. Lawrence River, that you must come to the irresistible conclusion that Barbados in the not distant future would also have to face the reality of bulk shipment and not only of molasses but of sugar. Whenever you say such things, the stupid and the ignorant—and that does not apply to persons only outside of this House—

His Hon. THE SPEAKER: The honourable member may not mention anything of that in relation to members of this House.

Mr. E. D. MOTTLEY: What I wanted to say Mr. Speaker, was some honourable members referred

to such facts as wishful thinking. Just a few days ago, in the memorandum on the Estimates, we saw what we must expect in the sugar industry with regard to the reduction in the price of it. We must realise that sugar, although it is our only economy, is one of the most cheaply produced commodities in the world and that the competition is great in it because of the open areas, not in Barbados, but in other parts of the West Indies, British Honduras and British Guiana, as well as other parts of the world where every effort is being made to grow the sugar cane to produce this commodity and because of the question of supply and demand when there is more of anything than is needed, we must do every thing to keep our price of producing it down to the minimum. We must also bear in mind that Barbados is not a metropolitan country and that we have not been able to develop industrially therefore we must face up to the situation which is taking place in our own industry and keep pace with what is taking place in it.

Sir, there are one or two things which the honourable Minister of Agriculture will have to reply to when he is summing up on this Bill. The honourable junior member for St. Lucy said just now that this House was given the assurance last week that certain things would not be put into the Estimates. While I do not agree with everything the honourable member said, yet, we on this side of the table should like to have it recorded that we resent it. If I remember correctly, I was the person who asked for the postponement relative to the item which the honourable member referred to and the honourable Minister of Social Services was correct when he said that he agreed to the postponement so that he could go back to the Executive on the matter. The honourable Minister did not give the assurance that it would be taken out. It is embarrassing for honourable members to come to this Chamber knowing that certain things would only be discussed, such as last week when we expected that we would only be meeting to give consideration to the Estimates, and then to find that after we had given such consideration and had left in the wee hours of the morning with the bare majority of only the five ministers and four other honourable members that other items on the Order Paper were dealt with by the Government. Mr. Speaker, while it is quite right and legitimate for the House to deal with such matters in the way it has done, the honourable Leader of this House should realise that it is not the best thing to do when you pass measures with just a quorum. If you respect democracy and the fact—

His Hon. THE SPEAKER: The honourable member has strayed completely from the matter in connection with this Bill. This Bill has nothing to do with anything that the Government dealt with last week.

Mr. E. D. MOTTLEY: I only wanted to say that I do not think it was fair and right to pass things in such a matter. I would like to take this opportunity to say that while I may disagree with the political views of the honourable Minister of Social Services who is now Leader of this House, I have nothing but the highest respect and admiration for his word and his integrity and that view I have heard expressed by nearly all honourable members of this House. I, therefore, am going to say now, lest it be felt on a future occasion that I expressed a different view, that it was very embarrassing to hear that the honourable Premier had left the island when in answer to the honourable senior member for St. Philip and myself, when we were asking for an adjournment of the House at a meeting last week, and

referred to the fact that we knew that the honourable Minister of Social Services was pressing us to continue longer because the honourable Premier was leaving the island shortly and that the honourable Minister of Social Services was also so aware, the honourable Minister of Social Services said—

His Hon. THE SPEAKER: I must object to the honourable member speaking on some matter which is irrelevant to the issue with which this House is dealing. If I attempt to give the honourable member that latitude, I would have to give every honourable member that latitude. The honourable member must not speak on that matter. The honourable member would have some other opportunity of criticising the Leader of this House and whoever is concerned when something to deal with it is brought up.

Mr. E. D. MOTTLEY: I appreciate what Your Honour has said. I must confess that I embarked upon that matter with some hesitancy and I realised that I was somewhat taking advantage of Your Honour's leniency. However, seeing that Your Honour did give an amount of latitude to the honourable junior member for St. Lucy, who is a member of the Government party, I thought I would be given that opportunity also.

His Hon. THE SPEAKER: I have given the honourable member very much more latitude than the honourable junior member for St. Lucy.

