

THE House of Assembly Debates

(OFFICIAL REPORT)

SESSION 1954—55

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, 19th October, 1954.

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

MEMBERS PRESENT

His Honour Mr. K. N. R. HUSBANDS (*Speaker*), Mr. J. E. T. BRANCKER, Hon. Dr. H. G. H. CUMMINS M.D., C.M., (*Minister of Social Services*) His Honour Mr. A. E. S. LEWIS (*Deputy Speaker*) Hon. M. E. COX (*Minister of Communications, Works and Housing*) Mr. L. E. SMITH, (*Chairman of Committees*) Mr. F. L. WALCOTT, O.B.E., Hon. R. G. MAPP, (*Minister of Trade, Industry and Labour*) Mr. F. C. GODDARD, (*Leader of the Opposition*) Mr. F. E. MILLER, Mr. E. St. A. HOLDER, Mr. V. B. VAUGHAN, Hon. C. E. TALMA (*Minister of Agriculture, Lands and Fisheries*) and Mrs. E. E. BOURNE.

Prayers were read.

MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting which was held on the 28th September, 1954 having being printed and circulated, were taken as read and confirmed.

PAPER LAID

Hon. M. E. COX: Mr. Speaker,—I am commanded by His Excellency the Governor to lay the following Paper:—

Statement of Post Office Advances for payment of Money Orders to the 31st July, 1954.

GOVERNMENT NOTICES

Government Notices were given as follows:—

Hon. Dr. H. G. CUMMINS (for the Premier): Resolution to place the sum of \$2,311 at the disposal of the Governor-in-Executive Committee to Supplement the Estimates 1954-55 Part I, Current, as shown in the Supplementary Estimates 1954-55, No. 22 which forms the Schedule to the Resolution.

Hon. M. E. COX: Resolution to place the sum of \$40,818 at the disposal of the Governor-in-Executive Committee to supplement the Estimates, 1954-55, Part II, Capital, as shown in Supplementary Estimates, 1954-55, No. 23 which forms the Schedule to the Resolution.

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Bill to amend the Co-operative Societies Act, 1949, to provide for the exemption of societies registered under that Act from certain taxes and duties.

Hon. Dr. H. G. CUMMINS: I beg to give notice of my intention to move the House into Committee of Supply at the next meeting in order to consider the money Resolutions of which notice has just been given.

PRIVATE NOTICE

A Private Member's Notice was given as follows:—

Mr. HOLDER: Of the following Address:—

*The House of Assembly
To*

His Excellency the Governor

The House of Assembly respectfully draw to Your Excellency's attention the urgent need for the establishment of a Housing Scheme and/or land settlement scheme in the parish of St. James.

2. The House further suggest that the Plantation known as "Trents" in the said parish of St. James, would be a suitable area for the development of such a scheme or schemes, to be run on a co-operative basis by suitable workers in the parish and would ask that negotiations be entered into for the purchase of this plantation.

3. The House would be pleased if Your Excellency would see fit to give effect to the terms of this Address at the earliest possible date.

BILL READ A FIRST TIME

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Mr. Speaker,—I beg to move that the Bill to amend the Co-operative Societies Act, 1949 to provide for the exemption of Societies registered under that Act from certain taxes and duties be now read a first time.

Hon. M. E. COX: I beg to second that.
The motion was put and agreed to.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

Mr. SPEAKER: The first Order of the Day stands in the name of the Hon. Minister of Social Services: to move the House into Committee of Supply to consider the grant of sums of money for the service of the colony.

Hon. Dr. H. G. CUMMINS: Mr. Speaker,—Before I make that motion, I am asking leave to take charge of the Orders standing in the name of the Hon. Premier.

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

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

Hon. M. E. COX: I beg to second that.

His Honour left the Chair and the House went into Committee of Supply, Mr. Smith being in the Chair.

RESOLUTION TO AUTHORISE CASH ADVANCES

Hon. Dr. H. G. CUMMINS: Mr. Chairman,—This Resolution is a resolution to authorize advances of not more than \$250 in any particular case, being made on the warrant of the Governor-in-Executive Committee to meet Cash payments on account of incidental expenses, and minor miscellaneous supplies. First of all, I want to say that I had a talk with the Auditor General not long ago, and there is an impression that this proposal is the result of Mr. Foster's visit; and that in fact, it is a recommendation by Mr. Foster. I want to say that impression is not correct. (MEMBERS: The Addendum said so). I am informed by the Auditor General that even before Mr. Foster came here, the Audit Office made a recommendation of the same sort which resulted from the visit of Mr. Gittens (the Assistant Auditor General) to Trinidad. Therefore, if Mr. Foster did make that recommendation, he was only supporting the recommendation made by the Audit Office.

This \$250 is to facilitate the purchase of minor things by different departments, such as provisions, eggs, stamps, etc. For instance, there is a vote for provisions in connection with the prisons. The Audit Office will authorise the Treasury to make an advance of not exceeding \$250; and the Officer in charge of the Prison will buy the provisions. When payment has been made, a receipt will have to be given; and when that whole advance is spent, the officer at the Prisons will come back for another voucher, and the advance has got to be replenished from time to time. This arrangement saves the trouble of having to make a voucher for every small item of \$5 or \$10, as the case may be; and it facilitates matters and saves a long wait which a person may have to suffer, a person who may have sold a few eggs to the Hospital, from having to go to the Audit Office and then to the Treasury, so as to draw the money. By this proposal, the amount of money will be paid to an individual on the spot.

The point that the Auditor General made was that first of all, before getting another advance, the Officer would have to bring in those receipts to be checked; and when the Auditor General is satisfied, the Officer will get another advance. Secondly, the Auditor General is authorised by law now, and will more so be authorised then, to pay surprise visits to these departments who get these imprest accounts, and demand to see these accounts. They will be checked by the Audit Office when they come back in. Periodically, probably every three months, the Auditor General will call on these heads of the departments to bring in their impressed accounts, so that they can be gone through with the Heads of the Departments themselves.

They are certain departments which I will name, to which these cash imprests will apply. I may say, sir, that there is a similar system going on now; but irregularly, for the purpose of buying stamps. Several departments are made advances in order to buy

stamps as they require. I will name some of the departments to which these cash imprest accounts will apply: The Public Library, \$5.00 for postage; Housing Board, \$5.00 for filing court cases for ejectments; Comptroller of Supplies, \$5.00 for postage; Education Department, \$45.000 for expenses of film production and \$12.00 for the payment of postage; the Airport, \$5.00 for payment of postage; Income Tax Department, \$10.00 for court execution costs and \$15.00 for payment of postage.

These departments get small cash imprests, mostly for postage. Instead of going on in the present irregular way, it is thought, it should be regularised and the amount extended to the maximum of \$250. It may be asked, why should the amount stated, be as much as \$250. That is because of the General Hospital. At the moment, the Hospital requires this amount for the purchase of fresh foods, eggs, vegetables and things like that; and also for blood donors. The Hospital's requirement is the highest. The next is, the Lazaretto, \$130.00 for fresh foods. Next highest is the Maternity Hospital, \$60.00 for fresh food and the Secretariat, \$60.00 for the payment of postage.

I want to repeat that it is thought necessary, to regularise what is now being done. Secondly, it will make for greater efficiency in the Audit Department and the Accountant's General's Office, and in addition, it will facilitate small vendors who find it difficult to go to the Treasury, to receive payment for eggs etc. There is ample safe-guard, that this money will never go beyond \$250; and there will be frequent checks from time to time.

I beg to move sir, that this Resolution do now pass.

Hon. M. E. COX: I beg to second the motion.

Mr. GODDARD: As far as I can glean, sir, both the Post Office and the General Hospital now have impressed accounts. If other departments have these accounts, it is apparently not legal now. This practice is followed in commercial circles; but in the case of Government departments, we do not wish it to be the thin end of the wedge, or a departure from the pre-audit system.

I followed the Leader of the House carefully, and from what he has said, this Resolution is merely to regularise what is now in existence rather than to bring about any new departure from what is legal. It always struck me as strange that departments should have to send out and buy a bar of soap and tell you to charge it to them. You send in your account, and may be two or three months after, it will turn out in their files. This practice which we are starting now in a legal way, will facilitate small vendors; especially those who have to call at the doors of certain institutions to sell their wares. But what I would like to stress is that these imprests accounts should be checked carefully and regularly by the Audit Department. I am not suggesting that there is any irregularity; but now that we are regularising this practice, these petty cash accounts should be checked very carefully by the Audit Department.

There are other departments apart from the General Hospital whose normal purchases are large; and really \$250 is not too much for them. I should also think that the Mental Hospital may require a sum similar to that of the General Hospital; but if they do not ask for it, by all means do not give them. The smaller the sum is, the more often will they have to visit the Audit Department, show their books and get new advances.

This is a slight departure; but I see the reason for it. With today's book-keeping methods it is necessary, and it will facilitate small purchases which are unavoidable. I hope, however, no attempt will be

made at any time, to do anything with miscellaneous or unforeseen purchases in these cash accounts. Any attempts to do that should be drawn to the attention of the right quarters immediately.

3.35 p.m.

Mr. LEWIS: Mr. Chairman,—The first thing I would like to point out is, that this is not a Resolution which the House go into Committee of Supply on. You are not voting one red cent. All this money has been voted already.

This is an abstract Resolution: and not even; that; it is merely a Resolution that the House would authorise an advance against items in the Estimates to certain Departments. It is a method which is already in practice, legally or illegally, in the various departments. So, Mr. Chairman, this matter is really out of order in this Committee stage. I hope, Sir, it will not form part of the conglomerate motion when these Resolutions are agreed to, because it should be agreed to separately, and by the House alone.

I would just like to say if you allow it to continue that I am very glad to hear what the Hon. Minister had to say on it. I am very pleased to know that this is a recommendation coming from our Auditor General; because I would hate to think that some Methods and Organisation Adviser had come here, and the Government had accepted a recommendation which he made and had foisted it on the Auditor General. I am very glad to know that this is a recommendation of his own. The Government seems to be perfectly willing to allow an Englishman to come here and whatever he tells them, they are willing to swallow it hook line and sinker. The only time that you get any mention of the Auditor General in this Resolution is in a very doubtful manner, down at the bottom about these imprest books, cash books etc. That is entirely wrong, if it means what I think it means. These cash books should be set up for the Accountant General. He is the person who should say what cash books should be kept, and the heads which should be in them. These Cash books should be checked by the Auditor General, and the Auditor General only. The day that the Accountant General attempts to check items in a cash book of any department, he is going outside of his job; he is entirely wrong. I am going to warn that it is not in the terms of employment of the Accountant General to check cash books. He has to set up a system of book-keeping; and he has no right to go into a department to check anything. Not a drop of ink from his pen should be put inside of any book; it should not even drop out of his pen.

I hope that the Government is going to carry out these things. It has been told them often and often in here, especially when they came for travelling allowance for the Accountant General. I remember very well, a former Accountant General undertook to go to Seawell Airport to check cash there, and you, Mr. Chairman, know what happened. Let the Accountant General set up your system of book-keeping and let your Auditor General check the accounts and the cash. I hope I will never hear that the Accountant General has gone to other departments to check cash; it does not concern him. If the system he sets up does not meet the requirements, then the Auditor General should say so.

As I have said, I think this is a very necessary Resolution, and I am very glad that the maximum is not more than \$250. This sum is fixed for a department which is really in contact with hucksters and hawkers—I mean the General Hospital. I suppose the Mental Hospital will soon be having more patients than the General Hospital, so that will also be another department which will need this

advance. Mr. Chairman, if you allow any more discussion on this Resolution in Committee,—(A VOICE: The Chairman cannot stop discussion on this Resolution now!) I think he can. However, Sir, I would like to know why it is that these Government departments need so much money for postage? (A VOICE: It is for postage overseas.) If it is for that, I am pleased to know.

If receipts are to be given for these amounts, I believe the Government will have to furnish these receipts. It is no use asking anybody who is selling something like vegetables to an institution to give you a bill and to go in for a lot of writing; because some of them—I mean the regular hawkers—will only be embarrassed. It may cause a lot of them to shun the institution and prevent the institution from getting some of the things it may need.

I too, would like to see that there are going to be regular checks. When a department has spent \$200, I expect that it will be able to take in the receipts and vouchers, so as to prove that the amount drawn under the Estimates has been accounted for, and that the particular department would be able to get reimbursed to that extent. They should not have to spend the entire \$250 before they can get more, because that would lead to so much confusion.

However, I must draw it to your attention, Mr. Chairman that this Resolution should not be passed in Committee of Supply; because it is not a Resolution for the voting of any sum of money from the Treasury. It is only a Resolution to be passed by this House to authorise something that has already been voted by the House. It is really expenditure which has not yet been incurred. I must say that this method is going to save a great deal of trouble to the people; and I commend it. If somebody get away with a few dollars, or even a hundred dollars, I do not think the system should be condemned for that. It is absolutely necessary in my opinion. As I see we are not passing this Resolution for any particular department; as there may be some departments which do not want it.

3.45 p.m.

Mr. F. L. WALCOTT: There is one point which I would like to make. I am not so happy about this change, although everybody seems to be happy about it. From the point of view of public convenience, you should relax a rigid rule. I have had a little experience in London, and I find that you do not get a voucher for a small amount so easily. I had an amount of 19s. to receive, and it did not come to me so easily. What worries me is this: in passing this Resolution, you are agreeing to part of the recommendations of Mr. Foster in his Report. The Government is not making any statement of policy to-day, as to what they are going to accept in this Report; or if they are accepting the Report as a whole. Mr. Foster has recommended the removal of the pre-audit from the Auditor General, and putting it in the hands of the Accountant General; and this is what Mr. Foster states in a footnote in his Report:

“Under Colonial Regulation No. 260, The Director of Audit shall not undertake any examination of accounts, partaking of the nature of pre-audit, which involves the acceptance by him of a responsibility which would preclude him from full criticism of any accounting transactions after they have been duly recorded in the account books of the colony.”

I am a little worried about this matter for this reason: for a long time now, Barbados has produced its Auditor General. In the past, it used to produce its Colonial Treasurer, and it has produced its Auditor General. I want to say this: I feel that in this island, you have enough people who are capable

of filling these posts; and Government accounts are comparatively simple transactions. There are not involved in any entanglements; and I feel that if you look through the whole island of Barbados where people are talking about a redundant population, and where you speak about secondary schools and of our having education second to none, it seems to me to be very strange, that you cannot find people with the ability and qualification to do these jobs. In some territories controlled by the Crown, you have a situation where the majority of posts are held by people from the United Kingdom.

I feel that in Barbados, when it comes to the position of either the Accountant General or the Auditor General, there are enough Barbadians with ability who can be appointed to these posts. If it is the Government's policy to remove the pre-audit system from the Auditor General and place it on the Accountant General, I would like to say that whatever system is adopted, an attempt should be made, for local candidates with the necessary qualifications, to be given the opportunity to fill these higher posts.

Mr. BARROW: Mr. Chairman,— The only point I would like to make about this Resolution, is this: I was quite surprised, when I came into the Committee, to find that hon. members were discussing a Resolution to authorise advances of not more than \$250 in any particular case being made on the warrant of the Governor-in-Executive Committee, to meet cash payments on account of Incidental Expenses and minor Miscellaneous Services. I do not see why we should go into Committee of Supply on a Resolution of this nature. I understand now that the hon. junior member for the City has already made that point. I do not think, that we should be befuddled by parliamentary procedure, and make ourselves look ridiculous in the eyes of the public, by considering resolutions of this kind in Committee of Supply. They are strong protagonists of the pre-audit system. I feel that the only reservations which I would have for a resolution of this kind, is that the amount which public officers are allowed to advance without bringing the matter to the Treasury, is only to the extent of \$250. I consider, that public officers are responsible persons; and therefore, I feel that it is almost an insult to suggest that a departmental accountant is not capable of manipulating in excess of \$250. I am very glad to see that this is being done, although it is being done at a late stage in our history. It is a miracle that it is being done now; when we see the bungling which goes on in administrative departments in this colony.

Mr. LEWIS: I did not comment on the post-audit and the pre-audit system; because the Hon. Minister of Social Services withdrew the addendum, when he said that the matter was not recommended by Mr. Foster, and that it was something which the Auditor General had done. I intended to do so, when I have the opportunity of discussing Mr. Foster's Report or anything connected with it. I would like to say, for the benefit of the hon. senior member for St. George that I take it, any person having control of Government funds, should have to enter a bond; and I take it that this \$250 is for small purchases, and that it has been found that this amount of \$250 will suffice in the case of the General Hospital; and if the minimum there is \$250, it should suffice for any other department.

3.55 p.m.

Hon. Dr. H. G. CUMMINS: Mr. Chairman,— There was a slight technical error in placing this Resolution under Committee of Supply. That was an oversight. But inasmuch as it will still have to be

passed in the House in the same way as an abstract Resolution, we may as well continue in this way with it. As far as the point made by the hon. junior member for St. Peter is concerned, he knows very well that it is the policy of the Government to bring certain heads of departments out here on contract, so as to bring the departments up-to-date. After that is done, we will revert to the previous order.

A case in point is, the Comptroller of Customs. Since his term of office has expired, he left the island. A local man has been employed in his place. That is the policy of the Government; and I am sure it will continue.

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

SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES (CURRENT) NO. 20

Head iii—Accountant General

Printing Machinery

Hon. Dr. H. G. CUMMINS: Mr. Chairman,— The next Resolution is for \$5,775. The first Head, Head 3, Accountant General, is for \$4,000 to purchase machinery to do some printing as far as the Auditor General and the Accountant General's offices are concerned, in connection with payment of pensions. The slips will carry the name of the pensioner, his address, pension number, pension rates, bonus, Cost of Living allowance, and the total amount payable. It is considered, that this will be a short cut on the present system; and will save considerably, as far as the printing of these pension claims, interest cheques, and other things which these offices deal with, are concerned. It is one of the recommendations of Mr. Foster. As you have seen from the Addendum, the estimate of approximate cost is as follows:—

Electric Printing Machine	\$2,400
Embossing Machine	1,000
2,000 Blank Plates at \$80 per 1,000 ..	160
Cabinet to hold Plates	150
	\$3,710

Making allowance for a rise in cost, under Incidentals the Government is asking for \$4,000.

I beg to move sir, that Head III stand part.

Hon. M. E. COX: I beg to second that.

Mr. LEWIS: Mr. Chairman,— In the first place, this is really putting into effect, perhaps in a minor way, Mr. Foster's recommendation. I feel, sir, when we are dealing with matters connected with the Treasury, it must be remembered, that this House up to very recently, reserved the right to appoint the storekeeper and Colonial Treasurer of the island. We have a responsibility to the people for the safe keeping and judicious spending of their taxes. While this may not be directly connected with the spending of money, and may be merely a convenience for paying it out, too convenient a way of paying out money, may be an easy way of losing it.

I assume that Mr. Foster's Report has been laid in this House. I got a copy while the House was prorogued; and I have not referred to the Minutes to see exactly when the Report was laid. I think however, the Government would be doing itself credit, and showing a disposition to accept such responsibility towards others, if Government had instituted some form of debate on Mr. Foster's recommendations. After all, this House voted money to pay for Mr. Foster's survey; and to come piece meal, and

say this, (because they have had to admit to-day that the wording in this Addendum was in the Addendum of the last Resolution, but was withdrawn), is not the correct way of doing things. Mr. Foster's Report should be discussed in the House; and the House could appoint a select committee to meet and take evidence from persons like the Auditor General and the Accountant General. That committee should visit those offices, and see exactly what is being done for themselves. They would not have to make a survey; but if the committee were composed of intelligent men and women, in a very short time, they could familiarise themselves with the situation by seeing the actual books and methods, and be able to say whether this should be done.

If for 300 years we have been doing this thing in the present manner, is it necessary to implement these little suggestions before you have the Report discussed? The Opposition and the other representatives of the people should have an opportunity of hearing what the Government thinks of the Report; and the Government should let them know that Government will be guided by any criticisms which they may make. We may act in a piecemeal fashion in introducing this mechanical equipment, and finding ourselves, as the hon. junior member for St. Peter has said, with a system which automatically puts us in the hands of some Audit Department somewhere else, who are likely to tell us that it is necessary for them to send out their man to get things going. The Government will then not only have given up the right to appoint the Accountant General, but they will find that they will have to pass some Resolution to get rid of one, if they did not like him.

