

THE

House of Assembly Debates

(OFFICIAL REPORT)

SESSION 1954—55

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, 6th December, 1955.

Pursuant to the adjournment the House of Assembly met at 12 o'clock noon today.

PRESENT

His Honour K. N. R. HUSBANDS (*Speaker*), Hon. Dr. H. G. H. CUMMINS, C.B.E., M.D., C.M., (*Minister of Social Services*), His Honour A. E. S. LEWIS (*Deputy Speaker*), Hon. M. E. COX, (*Minister of Communications, Works and Housing*), Mr. L. E. SMITH, J.P., (*Chairman of Committees*), Mr. T. O. BRYAN, Mr. O. T. ALLDER, Mr. J. A. HAYNES B.A., Mr. J. C. MOTTLEY, Mr. E. St. A. HOLDER, Mr. V. B. VAUGHAN, Hon. C. E. TALMA, (*Minister of Agriculture, Lands and Fisheries*), Mrs. E. E. BOURNE and Mr. J. C. TUDOR, M.A.

Prayers were read.

Messrs. E. D. Mottley and Goddard entered the House and took their seats.

MINUTES

Mr. SPEAKER: I have the honour to inform the House that the Minutes of the Meeting held on the 15th November, 1955, have been printed and circulated and unless there be any objection, these Minutes will be taken as read and confirmed.

There being no objection, the Minutes were taken as read and confirmed.

PAPERS LAID

Hon. M. E. COX: Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Hon. Premier, I am commanded by His Excellency to lay the Emergency Powers (Hurricane) (Control of Rents) (Amendment) Order, 1955.

I should like to say, subject of course to the feelings of honourable members, that I am asking for leave later in the day to move the passing of this Order. It is formal and I hope honourable members will acquiesce.

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Mr. Speaker, I am commanded to lay the Annual Report of the Department of Science and Agriculture for the year 1953—54.

REPLIES

Hon. M. E. COX: Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Hon. Premier I beg to lay the following:—

Reply to Question No. 53 asked by the hon. senior member for St. Lucy regarding an advertisement for candidates for the Police Force.

Also Reply to Question No. 60 asked by the same hon. member regarding the issue of passports.

GOVERNMENT NOTICES

Hon. M. E. COX: Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Hon. Premier, I beg to give notice of the following:—

Resolution to approve the continuance in force of the Emergency Powers (Hurricane) (Control Of Rents) (Amendment) Order, 1955.

On behalf of myself I beg to give notice of the following:—

Resolution to authorise the Accountant General to make advances from time to time to the Postmaster General of such sum or sums (not exceeding \$800,000 outstanding at any time) as may be necessary to enable him to pay Money Orders.

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Mr. Speaker, I beg to give notice of the following:—

Resolution to approve the allocation of the balance of the Stabilization Fund to producers of sugar at the rate of 9.4928 cents per ton of sugar produced.

Also resolution to approve the Order entitled "The Sugar Industry (Rehabilitation, Price Stabilization and Labour Welfare) Order, 1955. 12.25 p.m.

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Mr. Speaker, I ask leave to deal with the two Resolutions of which I have given notice in connection with the allocation of the balance of the Stabilization Fund and the Resolution to approve the Order relating to the Sugar Industry (Rehabilitation, Price Stabilization and Labour Welfare) Order, 1955. I am also asking leave that these two Resolutions be taken as the first two Orders of the Day.

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

SUGAR INDUSTRY (REHABILITATION AND LABOUR WELFARE) ORDER, 1955

Mr. SPEAKER: The first Order of the Day now stands in the name of the Hon. Minister of

Agriculture, Lands and Fisheries: To move the passing of the following Resolution:—Resolution to approve the Order entitled "The Sugar Industry (Rehabilitation, Price Stabilization and Labour Welfare) Order, 1955.

Hon. C. E. TALMA: As hon. members are aware or will recall, under the Sugar Industry (Rehabilitation, Price Stabilization and Labour Welfare) Act, 1947 the Governor-in-Executive Committee is empowered by Order to raise a levy which is the rate or rates as may be fixed by the Governor-in-Executive Committee. That is done in respect of the crop year in question: in other words, in respect of the crop for this year 1955. The Governor-in-Executive Committee has approved of certain recommendations made, and has fixed the Order for 1955 as set out in Article two of the Schedule whereby there shall be raised (a) on all sugar manufactured in this Island during the year one thousand nine hundred and fifty-five a levy at the rate of fifteen dollars and ninety-seven cents per ton; and (b) on all fancy molasses manufactured in this Island during the year one thousand nine hundred and fifty-five a levy at the rate of seventeen dollars and twenty-seven cents per two hundred and ninety wine gallons, which is the equivalent of a ton. Those are the two rates of levy which have been fixed for this year under the Sugar Industry (Rehabilitation, Price Stabilization and Labour Welfare) Act, 1947, as amended.

In Article three there is set out the proportion in which the money which is collected is to be paid out. As set out in that article there shall be paid (a) to the Sugar Industry Rehabilitation Board at the rate of four dollars and eighty cents per ton in respect of sugar and at the rate of four dollars and eighty cents per two hundred and ninety wine gallons in respect of fancy molasses; (b) to the Sugar Industry Price Stabilization Reserve Board at the rate of four dollars and twenty cents per ton in respect of sugar, and at the rate of four dollars and twenty cents per two hundred and ninety wine gallons in respect of fancy molasses; and (c) to the Governor-in-Executive Committee at the rate of six dollars and ninety-seven cents per ton in respect of sugar, and at the rate of eight dollars and twenty-seven cents per two hundred and ninety wine gallons in respect of fancy molasses.

Those are the proposed allocations for this year and they have been recommended by the Board and approved by the Governor-in-Executive Committee.

The Addendum sets out all the material points and it is fairly clear. After consultation with both sides of the Sugar Industry and after very lengthy negotiations with the Sugar Producers' Association in which matters affecting the financing of the Deep Water Harbour Scheme, the bulk storage installations, and the question of insurance were discussed as the details of the Scheme and the various proposals concerning it have not been worked out, it has been decided to leave them over until next year. There is also the question of the establishment of a Provident Fund which has the support of the Government. Those are the outstanding points which have been left over to be dealt with next year.

I am just giving some of the reasons for the delay in this matter. I refer to the question of the financing of the Deep Water Harbour, the bulk storage regulations and the shipping installations and there is also the question of the establishment of the Provident Fund which has to be established next year and which the Government supports, but the details of which are yet to be worked out. Hon. members can well understand that in matters affecting the financing of the Deep Water Harbour there

are certain persons who are necessarily sitting in on those negotiations; there is also the question of the illness of the Premier; then we have been visited by the hurricane which has distorted things a great deal; and there was also the port strike which again distorted things somewhat; and quite a great deal of the sugar which was sold this year was sold on the free market so that the average price of sugar was not determined until some time in November. With all these things added, when you think of the financing of a project which we attempted and upon which all sides are not yet agreed in every respect, you can appreciate that there would be some delay; but the Government is mindful of the fact that the cane growers are anxiously awaiting the money from the result of the sale of canes and regrets any inconvenience which has been caused to growers of cane.

12.35 p.m.

In the Addendum it is stated that after consultation with both sides of the sugar industry, it has been decided that levies upon sugar and fancy molasses manufactured during the crop year 1955 should be raised, under the authority of the Sugar Industry (Rehabilitation, Price Stabilisation and Labour Welfare) Act, 1947, as amended, at the rates appearing above.

I have already referred to the rates which are made up as follows:—

2. (a) basic levies per ton of sugar and per equivalent quantity (290 wine gallons) of fancy molasses, as follows. (Rates previously in force shown in brackets).
- | | | |
|-----------------------------|--------|----------|
| Price Stabilisation Fund | \$4.20 | (\$6.00) |
| Rehabilitation Reserve Fund | 4.80 | (4.80) |
| Labour Welfare Fund | 4.20 | (2.40) |

13.20 (13.20)

It will be seen from this table of comparative rates that whereas the amount allocated to the Rehabilitation Reserve Fund remains the same, an equation has taken place between the Price Stabilisation Fund and the Labour Welfare Fund. That is to say, whereas the amount formerly allocated to the Price Stabilisation Fund was \$6.00 and the Labour Welfare Fund \$2.40, the Price Stabilisation Fund is now \$4.20 and the Labour Welfare Fund is also \$4.20. There has thus been a decrease in the rate of the former fund and an increase in the latter, making them \$4.20 each. The basic rates together make a total of \$13.20.

On this occasion our rates are not only basic rates but over and above average crop rates.

- (b) The 1955 crop of 171,010 tons being slightly above the average 1950-54, an "above average" levy on the whole crop (including fancy molasses) at a rate calculated to yield the equivalent of a levy of \$1.80 per ton on the negotiated price quota of 131,906 tons, the proceeds to be credited to the Labour Welfare Fund. This works out at \$1.39 per ton of sugar, and per equivalent quantity of fancy molasses, on the whole crop.

This is a special levy which was granted some-time ago and has been granted again by the Sugar Production and Export Control Board on the average crop for the last five years at \$1.39 both in the case of sugar per ton and per equivalent quantity of fancy molasses.

- (c) A "marginal difference" levy, reflecting the proportionate increase in the levy element in the "negotiated price" of sugar, consequent upon the increase in that price since 1950. The gross amount of this levy

has been reduced to the extent necessary to eliminate the difference between the average prices received by producers, per ton of sugar and per equivalent quantity of fancy molasses, and the negotiated price. The difference between the average and negotiated prices in respect of the 1954 crop exceeded the "marginal difference" for that year by 97c. per ton of that year's crop; this shortfall has also been taken into account in this year's calculation. The average price received per ton of sugar and per 290 wine gallons of fancy molasses being different, separate calculations are necessary for the two forms of produce. On the basis described, the rates of "marginal difference" for 1955 are \$1.38 per ton of sugar and \$2.68 per 290 wine gallons of fancy molasses, which amounts are to be levied accordingly for the credit of the Labour Welfare Fund.

All that I have just read is set out under paragraph 2 (a) (b) and (c); and there is paragraph No. 3 which clearly sets out the rates in respect of each fund in tabular form as follows:—

3. The above rates or levies are summarised below in tabular form:

Per ton of sugar				Per 290 wine gallons of fancy molasses				
	Price Stabilisation	Rehabilitation	Labour Welfare	Total	Price Stabilisation	Rehabilitation	Labour Welfare	Total
	4.20	4.80	4.20	13.20	4.20	4.80	4.20	13.20
	—	—	1.39	1.39	—	—	1.39	1.39
	—	—	1.38	1.38	—	—	2.68	2.68
“Basic” levy	..							
“Above average” levy								
“Marginal difference”								
Total	4.20	4.80	6.97	15.97	4.20	4.80	8.27	17.27

drought, we may have two years, one after the other: and that would mean chaos, when one considers today's standard of living. In the old days, you could get potatoes at two cents per pound: and in case of drought you could still get something at a very reasonable price; but those prices are gone today. It would be a calamity indeed if we do not provide for such an eventuality.