Mr. E. D. MOTTLEY: That is what I was saying, Mr. Speaker. I said that I appreciated the latitude you had given me. Sir, under the circumstances, I have much pleasure in supporting this Bill and in doing so, I counsel the members of the Government who still owe some allegiance to the Workers' Trade Union to let it be known what is the position in regard to workers in the molasses industry and to make provisions for the changing circumstances. While I am on this matter, I would like to say that I am hoping that the report on the Deep Water Harbour Scheme which is a very able document would not be pigeon-holed for two or three years for political reasons, but would be considered promptly. It is my considered opinion that the Government can act soon in this matter because it is non-controversial. There may be slight differences of opinion relative to certain recommendations but nothing more than can be skipped over.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I wish to say that we of the Opposition are not supporting this Bill with a view of helping producers of this product or the Barbados Sugar Producers' Association. I say that because I have heard it expressed on more than one occasion that we, on this side of the Opposition, support anything that will help employers, companies or associations to make money. That talk is ignorance and stupidity. Those remarks are made by people outside of this House but they should be made to understand that molasses is an industry in which there is much competition and that it is a commodity which we of ourselves cannot consume; therefore, if other people are the consumers and the competition in the industry is great, we must put our house in order so that we will be able to sell it to the benefit not only of the producers and exporters, but of the community as a whole. I think that all that is necessary in this period of transition is a little economic ability and to use one's brains to find out how best problems in the industry can be worked out, particularly that with respect to the securing of alternative employment for displaced labour. I think we have in this community quite a number of people who can give such aid, and I counsel members of the Government not to think they of themselves know everything but to sit down and

discuss the matter with persons of every shade of opinion in the colony. Sir, I realise that this Bill brings into focus what is going to happen in the whole issue of the sugar industry. I visualise that we will have to look forward to the day in the not distant future when we will have to ship sugar in bulk.

Mr. CRAWFORD and Mr. VAUGHAN entered the House and took their seats.

Mr. F. L. WALCOTT: Sir, This Bill which deals with vacuum pan molasses has been mixed up with fancy molasses by some honourable members and I do not know if the honourable Minister of Labour has led honourable members of this House into that confusion because it would be recalled, that the honourable Minister referred to coopers and displaced persons. As I have said, this Bill deals with vacuum pan molasses and if you want to know the definition of "vacuum pan molasses" it means molasses separated from sugars made by a process in which the final evaporation of the cane juice is effected in a vacuum pan; while "fancy molasses" means cane juice evaporated to the consistency of syrup although there is a fancy molasses which is considered by the Fancy Molasses Board to be between vacuum pan molasses and Barbados Fancy Molasses, so it can be seen that there is a difference between vacuum pan molasses and Barbados Fancy Molasses.

Sir, there is no question at all of displacing workers by the shipping of vacuum pan molasses in bulk because, at present, vacuum pan molasses is shipped in bulk. As a matter of fact, it was shipped in bulk for quite a long time. The main purpose behind this Bill with which we are dealing is to give the Barbados Sugar Producers Association the necessary authority to construct and maintain pipelines for conveying vacuum pan molasses from installations which would be set up at Needham's Point to ships which will call here for it. It has been stated in the Objects and Reasons of the Bill that the Association is negotiating with the British Union Oil Company Limited, for a sub-lease of part of the lands now held by that company under a lease from the Government, for the purpose of erecting a terminal station for the purpose of conveying this vacuum pan molasses to ships from that point and that is the main reason for this Bill.

I would like to take this opportunity, Mr. Speaker, as reference has been made to displaced labour today and because the honourable Minister of Trade, Industry and Labour made some unwelcome remarks in the House last week about I being a member to the Barbados Fancy Molasses Control and Marketing Board, that the reason why I would not serve on that Board is because—

Hon. R. G. MAPP: Mr. Speaker, as far as I know, the only reference made in respect of the honourable junior member for St. Peter being a member of that Board was made by the honourable Premier. The honourable Premier referred to it, as far as I know, in his speech on the Budget.