Some of these things are definitely improvements. Embossing machines are already in use, in at least one department of Government. So there is little to fear from that. We should first have the Report discussed however, so as to find out what the House is willing to accept or to reject. Would it not be a good gesture on the part of the Government to find that out? And could not these things wait for a month or two longer?

4.05 p.m.

The Government should not have the sole right of rejecting some of the Report and adopting some parts of it. I cannot commend Government for this attitude; because, it savours of gross disregard for the people's representatives. The members of the Government are not solely in charge of the Treasury. When it comes to money, they cannot decide among themselves to take it out of the Treasury. I cannot commend this vote coming down, unless the Report as a whole is debated. As I have said, I do not even know if the Report of Mr. Foster was laid in this House. I know I have received a copy of it; but not in this House, as far as my memory serves me.

This is the first recommendation you have implemented from that Report; and you have not asked this House to express an opinion on the Report. This is to express one single opinion on the Report. This is a department which rightly concerns the House. I think, this is a Department which the Government should not tamper with; unless it gets the sanction of the House. This can never be a case of the Government's policy. It is definitely a system of dealing with the people's taxes directly; and I think, the Government should welcome an expression of opinion by the House. The Five Year Plan was one of Government's policy, yet, it was put to the House. This is something where you are tampering with the department, and the Government has said that it is not going to meddle in the actual administrative duties of an officer. If the Government is dealing with money coming out of the Treasury, no matter

how remote it is, the people's representatives should have the opportunity of expressing an opinion on the matter, and the Report as a whole.

Mr. GODDARD: Mr. Chairman,—In the face of not from the addendum, this appears to be a saving; and I think you could have written the Addendum in such a way, as to explain whether it was a saving. You could have stated how much you expect to save by this change over. A comparison should have been drawn, so that we would know what this investment would cause you to save.

I agree with the previous speaker, when he questioned the Government picking out things piecemeal from Mr. Foster's Report. Is the Government going to pick out things piecemeal from Mr. Foster's Report and come down here periodically, and say, this is something from Mr. Foster's Report which we have agreed to in principle?

To get back to the Addendum to the Resolution. Why could not Government set out more clearly, what is the actual saving by this investment? Undoubtedly, it looks like a saving, but Government does not tell you how much it is. There may be many things which Mr. Foster must have recommended, and perhaps, he might have stated those things which should be given priority. Is this one?

The question that Head III stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

Head xx—Education

Fences For Harrison College And Combermere School

Head 20,—Education was called.

Hon. Dr. H. G. CUMMINS: I beg to move that Head XX stand part of the Resolution.

Hon. M. E. COX: I beg to second that.

Mr. BARROW: Mr. Chairman,—As regards this amount of \$1,575 for the fencing around of the two schools, Harrison College and Combermere, I am sure that hon. members like myself, would like to know, whether this is going to be a wire fence, or a flower fence, or whether it is going to be a fence out of brick wall or coral stone. I wish to say that I would be opposed to any idea of putting up a wall fence around either of the two schools. We have the unfortunate experience, of Government spending more money on building wall fences, than on the buildings themselves. At present, a wall fence is in the course of erection aback of the Police Magistrates' Court; and for what purpose, I do not know. It would be of no earthly use to the island. To erect this wall, they had to spend a lot of money on foundations. The employment which it provides is of a temporary nature, and once it is over, the employment which it provided, would be of no further use to the workmen or the taxpayers.

4.15 p.m.

I may be speaking somewhat hypothetically; I have to put the different premises before the members of the House. If you are erecting a wall at Weymouth, it has been my experience that the foundation there is very uncertain, as witnessed by the collapse of Combermere School on more than one occasion, and the collapse of the wall at Queen's Park on another occasion. I certainly would like to see a beautiful boundary of casuarina trees around the playing fields of Combermere and Harrison College; but after all, in Barbados which is nothing more than a concentration camp, because our people cannot get out anywhere, we want to keep the lesser breeds within the law; we do not want elementary boys to stroll across the grounds of Harrison College and Combermere. When I was at an Elementary School, nobody could keep me out of Harrison Col-

lege or Combermere. I went there with my cabbage bat and ball, whenever I felt like going there. We do not hold any exhibitions in Harrison College. It is not a private school; and it is true, we would not want people to be walking in and out of the class-rooms, when classes are in progress. However, it never happens, because Barbados is much too law abiding, I do not see any harm in boys pitching marbles, or children from the Halls Road area, on Sunday mornings or Sunday afternoons, who may want to use the spacious grounds which exist at Weymouth, using those grounds. The whole of Weymouth belongs to the people of Barbados; and I do not see why we should be erecting barriers so as to keep out the populace from these grounds. If we allowed young children from the surrounding districts to have free access to the grounds of Harrison College and Combermere School when those grounds are not being used by the respective schools, the children themselves would look up to those institutions, and would aspire to being vital representatives of those institution, when they get older. I am fully qualified to speak on this matter, in view of the fact, that I used to live next door to the two schools. No one could keep me out, because there were no playing fields as accessible as Harrison College; and that was my rendezvous from the age of eight years upwards, until I entered Harrison College at the age of 13. People probably suffered after I entered Harrison College; but not before. I am opposed to Barbadians sinking money in walls, when the money could be profitably spent. If the honourable Minister could convince honourable members of this House, that it is absolutely necessary for the preservation of Government property, and not for snob values, then I say that there is some justification for the proposal. I do not see any justification, in building a wall from Baxters Road to the Police Magistrate Courts. I recommend a mixture of trees, which will improve the appearance of the school grounds. Perhaps, my fears are ill-founded; perhaps the money I am asked to vote will be spent on getting seedlings from the Agriculture Department for improving the grounds. However, I would like some assurance from the Minister of Social Services, that this money will not be spent in putting up any stone walls around these two schools.

Mr. CRAWFORD: None of us will deny that under all circumstances, and at all times, law and order should prevail. It should be the endeavour of all right thinking persons, to reserve a certain amount of decorum under all conditions. I say that, in order to say this: there should be more or less, general agreement with the proposals to provide some sort of fencing around Harrison College and Combermere; but there is no doubt about it, that the remarks of the honourable introducer of this Resolution in connection with this matter, appeared at least to be undemocratic in spirit. In his time, he will remember that the old Combermere School was an open sesame; both the second and third elevens were open pastures, to which both the children of the School and the public had admittance at all times. Within recent years an expensive and an insurmountable wall has been erected around these pastures; and the grounds have become private grounds. If one admits that in a school for girls there is some justification for all this privacy, and complete exclusion of the mob, shall we say, it does not necessarily follow that at a boys' school, the same prison-like wall should surround the entire playing fields. Playing fields in the urban areas of Bridgetown are conspicuous by their absence; and it is only in recent times that they have been few additions. No one will claim that the community in

Bridgetown is absolutely served with fields for recreational purposes.
4.25 p.m.

No one is going to go so far as to say that the entire youth of the area adjacent to Harrison College, should at all times, and in all seasons, utilize the grounds of the College and the Combermere School. On the other hand, there is some justification for the argument advanced by the hon. senior member for St. George, that there is nothing to be gained by undergoing expenditure of erecting a solid brick wall around these two areas. It is not that one condones radicalism in the extreme; but to provide some comparison between democracy in other places, and the sort of democracy as envisaged in the speech of the Hon. Minister of Social Services, I was forced to recollect a scene which I witnessed the other day in the neighbouring colony of Gaudeloupe. At a State function there, which the Governor held for a number of important people visiting the colony, (the function was held at Government House) at midnight, to my intense surprise, all the butlers, waiters and chauffeurs came into the Ball-room and danced with each other. I myself witnessed an incident of two waiters, one male and the other female, advancing on guests with laden trays; and then because the music was to their peculiar fancy, they put the trays in the window, and immediately started to dance. Well, that may be the French way of doing things; but even if that sort of behaviour is absolutely beyond our wildest imagination in Barbados, there is still a terrific gap between that and the implied snobbery of the Hon. Minister of Social Services that he sort of abhorred the idea of the proletarian barbers of Roebuck Street soiling the holy grounds of Harrison College on a Sunday, by going there and performing their tonsorial jobs.

I do not know, sir, if the hon. Minister has any real objections to a wayside barber, on a placid Sunday afternoon, going under a tree in the Harrison College grounds and enjoying the shade, and during which time, he proceeds to cut the hair of a customer. It is not as if they were a boisterous and rowdy law-breaking crowd, composed of every barber in Bridgetown, going up to Harrison College every Sunday afternoon to cut hair; or if every little boy and girl from Hindsbury Road and Roebuck street would descend on the College eleven at three o'clock on Sunday afternoons, and push the College boys off when they want to play cricket. I doubt if they would do it even on a Saturday, when the elevens were not being used.

I repeat, sir, there can be no objection to having an ornamental fence around the grounds; but I see no reason for having a solid wall, which apparently is what it is proposed to erect. I support the suggestion of the previous speaker, that no harm can be done; and the purpose of this Resolution can be achieved, if some sort of light fence, preferably a fencing of trees were established, rather than the prison-like wall which now serves the grounds of Queens College, including the old Combermere property.

Mr. MILLER: Mr. Chairman,—I think it is very apparent, the Government is not thinking in terms of the type of wall mentioned by the previous speakers. The money that we are asked to vote, \$1,575, certainly could not be enough for the foundation of the wall. It would appear to me therefore, the Government is thinking in terms of a fence. I am not in favour of a fence which will keep out those who are using these grounds, when they are not being used by the School. I am wondering whether Government is aware of the fact, that more

often than not, fences of this type are constructed of barbed wire, which is very dangerous. I would like the hon. Minister to say, if he has any information in the file as to the type of material which will be used for this fencing. I will vote against the Resolution if there is any question of using barbed wire; since it is unlikely from the amount of money here, they will build a solid wall. I have no doubt, the Minister will have something on it in the file, and will be able to say whether they will use barbed wire, or the B.R.C. fabric, or a similar type of material.

Mr. LEWIS: I would like to enquire from the Hon. Minister, whether Combermere School is being fenced off from Harrison College. It seems to me, you are securing the area, rather than separating the two but I would like that verified.

Hon. Dr. H. G. CUMMINS: I really thought, the honourable junior member for Christ Church would have answered some of the questions which have been asked. He is a member of the Governing Body of Harrison College; but perhaps, he does not attend meetings with much regularity. Now, sir, there are some things too stupid to answer. I am sorry that the honourable senior member for St. Philip indulged in such a fantastic talk about Sunday afternoon barbers; and I was surprised to see the honourable junior member for St. George fell into the trap. He is a builder, and should know you could not construct a wall with the money set out here.

Mr. MILLER: If the hon. Minister would give way a bit, I would say, that he was apparently not listening when I was speaking or perhaps on this occasion, my honourable friend and party colleague, did not understand what I said. What I said was, indications were from the amount of money involved, the Government proposed to build a fence and not a wall. My only fear was, the Government might be planning to use barbed wire, which is dangerous both to children and adults. I simply asked the hon. Minister to be kind enough to say what type of material would be used; and I said, if it is barbed wire, I will vote against it.

4.35 p.m.

Hon. Dr. CUMMINS: I am sorry that I misunderstood the honourable member. Certainly sir, the honourable senior member for St. Philip, an experienced man as he is, a man with an estate, could not imagine that a wall could be built for \$1,575.

Nobody can build a wall for that amount nowadays. As the honourable junior member for St. George said, that amount would hardly pay for the building of foundations around the grounds of Harrison College; and that can be gauged from the recent experience with the building of Combermere School.

Sir, I am told here, the Governing Body on the 31st May, wrote that they were very much concerned over people trespassing on the grounds of Harrison College; and because of the bad behaviour. On one occasion, the Headmaster had to ask the Commissioner of Police for assistance; and it was decided, that where no walls existed, the property should be surrounded by a chain linked fence, at least 6 feet high and at the top of the fence there should be a barbed wire. It was recommended, there should be a chain linked fence around these schools, before any action could be taken. Those are the facts I have before me. I think it is quite plain, no wall fence would be put up; and that the enclosure will be a barbed wire fence.

Mr. GODDARD: The only reason why I rise, is to ask you a question. Like His Honour the Speaker, I am a member of the Harrison College Governing Body. It was drawn to our attention by the Headmaster of that school, that there were frequent trespassers through the main gate and passing the Library, and he could not stop the trespassers. He sought the assistance of the Commissioner of Police, and it was his recommendation that some fence should be put up first; and then he would be able to help. I remember too, on the last occasion of the old boys cricket match, one person in particular gave some trouble, and nobody could do anything about it. As I have said, many of these people create a trespass by passing through the main gate of Harrison College for a near cut on their way home; and they refuse to stop or turn back, when asked to do so. Mr. Chairman, you know what Barbadians give. It was suggested to us, that a wire fence should be put up; and I think it was the recommendation of the Commissioner of Police. I realise, that it will be the most suitable fence. I understand, it was the intention of the Governing Body of Combermere School to enclose that school as well.

Mr. BARROW: Mr. Chairman,—My only observation on this Resolution, was for the purpose of illiciting the information from the Hon. Minister of Social Services which we now have been given, that a wall was not going to be put up. In view of the fact that there was no reference as to what the proposed enclosure would be, I do not see, how anyone could come to the conclusion that, \$1,575 would not be enough. I just want to make it quite clear, that I would not have approved of any wall around Harrison College; or of any wall other than for the purpose of supporting a roof. I hope, members of this House who are members of the Governing Bodies of these Schools, would use their influence to see, that trees are planted in addition to the fence; because, I think, it will greatly enhance the appearance of those grounds.

Mr. MILLER: Mr. Chairman,—My remarks are confined to the Hon. Minister of Social Services. These remarks are with regard to the putting of a barbed wire fence around these schools. From the information he gave, it appears that this fence would be of barbed wire; but I think it is unnecessary. Boys will have some reason to go over the fence at some time or the other; either for retrieving a ball, or for something else. If you are putting barbed wire at a 40 degree angle at the top of this fence, it cannot stop a boy from climbing it, but it would prove a hazard. If you are putting up a fence to stop people from trespassing, I do not think you need to put up a barbed wire fence. As a matter of fact, no barbed wire fence should be put around any school for boys and girls. I think the practice is outlawed in England.

Mr. LEWIS: Mr. Chairman,—Since we have heard what the honourable junior member for Christ Church said, I think someone should place on record, that we were under a misapprehension as to the reason for this fencing. I thought the fencing was to enclose the compound; but it appears, as if people used these schools' playing fields, for the purpose of getting from one district to the other. I do not know, if these fences are to serve for both purposes,—to fence in the compounds and the playing fields, and to prevent people from trespassing.

The question that Head XX do now stand part of the Resolution was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

4.45 p.m.

Head XL—Waterworks

Debt Collector for Department

Head XL—Water Works, was called.

Hon. Dr. CUMMINS: I beg to move that Head XL stand part of the Schedule. This is a new Item; and the amount asked for, is for the purpose of collecting some outstanding accounts at the Water Works Department. The Note to this Item says this:—

"It is estimated that an amount of \$200 to meet this service will be required for the remainder of the financial year. All outstanding arrears collected by the Debt Collector will be paid into the Treasury."

The Note sets out the position fully. In other words, the Debt Collector will not get any Commission through the debts he collects. The money will be paid into the Treasury, and this amount is for the purpose of paying him his commission.

I beg to move that this Head stand part.

Hon. M. E. COX: I beg to second that motion.

Mr. E. D. MOTTLEY: I may be one of those included, among those from whom this debt is to be collected; and I cannot plead guilt or innocence now. I should like to ask this question: is this money really in connection with water rates, or with plumbing expenses? If it is for water rates, the remedy is to collect the debt by just cutting off the water; and the people will pay immediately. The only way people will not pay their debts, is if they do not owe the money. On the other hand, if the money is for plumbing expenses, I am wondering if you should come for this \$200. If you are doing so, you will have to collect debts in another department.

I should like to pay this tribute to the Water Works Department. I have visited the department, and I must say, it is run very much better than it has ever been run. I recall, on previous occasions, if you lost your Water Works bill, and went to the department and said, "I have not paid my water rate, will you please look it up and tell me what the amount is," it took about three or four weeks in order to discover if you really paid, or what was the number of the bill. To-day, I am very pleased to say that within ten minutes, you can find out what the position is. I commend the office for that; but here you will always have people owing money, I am wondering if it is the best policy for the Government to engage the services of a Debt Collector. I think, Government should employ a junior in the office to do this work. It seems to me, if this money is to be collected and then paid into the Treasury, and then this \$200 has to be paid back out, that is not the best policy. I suggest, (you have many youngsters about; and since I understand that this office is always under-staffed, since if a youngster is trained to do the work, he is then removed to some other office,) a junior should be placed in this office, and a part of his duty would be to look after the collection of these debts. The Note to this item says this: "It is considered that the Government should engage the services of a debt collector to collect outstanding accounts of the Water Works Department, and that he should be paid on a percentage basis."

Earlier, the Note says this: "From time to time, approval has to be obtained to write off from the books of the Water Works Departments certain debts which have remained uncollected over a period of years. All efforts are made to collect such debts; but in some cases this has proved impossible as many of the debtors are deceased or have left the Island or cannot be found."

No one would object to the voting of this amount; but I suggest to the Minister of Communi-

cations, that while the Office has improved quite a lot, (rather than put any Debt Collector there, I envisage that you will run in trouble; it would possibly take somebody to collect this money from the Debt Collector;) (Laughter) I suggest strongly, it is a wrong policy, no matter who has suggested it. Will the Minister of Communications tell me, if at any time, they have asked for another clerk in this office, and that it has been represented, with another clerk, this work will be done? I say, in the interest of the public generally, it is not the best thing to have a Debt Collector to collect these debts. What will happen in the Income Tax Department? I certainly would not object to collecting the debts at this department! Are you going to do the same thing there? I am not pledging myself that I will vote either for or against this Item; but I ask the Hon. Minister of Communications to answer the questions which I have asked; and to say, whether in the interest of the community, it would not be better to engage the services of another cadet and let him be the man responsible for looking after these debts. I understand this Department is under-staffed; and you will find, there has always been this amount to be collected, because nobody attended the matter. I do not think that this House should seriously consider appointing a Debt Collector for this Department. You will also have to do a similar thing in the Income Tax Department.

4.55 p.m.

Hon. M. E. COX: Mr. Chairman,—To answer the last question first. I do not think it would be better for the Government to employ another clerk to do this work. I am surprised to hear the honourable member for the City say, the Department is under-staffed. I am sure, as far as I have been able to gather or ascertain, the Chief Engineer has not asked for any additional staff in recent days; since the re-organization of the various departments, which took place a year or two ago. The nature of this set up, would make it more than difficult, for a clerk to do this work. The outstanding amounts are made up of meter rent, plumbing, and also water rates. Sometimes people live in a house, and they move from that house without paying the rates which are due, say at the end of a quarter; although it is true, these rates are supposed to be paid in advance. It would be difficult for a clerk to chase down these individuals and find out where they live, and to get the amounts from them.

As I said, sir, as far as plumbing is concerned, honourable members know that while a service can be cut off for non-payment of rates, it cannot be cut off for a non-payment for plumbing or other expenses. That creates a difficult problem. After careful consideration, the Government has come to the conclusion, on the recommendation of the Chief Engineer, that some money could be collected from some of the defaulters, by putting a Debt Collector behind them. More often than not, people pay Debt Collectors better than they would pay someone else like a clerk.

I agree with the honourable member when he says that sometimes you have to put a Debt Collector in court, so as to try to recover from him. Let us hope, that we will find one with a better principle than that. Let us hope that the one to be employed in the collection of this money, will be one of some character and reliability, as far as the paying in of the dues collected, is concerned.

Mr. E. D. MOTTLEY: I would like the honourable Minister to answer another question. Following on his explanation, and referring to what the Honourable Leader of the House has said, the hon-

ourable Minister must be in a position to tell us what is the approximate amount due. The Leader of the House said that there is no question of commission; so if this is the sum you have agreed upon to pay, there must be some indication of the amount you are to collect.