The levy amounts to \$13.20 plus the marginal difference which I do not pretend that I understand. It has been explained to me a couple of times but I am still unable to grasp the full details of it. However, the overall picture is quite clear. Let me say that this is not the Government's idea. Those who claim not to have conservative tendencies have adopted this very sound conservative policy of putting aside something for the rainy day; and it is a very good thing to do, because one may not always have sunshine. However, although this was not the Government's idea, they have followed it and I commend them for it.

This Preference Money used to be paid out around October in past years but for various reasons it has been delayed this year, and honourable members of this House can tell the number of enquiries which we have been getting about it. People come to us daily saying: "Tell us why this money has not yet been paid." As a matter of fact, Parochial Treasurers are finding it difficult to get in their taxes because the people are awaiting this money to pay their taxes. I am sure that the Annual Industrial Exhibition this year is going to suffer as a result of this money not yet having been paid; and as a result of that, the Entertainment Tax which Government enjoys from that Exhibition will suffer. There are so many thousands of people who depend on this money. Let me say that this money which sugar factories will be paying out next week is being awaited just as bonus is awaited. I hope this Resolution will go through all its stages now and I am going to ask the Hon. Minister in charge, if the Other Place is meeting today, to send it up right-away and let it become law so that sugar factory owners can get on with the payment of this money at the very earliest opportunity.

Mr. J. C. MOTTLEY: Mr. Speaker, it is not with the view of holding up this Resolution that I am speaking, but I want to offer my sympathy to this Government for this long drawn out delay in getting this Preference Money to hand and trying to get an understanding of what to do. I hope, as the last speaker has said, that the Government will give sugar factory owners the go-ahead to pay out this money because I am embarrassed by the number of people who are coming to me asking about the matter; sometimes I get angry when they come.

Sir, I hope the Government will use its ingenuity, should a delay like this occur again, to make a pronouncement to the public so as to let them know what is the cause of the delay. It is said that no news is good news, but that is not so at all times. There was a lot of rumour which was spread around on this matter, such as, "we are not going to get any preference money this year." I hope all such rumours were false and that these new rates will not affect the poor peasant proprietor very much or that he will not lose very much as a result. With these few remarks, Mr. Speaker, I am offering Government my support although the matter is a little bit belated.

Mr. ALLDER: Mr. Speaker, the difficulties which I have encountered over the past number of months in trying to explain to peasant proprietors and workers the reason why this preference money has not been paid has caused me at this stage to express appreciation for the belated bringing of this Resolution before this Chamber. However, I

would like to say that it seems as if the Government does not know enough about the working of the Sugar Industry and therefore at times finds itself in a difficult position to give an explanation to the public on such matters. That causes much confusion and worry to those who have something to do with the industry—those who are out working in the factories, in the fields, or selling canes to such buyers. I would like to suggest again that Government make itself more conversant with this matter perhaps by way of the appointment of some Technical Officer who would associate himself with the Sugar Producers' Association and the Factory Owners as a representative of the Government's point of view, and that I think would be a means of getting an idea of how the industry is worked. The Sugar Industry is too much of importance as regards the economy of this country for Government not to know everything about it. Too many people have got to depend on it and when there is delay in getting money from it, and especially a delay as long as this which we have in getting this preference money, there is much confusion not only among the workers in the industry but even in commercial circles. As I have said, much depends on when such moneys are paid.

I would suggest that Government make sure that in the future delays do not take as long as formerly for the cane sellers to know what they are going to get and workers to know what is exactly their portion in the industry. I hope both the Hon. Minister of Agriculture and the Hon. Minister for Trade, Industry and Labour will amalgamate with each other to see that the public knows exactly how the Sugar Industry is run, what are the benefits to accrue to the various sections of the people who have something to do with it, and to see that the portion which is due to the workers is given to them in time as well as that to those who sell the canes.

I cannot convey to you Mr. Speaker, in sufficient terms the difficulties which those people have had to undergo due to the long delay in knowing when this money will be paid and how much it is to be.

12.55 p.m.

Mr. LEWIS: Mr. Speaker, I think that at the beginning of today's sitting I heard the honourable Member of the passing of this Resolution say that he intended to suspend Rules 88 and 89. I am not myself clear that this is the form of Resolution which is intended by Rules 88 and 89.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Hon. Minister has asked for permission to deal with this Resolution as the first Order of the Day and that permission has been granted.

Mr. LEWIS: You can have permission for a Money Resolution to be proceeded with but you will still have to suspend the Rules in order to deal with it.

Mr. SPEAKER: This is not a Money Resolution in the ordinary sense.

Mr. LEWIS: I have just wondered whether you have been advised in the matter and that we should suspend the Rule in order to be on the safe side. However, my comment today is that I am very glad to see that the day has arrived when something which I have been saying since 1947 has now been accepted. In 1947 we were told that these allocations were done in England and could not be altered; but I know the people in St. Kitts have not thought so. The next thing was that I said if you have to supplement the Labour Welfare Fund in view of the fact

that you have not made any survey of the factories, you should not do it in respect of the Stabilization Fund. Hon. members opposed that and said that it should not be done, but I have heard one honourable member who opposed it introduce an Address asking that it should be altered; so that I think we will come around gradually to that view and not collect this set on locally consumed sugar.

There is something which I am glad to hear today and it is that the junior member for Christ Church has said, that this Price Stabilisation Fund is for the purpose of maintaining wages. That was a point which was not made clear in 1947, and I think it was the subject of an enquiry in another island and that is how it was to be applied. However, I am glad to hear that, because I felt it would be a good thing to have it made clear. I am glad to hear that that is the view which is held in Barbados.

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

ALLOCATION OF BALANCE OF STABILISATION FUND

Mr. SPEAKER: The next Order of the Day also stands in the name of the Hon. Minister of Agriculture, Lands and Fisheries:— To move the passing of the following Resolution: Resolution to approve the allocation of the balance of the Stabilisation Fund to producers of sugar at the rate of 9.4928 cents per ton of sugar produced.

Hon. C. E. TALMA: This is a Resolution to approve the allocation of the balance of the Stabilisation Fund, fixed on the 5th December, 1955 by the Governor-in-Executive Committee on the advice of the Fancy Molasses Control and Marketing Board, under the provisions of Section 10 of the Barbados Fancy Molasses Production and Export Act, 1937. As the Addendum states:—

"The Fancy Molasses Control and Marketing Board, under Section 10 of the Barbados Fancy Molasses Production and Export Act, 1937 (1937-14), has advised that the balance of the Stabilisation Fund, 1955, should be allocated among producers of sugar as set out in this Resolution. The purpose of the Fund is to equalise, so far as may be, the prices of sugar and fancy molasses; this year, the price of the latter has been higher.

The Governor-in-Executive Committee agrees with this recommendation of the Board, and this Resolution is accordingly submitted to the Legislature in accordance with the provisions of the Act.

The balance of the Stabilisation Fund being this year insufficient wholly to achieve the object of the Fund, a further sum has been allocated from the Fancy Molasses Industry Fund by the Fancy Molasses Control and Marketing Board to equalisation purposes, with the approval of the Governor-in-Executive Committee.

1.05 p.m.

This is an allocation from the levy and does not require legislative approval whereas the first requires it. The total amount of payments to be made to producers from the Stabilisation Fund and the Fancy Molasses Industry Fund amount to 38.1477 cents per ton of sugar produced. That is a little over 38 cents.

Mr. Speaker, that is the rate at which preference will be paid. This is one of the those regular annual Resolutions that comes down to the House. If there are any outstanding questions in connection with the Resolution which honourable members would like to raise I should be glad to answer them, but to all intents and purposes those are the facts.

I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

Mr. BRYAN: I beg to second that.

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

EMERGENCY ORDERS

Hon. M. E. COX: Mr. Speaker, I am asking leave to deal with the Resolution relative to the Emergency Powers Orders of which I gave notice as the next Order of the Day.

Mr. SPEAKER: The honourable member is asking leave ———

Mr. LEWIS: Mr. Speaker, I am not objecting to leave being granted, but I believe that I should have a copy of the Orders.

Hon. M. E. COX: Well, Mr. Speaker, I have asked the Clerk to circulate some copies. [VOICES: What is it the House is now dealing with?] I am sorry Mr. Speaker. Although the honourable member has said he is not objecting ———

Mr. LEWIS: I should like to see a copy, that is all.

Mr. SPEAKER: The honourable member is asking leave to deal with the Resolution of which he has already given notice; and unless there be any objection leave will be granted.

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

Hon. M. E. COX: Mr. Speaker, this Resolution is to continue the order in so far as Rent Control is concerned. The Addendum reads as follows:

This Resolution seeks the approval of the House of Assembly to the continuance in force of the Emergency Powers (Hurricane) (Control of Rents) (Amendment) Order, 1955, made by the Governor-in-Executive Committee on the 1st of December, 1955, under section 3 of the Emergency Powers Act, 1939, during the continuation of a state of emergency declared to exist by a Proclamation made by His Excellency the Governor on the 19th of November, 1955. The Order has been laid in the Legislature.

The Order amends the Emergency Powers (Hurricane) (Control of Rents) Order No. 3, 1955, made by the Governor-in-Executive Committee on the 25th of November, 1955, and exempts from the provisions of the latter Order, any dwelling house the monthly rental value of which normally exceeds \$40. This exemption is intended to allow Hotels and Guest Houses to charge their usual special winter rates.

It has been represented to us that with the Order as it stood, the hotels and guest houses would not have been able to charge their winter rates for the simple reason that the Order universally controls all rents in the Island. With that representation the Government has decided to amend the Order to allow the hotels and guests houses to carry out their wishes and all their normal functions so far as rates are concerned. The \$40 maximum will cover those cases of which we are mostly thinking. That is to say, the cases of poor people whose rents might be pushed up as a result of their inability to get housing accommodation as easily as might have been the case before the Hurricane.