Mr. F. L. WALCOTT: Because the honourable Premier felt that he should support the honourable Minister of Labour in a reply to a speech by me was the cause of some unwelcome remarks about me, but even if you forgive the honourable Minister of Labour because he was not aware of the significance of what he was talking about in reply to me, I would have no desire to serve on any Board where a Minister can get in this Chamber and make sweeping statements, and further than that, it would be impossible for me to serve when it is alleged that the honourable Minister of Labour informed a delegation of coopers that I am responsible

for any delay so far as their employment is concerned.

Now, what I think should worry most in giving consideration to this Bill is if the Government is fully satisfied that putting the terminal station for the storage of vacuum pan molasses and shipment of it at Needham's Point, which is the Point allocated for the storage and shipment of oil, would be in the best interests of the island, because as I have said already, that is the main reason of this Bill, the facilities for shipping vacuum pan molasses in bulk having been given already. If honourable members are satisfied on that point, all well and good. I believe the reason why the Sugar Producers' Association has tried to get Needham's point for storage and shipment of vacuum pan molasses is because the Association believes it can be done on a cheaper basis from that point.

Sir, what this Bill purports to do would mean in the long run the exportation of more vacuum pan molasses. I do not know if the honourable Minister of Agriculture stated that the tank from which vacuum pan molasses is shipped near the Inner Basin of the Careenage is not even owned by Messrs Jason Jones but is owned by the Dominion Molasses Company of Canada, so by that foreign company owning this tank, it means that it has a monopoly on the trade.

As I have said, this Bill has nothing to do with the question of bulk shipment of fancy molasses nor displaced labour and, Mr. Speaker, if my advice is necessary, you can look at the Bill in that light and probably save this House of any unnecessary long debate.

Mr. BARROW: Mr. Speaker, I paid great attention to the introduction of this Bill by the honourable Minister of Agriculture, Lands and Fisheries, and there are certain misapprehensions which have arisen in my mind as to the perfect understanding by the Minister and the Government in general as to the full meaning of the Bill. The first point which I would like to make is whether the Barbados Sugar Producers' Association has any power to carry on business as the honourable Minister has stated, because under its articles of Association, it is not allowed to do so. I do not see the reason why in the Bill which is before us, the power to lay down pipelines and to carry on business of exporting the vacuum pan molasses in bulk from that particular site should be vested in the Barbados Sugar Producers' Association when the honourable Minister has made it clear that the Association has no power to carry on business. From the speech by the honourable Minister, it does seem as if a company has been formed for the purpose of shipping the molasses from the B.U.O.C. site but I feel that this whole thing should be vested in that company which has been newly formed from among the Sugar Producers' Association and not in the Association because, as the honourable Minister has told us, the Association would be acting *ultra vires* in the carrying on of business of this nature. This is a point to which we must give careful consideration because as far as I know, the Barbados Sugar Producers' Association is a Trade Union. The honourable Minister was at pains to say to obviate the Association from carrying on the business, the company was formed. That is the point I would like to make.

The next point which I would like to make has already been pointed out by the honourable junior member for St. Peter. It is that there can be no question of displacement of coopers involved in the passage of this Bill through this House to-day be-

cause for many years, vacuum pan molasses has been shipped out of Barbados in bulk and from a location which is not far from the site of this House of Assembly. As a matter of fact, quite recently, the intimation was given in this House by the Government that the boats which go up into the inner basin of the Careenage to that terminal will have freer access to the terminal point because the Chamberlain Bridge is to be abandoned. Now, Mr. Speaker, as far as I can see, the confusion does exist as to whether this House is dealing with fancy molasses or vacuum pan molasses. No mention is made of fancy molasses at all, or its shipment in bulk, in this Bill; it deals specifically with vacuum pan molasses. As has been rightly said, the main purpose of this Bill is to enable a new company, although the designation has been set down here as the Barbados Sugar Producers' Association, to interfere with the normal facilities of the harbour and to lay down pipelines and other works of that nature to facilitate the shipment of vacuum pan molasses from a point in the vicinity of the B.U.O.C. storage tanks at Needham's Point. We must get this matter in its true perspective.