Mr. BARROW: Mr. Chairman,—Before the hon. Minister replies, I would like to say, I have been making some small calculations in my own poor arithmetic. I would also point out that from my experience, (and the honourable senior member for the City can corroborate me in this,) Debt Collectors usually work on the basis of 20 per cent commission. Therefore, if you are going to pay out \$200.00, on the normal basis of calculation, the debts outstanding cannot be more than about \$1,000. That is from my experience in the courts.

I also notice from the Addendum, some of these debtors are either dead, out of the island, or cannot be found. What is the use of paying a Debt Collector to collect from a man who is dead, or out of the jurisdiction of the court, or one who cannot be found? The honourable senior member for St. Michael who introduced this Resolution also suggested, if a clerk were given the job of collecting these debts, the clerk would have to find out where these people may be residing, (whether at the Westbury Cemetery or elsewhere) and a lot of time would be wasted in that way. I would like to tell the honourable Minister, that a Debt Collector would have no authority to produce in court, the books of the Water Works Department. The Clerk would therefore have to appear in court, and give the Debt Collector information anyhow; and if the amount of the debt is disputed, the clerk would have to produce the books in court. To say that a clerk would not have the time or skill to do this job, seems to me a most inadequate explanation of the amount which we are asked to vote.

Another point which I would like to make, is this: the Debt Collector himself does not always bother about finding the person who owes the debt. That is the duty of the writserver. A Debt Collector normally serves a summons on the last known place of abode of the debtor. If the debtor cannot be found at that place, the summons is usually left there; or if the writserver has information that the debtor lives at another place, he goes in pursuit of his quarry and tries to run him to earth. Therefore, we already have the machinery in existence at the expense of the taxpayers, whereby these people can be located if necessary.

Now, I do not think that if these debts have been outstanding for such a long time, and if the amount is as it should be, in the vicinity of \$1,000, it is really worthwhile to employ a Debt Collector. I am not saying that we should abandon all hopes of recovering it; but I do not think that it is worthwhile to employ a Debt Collector, just to get information that one of the clerks of the Waterworks Department could get, especially bearing in mind that the clerk would have to appear in court. Why therefore pay a debt collector, to collect this \$1,000.

It is a penny wise and a pound foolish; for this reason: we have given the Chief Engineer \$200.00 a month more than he was already getting, making him one of the most highly paid officers in the Government of Barbados. He now gets over a thousand dollars a month, and the work which is being done now by that Department, is no longer work of a technical nature. The real research work was done by the British Union Oil Company under the direction of Dr. Senn, who got no thanks or reward from the Barbados Government for going

down into over 90 wells, and catching a fatal disease to which he succumbed. Now his wife and children are living in chill penury in Switzerland, and we are paying the Chief Engineer this amount to watch the Key Scale workers digging trenches. The work which is being done by that Department now, is mainly of a maintenance nature, and the laying down of new mains. I think that my colleague and the honourable senior member for the City will agree with me on that, because they have spoken on the matter before.

We cannot afford to pay the Chief Engineer a thousand dollars a month to do work which a foreman could do. We have some good foremen at the Water Works Department; men with a lot of experience. Some of them have worked in the Canal Zone when the Panama Canal was being built, and some have worked for many years in British Guiana extending mains etc. I do not think we need a Chief Engineer at all; without casting any aspirations on the present gentleman.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I do not see the Chief Engineer mentioned in this Resolution.

Mr. BARROW: If we could pay a Debt Collector to recover the thousand dollars a month that we are paying to the Chief Engineer, the Debt Collector would be doing the Government a perpetual service. As I have said, sir, Debt Collectors usually work on a 20 per cent basis. If we got one to work on a 10 per cent basis, he would be a more magnanimous collector than I have had the privilege to meet as yet. From what is written in the Addendum, and from what we have heard from the honourable Minister, this Resolution may well turn out to be a waste of the taxpayers' money.

5.05 p.m.

Hon. M. E. COX: Mr. Chairman,—This amount is approximately \$1,200; and the hon. senior member for St. George has attempted to reduce this thing to an absurdity. This is how the Addendum reads: "All efforts are made to collect such debts, but in some cases this has proved impossible as many of the debtors are deceased or have left the Island or cannot be found."

I have never suggested, that the hon. junior member for the City said, any clerk at the Water Works Department should not collect the money. I said, a clerk at that Department, did not have the time to trace down people who had left their places of abode. In addition, everybody who have debts to collect, would know the technique employed by Debt Collectors; so they would know that before a Debt Collector puts any one in court, he goes to the person and says, "I have a debt to collect for Mr. A or Mr. B., how much would you arrange with me to pay per month, or per week." If the person agrees to pay, the Debt Collector would agree almost in all cases to the suggestion; and there is no question of court at all. Another thing: a clerk at the Water Works Department would only be called into court to produce the books in the case where the debt was disputed, so as to prove that the individual owes the amount to the Water Works Department; but after these books are produced and judgment is entered, then the collecting by the Debt Collector starts. I would like to say that no clerk in the service can follow up a debtor with a judgement summons, or with executions running from year to year. This is work for a man who is trained in that sort of thing, and who has the time to do it. This is not work for a clerk.

Dealing with the question of bad debts, any member would know that in such cases, those debts were written off. Before I sit, I merely want to say, that when it comes to the question of the work of the

Chief Engineer, I am sure that every member of this House and this community, appreciates the very good work which this gentleman has done since he came to this Island. For anyone to say that he is only running around looking at Key Scale workers digging trenches and putting down mains, is very very uncharitable. With the greatest respect to you, Mr. Chairman, I do not think the Chief Engineer had any right to be drawn into this matter at all.

Again I will say, the collecting of bad debts is a normal course which is employed by private enterprise, as a matter of convenience, because they realise that the matter could better be done by a Debt Collector; and because they cannot find the time for clerks to do this work. Sir, if you had to pay a clerk \$100 or \$150 to run behind people who owed money to collect it for the Department, you will probably pay him more than you collect.

Mr. LEWIS: Mr. Chairman,— I do not think anybody would suggest that you should take a clerk to do this job, unless it was a wholetime job. It seems to me that all the Hon. Minister of Communications says is that a Debt Collector tries to collect a debt and in the vast number of cases he has to prosecute. After he has put somebody in court what has he to do? The courts belong to the Government, as well as the Water Works, and the courts are next door to the Water Works; so the Water Works Department will only have to send somebody next door to collect the money. It means that the Writ Servers and the officers of the Court would have the collecting to do.

You say that you can only lock off water from premises, if the person has not paid his water rates; well, change the law, and make it that you can lock off the water from any service which owes any money to the Department. I cannot for the life of me, see how Government can foster a Debt Collector.

The next thing is this: whenever there is a debt to be collected by a Debt Collector, you will have to send along a clerk to prove liability; if that is so, in short, he is your Debt Collector. If you are going to employ a Debt Collector who has other debts to collect for other people, is he going to give Government debts priority? Are you going to authorise this man to give receipts on behalf of the Water Works?

This does seem to me to be a small amount for the Waterworks Department to collect, in the manner stated. I feel it is something which can be written off. If as has been stated, many of the people who owe this money have left the island, or their place of abode, and you cannot find them. Do you think that a Debt Collector would find them?

5.15 p.m.
Hon. M. E. COX: If the Debt Collector does not collect any money, he is not paid his salary on the lump sum. If he does not collect any money, he does not receive anything.

Mr. LEWIS: If the Debt Collector says that he can put somebody in Court for money, you will let him do that. As soon as you agree with a man to collect the debts, you will have to pay him for it. (Hon. M. E. COX: Not at all). That is what somebody has said. I am not pretending to be an authority on this matter. I am saying that if this amount is only \$1,200, and they suspect that some of these people are dead, or that they have left the island, is it really that some of the people whom they suspect to have died, are included in these debts? I must say, that you would probably find yourself in more trouble in working things in this way. I think that all you need to do is to shut off the water. If you act quickly, or rather if you allow one quarter to go unpaid and shut off the water,

you ought to know if the person who owes the debt has died or has left the Island. I say, let the law be amended. I am going to move that the amount of this item be deleted. You are really now admitting, that the people who owe these debts are there; you have refused the process of the Court, and you are now asking somebody to collect these debts. If he collects them through the Court, you will still have to pay him.

Hon. M. E. COX: If Mr. A. rents a house and pays so much a quarter for the water rate, but before the rate for the quarter is collected Mr. "B" rents the house, how can you prosecute Mr. "B" for the water rate? There is no logic in what the hon. member has said.

Mr. LEWIS: You have to pay for turning back on the water; and therefore somebody will have to pay, if he wanted the water to be turned back on. You talk about amending the law, but you do not know what you are doing. Outside of Barbados this thing does not happen, because the people outside have sense. Outside of Barbados, the owner of the House is responsible for the water rates he puts the house at a certain rental, which includes the water rate. But you are trying to collect a debt from somebody who can move; the man who rents the house should not be responsible for that. It is the owner of the property who should be responsible for the water rates. If you choose to rent a house and pay the water rate, that is another matter. I say, you should attach these things to the owner of the house, and get rid of the idea of the Government appointing a Debt Collector to collect these debts. I think that they have certainly done a good job to have only the amount of \$1,200 outstanding. I think that you should apply what ability you have to an amendment of the law, so that the property owner will be the man whom you can get at all the time. The day you do that, you will make it easier for people to rent houses and pay their rates, and everything else. I regret that the Government thinks that what they have proposed, is the easiest way to hunt down these people in order to collect the water rates I now beg to move that this item be deleted.

Hon. Dr. H. G. CUMMINS: Let us remain in Barbados. As far as we are concerned, we know that what the hon. member has said is not the custom; the custom is that whoever occupies the house, pays the water rate. These amounts which are due, are due by people who are in a position to pay; the dead are excluded from this. What is explained in the note is, some of this money is owing by people who are dead; but there are others who are alive, and who can pay. As the law stands at present, if you do not pay your water rate, and you are still occupying the house, the water is cut off until the rate is paid. The hon. junior member for the City says that the service should be paid for before it is turned back on; but it is quite unfair to a man who goes into a house for the first time, to have to pay another man's water rate.

The honourable member has suggested that someone should pay it. If you cannot find the man who has just moved out, who is to pay it? (Mr. LEWIS: The owner of the house). I did not know, that was the law. (Mr. LEWIS: I am saying change the law). We know that the law is to be changed. There are none so blind as those who will not see. It is only when the Debt Collector brings the money to the Water Works, that he will be paid. We will only pay him when the money outstanding is collected. I think that that is as clear as a pikestaff.

5.25 p.m.
Mr. BARROW: I do not want to prolong this debate unnecessarily. I do not have much to add to

what I have said before. The Hon. Minister of Social Services said, the amount outstanding was \$1,200. We presume, some of this is not recoverable. Therefore, the Debt Collector would not bring to the island's revenue, the full \$1,200 which is outstanding. I am wondering whether since this represents a departure from the normal departmental procedure, whether we should at this stage of our constitutional development, for the paltry sum of \$1,200, all of which may not be collected, vote for a Resolution of this kind.

I would like to draw to the Minister's attention, the fact that far larger sums are collected by the Income Tax Department, without soliciting the aid of a Debt Collector or any other person; and that the Parochial Authorities employ one of their clerks from time to time, to go into court and collect far larger sums, without any additional cost to the Income tax Department or the Vestry, in the respective cases.

I am saying, if the Income Tax Department, without having a man specially selected for the purpose can sometimes collect \$30,000, \$40,000 or \$50,000 and amounts in that vicinity annually, and in addition the man carries out his other duties, and if a gentleman like Mr. Pilgrim from the Parochial Board of St. Michael—

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The honourable member will please stick to the Resolution.

Mr. BARROW: I can only do that by drawing analogies. I am only illustrating that this proposed expenditure is unjustified for a Government Department. If the Parochial Body can do it, and if the gentlemen in the Income Tax Department carry out their other duties efficiently, and still collect outstanding amounts for the Treasury consisting of far larger amounts than the amount involved according to information given at a late stage by the honourable Minister, I do not know. A Debt Collector is anathema to some taxpayers. We must be careful how we foist Debt Collectors on the taxpayers. In my opinion, water is one of the services which should be free. That is not to say, that I am inciting anyone not to pay their water rates. If by an oversight, one overlooks the payment of his water rates, cut off the water. If a debt is involved for other things like plumbing, a reminder or two from the Department will probably solve the matter. In those given cases in which it is found impossible, either by cajoling or by gentle persuasion to elicit the amounts which are due and owing, I think that it is a waste of time trying to collect.

To me, Sir, the whole thing has a bad odour. The taxpayers do not like this sort of thing; and they are the people who put us here.

Mr. E. D. MOTTLEY: Mr. Chairman,—There are one or two points which I would like to make. It is true, as my colleague has said, that in other countries rates are attached to the owner of the house. Now I am objecting to paying a Debt Collector to collect these amounts. I am not ashamed to say, Sir, that I have been on occasions sued by the Executive Committee (which is the Waterworks Department) for money due and owing, not for water rates. I believe, even now they can sue me. What is the position? Without having the file on this which the Hon. Minister has, I would risk to say, that where this money which you are trying to collect is concerned, very little is for water rates. The average person renting a house, realises that water is a service which he wants, and that if he does not pay for it, it will be cut off. If you rent a house at Jackson and you owe water rates, and do not pay them, the Department will take off the water. If you are the type of person who wants the water service

in your home, it means that if you rent a house somewhere else, it will most likely be a house with the water installed. When you apply to have the water turned on, the Department will see from their books that you owe money from the last house you were in, and they will not turn it on until you pay what is due.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Suppose you change your name?

Mr. E. D. MOTTLEY: You would have to belong to the Labour Party, to change your name. Speaking seriously, Sir, I would like to say, I am sure that the greater part of this money due is for plumbing. What is the custom? A man puts in the water service in a house; if he is an owner-tenant and a leak develops in a part of the service which is laid upon his grounds, and which is partly his property, it is the duty of the Water Works Department to save water as soon as they are notified of the leak. But the responsibility of paying for the plumbing is with the owner. That is how you get an accumulation of these debts.

Now if you are a tenant and not an owner, and anything goes wrong, you also draw it to the attention of the Water Works Department. If the owner is out of the island, or if he is the type of landlord who will rather tie a piece of string around the pipe than pay for the plumbing, it is the duty of the Department to save water; and many times the bill is not paid. This is nothing new. This \$1,200 must have been due over a period of several years. It is nothing to be ashamed of; it is a small amount. 5.35 p.m.

It may have happened since the Hon. Minister of Communications has taken office; I do not mean since he was responsible for the particular portfolio. Originally, every three months or so, the Department would go through its books with respect to those who owed for water rates and plumbing. Of this amount which is outstanding, I think a small percentage would be for water rates. As I was saying, the Department would go through its books, and if it were found that John Brown owes so much for water rates they would send and cut off the service; and before it could be put back on, the money would have to be paid. If you say here this amount outstanding is for water rates, then someone is guilty of not doing his work.

Now, sir, originally at the end of every three months, so long as the Department was properly staffed, a clerk would go through the books, and if he found, say service No. 321 the rates were outstanding, the Department would send the person a reminder. Sometimes they might telephone you; but if they didn't like you, they would cut it off. I remember well that I have been put in court several times because of accumulated Bills. That would happen to some persons; and I see nothing wrong in it either. I am of the opinion, this outstanding debt is for work done to the various services. It is peculiar that throughout the years, when another form of Government was in power, the Government then never thought of employing a Debt Collector to collect these debts. (A VOICE: Aha!) A Minister seems to be laughing at what I said; but I would say again, those who controlled the Water Works Department years gone by, did not look for a Debt Collector. (A VOICE: How many people had services?) A tremendous number.

However, sir, I do not think this principle is the right one. I feel what my colleague said is right. You merely have \$1,200 in bad and outstanding debts. In a business of the magnitude of the Water Works Department, and also taking into account that this amount must have been accumulated over a period of seven years, I do not think

this could be called a considerable sum. I must come to the conclusion that this amount must have accumulated over a period of not more than seven years. I may take this opportunity to draw to your attention the ramifications of the law if this amount would have to be collected. If it is over a period of seven years, say for a period of fifteen to twenty years, and you have to go to court, the debtor may call on you to produce the workmen who effected repairs. Will you be able to do that? Of course, if it is for that length of time, you may presume that the debtor is dead; but suppose you find him and you have to go to Court, and he denies liability, or suppose he asked you to produce the plumber, what will you tell him. I think if a house is rented out just like in other countries, and water is installed in that house, the owner of the house should be responsible for the service, and that will be the end of this matter.

What I am worried about is something which the hon. Minister has not told this House; and it is this: I hope that a substantial amount of this outstanding account is not for material credited to owners of services. I know the Water Works Department embarrasses business men in Bridgetown, by being able to supply customers with the fixtures for a service much cheaper than any business concern in Bridgetown. I think the cost of a service installed by the Water Works Department, with the customer buying all the material from the Department, is roughly 10% less than that available in Bridgetown; and it is a lovely service. I am therefore wondering whether any of this amount has been credited out for that purpose. Surely, if the amount of \$1,200, which I dare say has accumulated over a period of seven years or so, is all that the Water Works Department has outstanding, there is really no justification for getting a Debt Collector to hound down people for it. I say: go through the usual procedure for collecting this money. If you come to the conclusion that this outstanding amount is for those debts which are good, why pay 20% to collect them? If you know that mine is good, as well as my colleague's, why pay to collect them?

Mr. LEWIS: Mr. Chairman,—I would like to explain that my situation is the one which I recommend to the Government; and I am sure Government does not lose anything by that.

Mr. E. D. MOTTLEY: As I was saying, if you have taken out the bad and doubtful debtors, and have the others remaining, and the principle originally was that you put these people in court, and as soon as you send them a summons they paid, why then put these people in an embarrassing position by putting the debts in the hands of Debt Collectors? I suggest you should have the Act amended so as to make the owner of the premises responsible for the debt; therefore, I think I should second the motion by my colleague to delete this amount. My reason being that \$1,200 in a business of the magnitude of the Water Works Department, and which has accumulated over a period of years, is not a large debt. Again, I am submitting, it is not for water rates. I personally would like to know for what is the amount? It cannot be for water rates. Since it is for work done, I hope that it is not for material which you have allowed people to have on credit. You have stated in the Note:

"All efforts are made to collect such debts, but in some cases this has proved impossible, as many of the debtors are deceased or have left the Island, or cannot be found."

5.45 p.m.

Having admitted that you have never been told that the Department is understaffed, you collect your rates, and you have, I must say, a new filing system

which leads to the efficiency of the office, you can tell readily who owes this money; and all you need to do, is to send them a little summons. I am seconding the motion of my colleague. If in your admission, there are among these people, those who cannot pay, what are you getting a Debt Collector for? Is the Government really going to follow this policy? You give a Debt Collector a debt of say \$14 to collect from somebody, and that Debt Collector is doing his job with the understanding that he will collect it at 20% commission; he sues the person, gets an order against him, and if the man does not pay an instalment of \$2.00 which he has been ordered to pay, he goes to prison for 14 days. Do you know what you are doing? If the Debt Collector follows the courts of law to collect this money, you cannot take the job away from him. Are you going to levy on a person's property or send him to prison for 14 days? A socialist Government should not think of doing a thing like that; you cannot do that sort of thing. I am suggesting to the honourable Minister that he withdraw this amount, and pursue the normal course of suing people; and you will have the control in your hand. If you give a Debt Collector this money to collect, you cannot withdraw it from him; and you do not want to be charged with dishonesty. I would say, it is a privilege to be able to owe somebody money. A lot of people would like to have that privilege; a lot of people would rather die than rob you; they prefer to die owing you money. (Laughter).

Mr. LEWIS: I would like to warn the Government, the day the Government institutes this system of employing a Debt Collector in the Water Works Department, the Department would relax on the collection of rates. The staff would say that they can leave these matters to the Debt Collector. You will probably find, although the Debt Collector will be working no more money will be coming into the Department, because as I say, if you have a Debt Collector, the staff will leave these matters to him.

The question that this item "Commission to Debt Collectors" be deleted was put and resolved in the negative on the following division.