With those few remarks I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

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

Mr. LEWIS: Mr. Speaker, there was some thing mentioned here at the last meeting of the House in connection with an Order affecting the renting of houses, and I am wondering whether this is an amendment to give effect to the opinion that was voiced then. [Hon. M. E. COX: Yes.] I am referring to the Resolution; I am referring

to copies of the Order. I do not understand it. I think that it was either my colleague or the honourable junior member for Christ Church who spoke on this particular aspect of the question on the occasion to which I have just referred. So really and truly he should have spoken first. There is one thing which I do not like in this Order; and that is, that to make an order like this and make it retrospective, makes me doubt very much whether it applies to the spirit of the law. Further, I do not understand what is meant; I do not think that these Orders are meant to be retrospective. Imagine an Emergency having been declared and making that retrospective! This is a serious thing to creep into the business. All that you have to do is to amend it and wink at it from the 25th November. Otherwise it is very, very contrary to the spirit of the Act. How can you say that the Order was to have effect from the 25th when the Order was made on the 1st December. If that is so, it means that those Orders made on the 22nd September, could be easily made to apply from the 1st January of this year. If you can do that, if you can do the one, you can do the other. It only goes back to the day on which the very Order was made or rather to when the particular state of Emergency had been declared.

I hope that what I have said here on the last occasion the hon. member has taken to the Executive Committee, and that he will not allow us to find ourselves in this awkward position again. Let us revert to having our Hurricane and Earthquake Emergency Act which is something which might be made to last for a year or two. For the year 1955 you have anything like four or five Orders and Amendments which when read, one would be unable to distinguish which is which. I am asking him to do that and if he finds that a mistake is made, he should correct it. It means that every 22nd of the month you will have to come in here and do this until you clean up all the effects of the hurricane. Hurricane and Earthquake Emergencies are things which can last for a year or two years.

Mr. GODDARD : Mr. Speaker, just before the adjournment of the last meeting took place when the Emergency Powers Orders were being considered I drew this matter to the Government's attention. There was very much noise around and I wondered if they had heard what I said. However I am pleased to see that this amendment has come down. What I was saying then was this: Government had this rent control continued under the new Emergency Order and the time is coming when the winter and tourist season is approaching and the houses that were rented on lower rates in the summer would have their rates increased when that season comes. That is the normal practice throughout the world. There are many flats and houses which are rented to tourists and people who come here to spend the winter at remunerative rates. One of those flats can be had by those people for two or three months at winter rates and then the owner if he can get a renter for the flat in the summer will rent it at a reduced price. This same thing applies to Miami. At the Maresol Flats, which is an example of this practice, they have about six houses, each having between six and ten apartments; and the rates charged for those apartments are considerably higher in the winter months than those in summer. This Order if it remained as it was would have interfered considerably with the owner of such flats getting the rents which he usually charges during the winter season, and I am very pleased that Government has come down so speedily with this amendment, because it shows that they are interested in the tourist season or are showing signs of it.

Mr. E. D. MOTTLEY : I differ slightly with the hon. junior member for Christ Church on this matter. Now, Mr. Speaker, last week we dealt with a Resolution approving Emergency Orders arising as a consequence of the hurricane, and one of those Orders was for the purpose of controlling and preventing persons from raising rents. I think every hon. member will agree that it is an absolute necessity to have some sort of power to prevent people from raising rents as a result of the hurricane. We passed last week that Order which was a general Order; now this week there is an amendment to that Order. The amendment is to the effect that "nothing in this Order shall apply or be deemed to apply to any dwelling house the annual rental value of which normally exceeds four hundred and eighty dollars." I am going to say here and now that in my considered opinion that amendment is wrong and for this reason: what you are saying in effect is that rents can be increased as long as the house which you are renting out is at the rate of more than \$40 a month. I happen to represent a constituency in which the majority of people have to rent houses and I would prefer to see this Order saying what it really means. There is nothing in this Order which can apply to apartment houses, houses, and hotels: and that is exactly what you mean that it should apply to. With the value of money what it is today, and the cost of land what it is, everyone knows that there are people in Bridgetown, (white-collared workers especially), of whom two or three families might have to pool together to rent a house at more than \$40 a month. They will be at the mercy of God and the landlord if this amendment is put into effect. I agree with the Government for bringing in an Order at this stage to prohibit the increase of rent but I am not at all in agreement with your bringing something to limit it to houses of less than \$40 a month, because you are leaving the people who rent houses at more than \$40 a month at the mercies of God and the landlord.

I do not think I am going to vote for this Resolution as it stands. I know that this amendment was meant to apply to those places which are rented in the off season, that is to hotels, flats and apartment houses, so to speak, which are rented at reduced rates during the summer season; but with this Order as it stands now, it means that when the season is changed you could not prevent landlords who have houses rented out at more than \$40 a month from increasing their rents: and that would be wrong. It is the view that if this matter had been taken up in the right quarter and the desire was to relieve hotels and people with boarding houses and flats by allowing them to charge rents in the winter season commensurate with the value of the houses and to make back for the loss at which they were rented during the off season, this paragraph should have been worded differently.

I am sure the Hon. Minister in charge of this Resolution could not have taken this matter seriously. When it comes to the paying of rent for houses, in his own constituency there are people who pay \$40 per month for two bedrooms, and a lot of those people have suffered as a result of the storm. If the person who was responsible for drafting this amendment knew sufficient of the rental of houses, he would appreciate what I say.

Sir, I am suggesting the postponement of this Resolution in the meantime to let the Minister get something drafted to apply to boarding houses and hotels. As it stands, a lot of people who now pay rent at \$40 per month would suffer. Their rents would be increased and with the shortage of houses at present, the landlords would want to evict them.

While I am speaking on this matter, I want to draw the attention of the Government to something that has come about as a result of the houses damaged in the hurricane. A few weeks ago, we sat and passed a Resolution which gave consent to the building of prefabricated houses for the purpose of rehousing the homeless among other things. In other words, Government embarked on a scheme of repairing and putting back up houses which were damaged, and started on another scheme of building prefabricated houses for those people whose houses were destroyed. It strikes me that the only fair way to do this would be to start first with those people who are homeless and who are still residing in the shelters, almshouses, churches and such places. I am at a loss to understand what policy Government is adopting by allowing the people to remain in the various shelters and giving the prefabricated houses to people who are already in houses. In St. Michael you are still housing homeless people in schools and other Government buildings, as well as in the St. Michael's Infirmary. It is rather heart-rending to find those people coming to me requesting that they be given some opportunity to go back to their normal way of life by assisting them in the application for getting one of these prefabricated houses, and when I take the matter up I find that the people who are in shelters are left in shelters, and the people whose houses are actually put back up and who are able to live in them are given new prefabricated houses.

1.25 p.m.

I am addressing these remarks to the Minister who is in charge of this matter and I ask him to look very carefully into it because it is causing very much discontent and heartburn. There is the feeling that persons are being given houses, persons who are really still in their houses; while people who are still huddled together in shelters with their children all around them and who are sleeping all about, are not given any houses. I think the policy of the Government should be that the first houses which are finished should be given to those persons who have no houses.

Mr. SPEAKER: I have given the honourable member some latitude.

Mr. E. D. MOTTLEY: This Emergency Housing Order is the result of a hurricane and I quite appreciate the latitude which Your Honour has given me. I am sure honourable members will appreciate the point I have made and if this is to prevent the creation of any hardship in respect of the Hotel owners and guest house owners who carry on this business, that is an appreciation of what the Tourist Industry must be. If you appreciate the real estate position in Barbados today and the rents which are paid, when you appreciate the fact that a number of persons in the lower brackets have been thrown out of their houses, what would be the easiest thing to do? A lot of these people in houses at \$60 per month had the tops of them blown off and therefore, I do not see why you should draw the line at \$40 a month. If you went to Combermere Street and such places, you will find houses at a rental of \$40 a month; they are not all what is considered white collar workers and people like that occupying these houses and these rents could be raised; but below that the rents should not be raised.

The general amendment should be that this Order should not apply to Hotels and Boarding houses; you should say that as a result of the hurricane people are rendered homeless and no rents should be increased until the Government is satisfied that the rehabilitation has reached a stage where it can be considered as satisfactory. I am sure that the Hon. Minister must know that it is not the desire of the Government that this amendment should effect

any hardship or place any particular group in any hardship. This is really to prevent persons who carry on business so to speak with tourists —

At this stage Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair and Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER took the Chair.

Mr. E. D. MOTTLEY: I was saying, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that there is a difference between the people who run this business of hotels and so on and other people, one rich in season and another rich out of season. But a broad amendment to the Order such as this is really placing a particular income group at a great disadvantage; because whenever you get a shortage of houses, the rents will be going up and up. When you have one or two families who cannot get houses, the rents will go up and a man finds himself at the disadvantage that he will have to pay more money for rent or remain in his house. In my opinion this amendment really hits the type of person in the community who cannot afford it. In this matter, you will appreciate that no rents should be increased in the existing circumstances where people are suffering. Last week we passed without a murmur Regulations saying that no rents should be increased; this week you say that you want to amend this Order. I say, that you are hitting at a particular Income Group which can ill afford it; you are saying that Hotels, Boarding Houses and the like should not be increased. I am moving the postponement of this matter; if this is postponed, within seven days the Government might come back with a new Regulation. Honourable members either agree with this or they do not agree with it; we had a hurricane and it became necessary to bring down an Order saying that rents should not be increased, because you had unscrupulous people who put up houses, get people to go in them—those who want to get out of the shelters—and then increase the rents. The Government wants an amendment to this Order and in Section 2 of this Amendment they are asking for an amendment of the Order by the addition thereto of the following new article:

“Nothing in this Order shall apply or be deemed to apply to any dwelling house the annual rental value of which normally exceeds four hundred and eighty dollars.”

Four hundred and eighty dollars a year is \$40.00 per month.

1.35 p.m.

I contend that there is a particular group of people living here in which sometimes two families have to get together and rent a \$40 a month house. The difficulty underlying this maximum is that other people will in turn, carry up their rents. I can appreciate that, where the economy of a business is concerned. I am therefore in favour of a postponement of this Resolution; and this postponement is intended to give the Government a chance of saying: we have no idea of putting these people at a disadvantage. In short, to give the Government the chance to reconsider the Order with a view to redressing the irregularity. If you go through any part of this City you will find that houses which were normally \$45 and \$50 per month are now \$55 and \$60 per month. The people who rent such houses are in the majority and it is they who suffer most.

I beg to move that this Resolution be postponed for further consideration.

Hon. M. E. COX: Mr. Deputy Speaker,—

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Will the honourable member see whether some other honourable member is seconding the last motion.

Mr. TUDOR: I beg to second that.

Hon. M. E. COX: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I quite appreciate the remarks of the honourable senior mem-

ber for the City as I can see the logic in his argument. [Mr. E. D. MOTTLEY: Yes, for once.] Provided that these circumstances exist in so far as the number of houses in the \$40 category is concerned as compared to those smaller houses the renters of which we are trying to protect. While it is true (and I know that the honourable member has done a little reconnoitring as well as I have) I am sure he will admit that there is not 1% of the number of houses damaged in the \$40 category.