As far as I have been informed, certain road-works are in the process of construction or destruction in order to enable the bulk shipment of fancy molasses from somewhere in the vicinity of Cavans Lane. I do think the remarks of the honourable Minister of Labour as well as that of the honourable senior member for the City would have been more appropriate if they were uttered in the course of a debate on the bulk shipment of fancy molasses.

The honourable Minister of Agriculture made remarks to the effect that displaced coopers would be given priority of employment on the job of laying down these installations and the operation of this newly formed company, although he did not make that last point definitely clear. I am referring to those coopers who are displaced by a decision of a few months ago to ship fancy molasses in bulk and for which legislation has already passed this Chamber. I think I too must voice the fears expressed by some other honourable members. It is true to say that in accordance with the agreement and the Fancy Molasses Act which was assented on the 11th August 1953, considerable sums of money have been paid into the Fancy Molasses Industry Fund and no clear statement as to its disbursement has been made by the Government, particularly on behalf of those workers who have been displaced as a result of the decision. I have been made to understand that some of those workers are on the poor relief of the parish of St. Michael and I consider that as a very disgraceful state of affairs. I am quite aware, Mr. Speaker of the latitude which has been granted me but I must continue to voice misunderstandings which exist in the minds of the Government and other members of this House as to the nature of the Bill.

Hon. C. E. TALMA: I rise on a point of explanation, Mr. Speaker. Allow me to say that at no time was there any confusion or misunderstanding in my mind or any member of this Government as to this Bill dealing only with vacuum pan molasses.

Mr. BARROW: As I was saying, it is a disgraceful state of affairs that some of these displaced coopers have to seek poor relief, particularly in view of the fact that some money has been paid into the Fancy Molasses Fund and Government has not yet issued a statement on the disbursement of that Fund.

His Hon. THE SPEAKER: I am informing the honourable member that I think such a statement can only come from the Minister of Agriculture officially.

Mr. BARROW: I thank Your Honour for that information. I would be glad to get a statement on the matter from any quarter even if it came from the unemployed coopers or from the Opposition. I think the public is interested in finding out as to how many coopers or such displaced persons have been granted poor relief and such questions pertaining to the disbursement of the Fancy Molasses Fund.

As regards the statement by the honourable Minister of Agriculture that one of the objects of this measure is to enable the industry in the colony to obtain better prices, I would like to inform the honourable Minister that prices are regulated in two different ways: (1) they can be regulated by the ordinary operations of the markets by the laws of supply and demand; and (2) they can be regulated alternatively by agreement where the goods are sanctioned and approved by Government as a bargaining agency or agreement between agency and agency — that is between exporter and importer. In the long run, it boils down to the question of supply and demand except in cases where there are interferences with the normal market laws, such as imperial preferences. Sir, when you give the Barbados Sugar Producers Association power to put down this pipeline and to carry out the other works, as the honourable junior member for St. Peter pointed out, you are only giving them the necessary authority to put it down at a particular point, because they cannot do that without the consent of the Government; but there is no legislation to prevent the shipment of vacuum pan molasses in bulk; there is no legislation which says that exporters must ship it in puncheons or cartoons; they are left to ship it in whatever way they so desire. In so far as fancy molasses is concerned, it was a decision by the exporters with the approval of the Government to ship it in bulk. It is a method which did not exist before and it also meant a saving of \$24 per 100 wine gallons to the exporter by shipping it in that manner. This saving enables the exporter in Barbados a greater margin of bargaining with the importer in Canada over the price and as the honourable junior member for St. Peter also pointed out, that greater bargaining power also enables him to compete with other exporters whether they are without or within the Caribbean.