Ayes: Messrs. LEWIS, VAUGHAN, E. D. MOTTLEY and GODDARD.—4.

Noes: Hon. M. E. COX, Hon. Dr. H. G. CUMMINS, Hon. C. E. TALMA, Hon. R. G. MAPP, Mrs. BOURNE, Messrs. HOLDER, BRYAN, MILLER, F. L. WALCOTT, and BRANCKER.—10.

The question that Head XL stand part of the Schedule was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

On the motion of Hon. Dr. CUMMINS seconded by Hon. M. E. COX the Resolution for the sum of \$5,775 was passed.

ADJOURNMENT

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

Hon. M. E. COX: I beg to second that.

The motion was put and agreed to.

Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

On the motion of Hon. Dr. H. G. CUMMINS, seconded by Hon. M. E. COX, the House was adjourned for an half an hour.

6.00 p.m.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY RESUMED.

Mr. SPEAKER: On the adjournment the House was in Committee of Supply.

Mr. Speaker left the Chair and the House resumed Committee of Supply, Mr. SMITH in the Chair.

RESOLUTION FOR \$10,000 TO PROVIDE POWERED BOATS FOR FISHERMEN

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Mr. Chairman,—The next Resolution is for the sum of \$10,000, to provide powered boats for fishermen. The Addendum is fairly lengthy and explanatory, but I will give further details of the scheme for the benefit of honourable members. The question of increasing the productivity of the local fishing fleet has been engaging the attention of the Government for the last few months. A scheme has been agreed on for the conversion of the fishing fleet of the island from sailing boats, to power driven boats. Recently, sir, (this is just subsidiary,) the loss of life in the present type of boat has been very heavy. More than 100 men have lost their lives in the past ten years.

At present, there are about 17 powered boats which have been built by private owners, without assistance from the Government. The majority of the builders prefer the long launch type of boat: about 22 to 26 feet over all. The Fishery Officer considers that type of boat suitable and economical. That launch type of boat which has been selected, will have a 10 H.P. Diesel engine which will cost from \$1,400 to \$1,800. The installation of fuel tanks will make the total cost of the engine about \$2,100. The cost of the launch type of hull of the size selected, along with a small cabin house, will be about \$1,500. The total cost of a boat will therefore be about \$3,600.

The present loan scheme will be expanded, and the terms and conditions will be liberalised. Loans will be made up to 60 per cent. of the capital cost of the boat, and the owner will have a considerable stake in the boat from the very outset. He will be expected to put up 40 per cent of the cost; while the Government will put up 60 per cent. But the owner will be expected to place his 40 per cent. in order to convince the Government, that he is going to build a boat, before the Government advances its 60 per cent., not knowing whether any boat will be built or not. By that I mean, the Government will be careful to see that owner's portion of the money is available; so that the boat does not remain unfinished. This is a very important feature of the scheme.

It is considered that powered boats can be more economically built by private owners or individuals, than by the Government; but the Government through the Director of Agriculture and the Fishery Officer, will assist by the provision of advice and suitable moulds for hulls, and in other matters of that nature. The Fishery Officer will have to approve both the type of the engine and the boat, and the Government through the Fishery Officer, will have the right to make periodic inspection of the boat and engine, to ensure that maintenance is satisfactory, as long as the total amount of the loan remains unpaid.

As I have said, the owner will be called upon to find 40 per cent. of the cost of the boat; and in most cases, will give the boat as security for the loan of 60 per cent. which the Government will put up. The loan will be for five years, in cases where the loan does not exceed \$2,000; and in cases where it exceeds \$2,000, it will be for a period of six years. There will be no necessity for the loan to be secured by mortgage or real or personal property, as at present. Because, although the Resolution is somewhat similar to one for \$10,000 which was passed by this Chamber on another occasion for a similar scheme, in reality, only \$2,000 was utilised up to

presently; because the scheme entailed the average fisherman having to find collateral security. He had to have a house or land as collateral security, or additional security; things, which few fishermen have.

The result was that the last scheme for the assistance of fishermen was a failure in the true sense of the word; because, only one boat owner was able to avail himself of the facilities offered under that scheme. The object of this new scheme, is to make it easy for fishermen to take advantage of these loans. Under the present circumstances, the fishing boat alone will be regarded as good security; and there will be no question of the Government insisting on collateral security, which the average fisherman has not got.

Now this scheme will be regarded as a pilot scheme. If there are a sufficient number of applicants forthcoming, and willing to put up their 40 per cent., and to comply with the terms and conditions of this new scheme, then the scheme will be revised in the light of the additional circumstances; and a substantial sum will be put in the next Estimates to implement the scheme on a bigger and proper basis. I am making that clear, because I do not want to hear honourable members asking why only 10,000. Government wants to see how this scheme will work out on this basis, before going in for a bigger scheme; and Government intends to come down for a larger amount, if the scheme works on a proper basis.

The fishermen who take advantage of this scheme, will no longer have to rely on the wind that blows from the land, to take their boats to the fishing banks; and on the wind that blows from the sea, to bring them home again. They will be able to reach the fishing grounds quickly, remain out longer, pursue schools of fish more easily, and yet return home in time to catch the market. That is a big point in the scheme. The average fisherman, instead of having to leave home at 2 or 3 o'clock in the morning, will be able to enjoy a good night's rest like everyone else, and still get to the fishing banks earlier than he did previously. He can remain out later, when the catch is at a maximum. He can pursue more schools of fish, and his catches should increase with benefit, not only to himself, but to the community generally. By this means, along with other schemes which the Government will bring in from time to time, the Government is planning to improve the food supply of the community, whose diet is dangerously lacking in protein. It is hoped that as a result of this scheme, the community will not have to eat so much salted fish as in the past; and the nutrition of the people will gradually improve, as the scheme improves.

Both in Ceylon and Bombay, sir, powered boats have only recently been introduced, and already they have taken root; and the switch over is proving especially profitable to the fishermen and the community alike.

The state of the revolving fund is given in the Addendum. Honourable members will probably want to know what money remains unpaid. The amount remaining unpaid by way of loan, is \$42,304.43. I do not know, whether honourable members will be interested in hearing figures showing the growth of fisheries in Bombay and Ceylon.

6.40 p.m.

Mr. Chairman, the amount of \$8,000 is supposed to be the balance of this \$10,000, which was voted for purchase of engines. Since then, \$5,000 have been allocated, so that the entire balance standing in the

Revolving Fund is \$13,189.39. I have already mentioned that there is only one engine which has been provided for, by way of loans to fishermen; and there are 17 powered boats in existence at present, only one of which Government has assisted. I think, sir, when the facilities offered under this scheme are fully known, and that there would be no question of security apart from the boat, the scheme would be taken advantage of; and by that means, catches of fish will be increased. We will certainly after that, have to look for the finances for the Cold Storage and other schemes which are contingent on the success of this scheme. I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

Hon. M. E. COX: I beg to second that.

Mr. BRANCKER: Mr. Chairman,—I notice the Hon. Minister whom I must congratulate for the presentation of this case, mentioned that this amount was small. It is only \$10,000 because it was intended only as a private scheme. One appreciates that; but I notice in the Addendum it is stated that productivity of the local fishing fleet would be very greatly increased by gradual conversion to power propulsion; and it is therefore proposed to make larger loans available to suitable applicants for the construction of powered boats. I think it is very important to the working of this scheme, if you would make it known, into whose hands the selection of suitable applicants will fall. It is an open secret, that the Fishery Officer lacks tact and courtesy to speak to the average fishing boat owner, whose business takes him to the office of that official. Maybe, he has not had the experience of moving up in the Civil Service; but whatever the real reason might be, he has not got the gift of dealing with people in a pleasant and kindly manner, especially those people whom he seems to regard to be of a humbler standard than himself. That is what is worrying me,—the selection of suitable applicants. I would warn the hon. Minister to see to it, that the last word is not with that Officer; because we may find, that suitable applicants might only be those who are prepared to bend both knees and say, "Mr. Wiles please sir."

If this pilot scheme is to improve the fishing industry, it must prove a praiseworthy one. So we want to ensure that the suitable applicants for this gradual concession, is certainly not left in the hands of that Officer, who is obviously not well suited to make these selections. Perhaps, it is because of his numerous trips abroad, and his meetings with outstanding dignitaries in the fishing world, that he has lost the common touch. I think it would be well, if he is under the charge of the honourable senior member for Christ Church, whom I am sure, will never lose that touch; and will be able to guide that Officer along the proper channel. I sound this note of warning, and I feel sure that the Hon. Minister will make a note of it.

Mr. BRYAN: Mr. Chairman,—I am sure that this Resolution will have the whole-hearted support of all members of this House. We all agree that money spent by way of assisting the Fishing Industry, is money well spent.

We must not only think in terms of the dollars and cents which we are giving to assist the industry; but we must also consider the contribution which this industry makes to the economy of the island, and to the improvement of the health of the community, and the general benefits derived by the people.

But, sir, there are two points which I would like to draw to the attention of the Government. The first deals with the question of the security of boats, in respect of which loans are made. Mr. Chairman, I have always been inclined to the view, that this

Government should carry the insurance of fishing boats,—a compulsory scheme if necessary. There was a time, when the rate for insurance was something like 12½%; but one must bear in mind, that this scheme of insurance is carried out by private enterprise. And in computing the rates which private enterprise allows, a percentage is put on for profit. If the Government ever thinks of carrying out this scheme of insurance, I look forward to Government computing rates for overhead expenses; and if there are any financial benefits derived, there should be small. That in my opinion, would lower the cost of the premium to boat holders. Now, the other point, is with respect to the scheme of insurance for the fishermen themselves. It was early in the session of 1948-51, that I tabled an Address in this House, asking for a scheme of insurance for fishermen. Sir, I was prompted by a particular incident which occurred then. It was an incident in which two fishermen lost their lives; and they were bread winners. In one instance, the family of the deceased was in such poor circumstances, that the wife had to apply to the St. Michael's Vestry for assistance. We have heard today, that within the past ten years, there has been a cost of life of more than 100 fishermen.

6.50 p.m.

That does not represent only the loss of 100 fishermen in the industry, but also the loss of the bread winners of a hundred families. Mr. Chairman, you can imagine 100 families waiting on the Vestries for a few shillings a week, for feeding, clothing and educating their children. This is a serious case; and it must cause the Government some concern when they are faced with these figures. I look forward to the Government making a favourable announcement and deciding on greater schemes which will benefit the fishermen both by way of insurance for their boats, and life insurance for the fishermen themselves.

Mr. CRAWFORD: The Hon. Minister for Fisheries has admitted that the first loan scheme for fishermen was a failure.

Hon. C. E. TALMA: I did not say that the first loan scheme was a failure. What I did say was that the first scheme to assist the fishermen in the purchase of engines had failed.

Mr. CRAWFORD: That is what I am talking about. This is the second scheme; and what we have to try to ensure is that the second scheme is not also a failure. I must confess, that on the face of it, this does not offer very reasonable prospects of success. Am I correct in saying that the honourable Introducer of this Resolution said that the total cost of a powered boat is likely to be \$2,600? (Hon. C. E. TALMA: \$3,600). Well, let us be realistic; we are not here to waste time. Where on earth is the average fisherman going to find forty per cent. of that amount before he can get a loan from the Government for the remainder of the amount? I should like to say that 40% of \$3,600 is roughly \$1,440; so that a fisherman must have that amount, before he can get a loan from the Government for the remainder of the \$3,600. Does it not appear to the House, that the scheme is doomed to be a failure from the beginning? Under the original scheme, we loaned fishermen a maximum of \$500; and that scheme was not a success, partially because the persons who went to borrow the money had to advance collateral security for the amount of the loan. I realised that; and when I tabled the Address which I tabled here in June last year, I reminded the House about the stipulation for collateral security, and suggested that you should amend the Act in order to permit the granting of loans without collateral security. But I never envisaged a total expenditure of \$3,600 for a fishing boat. What prompted

me to bring the matter before the House was the fact that there was a serious accident in which some fishermen lost their lives; and the owner of the boat who was not in the boat at the time, when he tried to replace the craft, he was perfectly prepared to build a new boat with whatever help he could get to borrow money and install an engine. Let us establish something once and for all. If the boats which the Government have in mind will cost \$3,600, we will not get two powered boats in the waters under this scheme. We have to concern ourselves with a cheaper type of boat and a cheaper type of engine. If we want people to believe that this is a private scheme, we should experiment along entirely different lines. Instead of building a big boat with this proposed type of engine the Fishery Officer should consider building a similar type of boat with an outboard motor, which would be cheaper, and more within the likelihood of fishermen being able to procure such boats. Right now, we know from our own experience, that numbers of fishermen have small boats with out board engines bringing in approximately large catches of fish.

7.00 p.m.

It is true, sir, quite true, that a bigger boat with a bigger engine will bring in larger catches; but if, as the Hon. Minister claims, the Government will not advance a single cent as a loan until a fisherman can prove that he has his 40%, I will be very much surprised if in ten years we advance \$10,000. Previously, the maximum amount of money which he will advance was \$500; and the fishing boat to be constructed for \$1,000 was a fishing boat of a reasonable size. Some sizes cost \$800, and some \$1,200. When it comes to amounts of money, like everything else, what is important is relativity. 40% of \$1,000 is infinitely easier for the average fisherman to find, than 40% of \$3,600. A fisherman who can put his hand fairly regularly on \$400 which he collects from insurance on a boat lost at sea, or which he made from an old boat when it was in operation, cannot with the same facility put his hand on \$1,400; or alternatively, a young fellow who has just started fishing, and who have saved a little money, or who could get \$400 to start, cannot get \$1,400.

If we expect to get these grand results from this particular expansion of the fishing industry, we are going to have fundamentally to revise our conceptions of how this scheme will operate. The Minister has not suggested that what we do tonight shall be the final word in this scheme. We are experimenting. But it does appear to me, as if the Minister in charge of Fisheries, and the Fishery Officer, and all the Government's advisers on fishing, are living in the clouds, walking with their feet in the air, and are absolutely out of touch with reality, if they conceive that you can get even a dozen fishermen in Barbados tomorrow morning who could establish that they can raise \$1,400 so as to qualify for a loan under this scheme.

It is all well and good to say that you are completely eliminating the necessity for collateral security. But to insist that a fisherman must have 40% of \$3,600 before he can get a loan, is making the last state more difficult than the first. I appreciate of course, that the Government cannot pick up money indiscriminately and throw it away. No one in his right senses would suggest that the Government should advance \$3,600 without collateral security, and without the fishermen having some stake in the cost of the boat. But I certainly suggest that we could consider the possibility of bringing the total cost of these powered boats more within the reach of the average fisherman.

There are many aspects in this matter on which I would like to talk; but I do not feel like bothering with them tonight, because I am really concerned with this almost insurmountable hurdle. I repeat that the Minister of Fisheries if he wants to, can carry this Resolution through; but if he does not want it to remain a dead letter on the Statute Book of the colony, and if he is really minded to do something to expand the industry, he will consider immediately the possibility of having smaller boats with smaller engines. I am not suggesting the possibility of smaller boats with smaller engines. I am not suggesting that we should sacrifice safety for size. I am suggesting the possibility of smaller safe boats, with inboard engines, or a sturdy boat of reasonable size with a small out-board engine. An in-board engine costs \$1,600 or more; or you can get a serviceable out-board engine for less than £100. On any popular fishing beach, you see boats with these small out-board engines being driven by amateur fishermen; and going pretty far out, and bringing in good catches of fish.

When I myself urged upon the Government the necessity of removing the stipulation of collateral security, and of increasing the amount which they advanced to fishermen who wanted to power their boats, I never envisaged at all any question of \$600. I cannot with equanimity conceive how the Government which boast of having its ears to the ground, and being familiar with living conditions of all classes of people in the country, could elude itself that this scheme has any possibility of being a success.

These boats will have to be insured. Fishermen now find it impossible to pay the premiums on fishing boats costing \$1,000 or \$1,200. I cannot conceive, they will be able to carry the premiums on fishing boats valued \$3,600; even with increased catches of fish. The Minister in charge of Fisheries must have some idea of the extent of the insurance premiums on fishing boats today. They are numbers of fishermen who own their boats outright; and who prefer to run the risk of going to sea without being covered with insurance, rather than to pay the high premiums. To carry insurance on a boat valued at \$3,600 will be, from my experience, almost completely beyond the means of the average fisherman. From the figures of the premiums which I have had recently a fisherman will have to be extremely successful in catching fish everyday, to be able to pay the premium on \$3,600.

While one hates to appear to be throwing a damper on any scheme which seeks to expand the economic resources of the colony, yet in my opinion, one is bound to view matters of this sort from the most practical approach. Just as no one will conceive that a small farmer or peasant proprietor, with two or three acres of land could himself invest in a tractor for £700 to work his land, so in like manner, we must be forced to the conclusion that anything over \$2,000. will represent an almost insuperable difficulty for the average fisherman.

I presume the Hon. Minister of Agriculture, Lands and Fisheries has been giving to the House all the information given, by the Fishery Officer. One has to presume that that Officer knows his job. I really cannot understand, how he could jump from a loan of \$500 to an estimated loan of over \$2,200; and imagine that merely because we say no collateral security, fishermen can get this amount for the initial deposit by waving a magic wand and pulling it out of a hat. Perhaps, however, my entire conception of the matter was wrong. I will be very pleased if the Minister could contradict me, allay my apprehensions, and establish the fact that my fears are ill-founded; and that this scheme with the stipulation

which surrounds it, is quite within the realm of possibility for the average fisherman.

7.10

Mr. VAUGHAN: Mr. Chairman,—I can appreciate the honourable member's apprehension. Nothing he said, is entirely wrong; but one thing he has to remember, is this: in every step forward, in any kind of industry, in every little progress, there is greater cost. It only means this: if the fishing industry is to progress along the lines which we envisage in the near future, we would be having a different class of boat owners. You will find that there will be people, who will be investing in the fishing industry as a business proposition, because their means could afford them the greater cost of the new powered boats. Alternatively, Government will have to institute a system of co-operation among fishermen, so as to enable them to come together, and to meet the cost of the new powered boats. Whether the boats as the Hon. Minister envisage is a technical possibility for going out further and catching fish, I do not know, or I am unable to say; but I do know now, a lot of fishermen who have never done anything else for a calling, do not own a boat. Many of these fishing boats are privately owned; and there is a system of shares for the fishermen who work those boats. I think there is a system of taking out a share for the boat, and then the balance is divided equally between the fishermen who work the boats. I understood that, when I was spending a holiday in a northern parish.

If the fishing industry is to be put on a better scale, there is one thing which will have to be done, and that is, there should be a better distribution of the catches of fish. The colony can do with a lot more fish; but unless we institute a more advanced boat than the one fishermen now use, they cannot catch more fish, so the Government must be prepared to help fishermen. There are still a few fishermen who might be able to get a new powered boat; but there will not be many. You must either institute and encourage among them a system of co-operation, or you must be prepared to see the fishing industry owned by a different class of person than what it is now. There are many people who do not fish now, but who own fishing boats. They employ fishermen. The owner may have three or four men, whom he employs to go out to sea in his fishing boat.

I do not see any difficulty in getting fishermen to man these boats; because many of them are manning the present boats; yet they do not own them. We must get out of the sentimental idea, that the poor fishermen as they are now, will be thrown on the sands. Let me say, one of the most independent characters in the classes of workmen, is fishermen. I can envisage, when the new powered boats are brought into operation by whatever owners there might be, they will be manned by the present fishermen, and these fishermen will be better off than they are today, because of the ability and the greater safety of the new boat to catch fish with greater regularity. The new powered boats will not be laid up on the sand as long as the present fishing boats. I am sure, the new powered boats will be able to continue in the months which the present boats are laid up now; therefore, I envisage an increase in the catches of fish.

We must also think of the means of distribution; there are many parts of the island and many districts, where fish is seldom seen. That may sound strange; but it is a fact. It is only within a mile or two from the actual fish markets, that fish is widely distributed. There are places in St. George, St. John, and St. Thomas, where people eat fresh fish very seldom; the fish mongers don't venture

out so far. When we get additional catches of fish, our system of distribution will have to be much better, than what it is today.