Mr. E. D. MOTTLEY: Mr. Speaker, on a point of explanation. I have not raised the question of damage to the houses in the \$40 category. What I argued was that with respect to those which have been damaged the tendency is for the owners to go ahead and raise the rents.

These are the people who will be at a great disadvantage; because wherever there is a question of supply there is a question of demand.

Hon. M. E. COX: The honourable member also spoke of a class of people who work for \$160 a month [Mr. E. D. MOTTLEY: \$120.00 a month too.] whose houses have been damaged by the hurricane. He claims that we are putting these people at a great disadvantage if we should allow the forty-dollar-a-month maximum to remain; for the simple reason that the owners of those houses could advance the rents and the cost of living would thereby go up. [Mr. E. D. MOTTLEY: I have not mentioned the cost of living.] However, the object of this Order is not really to bring into force a rent restriction Act, a rent restriction Act is definitely distinct from this. What we wish to say is this: that the Government is making extensive repairs to houses, whether owned by the persons who occupy them or by landlords. In those circumstances it is the tendency of landlords to unduly increase the rents of their houses. All therefore, the Government is trying to do is to prevent these landlords from making any undue increases of rent. But we are not, at this stage, attempting to interfere with the normal increases which the landlords are apt to carry out. That, Mr. Deputy Speaker, you will appreciate, should be dealt with formally under a separate Bill, the aims and objects of which would be fought out in this Chamber and either passed or rejected.

On the last occasion when a similar Order was before this House, the hon. junior member for Christ Church raised a point relative to boarding houses and guest houses. The Government saw the reason in the point raised and agreed to exempt such guest houses. However, the honourable member should also admit that there are quite a number of houses which fall within the category of guest houses which people may come to this Island and rent, perhaps for as long as two years. Such houses may even be newly constructed bungalows. [Mr. E. D. MOTTLEY: Newly constructed houses may be rented at any rate per month.] I am sorry; if it is a new house the rent may be advanced. But the hon. member must agree that if a person took up a house today, the rent should not be increased the next week.

At this stage Mr. Deputy Speaker left the Chair and Mr. Speaker resumed.

Hon. M. E. COX: As I said before, we are not satisfied, and I must appeal to hon. members to see the point in our argument. The forty-dollar-a-month houses are few in number and would not normally be repaired by the Government, but by the owners. The Government is, therefore, seeking to protect, more particularly, the poorer sections of the community whose rent may be advanced even though their landlords might not have gone through the

expense of repairing them. No harm can be done if we put the maximum at that. It was suggested that it should be lower; but we felt that \$40 should be the maximum for the small man, although it is known that many clerks cannot easily pay \$40 a month rent. As I said more than once, this is not a Rent Restriction Act; it is an Order the aim of which is to prevent unscrupulous landlords from taking advantage of their tenants during this unusual period of strain.

1.45 p.m.

I hope that is clear. I hope that they will see that there is absolutely no point in postponing this matter.

Now, there was another point raised by the same hon. member about the policy of getting people out of the shelters and he mentioned that the homeless people in shelters should be given houses first. I should like to assure him that from the beginning, I gave instructions that the people who are in shelters should be attended to first because we want to get them out; but the hon. member will appreciate that there are times when some extraordinary case will crop up and to which attention will have to be given. I know the case to which the hon. member is referring. He is referring to somebody who lives somewhere by Hothersal Turning that was given a prefabricated house. I can tell him that we had a report on the state of that individual's house although he was not living in a shelter. I really did not have the opportunity of inspecting it myself but I think it was on the information of the Chief Sanitary Inspector for St. Michael that that individual was given a prefabricated house. It was recommended that the individual owing to the state of the house in which he was living should be placed on the priority list for prefabricated houses similar to those people who were in shelters. As I understand it, the roof of that fellow's house was blown off during the hurricane and something was put on temporarily; and the fellow was living in something which could be described as a downfall. That is the case which was represented to me and which the hon. member took up with my Permanent Secretary.

I want to assure the hon. member that it is our policy to attend to those persons who are in shelters first, whether they were owners of houses or renters. That is definitely our policy.

Mr. E. D. MOTTLEY: That is only one isolated case which the hon. member mentioned; there are other cases in which people were given houses when they were not in shelters.

Hon. M. E. COX: The hon. member will appreciate that I do not know of any other. I therefore must appeal to him to assist in giving some of the information which he has because I want to assure him that I have not got it. If I knew it, I would put my feet down on it immediately.

Mr. VAUGHAN: I take this opportunity to bring to the Hon. Minister's attention what I consider to be an unfortunate remark which was made by the Hon. Minister of Social Services some time ago when he was introducing a Resolution for a large sum of money for the purpose of rehabilitating the houses of homeless people. He told the House that it was the last sum he was asking the House to grant for that purpose. I thought then it was a most unfortunate remark and I hope he will have the courage when he needs more money for rehousing the people to come in here and say that it was a most unfortunate remark of his, because, after all, none of the Ministers was responsible for the storm. That is how we have to look at it. They were not responsible when "Janet" des-

troyed the people's houses. Therefore, if Government has to spend money to rehabilitate them, do not talk of that being the last sum you are asking for to rehabilitate them, because I am aware that there is a great hesitancy about repairing and restoring certain houses where it is necessary to do so. I want to draw the matter publicly to the Hon. Minister of Housing because I know that if the matter is drawn publicly to his attention, he will take more urgent cognisance of it.

Mr. ALLDER: Mr. Speaker, I regret very much that I cannot see with the honourable senior member for the City moving his amendment because while I am in favour in some measure with rent control, yet I do not agree that an Order such as this cannot cause landlords to raise their rents because our landlords are such people that if they want an extra five or ten dollars, they are going to increase the rent of their houses whether this Order passes this Chamber or not. Therefore, there can be no argument based on what the honourable member said that the occupier is going to be asked to pay more rent. So long as there is not a definite system of rent control, the landlord is going to ask for more rent when he feels he want extra money.

What is more, Sir, you must reach some figure or other and because of that, I am not in favour of postponement of the Resolution.

Sir, I have a point to put to the Hon. Minister of Housing with regard to the case to which the honourable senior member for the City made reference about giving prefabricated houses to undesirable persons. I am sorry that the Hon. Minister so readily agreed with the recommendation for that case, (I do not know if it were intentional or accidental) but it does cast a reflection on the Housing administration.

What I want to say now is that the rehabilitation of people by the reconstruction of their homes is a job of extremely great magnitude. It is scattered all over the island and, lest it be a reflection on the Manager of the Housing Board over the way in which he is handling the job, I am going to say here and now (and I am not always willing to defend anybody unless I have good reasons to do so, nor am I willing to accuse anybody unless I am sure I am correct in so doing) that I know that the Housing Department gets a lot of trouble daily because of the dozens of people who come to me with their housing problem. Because of that, I have to telephone the Department often, and I can say readily that the Manager of the Housing Board has been always ready to respond to the giving of information in respect of rehabilitation of the people and their houses.

1.55 p.m.

It might not even be thought of as deeply now as it might be thought of in the future. I am speaking of the charge which has been made; I am not saying whether it is true or not because I am not fully aware of the particular case, but what strikes me is the admission of the Hon. Minister. Of course he clarified the position by saying that the special case was put to him and he was justified about it. I am not willing to say whether the person concerned was deserving of assistance or not; but I know how difficult it is for the Manager of the Department with the matters which confront him daily; and if an irregularity takes place, it should not be taken as a general reflection of the Management of the Department. Here you have supervisors some of whom the Department only became acquainted with as a result of the hurricane, and Mr. "X" is told to go to Penny Hole with materials and to use his discretion in the area. Cases like that should not be taken as

a departmental fault; I only wanted to make my position clear in that matter.

There is another point which I want to raise with the Government. Some time ago a Regulation was brought here pointing out the way in which the allocation of the prefabricated houses would affect the respective parishes. I have noticed in this Regulation that there was a provision for 38 houses for the parish of St. John and I am told by the people in the parish that although the houses are being built up there, they are taken out of the parish and carried to other parishes before those persons who are to get houses in the parish are given them. The Hon. Minister will realise that a thing like that would cause a little confusion and I hope it will be remedied.

There is yet another point which I would like to raise. There was a provision in respect of these lots of families and I have read where progress is going ahead in Christ Church. I would like to know why it has not been started in St. John in view of the fact that there is a misunderstanding among some of the householders in the parish. There are several cases in which even before the hurricane, labourers used to be given lodgings at each other's homes; since their houses have been destroyed and they have to seek shelter in public places, some of these people have refused to give further shelter to those who have no houses and who have been sheltering with these other people. It would be a good thing if you could give the parish two 20-block houses with which they could go ahead so as to relieve the situation as it stands today. As a matter of fact, if you are going to do kindness, the sooner you do it the more appreciated it will be for those who receive it. I hope the Government will try to expedite whatever they intend to do not only in that parish but in all the parishes with respect to the rehousing of the people.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. SPEAKER: It now being after 2 p.m. of the Clock this House now stands adjourned until a quarter to three in accordance with the Rules.
2 p.m.

On re-assembling.

Mr. SPEAKER: The question is that further consideration of this Resolution be postponed. Hon. members in favour of that will please say "aye" those against please say "no"; I think the "noes" have it.

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

AMENDMENTS TO REPRESENTATION OF THE PEOPLE BILL

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Mr. Speaker, I am asking leave to take Order No. 2 standing in the name of the Hon. Premier, as the next Order of the Day.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member is asking leave to take Order No. 2. as the next Order of the Day; and unless there be any objection, leave will be granted.

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

Order No. 2 was called: To move the consideration of the amendments of the Honourable the Legislative Council to the Bill to consolidate the laws relating to the Representation of the people.

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Mr. Speaker, this Bill has already been before this Chamber. It has now returned from the Other Place whither it went and

they have seen fit to submit a number of amendments. These amendments are essential in that they provide the necessary extra machinery for the effective working of this Bill. In so doing the Other Place has done a great service to the community. I thought I might mention that, having observed that the amendments are very voluminous. They are essential in the sense that, unless the amendments are incorporated into this Bill, the Bill may, in many cases, prove unworkable. This is, therefore, one of the instances in which the senior Chamber has rendered a great service to the Island as a whole, notwithstanding the services of Mr. Lightbourn and Mr. Malone of the Legal Department in regularising these amendments to the Bill as passed by the House.