When it comes to vacuum pan molasses, we must bear in mind that we are already exporting it at a competitive rate and what we are doing by this Bill is purely a question of convenience for the exporting association, that is to allow it these particular dispensations. Vacuum pan molasses is being shipped in bulk under the auspices of the Dominion Molasses Company of Canada and not by the Association here and what we are doing would enable the Association, perhaps, to enter into a little competition if there is any competition in that business. What I want to stress and to point out to the honourable Minister of Agriculture is that when this permission is granted to the Barbados Sugar Producers Association, it would not bring about an improvement in the price they get for the product; the price would be determined as it was before, that is, by the person who wants to buy it and not by the person who wants to sell it.

Mr. VAUGHAN: Mr. Speaker, it has been brought to my notice but I have never heard it stated in this Assembly before and, perhaps, the honourable junior member for St. Andrew would be able to refute what I say or answer me to the satisfaction of this House and the general public, whether in the calculation of the price of canes, the money received for one of the manufactured by-products

is calculated on the price paid for canes. I understand that you get 40 gallons of molasses to every ton of canes and if you calculate that, say, at a price of 10 cents per gallon, that would mean that you get four dollars more to the price you receive for every ton of sugar. I would like to know if that amount which you get over on that by-product is calculated on the price which you pay for canes.

(A VOICE: Oh yes.)

Another point, Sir. Quite recently it also has been brought to my notice that syrup which was formerly sold after being measured by the edge is now sold after being weighed to the consumers and owing to that departure, there can be some considerable difference in the weight when it leaves the small producers and the weight when it is received by the buyers. As I have been told, one of two things is necessary to bring about an evenness; either a return to the measurement by the edge, or to have a scale beam at the buyers' end. I think it is very important that the buyers of molasses should be subjected to the same check from the Sugar Producers Association as the Association is subjected to in respect of their scales at the weighing of peasants' canes. It must be realised that whenever mistakes are made by the buyers unfavourable to the exporters, not only is the producer losing money but also those who are engaged in technical work at the factories as well as cane cutters.

Sir, these small syrup factories now employ skilled labour of about 141 persons and unskilled labour of 380 persons. This means a total of 531 persons employed by those small producers of syrup alone. If you say that each of those persons represents a family of four, you must realise that over 2,000 persons may be affected unfavourably by this new way of measuring syrup. The Government cannot afford to be indifferent to the fate of these small producers of fancy molasses and as has been represented to me, if this unsatisfactory state of affairs that now exists in the industry continues, the small producers would be pushed entirely out of the industry. I have stated before that it was a grave error when the Fancy Molasses Board was taken out of the control of this House. Even when members of this House had something to do with it, there was always some difficulty with the small producers and that was my main reason for being opposed to the taking of its control out of the members of this House. Of course, it is true to say that the House of Assembly only appointed two members to that Board of seven and the majority could overrule any decision arrived at by only members of this House on that Board, we must bear in mind that in any community, whenever anything becomes a monopoly, it is a dangerous thing to the economy of the community and if there should be a monopoly in the syrup industry, it will be a calamity to the country as a whole.

I suspect that there is a subtle attempt being made to concentrate in the hands of a few or in a single company the production and export of this fancy molasses; the day on which that happens 1,800 people are due to suffer. Mr. Speaker, in the parish of St. John alone there are four-syrup-producing factories — Cliff, Colleton, Kendal and Moncrieffe — and only one of those factories has the facilities of weighing the syrup before it leaves the factory, because when it comes to Bridgetown there may not be any inspector to see that the scale beam is working correctly. In respect of the sale of peasants' canes to the factories, you can imagine the possible loss to the producers and the resultant loss to the labourers in a situation like that. I am advising the Government to have the

cane-weighing beam subject to the inspection of their officers. I am told that the Commissioner of Police is the authority for the testing of these scale beams and it is on official record that at times there is no adequate way for testing these scale beams. That is something which should not be allowed to continue. I happen to know that one of the inspectors is an expert on cane-weighing scale beams and the Government could easily discover who he is and appoint him to inspect the scale beams of the buyers of fancy molasses.