In every advanced industry, as I said when I began my speech, there is additional cost. There is no use our trying to shy away from that. When we had windmills making sugar, that was a certain cost to the many owners then; but when they invested in sugar factories, that cost went up. In every age of industrial progress, it means considerably higher cost; so if we look at cost, we must not forget the progress of industry. One is contingent on the other; and there is the inevitability about that. The price of progress in industry, is increased cost. We need not fool ourselves; we may have to accept a new class of person in the fishing industry. In the big countries of the world, the fishermen who catch sardines and cod fish, do not own the boats; those are controlled by big companies.

7.20 p.m.

Many boat owners today never go to sea; one-third of the profits is their share, but they never go to sea. The boat is manned for them by fishermen. I do not see that the possibility of staring full in the face a new type of person in the fishing Industry, should be any reason to deter the Government from embarking on its proposed course. Alternatively, the Government should become the owners of the boats and put them into the hands of the fishermen, who will work their way until they can pay for the boat. Government should have some kind of co-operative system. I think it is in Malaya that you have a great co-operative system; but nothing of that sort has reached here as yet. I do not think our fishermen are of such dull characters that they would not be interested in the idea of co-operative ownership. I think that this is an idea which should be put up to them under the direction of the Fishery Officer.

Mr. ALLDER: The honourable member who has just sat down, must not forget that sometime ago when these loans were first promised by the Government, there was a stipulation that these loans were not to be given to persons other than practical fishermen. I can remember the argument which was put forward: that whoever wanted to enter the industry should be given loans, and the Government said: "No, only the actual fishermen must be given these loans." Therefore, I agree with the previous speaker who is afraid that the average fishermen will find it difficult to realise \$300 to start off with, before the Government assists him with the remainder. Inasmuch as it is very desirable that we get as much food as possible during hard times like these, regardless of their sources, the Government should not continue to make these stipulations. I do agree with the point which has been made, that many of the fishermen do not own any fishing boats. I think that we have reached the stage where, if the Government is going to spend money in order to assist the fishing industry, consideration should also be given to those fishermen who have been dependent upon those who are able to own boats. We should see that they become owners, too, and that we avoid any measure of exploitation towards the fishermen, by those who are able to own boats. I feel these stipulations should be removed; and whatever can be done should be done, to make it as easy as possible for the actual fishermen to be able to own their own boats.

It is very encouraging to see that such a Resolution is being handled today; but you cannot refrain from observing the fact that this Government always does things too late. What I mean is this: about two years ago, a discussion to assist fishermen finan-

cially was carried on in this honourable Chamber. Certain boat owners took the initiative and constructed larger and better boats. There is a boat at Browns Beach, which is nearly the size of a sloop. I should like to say, some of these men started with such zeal and enthusiasm, that if they had been encouraged by the Government and assisted with the loans which they wanted, hundreds of thousands of pounds of fish would have been brought to this colony already. Some of the fishermen became callous, because the stipulations made by the Government were too heavy; and many of them sold their boats after constructing them. However, after agitation by the honourable senior member for St. Philip, the honourable senior member for the City, and other honourable members, it is only now at this late hour, that the Government has seen fit to extend the scope of these loans. At that particular time, every fisherman, although he was assisted in some way or other, was disgruntled, dissatisfied, and extremely abusive as regards the Government and the Fishery Officer. I am wondering what has reached the ears of the Government, to cause them to extend the scope of these loans to help these fishermen whose occupation is a very dangerous one, but whose calling is very beneficial to the colony, inasmuch as it provides food for a starving population such as ours.

I hope the Hon. Minister of Agriculture, Lands and Fisheries will continue to carry out a strict surveillance over the execution of these loans; and that wherever he sees any faulty carrying out of the scheme, he will not wait for a very long time before he attempts to amend it.

7.30 p.m.

Mr. F. L. WALCOTT: Mr. Chairman,—I have heard some members make speeches on this Resolution. I do not think any of them have taken the trouble to go down to figures. I know that the fishing population is a big one; and it has a number of boats attached to it. It is therefore no surprise, that strong speeches are made as regards anything affecting the industry, so that fishermen will feel that we are supporting them. My opinion is, a fisherman as a workman, has nothing to complain about. He is one of the most favoured workmen in this island. No other workman is receiving, at the taxpayers' expense, assistance to carry out his vocation like the fisherman. In 1949-50 they got \$17,000; in 1950-51 they got \$12,000; and in 1951-52 they got \$12,000; and that is not all. I have heard honourable members talk about the number of boats. They have got as many boats as we can cope with. We have approximately 560 boats in the sea. How do you think they got there? By the generosity of the Government in the past? There is no question of fishermen being assisted; and it is not true to suggest that.

As far as the Fishery Officer is concerned, some people like to attack others on personal grounds. I feel that any Civil Servant, no matter who he may be, should be criticised if he is not carrying out the functions of his office properly. I will say this for the Fishery Officer, Mr. Wiles: he has been more enthusiastic about promoting the interest of fishermen, than any other individual that I have found in the colony. He has taken his work seriously; and has done his best to initiate schemes for fishermen. It is true, at times he and a fisherman might have a misunderstanding, and come to words. But if you read the Bible, you will also realise the trouble that Christ had with fishermen. They are not angels. Those of us who have had the experience of going to the beach and buying fish, know that sometimes you ask one of them a question, and you get no reply. He just looks into the air. When you are dealing with them, you are dealing with people whose reasoning can some-

times be very crude; and who can be very rough in their dealings.

As far as this scheme for building powered boats is concerned, if these powered boats are to take the place of the present sailing craft of which you have over 500, can the Government give an estimate of how many powered boats you will need to take the place of the present 560 sailing craft? I will say, the average you will need is 50; and you will need a half million dollars. When you get these phrases about bringing food to a starving population, we should remember that Barbados is not the only place where fishermen go fishing in the sea. If you look at the matter entirely from the basis of the fishermen bringing in food to a starving population, when you deal with the case of a pilot who carries people all over the world in an aeroplane, you will have to subsidise the education of these fishermen, and give them all the money in the Treasury. Let us be realistic.

Those people who talk about lending people money just so, and hoping they will pay it back, seem to think that the money is the Evergreen tree out there in the yard. Do those members lend money that way? When you want to make a loan from them, they are always broke. If a man is borrowing \$2,000 from the Government, and you ask him to find 40% of the amount first, what is wrong with that? What I would like to say is, if a man is borrowing money, and he cannot find approximately half for himself, what would Government be faced with? You will lend a man \$2,000, and he provides the hull of the boat. If he cannot complete the boat, you will be called upon to look for all the money, before the boat even puts out to sea; because a boat which has to remain on the land, is no use to the Government or anybody else. What in the name of goodness, is wrong with asking a man, whether a fisherman or otherwise, to pay 40% of the cost of the boat, before the Government advances a loan of the remaining 60%? If the cost of the boat is too much, it is left to the Fishery Officer and the Minister concerned, to see if a cheaper boat can be provided.

As far as the point made by the honourable senior member for St. Philip, about where the out-board engine is concerned, I do not know what he is thinking about. Does he think, you could get an out-board engine to propel a boat, (unless he means one of the little boats which are used for pleasure sailing) at the price that he mentioned? If these fishermen are granted loans, there should be some security attached to it. All the security the Government will have is the boat, and the insurance on the boat. I doubt, whether you will get insurance that will cover them fully. Even when one of these boats is built, and it is put out to sea, it does not necessarily mean that what the boat costs will be recovered.

Speaking as a member who sat on the Fisheries Advisory Committee, I am asking again, sir, what is wrong with asking a man to pay the initial 40%, to show that he really intends to build a boat? You must remember, it is not a question of the Government telling a man to go and build a boat. It is a question of a man saying that he wants to build a boat. I wish I could get someone willing to lend me money in that way, to build a house. I do not agree that a fisherman should be treated in a manner, as if when he brings in fish, he gives them away. Are they giving the community food? The people have to buy it.

Throughout the Caribbean area, there is no territory where fishermen are treated as generously, as in Barbados. While we are willing to see the scheme

go through, we should let the fishermen know that we think, the Government is making a reasonable request. I agree that \$3,000 is a lot of money to invest in a boat. But if that is the boat they need, they will have to meet the cost of it. It means, that although the boat costs more, it will last longer; and give better service than some of the little skiffs in which you have to make 14 tacks, by the time you get to Needham's Point.

7.40 p.m.

That is happening in all walks of life to-day. You pay more money for renting a house to-day, than you pay before; you pay more for food; but it also means that you have an improvement in the standard of living of the people; and that is the significance which you must face. In the United States, you do not get things cheap; you have to pay economic prices for them, but the standard of living is greater.

One of the things you must face is, the price of fish may be raised. Although the Government does not want to raise the cost of living, because of the nature of the work of fishermen, you are going to find yourselves having to pay more money for the fish you eat. You cannot regulate the supply of fish everyday, by those who go down to the sea in ships. You are getting to find, that you will have to pay more for fresh fish.

I do not see anything wrong in asking a fisherman, in order to show that he is able to build a powered boat, to show 40% of the capital costs. You cannot take all the money out of the Treasury to provide for that. I do not like the idea of hon. members making the expressions, that because a man is a fisherman, therefore, there is no responsibility attached to him, like other people in the community. I consider the 40% which a boat owner has to contribute towards the cost of the boat, to be reasonable; and in view of the fact, I have not heard the hon. Minister say the rate of interest will be paid in the first year.

Mr. LEWIS: Mr. Chairman,— I hope that the Hon. Minister will not misunderstand my attitude, if I do not join with other members in praising the Minister for the information he gives. My opinion is that the Ministers should give the fullest information as a matter of duty. So of this particular Minister I should just content myself with saying—I thank the Lord that he is not as some other men are. However, I think, the Hon. Minister's good intentions, as I said on the last occasion, are being set at naught by people who are either wicked or ignorant; and I am asking him the construction of the Revolving Fund account you cannot see the amount outstanding; he had to give that information himself. There is no such thing as this Revolving Fund having any income or expenditure, as the former is paid into the Treasury and the latter is taken out of the Treasury. What you have here, is your capital; and you cannot add to that what you have been repaid as they are one and the same thing. When hon. members read these things, they want something intelligent to read, and it is the duty of the Civil Servants to see that members are supplied with proper information. Sir, look at the nonsense we have here before us. The figures for this Revolving Fund can only relate to the capital of the Fund and the loans made from it, and the balance outstanding can be shown.

Sir, you want to know what is outstanding. The Hon. Minister has no right to come in here and say what is outstanding. The people who have drawn up these figures should show also what interest has been

collected from the fishermen and paid into the Treasury.

What money has been paid into the Treasury, is interest paid by the fishermen.

Sir, I am appealing to the Hon. Minister of Agriculture, Lands and Fisheries to live up to the reputation he has gained in this House. I am going to appeal to him, to see that in this type of business where accounts are rendered, they should be rendered to the House quarterly or half-yearly. If this account was coming here, we would have been able to see that the \$10,000 was not used. Sir, nothing, nothing whatever of these funds are laid before members of this House. But what do you find? If the Commissioners of Highways of Christ Church, or the Commissioners of St. John, get a vote from this House, they send down a statement, so that you can see how it is spent, if you are curious enough. Here is a Revolving Fund of \$60,000, and the House does not know anything about it, until you come back and ask for more money to be put to that fund. Let justice be done or appear as if it were done. You are now asking for \$10,000, and there is no promise whatever of showing this House the account. I say it is a wrong thing, if you do not show these accounts. In the interest of the Hon. Minister, he should see to it that this is done; particularly, if the people who keep them, keep them in this way. Well, Sir, I can only say, those people are out to bamboozle somebody.

7.50 p.m.

I would like the Hon. Minister to say if he can, what money has been paid into the Treasury as interest on these loans. The Government was told that there should amalgamate the several schemes. There is a revolving fund where the repayments of loans go back to the Fund and the interest goes to the Treasury. Then there was a Fund where the repayments and interest went into the Treasury. This Fund is now brought into the Revenue Fund.

I congratulate the Government on having seen the light; but if they refer to the Debates, they will see that they were told that if they want to help the fishermen, — and the fishermen are willing to pay their share— the Government should insure the boats as their security for loans. They should not levy on the fishermen's houses. If the fishermen have lost their boats, are you going to levy on their houses? It has taken the Government all this time to realise that they were wrong. They were told so by more than one hon. member; and they should admit that the members of this House had told them so.

I feel, it is a very generous scheme put up by the Government, to lend up to 60% and to test the *bona-fides* of the fishermen in asking them to put up 40%. Let the fishermen build boats which will suit them. I hope the Government will soon help masons and carpenters who want tools to get them, perhaps they could then help the fishermen more. I am very grateful for the present proposal of the Government. I do not think that they should undertake the Insurance scheme for fishing boats alone, they should undertake entirely the Workmen's Compensation and the Third Party Insurance as well; but some people will pick out the worse type of insurance, and ask the Government to take it. I am asking the Government to set up a department when they get rid of the Control Board; (they should get rid of it to-night) and utilise the people in that department that are able to deal with statistics, so that it would be quite easy for them to shift their mentality into an insurance department for the Government.

I hope, the method of distribution of fish will be given some attention; and that the Government will avoid this matter of cold storage as much as possible. Let them see, that everybody in the country get some fish of the fish before they put them in cold storage. Do not let it be said, that Barbadians are the only people who do not get the fish. I do not think that the tourists should be the only people to get the fish. I would like to know, if it is within the province of the Hon. Minister of Trade, Industry and Labour, or within the province of the Minister of Agriculture, Lands and Fisheries, to make these things interlock. I am wondering, if either of them could make a statement now, as to the curing and canning of fish. You see splashed all over the newspapers that this thing is being done, and that the canning of fish is to be given pioneer status. If this is going to be an industry to help people, perhaps the Hon. Minister of Trade could, at this stage, make a statement on this particular vote, as to what is happening. I have heard rumours to the effect, that the right type of assistance has not been offered; and that is why the industry has not been started. In that case, people will get the impression that the Government is to be blamed. I would like which ever Minister is replying, to make some statement as to this matter. I might go to the length of decrying the curing of fish; but let us know, if you are really assisting in this matter of curing fish or not. I am one of those, who do not think that we are getting more fish than can be used by the people of Barbados; but if you are saying to the world that you are starting a canning industry, then let us know how far you have got with it.

8.00 p.m.

The next thing I would like to know is, if I can be told now, (if the figures are not available, another time will do,) the amount of interest that has been earned on the loans made to fishermen. Some note of the running expenses of this department should perhaps be given; not for the purpose of charging more interest, but for the purpose of giving more information. We are not subsidising the industry, because the loans are being repaid; but we might be subsidising it in an indirect way, by not running the department on the revenue you get from this source.

Mr. MILLER: Mr. Chairman,— I believe that the entire Assembly to-night, is to some extent in agreement with the Resolution now before us. And that they at least hope, something will happen to bring some improvement to the industry. But I think that at this stage, I must pass on to what the Minister of Fisheries said in introducing this Resolution. In my opinion, sir, this new scheme is doomed to failure, like the scheme of 1952. There is nothing practical about it. The thing that irks one, is the grave lack of planning; and the absolute lack of knowledge of the psychological approach to the people whom we must encourage in the industry. There is no skill; no thought. I am not criticising anyone personally. I would rather have my criticisms, regarded as general. You cannot even read a single phrase in this Resolution which points to the fishermen. There is no thought of the fishermen, when you examine this Resolution. What will the ultimate result be? It is regrettable, the Minister will have to come back to this House and report failure again.

Hon. C. E. TALMA: I would like to bring it to the attention of the hon. member that I have only been a Minister from this year. There will be no question of returning again to report failure. I will have to be coming for the first time.

Mr. MILLER: I am correct in saying, "again"; because the Hon. Minister has said today that the last scheme was a failure. I did not attempt to say that the Minister was the one who inaugurated the scheme. I am talking of general policy. In 1952,—

Hon. C. E. TALMA: I admitted failure of a scheme which I had no hand in; and which I knew nothing about. I am trying today, to do something constructive and advantageous for the fishermen, in whom I have probably more interest than the hon. member.

Mr. MILLER: It is not altogether correct for the honourable Minister to say, that he was not responsible. He is the Minister for the industry; and has been handling this \$10,000. Whose responsibility it is then? Is it the responsibility of the Fishery Officer? If that is so, what is the Minister of Fisheries there for? It is an actuality that the scheme under the control of the Minister, failed.

Hon. C. E. TALMA: I am only now introducing a scheme, which I hope will prove successful.

Mr. MILLER: We had a scheme for powered boats, in which the same sum of \$10,000 was involved. The honourable Minister resents, or rather regrets, having to be reminded of failure. This scheme lacks any knowledge of planning, or knowledge of people in the industry. Let us examine the scheme. The 1952 scheme failed, because the Government asked for the collateral security, apart from the overburdening Regulations. If a boat costs \$3,000, and carries a 12% insurance with it, in eight years, you would have paid the total cost to the insurance company; and in five, seven, or eight years, you will have paid the total sum of this loan to the Fisheries Department. How will these men exist? How can this scheme have any practical existence, if you think in terms of dollars and cents? If you have failed, you have failed; and this world has no place for failures.

An honourable member has said: in every step forward, something must be left behind. But this scheme, is nothing but a miserable contraption of human stupidity. I do not believe you will find one breathing soul in the industry, who will be able to pay 40% of the cost of a boat worth \$3,000. Even if a fisherman has a little property, it will not make the \$1,000 that is necessary. Does the Government think, you will find a fisherman who is able to make the initial payment of \$1,000, pay \$3,600, or \$380 a year to the Insurance company; to say nothing of the reduction of the loan, and the interest accruing on it? This scheme is farcical, and impractical.

We, like the Ministers, are anxious to see this scheme work. If the Government is going to lend money without collateral security, Regulations will have to be made to take care of the insurance. A fishing scheme like this for \$10,000, or for \$10,000,000, should not be regarded in the like of profit to the Government. Some day, you will be in a position to withdraw the loan, and the Revolving Fund will stop.

The honourable Minister has mention Bombay and Ceylon; but the place which he should mention, is Newfoundland. Let him read Omar Monroe, a retired man, who started with a box and took one fish and who went a little further and took two fishes, and then a little further and took five fishes. Then he produced a boat and in fifteen years he produced 100 boats, and took all the fish.

8.10 p.m.

This scheme lacks enthusiasm; it lacks enthusiasm to perpetuate it. You ought to realise, that you would have to find money to make the scheme a success. The Water Works Department has never

yet paid its way. It is not expected to pay its way, to say nothing of making profit, or to say that it is making one per cent. on its investment. Are you asking people to pay back this money in five or eight years? Sir, imagine an individual who is interested in the fishing industry, having to put \$1,000 in a boat, and then borrow 60% of the cost of the boat, in order to get an engine, and then have to pay \$360 for insurance annually. What is there in this scheme to encourage any single human-being to invest in it? It is hopeless. Are you not aware that it is hopeless?

I am going to vote for it, just because some one may attempt it, whether he fails or not. I am going to say again that there is no hope in this scheme; but I am going to vote for it, because someone may attempt it, even if he fails by the wayside. I know that thousands will never attempt it. If one person attempts it, we will have at least one more powered boat. I say again that it lacks all that one expects of it.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. BARROW: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that your honour do now report progress and ask for leave to sit again.

Mr. HOLDER: I beg to second that.

The question was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

Mr. Chairman reported and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair, and reported accordingly.

Hon. Dr. H. G. CUMMINS: I beg to move that this House do now adjourn for three quarters of an hour.

Hon. M. E. COX: I beg to second the motion.

The question was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. SPEAKER adjourned the House accordingly.

8.15 p.m.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY RESUMED

Resolution For Improving Fishing Industry Cont'd

On resumption—

Mr. SPEAKER: On the adjournment the House was in Committee of Supply.

Mr. Speaker left the Chair and the House resumed Committee of Supply Mr. SMITH in the Chair.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: On the adjournment, the hon. senior member for St. George was speaking on this Resolution.