Now, what are the main objects of these amendments? As hon. members will see, there are two measures; one of which is the Local Government Act, and the other, the Representation of the People Bill, which is still in the form of a Bill and which is now before us. The Local Government Act provides for the preparation of a yearly register for local government purposes; while the Representation of the People Bill provides for the registration of electors at least every five years. After further consideration, Government has decided that having two separate registers would involve unnecessary expense, as it would be necessary to have two separate persons to compile them. It was also felt that the principle in the Local Government Act of having a new register prepared every year would also involve considerable expense. It was, therefore, resolved to combine the two Acts in order to be able to provide one register for both purposes; that is, for the purpose of the Local Government Act and that of the Representation of the People Act. That then, is really the gist of these amendments. In other words, the main object is to combine the two Acts in such a way that there will be necessity for only one register, and not two, as is contained in the Local Government Act which was formally considered and passed by us.

I will just mention this in passing. In England the same principle is followed. The Representation of the People Act, 1949, it exists in England, consolidates the election law in that particular respect so as to include, not only the elections of the House of Commons, but other types of elections, as for example: those of the County Councils, the Borough Councils, the parish and rural districts. Therefore, in our case we are just following the English practice.

Now that we have adult suffrage, the basic qualification of which is residence and the attainment of the age of 21 (because although there are other qualifications in the Local Government Act, the basic qualifications under adult suffrage are: first of all, being a British subject, having attained the age of 21, being of sound mind and residing in a particular area or district at the qualifying date; there is no necessity under those circumstances of having this main and only qualification of the Representation of the People Act, to have two registers. After securing the advice of the Local Government adviser and that of Mr. Malone of the Attorney General's Chambers, the matter was duly considered with the result that these amendments have been submitted by the Other Place.

Now the amendments which have been made involving these two Bills in no way affect any existing principles, but merely provide the necessary extra machinery. I hardly can say that too often. In other words, the old principles laid down in

these two Bills, the Representation of the People Bill as passed by us and the Local Government Bill, remain the same.

Now, Mr. Speaker, when the Representation of the People Act comes into force there will be three registering officers for the whole Island who will, in their substantive posts, be the clerks of the respective councils; but for the preparation of the first register of electors, as the councils will not yet have been revealed, power is given to the Governor-in-Executive Committee to appoint registering officers for the several constituencies. Hon. members will realise that when the Local Government Act comes into operation the Island will be divided into three areas, each area having its Council. There will be a clerk to each Council who normally will be the registering officers. But, until then, the registering officers will have to be appointed by the Governor-in-Executive Committee. In addition, there will be a chief registering officer who will be in charge of the work of all the registering officers. The reason for this is that the registers of the election officers will involve far more work than the preparation of subsequent registers; and the revision of these registers must be done because the constituencies will have to be divided into polling districts.

Provision has been made in clause 16 of Part II of the Bill for the appointment of a Deputy Supervisor of Elections who will be provided with powers as full as those of the Supervisor of Elections, and who, normally, will supervise all the polling on Election Day. That is a very timely amendment to clause 16, because in case the Supervisor of Elections should for instance fall ill, there would be no one to take his place, as there is no provision for it in the Bill as passed by us. Hon. members will at once realise that an incident such as that would throw the whole machinery out of gear. Therefore, the amendment providing for a Deputy Supervisor of Elections to take the place of the Supervisor of elections and to be seized of those powers, is indeed welcome. The Deputy Supervisor of Elections will be the man in the field on Election Day covering the various districts of the Island where his presence will be necessary. On the other hand, the Supervisor of Elections will be in his office controlling matters from the executive point of view.

3.00 p.m.

As honourable members will appreciate, this is a necessary amendment for the smooth working of this Bill.

The amendment to Clause 10 provides that the division of a constituency into polling districts should become a job of the registering officer. That change therefore has caused this Clause to be extended. Let me say that the Register is prepared on the basis of polling districts and it is obviously important that the division of a constituency into polling districts should not be a matter which should be left to the whims and fancies of any particular individual.

Sub-section (5) provides:—

Subject to the provisions of subsection (9) of section 7 of this Act it shall be the duty of the registering officer to keep the polling districts of the constituency for which he acts under review and subject to the approval of the Governor-in-Executive Committee by notice published in the "Official Gazette" to make such alteration in such districts including the abolition or establishment of any polling district as he may consider proper having re-

gard to the provisions of sub-sections (2), (3) and (4) of this section.

Sub-section (6) further provides:—

If at any time the Governor-in-Executive Committee shall consider it to be necessary or desirable so to do he may review the polling districts in any constituency and if he shall so think fit having regard to the provisions of sub-sections (2), (3) and (4) of this section direct the registering officer for that constituency to make any alteration therein, including the abolition or establishment of any polling district, and if such registering officer upon being so directed shall fail within one month after being so directed to make the alteration so required, the Governor-in-Executive Committee may by notice published in the "Official Gazette" effect such alteration.

Then there is sub-section (7):—

The Governor-in-Executive Committee may make regulations providing for the adaptation of district and may make in such regulations special provisions for cases where any alteration of polling districts is made between the date of publication of the electors' lists and the coming into force of the register of electors prepared from those lists, but except in cases for which such provision is made by regulations, an alteration of polling districts made either under the provisions of subsections (5) or (6) of this section, shall not be effective until the coming into force of the first register of electors prepared or as the case may be revised after the alterations were made:

The following proviso is added:

Provided that for the purposes of all proceedings connected with the preparation or revision of such register the division or alteration shall be effective as from the date it is approved or, as the case may be, made by the Governor-in-Executive Committee.

In England this power is vested in the Home Secretary.

I do not intend to deal with all the amendments. I will now deal with those to Clause 19. The amendment to this Clause gives power to the Supervisor of the Election rather than to the Governor-in-Executive Committee, the right to appoint poll clerks. It has been done for the reason that Poll Clerks are junior officers and as such, hardly warrant appointment by the Governor-in-Executive Committee. Clause 19, subclause (2) of the Bill provides that in case of an emergency a poll clerk should take over from the Presiding Officer. However, it is felt that the Poll Clerk might not be always a suitable type of person to run a polling station, so the amendment to this Clause to give power to the Supervisor of Elections to appoint such an officer in an emergency. I think these amendments to this Clause are pretty clear. They only have to be studied carefully.

Formerly, there was only one Revising Officer, but now with Adult Suffrage there are thousands of electors in each constituency. There is need therefore, for having more than one Revising Officer now, if the work is to be completed within the stipulated time of three weeks. Power is therefore given to the Governor-in-Executive Committee to appoint as many Revising Officers as the Governor-in-Executive Committee may see fit. That is the amendment to Clause 66.

There is the addition of Clause 71 which is a saving clause. Honourable members will agree that when this Act comes into force the first thing that will have to be done will be the preparation of the Register of Electors. That takes several months to compile because it involves house-to-house visits to

find out who are entitled to vote. In point of fact, the Register cannot be brought into effect before the 30th June every year. Before this Act comes into operation, there is the possibility that there will be no register to govern an election as the Act repeals the existing law; therefore sub-section (1) of Section 71 provides for the saving of the existing register until the new register is published. Sub-clause (1) reads as follows:—

Notwithstanding anything contained in this Act, in the event of any election being begun prior to the publication pursuant to the provisions of this Act of the first register of electors prepared under the provisions of this Act the registers of electors prepared and in force in accordance with the provisions of any enactment in force immediately prior to the date of the coming into operation of this Act shall be the registers of electors to be used at such election, and the persons entitled to vote at such election shall be those who are registered in such registers of electors."

Sub-clauses (2) and (3) of Clause 71 are designed to save the register of previous elections for Vestry elections. Sub-clauses (2) and (3) read as follows:

"Notwithstanding anything contained in this Act, in the event of any election of members of a Vestry being begun prior to the first local Government election to be held under the provisions of the Local Government Act, 1954, such elections shall be held and conducted in accordance with the provisions of any enactment relating thereto in force immediately prior to the date of the coming into operation of this Act.

"Notwithstanding anything contained in this Act, until such time as the Governor shall, by notice in the "Official Gazette" otherwise direct, the lists of voters entitled to vote at an election of members of a Vestry shall continue to be prepared and maintained and revised in accordance with the provisions of any enactment relating thereto in force immediately prior to the date of the coming into operation of this Act.

This means that the old Register will hold good so far as the General Assembly and the Vestry are concerned.

Mr. Speaker, the amendments to this Act are voluminous, but they are essential and valuable in order that the whole Bill will be workable. They are absolutely essential in order to put this Act in order, and to regularise both Bills—the Local Government Act and the Representation of the People Act. They entailed a voluminous amount of work by Mr. Lightburn whose services we are fortunate to secure, and who had been here for the past six or eight months, and has spent many hours considering these amendments along with the assistance of Mr. Malone who is the Legal Draftsman in the Attorney General's Department. These amendments have been thoroughly examined by a Select Committee of the Other Place, paragraph after paragraph, clause after clause, section after section, over a period of weeks and have also received the close scrutiny of the Hon. Premier under whose portfolio this Bill comes, but who unfortunately is absent from the House today through illness. They have also received the scrutiny of the Hon. Minister of Social Services who normally would have been handling this matter today, were it not that he is absent from the colony on legislative business. 3.10 p.m.

I am merely submitting to hon. members the fact that these amendments have received the close scrutiny and attention not only by the Other Place who made a very good job of them in Select Committee but also by Mr. Lightburn and the Legal

Draughtsman Mr. Malone, who has made a very valuable contribution and who has done a very good job so that these amendments could be presented to this House today. In the absence of the Hon. Premier and also that of the Hon. Minister of Social Services, it has fallen my lot to deal with these amendments and with the limited time at my disposal to go through these amendments. I will be quite willing to answer any points of difficulty which might arise in the minds of honourable members.

Before I sit down I should like to give this assurance, that these amendments do not affect any principle to either of the Bills which we have passed, either the Local Government Bill or the Representation of the People Bill. This is just the machinery for putting these two Bills into effect; this is just the conversion of what is written on paper into reality. These amendments had to be inserted in this Bill in order to make it workable; this is the means of making one register for Local Government elections and elections for the Central Government. This is a question of saving expense to the taxpayers; whereas you would have to spend about £2,000 or £3,000 every year under the old Bill. We are now asking hon. members to agree to these amendments. Knowing how anxious hon. members are to save the taxpayers' money and to do everything to assist them, we are asking hon. members to agree to the proposed amendments which have been sent down.

I am merely telling hon. members that if they disturb any proposals which are sent down here, that will interfere with the whole machinery. If we want to hold the elections for Local Government next year, the qualifying date is the 31st December and unless the amendments to these two Bills are agreed to, it means that the whole machinery will be upset. It is important to ask hon. members not to insist on any new amendment although they will naturally attack whatever amendment they think fit to attack; but to incorporate any new amendment would disturb everything and throw everything out of order. In order to hold the new election next year these Bills will have to be put on the Statute Book and they will not be on the Statute Book unless these amendments are agreed to.