As an alternative to that, the Government should lay it down that the sale of molasses by gauging should be re-established. I should like to say that the day in which the syrup plants are put out of production it will be more difficult for peasants' canes to be sold; as a matter of fact, there is the possibility of the lack of productive factory capacity of which I have spoken at length on other occasions. There is a certainty that with the pushing out of production of the small syrup plants, the small producer of cane will have to look for some other crop which none of us can tell. Not only will the abolition of the small plants entail the loss of labour, but it will also entail the loss to the small cane farmer in this country of a traditional means of his economic salvation. Right now the small cane producer should approach any of the small syrup-producing plants and be helped—

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member is out of order. He is straying from the substance of the Bill in hand.

Mr. VAUGHAN: I accept your advice but I only thought that molasses being a product of the sugar industry, I would take the opportunity to speak on that matter. Anyhow, I think I have said sufficient to warn the Minister of Trade, Industry and Labour and the Minister of Agriculture, Lands and Fisheries, that the small producers of fancy molasses must be protected from every possible angle and see what profit the buyers are making in relation to that of the producers.

Hon. Dr. CUMMINS: At this stage, Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this House do now adjourn for three quarters of an hour.

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

BARBADOS SUGAR PRODUCERS (CONVEYANCE OF VACUUM PAN MOLASSES BY PIPELINE) BILL, 1954.

On re-assembling,

Mr. SPEAKER: On the adjournment the House was debating a motion for the second reading of a Bill to authorise the Barbados Sugar Producers' Association to construct and maintain one or more pipeline or pipelines for conveying vacuum pan molasses from a point ashore to vessels in the harbour.

Mr. GODDARD: Mr. Speaker,— Every member of this Chamber should be in favour of this Bill; it only seeks to give the Sugar Producers' Association the opportunity of doing for themselves what anybody would want to do for himself in normal business. At present the marketing of vacuum pan molasses is done through only one channel and there is no competition for this product. This Association is now seeking to make its own installation at Gravesend and when this installation is completed, the Association will be in a position to offer competition in the sale of molasses. I presume that the molasses will go to the highest bidder. I have been told that the Association

have not been realising for their molasses what they would realise if they had these facilities. The benefit to the island is obvious; every ton of sugar produced results in 40 gallons of vacuum pan molasses and I think that about 7,000,000 gallons of this molasses may be produced this year. If we get a penny a gallon more for this product, you will see what benefits will accrue to the sugar industry. As previous speakers have said, the price fixed for canes is computed on the total earnings of sugar and molasses produced.

Only a few weeks ago we gave the right to an Oil Company to make its own installation at Black Rock and this Company competed with another Oil Company in marketing their product; now we are giving people in our main industry a similar right to make an installation whereby they can get foreign competition for their molasses. It is my feeling that hon. members will vote for the passing of this Bill.

Mr. MILLER: I was somewhat surprised at the unnecessary discussion in respect of this Bill, because, as a matter of fact, there is little to be said on the question of authorising this Company to make this installation which will facilitate the export of this product; however, there are still some factors which deserve consideration. Hitherto the bulk of this vacuum pan molasses was shipped by Messrs. Jason Jones & Company to the Dominion of Canada and now we have the Sugar Producers' Association seeking authority to ship this molasses in bulk. There was a period when there was some difficulty in disposing of this product and although it has been regarded as a nuisance, it is now regarded as the main raw material in one or two important industries.

Vacuum pan molasses shipped to the United States of America and Canada is used primarily as a basis for animal feed and it is also used for the manufacture of alcohol and other liqueurs. The question is whether or not there is a mutual understanding between the houses which handle the export of vacuum pan molasses; some hon. members feel that no vacuum pan molasses is exported in packages but a small quantity has been shipped by Messrs. Manning & Company. At the moment what has been hinted to us in the Memorandum on the Estimates is that we may have to force down production due to world requirements, and I think the time is now ripe for the Government to have a Control Board with a policy in respect of vacuum pan molasses similar to that in respect of fancy molasses and bring under its control the distillation of rum. When we had an opportunity of shipping alcohol, when it appeared that we had some claim on the market due to our standard of alcohol, our hope of shipping alcohol to England was destroyed.