Mr. BARROW: I think, in all fairness to the Hon. Minister of Agriculture, Lands and Fisheries that somebody should say, that he was one of the most vehement critics, under the old system under which the Fishermen had to mortgage lock, stock and barrel before they could obtain any assistance from the Government; and it was because of the keen interest which he evinced, not only in Christ Church but also in the surrounding parishes, that the particular portfolio which he now holds, was allocated to him. I do not think that anyone should try to bring home any sense of inefficiency to the Minister, (Who is the most co-operative of all the members of the Government, in; giving information to members of this House), when he has only had the opportunity of being six months in office, and he has brought forward a most feasible scheme to the House, for the benefit of those who are employed in the fishing Industry of this Island. But with all encomiums aside, I think we should get down to the root of the problem; and the only rationale of expenditure on fishing boats, is to get more fish for the inhabitants of this island. The idea of providing money and rendering assistance to the fishermen, is not to give them by virtue of their

calling as fishermen, [gratuities from the public boards of this Island; but to enable them, to relieve the shortage of what is considered an essential commodity, in the diet of a normal taxpayer and a member of the public in this colony. Therefore, we must look to the objective, rather than the machinery, in order to see whether the Fisheries Department is in truth and in fact, justifying its existence; and on the expenditure from time to time of these sums of money on that department, both for administrative purposes, and by way of subventions to the revolving fund.

I want to give the Hon. Minister of Fisheries, something about which he should ask his department. I hope, if I give him a question to ask the Fishery Officer, he will forgive me. I should like to know, in the first place, what has been the effect of the explosions set off by the Gulf Oil Company around this island, on the bottom fishing industry and the spawning of the fish during the season? Did the Fishery Officer make any attempt to ensure that no damage was done to the bottom fishing around the coast line of this island, when the Gulf Oil Company was making its seismographic experiment? It is remarkable that after a plentitude of flying fish last year, and after the Gulf Oil Company carried out its explosions around the coast line, that this year, we have practically the smallest amount of flying fish which has ever been recovered in one year. The two things may not necessarily be linked; but since we have a Fishery Officer, we expect to hear some explanation of this matter. We do not want to hear any whitewashing of any group of individuals, or anybody in this colony or outside of it. If the conclusions are the conclusions which I anticipate, what provision will be made, when the Deep Water Harbour is being built, so that the same disastrous results will not ensue? There will be blasting which will be carried on over a period of five years of course; there will be periodical and sundry explosions carried out during a period of a few months. I would enjoin the Hon. Minister of Agriculture to hold a public enquiry into this matter, and tell us if this officer has not got the necessary authority to ask the Caribbean Commission or some other authority, to assist him in his findings.

In the second place, I notice that the hon. Minister has stated that only one powered fishing boat was launched as a result of the assistance. One explanation is that the terms and conditions were such, as to deter any prospective owner from approaching the Government for the purpose of acquiring a motor boat. But another possible explanation is, the approach of the particular department to the problem itself, when certain people were actually encouraged to build boats; and then, what I consider as extra statutory conditions, were imposed on the parties before the loans were granted. I only view with alarm, the statements of the hon. Minister, that the Fishery Officer will have a say as to what kind of insurance should actually be put on the fishing boats; because as he very well knows, in the past, the Fishery Officer has been exceeding his statutory powers. I am saying this in parenthesis now. I am not irresponsible now, because I am saying something which the hon. Minister himself knows, that is: the Fishery Officer stipulated where the engines should be bought from and which store or agent you should order from; and if you put in an engine from a different place, that was not good enough. You had to go to a particular selected place on the patronage list of the Fishery Officer, to buy an engine. am saying that is what put off many prospective boat owners.

9.15 p.m.

I am fully aware of what I am saying. Anyone who wants to draw conclusions, can draw what conclusion they like. Now the next question that I would like to put to the Hon. Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries, is how many times during the last six months, has the "Investigator" left port. I would like the Minister to look into the log book and take an average of the trips made, (not pleasure trips) but trips in the interest of scientific research, during the last three years. Does he think it is worthwhile to pay a captain and crew, when the "Investigator" is tied up outside Cavan's Lane for six months at a time? It would be better in the circumstances, to sign on a crew for a particular voyage. It would be much cheaper for the Government to do that. I do not think that the number of trips which the "Investigator" makes, and the results achieved by these excursions, are commensurate with the money we have to spend to maintain the boat and keep the crew in regular employment.

Why is the "Investigator" tied up as long as I think it has been; is it that you cannot get anyone who is a good enough sailor to go out in it? Or is it that they have run out of ideas, and think that no further research can be done? I would also like the hon. Minister to consider the question of wharves. What provision is being made for the erection of jetties, or the utilisation of existing jetties, at Holetown and Speightstown, or the rebuilding of the one at the Crane, or the building of a new one at Oistins to provide safe anchoring places and suitable points for the unloading of fishing boats when they come in? We have jetties lying idle, which can be leased or acquired by the Government; and which would be of great assistance to the fishermen who live in the particular parishes.

With regards to the point raised by the honourable senior member for St. Philip, the honourable member was a bit perturbed over the fact, that fishermen who wanted to own a boat, would be called upon to subscribe at least \$1,400 out of the total cost of the boat. I would like to remind the honourable member who, unfortunately, is not in his place, and all other members who are of the same demagogic mind as himself, that not all fishermen care to have engines in their boats; even though there may be some substance in his observations, that an attempt should be made to foster some scheme of co-operative ownership as between fishermen and fishermen for powered boats when they want them. As I said just now, not everyone wants to own a powered boat; and very often, boats which rely on this system of propulsion are not owned by fishermen at all. In that, I see the only danger of the scheme which the Minister has introduced today. Because the tendency may be, that you will get capitalists, (not using it as a term of abuse) or a man who already has a lot of money, borrowing money from the Government and building boats and turning the fishermen into ordinary workmen. I do not regard a fisherman's calling as a job, so much as a way of life. There is a certain rugged individuality in the psychological make up of a fisherman, as the honourable member for St. Peter told us. So my fear is, you may get a highly organised business by people with money, who can borrow more from the Government to build boats, and who may then hire fishermen. I am afraid, you will take away not only the glamour from fishing but you will turn the fisherman into one of the disgruntled workers. A process of proletarianism will take place; and we do not want our fishermen to descend to that status.

I hope, therefore, that an opportunity will be given to fishermen *qua* fishermen, to own their own boats, rather than to turn them into an army of

proletarian workers. The time has come, when the Government has got to consider, apart from the question of jetties, the provision of a safe anchorage for the careening of the boats. The only suggestion that I can offer, is that River Bay in the parish of St. Lucy which the honourable member for St. Lucy has the good fortune to be the representative, and the sole representative, and in which I was fortunate enough to be born, should be dredged and a suitable place put up. It is a natural harbour, which can be used to dock fishing boats and boats of a certain tonnage; and it will create a certain amount of industrial development in the parish of St. Lucy. It will provide boats during the hurricane season, with a safe haven.

It may sound a bit far fetched, but we have to provide for the future, and make plans for advancement. I am offering that advice and suggestion to the Minister of Fisheries gratuitously, because of my associations with the parish; and because, I think it would be a good thing for the fishermen on that side of the island.

9.25 p.m.

I am sure that if he call in expert opinion on this subject, he will find out, that the proposition is one which has been urged before by experts. He will find, it is one which is not only definitely workable, but one which is practicable from the standpoint, that it may be put into operation at a very low cost to the Government of the Island.

Mr. Chairman, no one wants to criticise the Fishery Department for the sake of criticising. We offer suggestions, because we feel that it is a vital sector to our economy; and because we feel, there is room for improvement. At the same time, we cannot help feeling that during the past two years, ever since the building of the Calver Fishing Boat, this Department has not been sufficiently active and virile in the carrying out of its policy and research, so as to be of assistance to the fishermen and to the fishing industry of the colony.

I hope, when the Hon. Minister returns with something more to this measure, if he does return, that he will have something much more cheerful and progressive to lay before this House. Since the Seine net has been developed, one cannot attribute any one beneficial innovation to the activities of the Fishery Officer or the Department which he controls. I hope, with such a constructive critic as the honourable senior member for Christ Church controlling the destinies of the Fishing Industry, we will be given some news of some such innovation and expansion as we all anticipate on his return.

Mr. E. D. MOTTLEY: Mr. Chairman,—This Resolution is one which I believe, all honourable members of this House are very happy to see before us. Any scheme that will aid the fishing industry, is one which would be welcomed by honourable members, and although in these schemes, we must offer our criticisms, I think in a scheme like this, we should give it a chance. On the last occasion, I spoke at length on this matter; so if I now sit back and feel somewhat satisfied, I hope, the Government has begun to realise that the scheme with which they came originally to the House, and which was criticised on all sides, and was pointed out would be a failure unless it was expanded more, was unworkable.

I have just a few criticisms to offer on this Resolution. After listening to the criticisms of other honourable members on this scheme, I am thoroughly convinced, that it is not a scheme which is going to be of any help to the fishermen themselves, in a direct sense. In our helping the industry by this scheme, the money will be distributed out in loans to a few persons who want to invest in fishing boats. When this scheme was first discussed, it was pointed

out to the Government, that this is a business which few persons would like to take a chance in spending their money; it is a rather risky investment. As a matter of fact, in those days, it was no investment at all; and it was made clear then, that the shop-keepers and other persons who accumulated a few dollars, were the majority of the boat owners, and not the fishermen themselves. A very small percentage of the actual fishermen are boat owners. A very small percentage of the actual fishermen, can raise five or six hundred dollars to start something which they can now show, to borrow from this loan fund. (A VOICE: What about your friend?) I heard *sotto voce*, someone asking a question about my friend. He is not a definite fisherman; Clem is a butcher-boat-owner. I am thinking of those who go down to the sea in ships. Those are the people whom you refer to as fishermen.

Sir, there is a lot in what the honourable junior member for St. George said. I expected after hearing him for the first time, for a very long time, offering some criticism to the Government, that he would have been courageous enough, to tell Government to postpone the Resolution so that they could come back with something more. And this is a scheme which Government could postpone for a little while; and in the meantime come to me and let me tell them, what I think they can do. At least, the Government should bring along some other scheme. However, I am supporting the scheme for the reason, peculiar as it may seem, that it will be of some assistance to the fishermen themselves. I know of several people who are interested in building powered boats. They are not fishermen by any chance; but they are people who are interested in the fishing industry.

I want to get the assurance from the Hon. Minister of Fisheries, and I think he will agree, that this is not a scheme to help fishermen directly. There are but a few fishermen who can find four or five hundred dollars to come in for assistance, to get a powered boat. I do not think, there is a fisherman who can go to the Fishery Officer and say: "I have four or five hundred dollars; I would like you to help me with a loan to build a powered boat." Almost every fisherman, after the fishing season is over, has to borrow money or credit goods from a shop-keeper to carry on. Sir, if you say that this is a scheme for assisting persons to build powered boats, then we will support it. For political purposes, you might say it is a scheme to help the average fisherman; but it will do you no good. You know that you are fooling him, when you say so. You are not helping him, because you are not doing anything for him. This is a scheme to help those persons who are willing to invest in boats; and rightly so. That is what I told you that you wanted some two or three years ago.
9.35 p.m.

When you talk about builders, you have shop-keepers, landed proprietors who are interested. That is what I told the Government three years ago. I am not criticising the scheme, from the angle from which the honourable senior member for St. George criticised it; I say that this scheme will offer some help. When the scheme first came up, you had a man who took his life savings and invested it in a hull on the beach, and day after day, he went to everybody possible, and he was told that the scheme was for fishermen, and not for him. The hull of the boat was on the beach, and it is still there now. I am glad to say, with justifiable pride, "I told you so; you had to come down with this scheme." You were putting up a smoke screen and the election was coming off, so you put up something to catch votes; but you did not catch any votes.

The remarks by the honourable senior member for St. George are correct. I have also received complaints that people who are interested in motorising their units, have been told by The Fishery Officer what type of motor they must get. Some people believe in a different type of motor; but the Fishery Officer, I understand, has been telling people what type of motor they must get. You cannot prevent people from thinking. If it is true, and I have been told that it is true, that people are telling you that you can only get money from the Government if you do these things, then I would say, let the honourable Minister get up and defend the Fishery Officer. You should shun the appearance of evil. Just as I am told, that if I want to get money from the Government I must do so and so, as it is with the motors, so it is with boats. Some people believe in different types of motor cars. Some people believe that if they die, Messrs. Burton & Co., must bury them; but the Hon. Minister believes that if he dies, you, Mr. Chairman should bury him! (Laughter). I should like to say that there is nothing here in this Resolution, which says that you must be a fisherman, or a shop-keeper, or anybody else, in order to get assistance from the Government. There is no reason, why a shop-keeper in Oistins for instance should be granted assistance and not a shop-keeper in Bridgetown. This is a question of the Fishing Industry; and therefore, the differentiation which is being practised now in saying that you are a shop-keeper, should not be practised. The Hon. Minister of Fisheries should know that it has been drawn to my notice, that there are a number of persons who are interested in taking advantage of this scheme; but it has been represented to them, "it is not for you." I say that there is nothing in this Resolution today to show that it is not for the assistance of a shop-keeper, quarry owner, clerk, or anybody else. I am asking that instructions be given the Fishery Officer, that we are passing this Resolution without any strings attached to it. As long as you are investing money in a boat in Barbados, to carry on fishing in Barbados so as to employ people in Barbados, you are qualified to get a loan.

9.45 p.m.

It would appear, sir, some of the Government's members do not read the Addendum to a Resolution before it comes to the House. Anyone can write any stupidity in an Addendum. There is a big cost for a boat, insurance etc. What I believe can be done to relieve the situation, (and it is of sufficient importance that you should do it) is that imported material for boat building should be earmarked, or done through the Government. Licences are granted nowadays for the importation of almost everything; and I believe that a certain amount of supervision is necessary in this respect. It has been represented to me, that very often a man starts a boat, material comes to the colony, and rather than being given consideration for the type of material necessary to build the boat for the next fishing season, the material is used otherwise; and no attention is paid to the fact, that the people who are willing to build boats, and who have expended their money and have the hulls lying on the beach, need this material for spars etc. They are not given any consideration, and have to wait for four, five, or six months before another set of material comes.

When a person elects to build a fishing boat, he elects to do something which will help the industry, which will help feed the people, and which will employ people. Government should seriously bear in mind that fishing boat owners should be allowed to select their own brand of materials; and not to let it

be said, that they are forced to buy any particular brand from any particular firm or store.

As to the Government's pleasure yacht known as the "Investigator," I agree with the honourable senior member for St. George. With the greatest respect to Mr. Wiles, I have always looked on his appointment as the Fishery Officer, to be a square peg in a round hole. It is like suddenly asking me to become an aeroplane pilot. The Government's pleasure yacht, "Investigator," must cause the hon. Minister and other members of the Government great concern. What is it doing? I suppose they will use it as the ship to present the local brigade to the member of royalty, when she visits here.

A square peg in a round hole! If there were someone at the head of the Fishery Department with a real love for fishing, and a knowledge of fishermen, the situation would, I think, be quite different. I can think of men like Messrs. Fergusson, Burke, Hassell or Teddy Jones. I can think of people who know about fishermen, and how to get along with them. With all due respect to Mr. Wiles, you do not want a clerk and administrator who will read a text book, slip out a few words and send them to the *Advocate*, and you call it something wonderful; and the Government and all the Ministers think that he is a very able man.

Let us get down to earth. The "Investigator" cost \$30,000; and it is not good enough to have it lying down. If you see a cloud up in any part of the island, you will still see some fishing boats out; but the "Investigator" will be tied up by the Swing Bridge. Honestly, Mr. Chairman, this is constructive criticism. I have gone down to the beach to discuss this thing. You will see a cloud up and you will still see a few fishing boats trying to get some fish for the hospital; for the sick. But where do you think the "Investigator" is in the meantime? Tied up under the Swing Bridge; and the Fishery Officer is in a car more often than he is on the boat. Has the Hon. Minister of Fisheries ever visited the "Investigator" and seen the Fishery Officer on it? I am not suggesting that you get rid of the Fishery Officer; but appoint a real Fishery Officer, and make Mr. Wiles an administrator. Put him in the Agricultural Department as a deputy Lord Gort, and let him get a salary.

I wonder, if the Minister in charge of this portfolio can tell me whether he has ever visited the fishing banks in the "Investigator," along with the Fishery Officer. I am sure that when I sit, the hon. Minister will be able to tell me. The hon. Minister has only been in office for a few months; but by this time, the Fishery Officer must issued, and the Minister must have accepted an invitation to go out to the Fishing Banks and see how the poor fisherman fares; especially now that someone is drowning nearly every morning. Surely the hon. Minister must have gone and seen for himself.

Surely, the hon. Minister should have gone out in the "Investigator" to see what has been done.
9.55 p.m.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Do you want the hon. Minister to go down too?

(Laughter).

Mr. E. D. MOTTLEY: The hon. Minister knows that it would not be the wish of any of us to see that happen to him; but if he would like to do the island a favour, he can let some of the other Ministers go. I think it would do the island some good. (Laughter). It is good to be humorous some times

Sir, I hope the hon. Minister will note my comments. There is great dissatisfaction among the fishermen and those people who pursue that calling.

as to the whereabouts of the "Investigator," and what it is doing. I started off my speech by saying, this is a Resolution to grant money so as to aid people to build powered boats. The granting of loans must not apply to any class of person; loans should apply to all classes who are willing to put up money to build a boat, and then hire fishermen to work the boat. You should not discriminate against any person who wishes to borrow money for that purpose, be he a clerk or a shopkeeper. Secondly, sir, I want to be assured that the Government is satisfied beyond any shadow of doubt, it is not accepting motors of one particular make as against others. I do not think any member of this House would like to see in this instance, something which was practised during the war by another Government Department; that is, if you wanted to put in a sanitary unit, you had to buy one of a particular make, or you could not get it put in at all. What is going to be the position if A, B and C want to build a motor powered boat? I am sure, you are not going to suggest to either of them, that they should buy mahogany trees from Lascelles or Sandy Lane Plantation. You therefore should not suggest to any of them, that they should buy only a certain type of motor for the boat which they are building. People have been told: "No, we can't help you, unless you buy such and such a motor." If you are going to suggest to the people to buy a certain type of motor, there must be that suspicion; and if I get any data about it, be the person Mr. Wiles or not, I am coming in here and say what I have heard, and speak on it.

Mr. LEWIS: After listening to the last speaker, I think it is incumbent on the House, to ask the honourable Minister to alter the wording under which this item is voted. First of all, this item is under *Agriculture*, and not *Fisheries*; and it is for the rehabilitation of the Fishing Industry. A previous money vote under that name, was for boats of the Fishing Industry which got damaged, and which you had to really rehabilitate. This Resolution is not for the rehabilitation of the Fishing Industry, nor for something that is in existence already; this is for creating new boats. Therefore, it must really be a Revolving Fund, if it really means what it says; that is, for loans to fishermen. Here you have: "V. *Agriculture*—9 (new) Rehabilitation of Fishing Industry." We are not voting money for that. (A VOICE: What are we voting it for?) You can only rehabilitate something which you have already. It does say in the Addendum, "Revolving Fund for loans to fishermen." This certainly is not rehabilitation of the Fishing Industry. This is for the purpose of aiding people with an engine for a boat, which they are building. I hope, the honourable Minister will give it some attention. We are really voting money, and not using it for the purpose which it is voted. (A VOICE: I do not agree with you). Sir, let us say that this Resolution is for loans to power fishing boats; so that if you want to give it to somebody else, you would not be able to do so.

HON. C. E. TALMA: Mr. Chairman,—In an important debate such as this, it is inevitable that speeches of every nature and kind, would be made. I am happy to say that the majority of speeches were of a constructive nature; and the points raised, and the suggestions offered, by honourable members who contributed to the debate, have been carefully noted, and will receive the careful consideration of this Government.

I am indebted to a great extent to the honourable senior member for St. John, and the honourable junior member for St. Peter, who more or less,

replied to points raised by the opposers. If they had spoken at a later stage, probably, there would have been little necessity for me to make a reply. I must also offer my congratulations for the constructive remarks made by all honourable members who spoke: but I must especially commend the honourable senior member for St. John, who usually is a serious critic of the Government, and of this Ministry, with the exception of the honourable senior member for St. George and the honourable senior member for St. Philip. Anyhow, I am not here to indulge in any slander, or anything of that sort; I am only here to reply for the Government, and I will do so in a dignified way.