I hope I have explained certain things to the satisfaction of hon. members. However the amendments are very clear and any hon. member who goes through them can see where they have been made; if they have done that, they will see that the amendments are clear. There are many typographical errors which could have been avoided and I must say that meticulous as certain hon. members of this House are, this is one Bill which certainly does not pay any tribute to the meticulousness if I may use that word, of the meticulous members of this House. This is one case in which the genius of being meticulously careful did not exist, it was absent and absolutely void. There was quite a vacuum for the Other Place to exhibit some of their prowess in so far as being meticulous and in so far as draughtsmanship are concerned. Therefore I am asking hon. members now that the members of the Other Place have made a complete job of this Bill, to pay them some tribute; now that the experts have spent hundreds of days in going through these Bills, these Bills having received the scrutiny and attention of other people who are competent to advise, I am asking hon. members to think carefully before they make any snap amendment which will destroy everything which we have been trying to achieve and which we all have in our minds. I think all hon. members are anxious to see these

Bills passed and I therefore beg to move that these amendments be now read a first time.

Mr. SMITH: I beg to second that.

Mr. LEWIS: The hon. member has said that this Bill has received the attention of the Other Place and that if we interfere with these amendments, this Bill is not likely to come into effect at the time when it should come into effect. I counsel the hon. member to review his attitude to Bills which are sent back here with amendments. That is a wrong attitude. If we disagree with any of these amendments we should say so and we should be prepared to fight any principle which we regard as wrong and put it there. The attitude which the hon. member has expressed is too often the attitude of the Government in bringing forward measures here. Who is responsible for this Bill coming to this House? This House passed this Bill a long time ago and at this stage I would like to correct what the hon. member has said.

3.20 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, there are certain things in this Bill which will need very careful attention, and I hope that the Hon. Minister has attempted to study, at least, some of these amendments which he is most likely to be called upon to explain. He has said that he is willing to explain.

Mr. Speaker, it is regrettable that the House adjourned until mid-day today for the purpose of dealing with these amendments and that there are so few members present to deal with this Bill. I am convinced that these amendments should not be passed in the House but that they should be agreed to in a Committee of the whole House. One of my reasons for saying that is because the amendments are very voluminous. The Hon. Minister claims that they should receive attention; and I am going to ask him to exercise his mind in this respect. The amendment to clause 16 reads thus:

(2) "For the purpose of an election under this Act, the Governor shall appoint a Deputy Supervisor of Elections who shall assist the Supervisor of Elections, and shall, subject to any general or specific directions of the Supervisor of Elections, have power to perform all or any of the functions which the Supervisor of Elections is by this Act required to perform."

(3) "The Supervisor of Elections and Deputy Supervisor of Elections shall receive such remuneration as may be prescribed."

Mr. Speaker, the Governor appoints the civil servants and there are past instances in which I have even supported this practice; but this is one case in which I think that the Ministers should not insist on having the Governor-in-Executive Committee make the appointment, for this reason: the Governor-in-Executive Committee is a political body and they have no right to appoint people to be returning officers in an election. That is a serious principle. However, I do not intend to discuss this particular amendment to any great extent at this stage.

Mr. Speaker, I should also like to ask the Hon. Minister to look at paragraph (I think they call them paragraphs or rules) look at rule 11 of the First Schedule.

The Governor-in-Executive Committee is a political body; and fancy them appointing people to a political office. Mr. Speaker, in 1939 an Act was passed to take certain powers from the Governor; but in 1945 they were restored because the Governor asked for them. If he had not asked for them would he have got them? Or, if he had refused them would

you have given him? This Bill is not clear to everybody and I am sure it is not clear to them. I must ask the Hon. Minister to tell me, not what the word "majority" means generally, but what the word "majority" means in this text.

Mr. Speaker, let us imagine, as happened in Trinidad, that 10 people came forward for a constituency. Is it possible for a majority of votes to be given to two people?

Hon. C. E. TALMA: The word "highest" as contained in the context of rule 11 of the First Schedule of the Bill as passed by the House denotes the superlative degree; so "highest" refers to one, whereas "majority" as contained in the amendment to rule 11 refers to two.

A VOICE: You cannot have a superlative referring to two.

Mr. LEWIS: Mr. Speaker, did the Hon. Minister not know that it was included in the Bill last time? Or is it that he did not know the meaning of the word "superlative"?

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Mr. Speaker, I did not look at the text of rule 11 so closely. However, I am saying now, that we may correct a word; but that does not mean that we had used the right one. It is quite easy to get mixed up in this point. If the candidates did not get a majority of votes (and the majority might be two, as he says, out of ten that have not been elected)—

Mr. LEWIS: Mr. Speaker, I am asking the Hon. Minister to consider that what I am telling him is not wrong. Does the Hon. Minister know that if 10 people came forward out of 1,000 all of them could get votes? Suppose a couple or six of them got 98 and it was added to the total, do you not see that if you picked out two of them what would happen? All this only makes me feel how careful we have to be with this Bill, and how, Mr. Speaker, they will discover later the full significance of what I am saying.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I should like to ask the Hon. Minister also to look at rule 44 in the First Schedule. He says that no new principle is involved in these amendments. I have seen the Act as originally printed; and while it is true that this is not an amendment except in the sense of a typographical error, I should like to ask the honourable senior member for St. Michael if this was taken from the United Kingdom Act. It was brought to the House and while nobody says that it has changed the principle of the Bill, yet, if you read the Objects and Reasons you will see it stated that certain new provisions have been included. A brand new principle has been introduced here and not one of the Ministers has acquainted the House of it. I will read it and perhaps the Hon. Minister will be able to tell me whether he understands it and whether it can be taken to apply to elections in Barbados. It may be all right for England but not for Barbados.

Mr. Speaker, I realise that I am trespassing. But in the 1943 Act a deposit was mentioned and the particular section dealing with it reads as follows:—

"If a candidate be not elected and the number of votes polled by him do not exceed one-sixth of the total number of votes polled the amount deposited shall be forfeited to His Majesty."

Read that and see what you understand by it. Rule 44 (4) of the first Schedule says "one-eighth of the total number of votes polled by all the candidates."

Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the Hon. Minister would understand this? If you had 100 people going

to the poll, and 100 people voted for the candidates, do you divide the poll or the people?

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Mr. Speaker, up to now the honourable member has not read the amended rule 44 (4) in full. It reads as follows:—

"Subject to the last foregoing paragraph the deposit shall be forfeited if a poll is taken and, after the counting of the votes by the returning officer (including any recount) is completed, the candidate is found not to have polled more than *one-eighth* of the total number of votes polled by all the candidates."

Mr. LEWIS: That means the number of votes which each candidate has received.

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Mr. Speaker, that is just what I am telling the honourable member "polled" means secured by the candidates. Or that the votes secured have been polled by the candidates. Why try to reduce everything to an absurdity?
3.30 p.m.

Mr. LEWIS: He does not understand what he is talking. If you say the number of votes polled on each candidate, it means if an elector vote for two candidates that is two votes.

Hon. C. E. TALMA: It says the number of votes polled. That means the total number of people who went to the Polling Station and voted.

Mr. LEWIS: This is a mistake in this Act, and you will have to change it. You will have to bring in an amendment to it later on. I know what has happened. It has been copied from the United Kingdom Act where an elector does not split his vote.

Mr. Speaker, we have a lawyer in the House. Ask him how he interprets this; he ought to be interested in it. I say again that this can only be interpreted to mean a total of all the votes which the candidates received. And then you divide it by eight. It means that if one candidate got one hundred votes, another got a hundred and another, another hundred, that will be three hundred votes and then you divide the amount by eight. That will be three hundred votes although only two hundred people may have voted and that is the type of thing that you are up against.

It is too bad that the Hon. Minister cannot see at what I am driving. I have to give up. My health does not permit me to argue this point with the Minister anymore.

I am also going to say that it has not been drawn to our attention that this was changed from $\frac{1}{6}$ to $\frac{1}{8}$. If you look at the 1943 Act you will see that it is $\frac{1}{6}$ of the number of people who go to the Polls, not the number of votes cast. It was changed from $\frac{1}{6}$ to $\frac{1}{8}$ and no mention was made about it.

Hon. C. E. TALMA: In an attempt to clarify this point for the benefit of the hon. member, I want him to realise that the votes polled at any election are the number of votes which were cast on that particular day. We may have a person voting for two candidates but it is not on a calculation of the number of votes which the candidates receive together; it is on a calculation of the number of votes which the people cast. Anybody reading this Act and knowing our set up cannot misunderstand it.
3.40 p.m.

Mr. LEWIS: Mr. Speaker, really and truly we are all out of Order; but I am very glad that you have not seen it yet. However, it appears to me that so long as you have it on the number of votes that the candidates get, it means that if so-and-so gets so many, you have to add up those votes, and then divide them; and if that is not done you will not be following the law. It is not as the Hon.

Minister has said that it will be calculated from $\frac{1}{8}$ of the people who go to the Polls.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to get a ruling from you as to whether it would be in order for this House to move an amendment to a Clause which has been amended by the Other Place, or whether we can only amend the actual words.

Mr. SPEAKER: The House has its power to do that; the matter is before us for our consideration. But what exactly is the hon. member's point?

Mr. LEWIS: I am asking for Your Honour's guidance as to whether this House can amend a Clause in this Bill which has been amended by the Other Place or whether the House is only confined to amending those words of the amendment as actually proposed by the Other Place.

Mr. SPEAKER: Nothing which we have sent to the Other Place can be amended by this House, we can only deal with the actual words which the Other Place has amended.

Mr. LEWIS: If there is a mistake it would have to be amended by an amending Bill; it cannot be amended by us because it is our mistake. There is an actual mistake now in the Bill as printed. I would like to find it, Sir, because advantage has been taken of us by the Other Place as to any small mistake. There is an amendment which is in italics and which has got me confused and there is one in italics which is not an amendment at all. I, too, am of the opinion that we should debate this Clause on the second reading of these amendments.

The question that these amendments be now read a first time was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

Hon. M. E. COX: Mr. Speaker, with the permission of the House I beg to move that these amendments be now read a second time.

Mr. LEWIS: We have already given permission for an honourable member to take charge of these amendments.
3.50 p.m.

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Mr. Speaker, I am sorry to have delayed the House. I beg to move that these amendments be now read a second time.

Mr. SMITH: I beg to second that.