I am hoping that the Minister of Agriculture will be willing at least to examine what I am saying in connection with this matter; we are up against the question of the exportation of this vacuum pan molasses in large quantities, which must, to some extent, give rise to the price of the product which is used in our local animal feed, and that will have an effect in changing the price and cost of the animal feed, which is very important to us. I repeat that if we can make use of the by-products of our main industry in this island, the time is now ripe when we should have a form of control in respect of the exportation of vacuum pan molasses as we have in respect of fancy molasses.

I think that alcohol at any standard required could be produced in Barbados if arrangement could be made as regards tariff; I do not believe that there is any other raw material which could be regarded

as cheap as vacuum pan molasses for the production of alcohol. It would appear as if I am very conscious of the possibility of the export trade, but I am still worried as to whether or not the country will have an opportunity to sell rum in large quantities as seen in Jamaica. It is a question of taste and rum all over the world will have those who will criticize it; we had no complaints but we lost business which was thrown out of gear having regard to the price from other competing countries.

Hon. C. E. TALMA: In so far as the principle of the Bill is concerned, all hon. members are definitely in favour of it, realising that it is for the benefit not only of a certain section of the community but for the benefit of the island as a whole. The only way in which this industry will retain its old status and offer competition in world markets is through the passing of this Bill. I should like to say that at no time did I attempt to confuse this Bill with the Fancy Molasses Bill; I merely said that through those installations and through the construction of this storage station, certain avenues of employment will be offered to about 60 people at this stage; it will also be a means of relieving unemployment to some little extent, and I thought of the coopers at the time. In many cases, the points raised were not strictly relevant to the issue; it is a question of concessions to be granted to the Sugar Producers' Association. In Clause 11 of the Bill the power is given to the Association to transfer their rights to the new Company which has been formed.

Mr. SMITH: I am sorry that I have to speak after the hon. Minister has replied, but there is only one point which I should like to raise. The hon. Minister has said that the erection of this storage station will relieve a certain amount of unemployment; I would be very glad if the persons responsible for this work would be told not to employ people who are already working to do this work. We do not want people to be doing two jobs while others who are out of work cannot get anything to do. Many engineers have been put out of work owing to the fact that factories have gone out of commission, and it would be a nice thing if the authorities in this case were told to employ those who are unemployed.

Mr. CRAWFORD: There is the question of investigating the possibility of developing some industry from vacuum pan molasses. In their Report, the Mission of United Kingdom Industrialists recommended that the possibility of the manufacture of

anhydrous alcohol from molasses should be considered. The relative paragraph of the Report says this: "There is already substantial productive capacity for industrial and anhydrous alcohol in Jamaica, primarily with the object of blending up to 15% with motor spirit. This should prove a most valuable balancing factor in the utilisation of molasses and a similar scheme might be worth consideration for British Guiana, Barbados and even Trinidad."

The paragraph goes on to point out the likelihood of the easy supply of motor spirit from Trinidad competing with anhydrous alcohol, but that would not apply to Barbados because we have no motor spirit derived from oil. I imagine that the members of the Mission went into this question and made the recommendation that we should investigate the matter, but there is no reason why the Minister of Trade, Industry and Labour should not set the wheels in motion to endeavour to implement this particular recommendation. The future of molasses is uncertain and it should be worth our while to develop any means of utilising this product in any form in order to safeguard the income from the product to the economy of the island as a whole.

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

On the motion of Hon. C. E. TALMA, seconded by Hon. M. E. Cox, Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair, and the House went into Committee on the Bill, Mr. SMITH being in the Chair.

The twelve Clauses of the Bill were called and passed.

On the motion of Hon. C. E. TALMA, seconded by Hon. M. E. Cox, the CHAIRMAN reported the passing of the Bill in Committee.

Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

On motions of Hon. C. E. TALMA, seconded by Hon. M. E. Cox, in each case, the Bill was read a third time and passed.

THE ADJOURNMENT

Mr. SPEAKER: That concludes the business of this meeting and this House now stands adjourned until the 13th day of April, 1954, at 3 o'clock p.m.