At the outset, I must say that there are two or three points to be replied to, which were made not only by the honourable senior member for the City, and the honourable senior member for St. George, and by one or two other members of my party. But before I do so, I would like to give the assurance, that the caption under which this money is to be voted: "Rehabilitation of the Fishing Industry" is not different from the object of the Resolution. Of course, I must say, the honourable junior member for the City has greatly assisted in clearing up many points relative to the Estimates of accounts; but in this case, the caption does not differ from the object of the Resolution, because the object is really to rehabilitate the Fishing Industry. In our making loans to people to buy engines, we will be helping fishermen; and in so doing, we will be helping the Fishing Industry.

10.05 p.m.

As to the question which was raised at the end by the honourable junior member for the City, whom we all know is a stickler, (but it serves a useful purpose in an Assembly like this, and it has assisted in clarifying the statement of accounts) this system of accounting was adopted so as to present facts and figures to honourable members who are not so well informed. (Laughter) I will give the assurance, that this Government in its attempt to rehabilitate the Fishing Industry, will normally grant fishermen priority as far as possible; but the scheme will necessarily include boat owners, because we know, that the boat owners are those who are not necessarily fishermen. The aim of this Government is to feed the people of this colony, and to feed them with the things which are beneficial to the human system, and for which the community has been looking for generations. We want the fishing-boats to go out to sea, and return to land safely. What we are trying to do is, to improve the fishing industry and provide greater safety for the fishermen; and to induce, as it may be, people who have left the secondary schools and who cannot find employment, to enter the industry.

As regards the question of fishermen not being able to take advantage of the loans, I should like to say that the old system of co-operative fishing is being worked upon; and it is hoped, that we will have co-operative societies by fishermen who will be able to put up enough money so as to embark upon a scheme of this nature. Boat owners to-day are not necessarily fishermen; and it would be a good thing for people who have money to invest, to invest it in the industry, so as to provide employment for fishermen. The main thing is that the catches will be increased to a great extent and there will be a greater income for fishermen, and the community will have the benefit of it, in that fish will be more easily available.

Mr. Chairman, there are many points which have been raised during this debate. I want to assure the honourable senior member for St. Lucy, that

his point has been confirmed as to whether or not, the scheme will be left in the hands of the Fishery Officer alone. Honourable members should never think that I would attempt to leave a scheme like this in the hands of any one person. Relative to the scheme for the compulsory insurance of the fishermen, that scheme is at present engaging the attention of the Government. We are hoping that if a Government scheme is brought down, it will be a means of reducing the high rate of premium which the fishermen are called upon to pay; and which is prohibitive. Marine Insurance is so great that one will naturally expect premiums of Marine Insurance to be high. This is not a matter of vote catching. We are here to try and to do constructive work for the benefit of the colony. I will attempt, whenever I stand on the floor of this Assembly, to try and do something constructive and which will assist people outside. Even the honourable junior member for St. George is in favour of the scheme, although he has criticised and censured it.

The honourable senior member for St. Philip has made his point, and I would like to say that if you have a small boat, there is no reason why that boat would not receive consideration. But the honourable member has to remember that we are not out for putting any death traps to sea. I have already expressed my gratitude to the honourable member, who has explained many points which the Government should have explained. The same thing applied to the honourable junior member for St. Peter, who has been in charge of matters relating to Agriculture and Fisheries, and who has held other portfolios, and was a member of the Fisheries Advisory Committee, and who is *au fait* with all happenings of that Committee; and who might know more about it than I know, although I have served in that capacity.

The honourable senior member for St. John can rest assured that the scheme is not merely designed to assist fishermen alone; but also to assist boat owners or prospective boat owners.

10.15 p.m.

What is the object of this scheme? It is to improve the catches of fish; and that will result in greater prosperity for fishermen, so that they will be in a better position to pay off their debts and improve their standard of living. The whole object is to multiply fifty fold, the catches they now make. In Bombay in 1933-34, there were only two fishing launches, and they took over 55,000 pounds of fish. In 1948-49, with 50 launches, the catch was over six million pounds. What has happened in Bombay can happen in Barbados, on a comparative basis. As far as interest goes, the position will be, that you will pay 20 per cent for the first two years. As you reduce the amount, the amount for which you are insured will be reduced proportionately. The Government does not expect a fisherman to insure his boat for the highest value. The loan will be reduced over the years by 20 per cent each year.

Mr. Chairman, I can assure the honourable member for St. George that I have made special notes on the points raised by him, to which, I am not in a proper position to reply tonight. I will see that a statement is made very shortly, to cover not only the points raised by the honourable senior member for St. George, but any constructive, relevant and sensible points raised by any other member. Such points will always receive consideration by the Government; and this is a policy which will always be adopted.

When it comes to life insurance, a fisherman would have to see after that for himself. Who must see after anyone's life insurance?

Mr. LEWIS: Will the hon. Minister give me the assurance, that he will let me know the interest collected from fishermen and paid into the Treasury, during the duration of the scheme? I presume, he has not got that information tonight; and that he will present it. It is no use, sir, for the honourable Minister to screw up his face. All he need say is, that he has not got the information now, and that he will get it.

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

Hon. Dr. H. G. CUMMINS: Mr. Chairman,—I beg to move that you do now report the passing of three Resolutions in Committee.

Hon. M. E. COX: I beg to second the motion.

Mr. LEWIS: That is an incorrect motion. You cannot report the passing of three Resolutions, because when you attempt to total them, there will not be three Resolutions that you can total. Only two.

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

Hon. Dr. H. G. CUMMINS: I beg to move that the Resolutions be now read a first time.

Hon. M. E. COX: I beg to second that.

Mr. LEWIS: As far as the reading of these Resolutions is concerned, there is one Resolution which cannot go through the process of being read a first and second time, because it is not a money Resolution. I do not mind the asides, sir. I am appealing to the intelligence of the House, and not to the ignorance of the House. This Resolution has got to be passed in the House by itself. The Government has admitted that it was technically wrong to put the Resolution under Committee of Supply; and still they want to treat it in the same way.

Mr. SPEAKER: I will point out to the honourable junior member for the City, that the Resolution to which he is referring, does not specify a definite amount of money; but the House went into Committee on these three resolutions, and passed them in Committee of Supply.

10.25 p.m.

Mr. LEWIS: Mr. Speaker,—I am merely drawing to your attention, that the House should pass this as abstract resolution, because this is a Resolution authorising the advance of money already voted by this House. When you total the three Resolutions passed in Committee, they can only total the amount of the other two resolutions. When these resolutions are read a first and second time and agreed to, that can only be meant to be the Resolutions for \$5,775, and the Resolution for \$10,000.

I am merely saying, let us do it the right way if we want to give the proper authority to the people who have to deal with these matters. The House must approve of this Resolution. This is only saying what method should be adopted to advance sums of money out of the Treasury; the money has already been passed by this House. This is not a money Resolution; it is an abstract Resolution.

Sir, there is nothing wrong in our separating these Resolutions, and passing this one separately, and not as a money resolution. I am not going against your ruling, if you say that this is a money resolution. I am merely saying, it is to give authority to a method of dealing with money already voted. The other Resolutions are Supplementary Resolutions. The money with which this Resolution deals with, is already a law on the Statute Book because it comes under the Appropriation Act.

Hon. M. E. COX: May I draw to Your Honour's attention, the motion made by the Hon. Minister of Social Services is that this Resolution do now

pass. You are saying: "the motion is that this resolution do now pass." What is wrong with that?

Mr. LEWIS: Mr. Speaker—

Hon. M. E. COX: How many times is the honourable member going to speak?

Mr. LEWIS: I rise on a point of Order, Mr. Speaker. If this Resolution is read a first and second time and then agreed to, I will not be in that at all. The Chairman reported to you, the passing of three resolutions in Committee. Therefore, any motion which says that these resolutions be read a first time, then a second time and then a third time, means all three of them; and that is wrong.

Mr. F. L. WALCOTT: The Hon. Minister of Social Services admitted that it was a technical error, and that this Resolution should not have gone to Committee of Supply, because it was an abstract resolution. And we know, that abstract resolutions, if you so care, are not sent to Committee of Supply. Those hard-headed Ministers who are not aware of what the Resolution is for, but who want to satisfy their ego, are saying that it should be passed as a money resolution, which is passed in Committee of Supply. I want to submit, that the honourable junior member for the City is correct in his submission,—that it is an abstract resolution. And I am saying, at this stage, there is no harm in dealing with the resolution separately. Those honourable members who say that they can break the Rules of this House, and they need not respect the Rules of this House cannot be respected. If the Rules of this House cannot be respected, what else will be respected. If a rule of procedure is broken, and it has been pointed out, I cannot see why anybody should object to its being corrected. The honourable junior member for the City has pointed out, that this Resolution should not be dealt with in Committee of Supply. He is either right or wrong. I submit, he is correct in his submission. I would like to see that the motion you adopt is the correct one.

Mr. MILLER: I am asking Your Honour to be careful in your ruling.

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

Mr. MILLER: I only got up to say, we do not wish the two honourable members, the honourable junior member for the City and the Hon. Minister of Communications, to keep us all night.

Hon. Dr. CUMMINS: Mr. Speaker,—I beg to move that the two resolutions,—the second and third—which were passed in Committee of Supply, be now read a first and second time.

Hon. M. E. COX: I beg to second the motion. The motion was agreed to.

Hon. Dr. CUMMINS: I beg to move, that the two resolutions be now read a second time.

Hon. M. E. COX: I beg to second the motion. The motion was agreed to.

Hon. Dr. CUMMINS: I beg to move that the two resolutions be now agreed to.

Hon. M. E. COX: I beg to second the motion. The motion was agreed to.

Hon. Dr. CUMMINS: I beg to move that the first resolution passed in Committee of Supply, do now pass.

Hon. M. E. COX: I beg to second the motion. The motion was agreed to.

10.35 p.m.

BILL TO AMEND THE POST OFFICE ACT, 1911

Hon. M. E. COX: Mr. Speaker,—I hope that honourable members will remain, so that we can deal with two other items on the Order Paper. One item

is Order No. 7, and the other is Order No. 11. Both these items are fairly urgent. One deals with an amendment to the Post Office Act, and the other deals with the creation of an additional office at the Department of Highways and Transport. I am therefore asking leave to deal with Order No. 7 as the next Order of the Day.

There being no objection leave was granted the hon. member.

Mr. SPEAKER: The next Order of the Day therefore stands in the name of the Hon. Minister of Communications: to move the second reading of a Bill to amend the Post office Act, 1911 and to provide for increases in the concession allowed on literature for the blind; and in the maximum amount of indemnity for loss of damage to uninsured postal parcels.

Hon. M. E. COX: Mr. Speaker,—The object of this Bill is to amend the Post Office Act, 1911. As hon. members will see from the Objects and Reasons, Section 20 of the Act provides for the grant of a concession in the case of literature embossed for the use of the blind; and Section 32 (1) fixes the maximum indemnity for loss of, or damage sustained to uninsured parcels, intransit in the island. It has been pointed out, that the concession granted by Section 20 of the Post Office Act, at present is less than that provided for literature so embossed, as set out by article 48 of section 1 of the Universal Postal Convention, signed at Brussels in 1952; while the maximum indemnity fixed by section 32 (1), is below that which is now in force in the United Kingdom.

To wit, the first part of the 1932 Act provides for the maximum amount of weight to be six pounds. Since then, the amount was increased to eleven pounds by Regulations; but it has been discovered, that was acting *ultra vires*, in that Regulations are subordinate legislation. The mistake therefore was made by the Crown Law Officers of that day, by not amending the original Act; instead of merely bringing forward regulations increasing the amount from 6 lbs. to 11 lbs. This Bill seeks not only to change the amount from 6 lbs. to 11 lbs., but to 15 lbs; which has been agreed to by the Universal Postal Convention which was held in Brussels in 1952.

As the position stands to-day, the indemnity on intransit mail is twenty shillings; and this Bill seeks to increase that indemnity to \$22.32, which is the amount in existence in the United Kingdom some-time now.

This Bill therefore has a twofold purpose. It amends those two sections of the Post Office Act so as to bring it in line with up-to-date countries, which have adopted these Agreements. I do not know whether hon. members want to know anything more about this matter; but if they need further information, I would be quite willing to supply that information.

Hon. C. E. TALMA: I beg to second that.

The question that this Bill be now read a second time.

I beg to move that this Bill be now read a second time was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

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

Clauses 1 and 2 were called and passed.

Clause 3 was called.

Hon. M. E. COX: I beg to move that Clause 3 stand part of the Bill.

Hon. C. E. TALMA: I beg to second that.

Mr. LEWIS: I would just like to know, if this indemnity which is being authorised, is in respect of a registered letter which has been lost.

Hon. M. E. COX: This is not confined to a registered letter; it might apply to anything. I have pointed out, that the maximum indemnity at present is twenty shillings; and that has been in existence for many years. It has been changed for a long time now by the United Kingdom Government, because the amount has been found to be insufficient. It does not cope with the amount of damage or loss, and we are now increasing it to \$22.32, so as to bring the position more in line with the United Kingdom. 10.45 p.m.

Mr. LEWIS: I think I understand that. I wanted that clarified in my mind, because of something else that I was hearing. I would like to tell the Minister, when you are amending an Act for two purposes, you should not put only one purpose in the Objects and Reasons. From reading the Objects and Reasons of this Act, Clause 3 does not apply. Not a word is mentioned about it. It would have saved the Minister a lot of trouble, if it had been put in the Objects and Reasons. The matter of time does not apply to indemnity. If there is any loss, this is the maximum indemnity. No one can put \$5.00 in a letter and if it is lost, tell you that it had \$22.00 in it. Objects and Reasons are for the purpose of helping members. If members had seen this mentioned in the Objects and Reasons, they would have known what are the two objects of the Bill. It is not clear as it is here.

Mr. MILLER: Mr. Chairman,—I would like the hon. Minister to say, if this assistance to the blind in respect of literature, is restricted to Braille.

Hon. M. E. COX: Mr. Chairman,—If the hon. member reads the Bill and the Objects and Reasons, he will see "literature for the blind". In answer to the hon. junior member for the City, if he reads the Objects and Reasons carefully, he will see that the first paragraph says that the Post Office Act, 1911, by section 20, provides for the grant of a concession in the case of literature embossed for the use of the blind; and by section 32 (1) fixes the maximum indemnity for loss of or damage to insured parcels. The Objects and Reasons set out clearly the intentions of the Bill. In the first place, it is to increase the amount of weight of literature for the blind on which the concession is granted; and secondly, to increase the indemnity.

Mr. MILLER: I only wanted to know if this literature for the blind is restricted to Braille. You can have all types of literature. I only want to know if this concession, which is by international convention, is restricted to Braille. I forgive the Minister, however, because I realise that he does not understand.

Hon. M. E. COX: I will remind hon. members that I said, that this legislation already exists in the U.K., and we are bringing the local legislation into line with that of the U.K.

Mr. LEWIS: The hon. Minister must remember this: it does not say so in the Objects and Reasons. It merely sets out that someone has seen fit that 20/- should be taken out, and \$22.00 put in.

Hon. M. E. COX: Again I am going to read: "This Bill seeks accordingly to revise the Post Office Act, 1911 so as to bring the provisions of that Act relating to the above matters into line with the terms of the Parcels Convention and with the law now in force in the U.K."

The question that Clause 3 stand part of the Bill was put and agreed to.

Clause 4 was called and agreed to.

On the motion of Hon. M. E. Cox seconded by Hon. C. E. TALMA Mr. Chairman reported the passing of the Bill in committee and Mr. Speaker resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

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

CIVIL ESTABLISHMENT ORDER NO. 13

Road Overseer At Highways & Transport

Hon. M. E. COX: Mr. Speaker, I am asking leave to take Order No. 11 which stands in the name of the Hon. Premier, as the next Order of the Day.

Mr. LEWIS: Mr. Speaker—We have already given permission to the hon. junior member for St. Thomas to take charge of everything on the Order Paper, standing in the name of the Premier.

Hon. M. E. COX: I am still asking leave to take charge of Order No. 11, which concerns the Department of Highways and Transport.

There being no objection leave was granted.

Hon. M. E. COX: Mr. Speaker,—This is a Resolution to approve the Civil Establishment Order No. 13 for the appointment of an overseer to the Highways and Transport Department. This, as hon. members will see, is a result of the Government having taken over the roads of St. Joseph. At the time when the roads were being taken over, it was made clear, that the Government was prepared, as far as possible, to employ all the persons who were then employed by the Highway Commissioners of St. Joseph.

We found that there was one Road Inspector and two Road Overseers. It may be asked, why we have come for the appointment of one, and not for the appointment of three persons. In the first place, I would like to say that two posts will be created; but on the dismissal of a clerk at the Highways and Transport Department, that office has been filled by an overseer of the Department. Therefore we are only asking to increase the Establishment as far as overseers are concerned, by one; and this Resolution seeks to establish that post.

I beg to move, Sir, that the Resolution do now pass.

Hon. C. E. TALMA: I beg to second that.
10.55 p.m.

Mr. LEWIS: Mr. Speaker,—I would just like to know whether all of these people will be taken care of in the new establishment.

Mr. SMITH: Mr. Speaker,—Relative to this appointment of an overseer, I had been assured in this House by the Hon. Minister of Communications, that no one who was working with the Commissioners of Highways in St. Joseph, would suffer as a result of the taking over of the parish roads by the Government. But Sir, the Chief Inspector has not been included among the staff which the Government has taken over. In other words, he has been dismissed; and it is a very serious thing after I had been so assured that no one would suffer. I had assured the people of St. Joseph to that effect; and the Government has taken it upon itself to dismiss our Chief Inspector, without telling him one word, or the reason for so doing. Surely, I have not been told the reason for not employing this inspector or overseer, whichever it may be; and it is a very serious state of affairs for a man with a family to be dismissed from his job working with the Highways Board of St. Joseph, after that department has been taken over by the Government.

I have been told that the Department of Highways and Transport can do without a few overseers at the present time; but I see, this resolution is approving of one more. I feel the Inspector of the St. Joseph Highway Board should be told something relative to his dismissal. This particular Government in taking over the roads of St. Joseph, promised to take over the staff which was comprised of three officers,—I can better describe this staff as one man and two boys—and Government has seen fit to employ the two boys, but has no use for the man. Government has not the decency to even tell the representatives of the parish, the reason for not employing that gentleman. Sir, when one is vex, he is not pleased; and I am vex about this. If you have any kind of reason for not employing this man, state it; he should be told, or I should be told, so that I could explain it to the people who ask me about it. This gentleman had been working with the parish for years, and he has not been told the reason why he has been dismissed; neither have I been told. Both of us have been treated as boys in the yard. The roads of the parish have been taken over by the Government since the beginning of last month. I had been assured that no one would suffer as a result. If I had expected that anyone would have suffered as a result, I would not have consented to their being taken over by Government. I say so, not because I do not want the roads to be taken over by Government, but because I do not think it is fair to the man, for so many years in that respect.

Sir, the Vestry of St. Joseph went as far as to write the Government asking for an explanation of the case and the Vestry received the answer that it was taking up the matter. Sir, the particular person is a man with a family; and the only person to suffer is that gentleman. I feel something should have been done in the matter by now; and I do not think the Government has adopted the right attitude in this matter, especially as it is a Labour Government. I do not think this Government should put people out of work without giving the reason.

Mr. LEWIS: There is an obvious mistake in the Order; and I am drawing it to the attention of the hon. Minister. It is to come into effect retrospectively. This is how the Order is worded: "This Order shall come into operation on the first day of September, 1954." It should have been worded this way: "This Order shall be deemed to come into operation on the first day of September, 1954."