Mr. LEWIS: Mr. Speaker, I thought the Hon. Minister would have taken the opportunity to let us know if he had made any discoveries so that our minds would not continue to be uneasy if we were wrong.

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Mr. Speaker, On a point of explanation, with reference to the point raised by the honourable junior member for the City in connection with rule 44 (4) of the Rules of Schedule one, I should like to say that this is the identical wording of our old Acts, and it has passed the House like this before; but further investigation of the matter is now being carried out by the Crown Law Officers and I am afraid that I cannot give the honourable member the full explanation now. However, the functions of the Act are quite clear. It relates to the number of people voting. It does not relate to the number of votes cast; because under our system our people have the right to vote two ways. It does not relate to the number of votes cast. It must relate to something sensible; so it relates to what is reasonable. The electors are human beings, and this relates to human beings and not necessarily to the number of votes cast; this is a factor which under our present system gives rise to much confusion, not only in this respect, but in other respects; because, very often you do not know who is opposing whom. The time is coming when wards will be set up and these wards

will receive a fair and more equitable basis of representation.

Mr. LEWIS: Mr. Speaker, I thank the honourable member for his interruption; and I would tell him this: that there is some time between the intention and what you are actually doing. I have shown the Hon. Minister the 1943 Act which does not say anything about votes for any candidates. I can only hope that this is what is really wrong there. If rule 44 (4) as amended had stopped at "polled" I believe it would be exactly as we had it before, and everybody would be able to understand what is meant by a vote "polled". But when you talk of "the total number of votes polled by all the candidates," if you have copied that from the English Act that is perfectly right for them. In their case the total number of votes polled for all the candidates are the number of people who go to vote. That is so in England but it is not so in Barbados. If the Government should bring in that it should be changed from "one-sixth of the total votes polled" to "one-eighth of the total votes polled" that would be a different matter.

I am surprised that the Hon. Minister has said that single member constituencies should be set up. I remember when this Bill was before this House, an amendment to that effect was introduced; but I do not think that it was accepted. It may be a useful thing in our present political set up to retain that. However, this Bill as a whole is a Bill which we have long wanted. It was due since the last Election because I remember that at that time we had an emergency Law which we had to regularise.

I do not think that the Governor-in-Executive Committee should be the body to say when a new register should be made. Whenever there is a new general election we should have a new register; and the register for the general election should cover any bye-elections in between, or any time that the House may be dissolved other than during the efflux of time. It should cover a period of years. It should not be at anybody's discretion, and especially the Governor-in-Executive Committee's because if the party in power feel that it would be to their advantage not to have a new register, all they have to do is to advise the Governor by saying for instance: "Well, we can get back in power on the old register; therefore, do not have a new register." I say again, that I do not think that anybody should be in that position.

I would certainly welcome the House going into Committee on these amendments. It is true that you might have had an expert to advise you but he may not be an expert on Barbados elections. As the amendment stands it might confuse people with the best intentions.

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Mr. Speaker, for the satisfaction of the hon. member and the House in general, a subclause, which really clarifies the situation considerably has now been inserted in these amendments to make the position doubly clear. It reads thus:—

"For the purposes of this section the number of votes polled shall be the number of ballot papers counted including those spoiled or 'vitiating'."

In other words it refers to the ballot papers or the number of individuals who voted. It is therefore a question of —

[Mr. LEWIS: Ballot papers refer to the candidates.] Each elector is entitled to one ballot paper to which each reserves the right, under our peculiar system, to vote for two candidates. If our constituencies were divided into wards, each person would only be able to vote for one candidate.

Mr. Speaker, with the assurance that this subclause in the 1943 Act which I shall read again fully clarifies the position, I think that hon. members will agree that the intention is quite clear. The subclause reads as follows:

"For the purposes of this section the number of votes polled shall be the number of ballot papers counted other than (spoiled or vitiated papers)."

I think the intention is clear. [Mr. LEWIS. The intention is clear, but not the law.] And the necessary amendments will be forthcoming in due time. [Cheers]. Hon. members will therefore, co-operate in the passing of these amendments.

I beg to move that Your Honour do now leave the Chair —

Mr. LEWIS: I beg to second that.

Hon. M. E. COX: Mr. Speaker, I have merely risen to say that the motion made by the Hon. Minister of Agriculture is an error. I consider that the Hon. Member intended to move that the amendments be now read a second time.

Mr. SPEAKER: I do not think that the motion by the hon. member was intended.

Mr. LEWIS: Mr. Speaker, I suggested to the hon. member that the House go into committee on these amendments and I thought that the Hon. Member had accepted it.

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Mr. Speaker, there is no necessity for me to withdraw the last motion; because I cannot make two motions. And if I had, the hon. junior member for the City would have ruled me out of order.
4.00 p.m.

Mr. LEWIS: Mr. Speaker, I am at liberty now to move that the House go into Committee on these amendments. However, it is obvious to me that the House is not going to agree with me. It is my opinion that this is one of the most important Bills that is passed, and it is the very Bill that creates this Legislature, and for members to come in here.

I am sorry that they are not more hon. members interested in having these amendments considered in Committee.

The question that the amendments be now read a second time and agreed to was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

Mr. SPEAKER: The first Order of the Day is to move the House into Committee of Supply to consider the grant of a sum of money for the services of the colony.

On motion of the Hon. M. E. COX seconded by Hon. C. E. TALMA the House went into Committee of Supply, Mr. SMITH being in the Chair.

Head XV—Police

Hon. M. E. COX: Mr. Chairman, this Resolution is for the sum of \$45,276 for the purposes set out in the Schedule to this Resolution. The first item is to supplement Item No. 19 — Scrubbers & Cleaners under Head XV, Police.

As you will see, the amount voted in the Estimates under that Item was \$6,525, and it is now found necessary to increase that amount by \$105. The note to the Addendum explains that the Cleaner who previously cleaned the old Fire Brigade Station in Coleridge Street and the Writ Servers' Offices has been transferred to the new Fire Brigade Station and as her duties there keep her fully occupied, it is necessary to employ a scrubber for the new enlarged Writ Servers' Offices.

I am sure that all hon. members will agree with the Government in these days of so much unemployment in this island that by increasing the number of Scrubbers by one, Government is making every effort to reduce the number of unemployed. I may say that this is a necessary request. I therefore beg to move that Head XV stand part of the Schedule.

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

Mr. LEWIS: Mr. Chairman, my comment is not so much on this Head, but I am taking the opportunity to comment on the statement made by the Minister who took charge of moving this House into Committee of Supply. He says that there is a lot of unemployment, which means that it is difficult for people to get jobs; and according to him, it would mean that this Committee should welcome an additional cleaner under this Head. I wonder if he would have said the same thing when we were giving similar consideration to a Resolution for the maids at Combermere School who are not given allowance so as to enable them to draw salaries out of the school term.

Hon. M. E. COX: We have made that right already.

The question that Head XV stand part of the Schedule was put and resolved in the affirmative.

Head XXV—Public Works

Head XXV Public Works was called.

Hon. M. E. COX: Mr. Chairman, the Item under that Head is for the Harbour Police Station for which provision was made in the Estimates for \$1,220; and there is a request for \$150. As you will see in the note to the Addendum:

As the result of an inspection undertaken by the Government Electrical Engineer, it has been found that the electrical wiring of the barracks at the Harbour Police Station is in urgent need for replacement. The cost of this work is estimated at \$150.

This is also necessary. I beg to move that Head XXV stand part of the Schedule.

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

Mr. LEWIS: Mr. Chairman, I am trying to get a copy of the Estimates to see whether this \$150 is for the same purpose as the \$1,220 which has been voted in the Estimates. Can any hon. member say?

What I was getting at is whether it is a new idea to rewire the building or whether this is \$150 more than what was estimated for it. I am very glad to see that the Government Electrical Engineer is doing work like this and is seeing that these places are properly wired. I hope that in due course he will see that they get the necessary current and not only that, but that he will check up on the fluctuations of the current so that no electrical equipment belonging either to the Government or other people may be damaged as a result.

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

Head XL—Waterworks

Head XL—Waterworks—was called.

Hon. M. E. COX: In moving that Head XL stand part of the Schedule I will point out, as hon. members will see, that this sum of \$45,000 is being requested to meet the additional cost of pumping and also as a result of the additional number of services which has been installed in private homes. The note to this Item states:—

"There has been a great increase in the volume of water pumped to meet the needs of the population.

This has been a result of the installation and operation of the new pumping stations, particularly Warleigh Repumping Station, which was brought into operation in April, 1955, following a successful experiment with substitute pumping machinery, in order to alleviate the acute water shortage in certain areas in the northern half of the Island. In addition, following the reorganisation improvement programme, the number of water services installed in residences has been increasing at the rate of 100 per month. There have also been increases in the price of electricity and fuel oil."

I am sure that hon. members have from time to time been reading the monthly reports by the Chief Engineer which revealed that quite a number of services are being installed month after month. People are taking full opportunity of installing these private services especially under the revised plan in which they can pay down 25% of the amount charged and the other 75% over a period of two years. It is heartening to see the advantage which they are taking of this Scheme. I have some figures here which I know the hon. junior member for the City will like to hear [Mr. LEWIS: I do not want them.] I am glad to hear that the hon. member is satisfied about this matter and he does not want these figures. [Mr. HAYNES: I want to hear the figures.] With those remarks Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Head 40 stand part of the Schedule.

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

Mr. GODDARD: I certainly would like to hear those figures. I think that this Head is a masterpiece of confusion; it says that \$45,000 would be required for pumping expenses and the Note ends by saying that there have also been increases in the price of electricity and fuel oil. I would like to know how much of this \$45,000 is for electricity and how much for fuel oil. I do not see that because you have increased installations of water services that that should increase the pumping expenses more than the amount which would be required for additional installations. That should come under the head of plumbing, not pumping expenses; these pumping expenses should not result from the installation of new services. I would like the Hon. Minister to explain that. I think that these figures should be forthcoming; if they are the break down of this \$45,000 let us have them before we go any further.

Hon. M. E. COX: The hon. junior member for Christ Church must appreciate the fact that with the installation of these services more water is used. If the head of a family has to send at the standpipe to get water he has to use it with more care than he would use it if a standpipe were in his yard. In that case more water is pumped. We are pumping approximately one million gallons of water more per day during this year than last year. I have a rough estimate of the cost. As regards fuel oil, for example, we use about 1,272 tons and the increased cost of one dollar and sixty cents per ton works out to approximately \$1,400. As regards the increase in electricity there is an increase from 4½ cents to 4½ cents per unit on large quantities (over 40,000 units) and 4¼ cents—8 cents on small metered quantities and that works out to approximately \$6,500. In short, the increased expenses on a million gallons per day is something like \$120 per day which works out at roughly \$43,800 say \$45,000. Those are the figures.