Hon. M. E. COX: In reply to the points made by the hon. junior member for St. Joseph with reference to a statement which I made in the House, that as far nobody would suffer as a result of the Government taking over those roads, I did say so. The hon. junior member for St. Joseph has now raised the point about the road inspector being dismissed by Government, and he went further and said, that he understood that the Department of Highways and Transport at present has too many overseers, but now they are taking over two more. It is a fact that the Director of Highways and Transport expressed the view that he could do with a smaller staff of overseers, than the staff employed by the former Director. The fact has been borne out by his recommendation of one of these overseers to be a store-keeper. Having given the assurance to the Highway Commissioners of St. Joseph, that when Government took over the roads in St. Joseph, Government would also take over the people who were employed in that direction, the Government has decided to come to the House and ask for the creation of an additional post of overseer. One of the overseers of St. Joseph is to fit in that post; and one is

to fit into the post of the overseer, who has been transferred to the post of store-keeper.

I am not prepared to say at this stage, anything of the man whom the Government might not be taking over. However, I would like to say that he has not been dismissed by the Government; because the Government never employed him. On the taking over of those roads on the 1st September last, that gentleman really was not required in the service. But I would like to assure the hon. member, that although the Government has not agreed to take over the liabilities of the St. Joseph Highway Commissioners, the Government is prepared to pay a pension either directly or indirectly, to the officer who has not been taken over by them. The Government is prepared to pay a pension either directly to the Vestry of St. Joseph or to the Officer whom Government has not found it possible to recruit into the service. As I have said, I am not prepared to say any more on that point, but I can say, we had experienced some difficulty in trying to assimilate him into the set-up. As far as I have been made to understand, he works for \$300 a month; and as hon. members know, we have no place for an officer in that category in our set-up. It is a fact that more people in that category have been employed now. I am sure the hon. junior member for St. Joseph would bear me out, when I say, more people have been employed by the government from that parish, than were formerly employed by the Highway Commissioners of St. Joseph. There is only one individual whom the Government has not employed. I say again, the Government is prepared to pay a pension to that individual; therefore, it cannot be said that the Government has broken faith, or that the Government did not honour its pledge.

The hon. junior member for the City, mentioned something about the wording of the Order. The Government took over those roads on the 1st September last. We are merely saying, that the Order should come into operation on the 1st September last. The hon. jun. member for the City said, that it should be worded "deemed to have come into operation" as from that day. I am a layman, but it seems to me how it is worded, it is meant to be a retrospective clause.

These Orders carry retrospective dates. I am not prepared to argue with the honourable member; but if he says that this Order shall be deemed to come into operation on the 1st September, 1954, and it says here in the Order that this Order shall come into operation on 1st September, 1954, it is the same thing, only worded differently.

Mr. MILLER: Relative to the plea made by the honourable junior member for St. Joseph, in connection with this engineer, the hon. Minister was at pains—

Mr. SPEAKER: Is the honourable member referring to some engineer?

Mr. MILLER: The road engineer in St. Joseph. I am in agreement with the honourable member's remarks; but I am still left in a quandary as to what he really means. What I gleaned from his remarks is, the new scheme of things as to the Government's policy in connection with the Department of Highways and Transport, is that the Department does not seem to be able to absorb this new engineer, under the new scheme of things; and it is true, that the honourable member did not attempt to break faith with anyone. I do not as a matter of fact, want to confuse any reason as to why the Government does not see fit to absorb this inspector in the scheme of things. I appreciate the fact, you have a technical engineer at the head, and it is still the Government's

intention to pay a pension to all those who are involved in this change.

Mr. F. L. WALCOTT: This is an indication of party politics; we may as well be frank. If you are governing, you must govern with the unpleasantness of Government. You have just passed a Local Government Act and you cannot promise to take over everybody. I find, that there is an absence of frankness when it comes to dealing with these matters, and you leave people with hopes; but I think, you should say that you cannot take over all of these people. If you take them over, you will have to give them an abolition pension, which means, you are rewarding them for services which they have rendered. The Government abolished the railway, and they had to provide the railway workers with abolition pensions. But as regards the idea, that you must go on everlastingly with some section of the workers, I rise to say, these parish pump politics will not do us any good.

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

11.15 p.m.

VACANT POST OF MESSENGER AND LIBRARY ATTENDANT

Mr. SPEAKER: Before the House adjourns, I would like to inform honourable members that acting under instructions from the House, an advertisement appeared in the local Press referring to the post of Messenger and Library Attendant which is now vacant. Sufficient response has attended this advertisement. The closing date was on Friday the 15th inst., and there were 202 applicants. I would advise the House to proceed by way of a screening committee, so that they may more easily decide on the candidate of their choice. I throw out that suggestion to the House.

Mr. F. L. WALCOTT: Mr. Speaker,—I intended to make a motion for the appointment of the committee. I want to say that I regard a post such as this, as falling into line with the Public Service, in that the former Messenger, Mr. Gittens, was formerly a member of the Public Service. I am of the considered opinion that if the Public Service could have provided this Chamber with a Messenger of the calibre of Mr. Gittens, there are other Messengers of the Civil Service available for service in this Chamber.

As I am a believer in the system that if you are working in the Service and there is any likelihood of promotion, there should be a chance to get that promotion. I would suggest to the committee which will be appointed that they pay special attention to any applicant from the Civil Service. There are likely to be Messengers in the Service applying for this job; because it offers more emoluments than the Public Service offers. It is with that in view, I feel it would be fair and in order for us to give suitable people in the Service an opportunity for receiving higher emoluments than in the Service itself.

I move, Sir, that a committee be appointed for the purpose of recommending a suitable candidate to the House. I leave the personnel of the committee to Your Honour.

Hon. M. E. COX: Mr. Speaker,—While I appreciate the remarks made by the honourable member relative to the recruitment of a member of the Service, I am wondering whether he has taken into consideration the fact, that if an officer leaves his job in the Service, and comes to work in this Chamber, there is no continuity of service between the Public Service and this Chamber. An officer might have

been working in the Service for 20 or 25 years. But if he comes to this House to work, there are no pension rights attached to the post. What we do, as we have done with our employees in the past, is to give them a month's salary for every completed year of service. So an officer in the Service may lose his secure job where he is entitled to pension, and come over here. You may give him \$100.00 a month and he may only remain two, three or six years. When he leaves he is only entitled to a month's salary for every completed year. That officer is going to lose his pension rights in the Civil Service for which he cannot be compensated in the House of Assembly. For those reasons, I feel that an applicant from outside should be considered rather than one from the Service, who will be placed in an awkward position.

As regards the appointment of this committee, I would like to move that the committee be composed of the senior members of the various constituencies.

Mr. BRYAN: Mr. Speaker,—I am in favour of the appointment of a screening committee; because with 202 applicants, one can foresee the difficulty that would arise. But in my opinion, this matter falls more within the province of the Debates Committee than any committee composed of senior members of the House. The Debates Committee has just appointed officers of this House, as well as the additional reporter.

I formally beg to move, Sir, that the Debates Committee be appointed the Screening Committee for this purpose.

Mr. F. L. WALCOTT: Mr. Speaker,—Replying to the hon. Minister, I would like to say that I have no candidate. I have made no promises. Hundreds of people come to me—

Hon. M. E. COX: I must object to the insinuation. I have no candidate either.

Mr. SPEAKER: The motion made by the honourable junior member for St. Michael has not been seconded.

Mr. F. L. WALCOTT: If the hon. Minister was not seconding my motion, I would like to know what he was speaking on.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister made a motion.

Mr. HOLDER: Mr. Speaker,—I beg to second the motion made by the honourable junior member for St. Michael.

Mr. F. L. WALCOTT: I would like to speak on that motion now. As far as this is concerned, what I would like to point out, whether you decide on the Debates Committee or on the Committee of senior members, I regard as very flimsy,—the argument that because a man is in the Public Service he should not be considered as eligible to be considered for this post. The honourable member talked about the House giving a man a month's salary for every completed year of service. Is there anything laid down which says that the House must do that? That happened in one case, when we retired Mr. Taylor; and on that occasion, the members of the House in consultation with the officer himself, decided that it would be better to give him that. But there was nothing to prevent the House from giving him a pension under the Ordinary Pension Act.

11.25 p.m.

In the case of Mr. Parris, he was an old man, and we gave him a lump sum, a gratuity; there is nothing to prevent this House from agreeing to pay a man a pension if he retires. What is to prevent this Chamber from so doing? Sometime last year, we met and made the Messenger an officer of the House. Officers of this House are not regarded as Civil Servants. The late Messenger came from the rank and file of the Civil Service; but we changed the

post from the Civil Service and made the post an appointment of this House of Assembly. And Why? You found you had an excellent officer in Mr. Gittens; and the idea of the members of this House was, you did not want to lose a man like that because as he was a Messenger of the Government, the Colonial Secretary could remove him and send him to another department, and then send some other person to this House, who might be likely to give trouble. We have been told about continuity of service. Where does that come in? If people from the public service have applied for this vacant post, they should know that they will not lose their service. The question is this: If a man who is in the Public Service working as a Messenger with the Colonial Secretary, gives up his job to come to this Chamber to do that job, you well might say, he is in the same Public Service; because he is drawing his money from the same Treasury, but only by your decision, which gives you the authority to sign his voucher, there is the difference. Would any member here suggest, that any member of this House or the Public, would quibble over that; and say that they are two different departments; therefore, there is no continuity of service. One of the first things the House did after the introduction of Ministerial system, was to pass an Act giving Mrs. Haynes a bigger pension for service she had rendered, although it was broken. Now the hon. Minister has got up in this House saying, this, that, and the other about continuity of service. Here you have Mr. Douglas Haynes for whom we passed a special Act to take into consideration the year of service which he gave to a Parochial body. If you appoint someone from the Civil Service to this job, and say, he has 20 years service do you think we should be willing to discount those years? Now, we have the hon. Minister, who was a party to the passing of that Act for Mr. Douglas Haynes, raising the point of continuity of service in this case. He is suggesting, we should not consider those people who apply from the Service. I am not suggesting, that you should not consider those people who apply from outside; but my suggestion is, if you have a man in the public service, whom we consider as suitable for the job, what is wrong in appointing him? We must bear in mind, we have raised the salary of the Messenger of this House, because of the additional duties. I do not want to gang-up with anyone to say, "we will have this thing done." I do not want to be put on any Committee to fill this appointment. I do not want the odium of anybody saying "I thought we would have helped me." However, I feel that any member of the public service who has applied, is more entitled to the position than anybody else.

Why do you think we have got 202 persons applying for this job? It is because we are starting the successful applicant at \$60 per month, plus cost of living allowance; and that salary is going up to \$100 per month. Added to that, you have conditions of service, where the person has to work in what can be called cultural surroundings. Are you going to make these people understand what they have to do? I know many are going to be disillusioned. Many of them may think, when they come here, they will be the 25th member of the House of Assembly; and may want to be on equal terms. I do not want to say, they are inferior when it comes to man and man, but they may not want to be regarded as servants of this House.

Sir I resent most strongly, the suggestion made of continuity of service. I cannot see the reason why the hon. Minister produced this argument. We would be placing ourselves in a rather awkward position, when we ourselves have laid it down, that you should not regard it as a break in your service, if you leave

one part of the public service to be employed in another part somewhere else. If a man comes here from the public service, he knows he has broken his service. It should not be a condition of our way of thinking, that we will give him some sort of punishment hereafter for doing that.

Hon. M. E. COX: Mr. Speaker,—The honourable junior member for St. Peter who has just sat down, seems to be confused in his thinking, on what I have given expression to. What did I say? I merely dealt with the terms of employment as an officer of this House of Assembly. He has not refuted what I said, that there is no continuity between the public service and this House of Assembly. We had Mr. Taylor who was a reporter and he retired, but he was not given any pension; he was given a gratuity according to the number of years he was in the employ of the House. We also had Mr. Maynard who died; his legal representatives were also given a gratuity. We had Mr. Parris, our Marshal; and he was also given a gratuity.

I have absolutely no objection, to Civil Servants given up their service to take this job. But what I am considering, is the means of security. The junior member for the City and the honourable junior member for St. George, will not be always in the House of Assembly to pass laws. Some other people will come in this House; therefore, you cannot say, "we give this, and we give that". What is the guarantee, Mr. Speaker, if a man comes in here from the public service, that he would be granted a pension on his retirement? This is not a pensionable job. As soon as a man leaves the public service to come in here, he breaks his service. Of course he gets a higher salary; but there is no continuity of service between Civil Servants and the House of Assembly. He would have to ask this House if he retires, to pass something for him. (A VOICE: And the Government will do it.) I am still convinced that no provision is made for continuity of Service, in so far as Civil Servants are concerned, coming over to this House. It does not exist.

I have been approached by some people who have applied for this vacant post, and I have explained the position to them. I told them when they come here, they are taking a chance of losing their pension rights, which they have in the Government service.

Hon. Dr. CUMMINS: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker. On what are the two honourable members arguing? Has continuity of service anything to do with the motion before us?

11.35 p.m.

Mr. SPEAKER: The honourable members have been given some latitude.

Mr. LEWIS: I intended to second the motion which was made by the Hon. Minister of Communications; and I would like to give my reasons for so doing. This is a question of making an appointment, and the Committee which he has suggested is a Committee which is not selected by the House but by the electorate; this, therefore is to be regarded as an impartial selection of a Committee. I am suggesting to the honourable member however, that since we have a Leader of the Opposition we should include him on this Committee; and if the honourable senior member for St. Michael includes him on the Committee I would second that as well. (Hon. M. E. COX: I accept that.) The Hon. Leader of the Opposition is given recognition under the law of the land; and I am happy to say, that he should be added to that Committee. Otherwise I would not second the honourable member's motion. I am appealing to the honourable junior member for St. Michael, and I want to draw to his attention,

that this matter concerns this branch of the Legislature; and we should not appoint a Committee which includes somebody from the Other Place. That savours of something which the Other Place would not appreciate; and I do not think that we should suggest it. The Other Place would say that they want to keep themselves clean out of this matter. (Mr. BRYAN: They will have the good sense to stay away.) I do not think that you should stay away, if you are asked to serve on a Committee; and it will go down in history that you have appointed a member from the Other Place to serve on this Committee. I am appealing to the honourable junior member for St. Michael not to allow his motion to be put to the vote. I hope that the Committee will consider the applicants on their merit, their character, and what can be gleaned from their ability to do the work. We have no retiring age for our servants; but we have security of tenure, so that anybody who is leaving the Government service and coming over here is leaving that service with the understanding that he is taking his chance in coming here. This privilege of there being no retiring age is a privilege which we hope anyone who is leaving the service and coming over here will enjoy.

Mr. Speaker, I have much pleasure in seconding the motion which has been made by the honourable senior member for St. Michael, because I feel that it will meet with the needs of the situation. This Committee has been chosen by the electorate, and therefore we shall not be committing anybody. I repeat, I have much pleasure in seconding the motion as made and amended by the honourable senior member for St. Michael; and I think that it would be a very good idea to ask the Committee to make their recommendations as soon as possible.

Mr. BRYAN: I have listened very attentively to the arguments produced by the honourable junior member for the City, and the fallacy of his arguments strikes me at once. He argues that it will go down on record, that we had to appeal to the Other Place to help us appoint a Messenger. How could that be so, when the Debates Committee appointed a Reporter who is paid by this House. Has it gone down on record that the members of this House had to appeal for help to the Other Place in appointing their Reporter. (Mr. LEWIS: The Reporter reports the Debates of the Legislature.) Mr. Speaker, the motion that I made was made in good faith. I feel that the best committee to deal with this appointment is the Debates Committee.

Mr. SPEAKER: I will put the last completed motion first, that of the honourable senior member for St. Michael.

The question that the senior members representing constituencies, including the Leader of the Opposition, be appointed a committee to make recommendations to this House regarding the appointment of a Messenger, was put and agreed to without division.

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. Dr. H. G. CUMMINS: Mr. Speaker,—As regards the adjournment, I would like to make a statement. We are asking honourable members to come back on Thursday. The reason for that is the matter of the inter-island steamship service. The contract has to be signed at Trinidad by the 31st. inst. Honourable members will remember, that a Select Committee was appointed to deal with the Message from the Governor in connection with the matter. But before the House could deal with the reply to the Governor's Message presented by the

Select Committee, a difficulty arose in connection with the contract. That necessitated the sending of telegrams back and forth between here and Trinidad. Executive Committee, however, expects to deal with it finally on Thursday morning, and we are asking honourable members to meet on Thursday afternoon to do just that one item. The Other Place has to deal with it too. We cannot wait to deal with it early on Tuesday because honourable members may be verbose.

I spoke with the Leader of the Opposition and he said that 2 p.m. on Thursday would be all right with him. But the consensus of opinion, to judge from asides, seems to be in favour of 4 p.m. I move, sir, that the House do now adjourn until Thursday next, the 21st inst. at 4 o'clock p.m.

Hon. M. E. COX: I beg to second that.

Mr. F. L. WALCOTT: I am speaking against the motion for adjournment, for the reason that the argument of the Hon. Minister of Social Services as to why we should come back on Thursday to deal with this inter-island shipping service, seems some what strange to me. I do not know if these things are done on a different basis in Barbados from in the other colonies; but I know that the Trinidad Legislature is in recess, and will not resume until Friday. (Hon. M. E. Cox: They have a Finance Committee). This is nothing that a Finance Committee can do.

Hon. Dr. H. G. CUMMINS: If the honourable member would allow me to enlighten him, I would like to say, this is not a question for the Trinidad Legislature. The Governor of Trinidad is authorised to sign on behalf of the Governments of the West Indies. This is a domestic arrangement; and a difficulty has arisen. As soon as we get through the cable to the Governor of Trinidad that everything is all right, he will sign on behalf of the Barbados Government.

Mr. F. L. WALCOTT: I do not doubt what the honourable member has said; but the Governor of Trinidad could not sign on behalf of Trinidad until the Trinidad Legislature gave him authority to sign on their behalf. The Hon. Minister of Communications has this matter to put through, and he is saying that it must be done on Thursday; but it is not to make any difference in any way. The suggestion is that if we do not come on Thursday, the Shipping Service will not take place. Will the ship stop? I do not like this idea.

The President of the Other Place is a member of Executive Committee, and he has stated that he will not allow Bills to go through, unless there has been sufficient time for members of the Council to consider them. If Your Honour had said that, I suppose that someone would have wanted to crucify you. I do not think that coming on Thursday is necessary, because of any matter of urgency. Hon. members have their private business to attend to. Ministers

are working for the Government and the Government alone. I do not see that meeting on Thursday will cause anything to happen within the following week. Now I am hearing *sotto voce* remarks of the Hon. Minister of Communications who is always laying down the law, and knows nothing of what he is talking about.

Hon. M. E. COX: There is another point which I would like to mention. In view of the fact, this is my portfolio, I crave your indulgence to reply. I am not like the honourable junior member for St. Peter. I do not boast of being an authority on everything; and what I know nothing about, I do not speak. I mentioned not long ago, *sotto voce*, about other West Indian colonies having Finance Committees. I know I am right in what I am saying; because, all the other Governments in the Caribbean area, with the exception of Barbados, have their Finance Committees. Therefore, they have already agreed to the main agreement which has been sent to this House, and have contributed their money. We cannot do that, until this Legislature agrees. Barbados is the only colony to-day, which has not yet signed that agreement. The ship has been held up. It cannot leave until that agreement is met by the Barbados Government. That ship is to leave on the 31st of this month; and if it does not leave by that time on account of this agreement not being signed, it is a question of indemnifying the company. Therefore, we are asking the House to meet on Thursday to agree on the main agreement which this House is in possession of; and afterwards, we can discuss and come to some conclusion on the domestic agreement. I have already stressed that the other colonies, having their Finance Committees which can advance this money without resorting to their Legislatures, have already complied with the terms of the agreement; but we cannot do so until this Legislature agrees to it.

Mr. GODDARD: Mr. Speaker,—I am told now, that the Trinidad Government has introduced something. They have not told us what it is; but they are asking us to come here on Thursday afternoon, after they have met in the morning, to come to a decision on the matter. I want to know how they will get their findings to us before we come in this House. Are we to be told what they have discussed in Executive Committee? That is all I would like to be told. I would prefer to meet on Tuesday instead of Thursday. If the Executive Committee met Thursday, it would give the Ministers the opportunity to send it over to us during the weekend. It may be something material, and something other than what is in the Message.

The question that this House do now adjourn until Thursday next, at four o'clock p.m. was put, and resolved in the affirmative without division; and Mr. SPEAKER adjourned the House accordingly. 12.02 p.m.