We have put in about 835 services. The average cost per thousand gallons of water is 12 cents. From the figures I have, it is roughly a million gallons which gives us something like \$43,800, at \$120.00 per day.

4.20 p.m.

Mr. GODDARD: What I want to know is, what was the last increase and what were the most recent figures on electricity.

Hon. M. E. COX: I said, it is \$1.66 per ton, and we have about 1,272 tons. That refers to fuel oil. Electricity was 4¼c. per unit, now it is 4½c. per unit.

Mr. GODDARD: Mr. Chairman, most of this \$45,000 to be voted is due to the increased cost of electricity and fuel oil, which I think, the Hon. Minister admits. He tells us that they are pumping a million gallons per day more than had been done last year. [Hon. M. E. COX: Yes.] Therefore, that means that more fuel oil and electricity is being used, apart from the increased cost. My argument about the installations which have been mentioned in the Addendum was not meant to becloud the issue. The million gallons of water are probably used for industrial purposes. I make no criticism of that other than by way of clarifying the context of the Addendum. This \$45,000 is required by the Water Works because the cost of pumping has increased both as a result of the increased cost of fuel oil and electricity and the quantity of water pumped this year as against that of last year. If the Addendum had stated the position as clearly as that, there would have been no cause for me to rise.

Mr. LEWIS: Mr. Chairman, I wanted the Hon. Minister of Communications to get down to discussing their cost because I knew that it was going to produce a lot of figures. If you look at the Estimates for 1953—54 you will see that the sum of \$237,000 was asked for in the Estimates of 1952—53. In 1953—54 it was increased; and the Note on that particular Head said: "for electricity". The amount was \$275,300.

The next year 1954—55 in spite of the fact that the Government had asked for \$275,300 the previous year, it being an increased amount, (it appears that they spent \$273,880), would you believe that in 1954—55 they only asked for \$238,572, and that they had calculated it to the last cent? [Hon. M. E. COX: Do you not see it?] The actual expenditure for the previous year is here set out in the Estimates. They have spent in 1953 and 1954 \$237,000 and \$275,000 respectively; but after spending \$237,000 and \$275,000, they asked for \$250,000. I would bet that the Supplementary Resolutions brought that increase. They say that the decrease is due to the transfer from steam to electricity and the mechanics have said that the Electric Company have raised the rates. Then they go back and say that the increase is due to higher costs in fuel oil and the increased volume pumped as a result of the increased service.

I do not know if it is logical; but I have been asking the Government for a long time to do this; and not one member of the Government would consider it: I told the Government that from the time they changed to electricity they should be generating their own electricity to do their pumping. No consideration has been given to that at all. I have told them that that is a practical proposition. [Hon. M. E. COX: They buy generators.] They buy generators; but do they say to themselves: Are these generators good for every purpose? [Hon. M. E. COX: No; they are only single-phase.] Just as other people can get generators, the Government can.

The amount spent was \$¼ million; it has again reached \$273,000, and one cannot tell whether Supplementary Estimates will be passed under this Head several months from now. In June next year we may be supplementing this very Head. It must be remembered that \$40,000 or \$50,000 more was

charged when they arranged the Five Year Plan. The moment they planned to increase the water rates to give more revenue to the Government, the Electric Company came down and took away every cent from them. It will be seen that the people had to pay increased water rates, not to assist the Government, but to assist in paying for the electricity which, in some cases, they were not getting. The Government should not take the opportunity of correcting such matters while they have an engineer. They have much confidence in the Engineer and they should take the opportunity to instal their own generators at the Bell Pumping Station and at some of the others. They owe it to themselves to do that. They should keep the Electric Company's current as a standby. The Electric Company cannot get annoyed about that. They can sell this same electricity to other people, probably, for more money. The Government has the fuel at its disposal and would not generate one bit of electricity. They are continuing to pay for it. In one year the increase is due to oil, in another it is due to electricity and the next year it is due to electricity and oil; and so it goes on.

4.30 p.m.

After all, are you controlling the price which the Barbados Light and Power Company is charging you? Have you got any means of finding out whether it is the right and proper thing to do or is it one of those cases that it is under the maximum charge therefore you cannot interfere with them? This is something to which Government must give consideration. You are selling Natural Gas; why not use it in pumping this water? You have asked the Barbados Light and Power Company to come and light up Seawall Airport for you, when you should be doing it yourself and keeping their installation as a stand by. Why do you not take the opportunity and advantage of the engineer in the island in whom you have great confidence and do not let him leave until he gives you advice on this thing if he knows anything about it? Do not let him merely go and inspect something that is there; let him advise you as to whether it is good and right and cheaper for you to pump this water for the people by Natural Gas. The people are getting more water and you are saying because of that you have to pay out more money; but that is not my view.

If you have to keep the pumps going all day, it would amount to the same thing if you used a gallon or two gallons of water. You do not pay the increase on the million gallons you pump by electricity a day; you pay the increase on the electricity and oil. It is time that you give consideration to this matter because you want this money to spend on the people in other ways. It is ten or twelve times that I have asked the Government to consider it and that you get these people together and bring in a statement in this House. Do not keep it as a secret document; let it be public property so that we can know whether this is not a practical suggestion or not.

Hon. M. E. COX: I want to tell the hon. member that the point which he raised about Government providing its own power station has not been overlooked as the hon. member believes. I will further like to assure him that no one feels stronger on this question than I. I feel water is the most essential service to the community and that no private Company should have at its command the power to increase the price or to say: "If you do not pay what I want I will cut off the current." That is why I feel strong on the matter that Government should have its own power to bring this water to the surface.

This matter was raised in the House already and a Committee was set up to consider it and it went into the matter very thoroughly. Figures were given as to the cost of all the necessary materials and equipment—the Capital as well as the current expenditure. I may say that it did amount to a fairly substantial sum as hon. members will appreciate. The Government having so many other things to do and with a little faith being pinned in the Public Utility Board, deferred further action on the report until a later date, but I want to assure the hon. member that the matter is not dead. We have gone into it very thoroughly and even though I am at all convinced about everything that has been put up, as the hon. member has just said, there are other people who have been running plants—diesel motors—which are used in the making of bricks and such things. However, on the other hand, we feel that for the time being we will watch the activities of the Utility Board and if necessary at a later stage we will refer to the Report on this question. As I have said, it was very costly in the sense that not only would we have to provide for the Belle Pumping station on which a gas line is installed, but the cost of supplying current to the other pumping stations, such as Bowmanston, Warleigh and Golden Ridge, either by running overhead or underground lines, was very high and that really made us come to the decision to delay action when taking other things into consideration such as housing and schools for the people. However I again assure the hon. member that the idea of Government having its own power for water is not dead.

The question that Head 40 stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

Hon. M. E. COX: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that this Resolution for the sum of \$45,276 do now pass.

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

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

On motion of Hon. M. E. COX, seconded by Hon. C. E. TALMA, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported the passing of the Resolution in Committee.

4.40 p.m.

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 Resolution passed in Committee of Supply was read a first and second time and agreed to.

ORDER PAPER

Hon. M. E. COX: Mr. Speaker, I am asking leave to deal with Order No. 16 as the next Order of the Day.

Mr. SPEAKER: The honourable member is asking leave to take Order No. 16 as the next Order of the Day. Unless there is any objection —

Mr. GODDARD: Mr. Speaker, this is a Bill on the Order Paper, and I have asked the Government to let us know from time to time what we are expected to do when we come here. I have not read this Bill recently. Again I am asking the Government when they are fixing the Order Paper to let us know what we are going to do. We came here early today in order to try and get through with these amendments to the Representation of the People's Bill and one or two other things. We obliged the Government too by getting through with two Resolutions and I do not think it is fair for us to go from one Order to the other in this manner.

Hon. M. E. COX: If the honourable member says that he has not had the time to read through this Bill, I will withdraw my request.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Hon. Minister has withdrawn his request to deal with this Order.

Condition of the Floor

Mr. SMITH: Mr. Speaker, before we proceed with any further business, I want to draw to Your Honour's attention the condition of the floor of this Assembly. It is very slippery and it is becoming very dangerous to walk on it. I nearly lost my footing owing to the condition of this floor. I am asking you, Sir, to see that this floor is treated in such a way that honourable members will not be in any way inconvenienced.

Hon. M. E. COX: I promise the honourable member that I will take up the matter with the Director of Public Works.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

Mr. SPEAKER: The honourable junior member for St. Lucy intimated to me earlier today that he is willing to proceed with an Address.

Mr. TUDOR: I beg to move that Order No. 36 standing in my name under the Head "Private Members' Business" be taken as the first Order of the Day under that Head.

Hon. M. E. COX: Mr. Speaker, I am not opposing the motion but I want to appeal to the honourable member. This matter with which he wants to deal falls within my portfolio; I had no idea that the honourable member was prepared to discuss this question today, and therefore I have not got the files. I am unprepared to deal with it. I want to appeal to him to make this Order the 1st Order of the day under this Head on the next occasion when I will have the necessary information.

Mr. TUDOR: That is quite all right.

Hon. M. E. COX: I thank you.

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. M. E. COX: Mr. Speaker, in fixing the Order Paper, I should like to draw Your Honour's attention to the fact that Order No. 22 under Government Business which stands in the name of the Hon. Minister of Agriculture was introduced by him on my behalf. I should now like to have it changed to appear under the Minister of Communications.

Mr. BRANCKER: Mr. Speaker, I am asking with the concurrence of my colleague who intimated to me that he intended asking that Order No. 36 standing in his name be made Order No. 1, that No. 4 standing in my name in relation to Standing Counsel for Your Honour be No. 1 of Private Members' Business.

Mr. GODDARD: Mr. Speaker, I am asking that No. 35 standing in my name be made No. 3. I should like at the next meeting of the House to ask leave to deal with it early in the day. Had it been printed, I would have asked leave to deal with it today. It relates to the cost of living bonus for Parochial Pensioners.

Mr. TUDOR: Mr. Speaker, I beg that No. 36 standing in my name be No. 2, and that No. 28 be No. 4.

Mrs. BOURNE: Mr. Speaker, I beg that No. 18 standing in my name be No. 5.

Mr. LEWIS: Mr. Speaker, I am not objecting to these things; but I do not like to lose sight of certain things. I have observed that if a member has an Order standing in his name high up on the Order Paper and he happens to be absent, the House is always very chary about displacing his Order in favour of that of some other member.

On motion of Hon. M. E. COX, seconded by Hon. C. E. TALMA, the House adjourned until Tuesday, 13th December, at 3 o'clock p.m.

4.55 p.m.