

THE House of Assembly Debates

(OFFICIAL REPORT)

SESSION 1954-55

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, 31st May, 1955.

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

PRESENT

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

Prayers were read.

MINUTES

Mr. SPEAKER: I have the honour to inform the House that the Minutes of the meetings held on the 17th and 22nd March, 1955, respectively, have been printed and circulated amongst hon. members and unless there be no objection —

Mr. LEWIS: I am not objecting to the confirmation of the Minutes but I do not think that they have been circulated to hon. members. I have only just got my copy of them, and I respectfully suggest that the confirmation be left over until the next meeting of the House.

Mr. SPEAKER: I quite agree with the Deputy Speaker. I was of the opinion that they had been circulated amongst hon. members; that not being so I quite agree that they should be left over until the next meeting.

DOCUMENTS

Mr. SPEAKER: I have the honour to inform the House that I have received the Financial Report of the Accountant General of the colony for the month ended 30th April, 1955.

ILLNESS OF THE CLERK

Mr. SPEAKER: I have the honour to inform the House that I have received the following from the Clerk of the House:

"Juleville,"
Maxwells Coast,
Christ Church.
31st May, 1955.

His Honour, The Speaker,
House of Assembly,
Bridgetown.

Sir,

I beg to make application to Your Honourable House for leave of absence until the 30th day of June, 1955.

Mr. Dave Banfield, Solicitor, has kindly consented to act for me during this period of my illness.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

D. LEE SARJEANT,

Clerk, General Assembly.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Doctor's certificate is appended.

Hon. Dr. CUMMINS: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that Sick Leave be granted to the Clerk until the 30th June, 1955.

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

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

MR. D. A. BANFIELD TO ACT AS DEPUTY CLERK

Hon. Dr. CUMMINS: I beg to move that Mr. D. A. Banfield (Solicitor) be appointed to act as Deputy Clerk for the month of June.

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

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

PAPERS LAID

Hon. Dr. CUMMINS: On behalf of the Hon. Premier I am commanded by His Excellency the Governor to lay the following:—

MESSAGE NO. 14/1955

His Excellency The Governor

To

The Honourable The House of Assembly

His Excellency the Governor has the honour to inform the Honourable House of Assembly that he

proposes to proceed to the United Kingdom on leave on the 12th of June.

2. On His Excellency's departure the Honourable R. N. Turner, C.M.G., Chief Secretary, will assume the administration of the Government in accordance with Article XXI of the Letters Patent dated the 4th of June 1914.

R. D. H. ARUNDELL,
Governor.

Government House,

Barbados.

31st May, 1955.

(M.P. 4875)

GOVERNMENT NOTICES

Hon. Dr. CUMMINS: On behalf of the Hon. Premier I beg to give notice of the following:—

Resolution to authorise the Governor to enter into an agreement with a person to serve as Director of Training.

Bill to amend the Pensions Act, 1947.

QUESTIONS

Mr. LEWIS: On behalf of the hon. senior member for St. George, I beg to give notice of the following question:—

To enquire of the Minister of Social Services:—

1. Is the Minister aware that great distress and inconvenience were caused to the relatives of a late resident of Newbury in the parish of Saint George through the failure of the Hospital authorities to carry out a *Post Mortem* examination without undue delay?
2. Will the Minister explain why no Medical Officer was available on the 19th May, 1955 for the purpose of carrying out *Post Mortem* examinations?
3. Will the Minister give the House an assurance that incidents of this nature will not recur?

BILL READ A FIRST TIME

On motion of Hon. Dr. Cummins seconded by Hon. M. E. Cox, the Bill to amend the Pensions Act, 1947, was read a first time.

3.25 p.m.

HOUSING DEVELOPMENT BILL

Dr. CUMMINS: Mr. Speaker, I am asking leave to postpone Order No. 1, and take Order No. 2 as the first Order of the Day.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member is asking leave to postpone Order No. 1 and take Order No. 2 as the first Order of the Day. Unless there is any objection leave will be granted.

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

Hon. M. E. COX: Mr. Speaker, in moving the second reading of this Bill, I think hon. members will agree that the need for a comprehensive housing programme more particularly for the suffering masses of this island who no doubt are the prime factors in the production of the wealth of this country, has been felt by such persons for many years.

It is true to say that before the year 1940 little or no consideration was given either by the Government or by private employers to the question of pro-

viding housing facilities in so far as the workers were concerned. Hitherto it was felt by Government and private individuals alike that workers were merely dead cogs in the wheel of the machinery of industry, designed, constructed, operated and maintained mainly for the production of wealth. The social consciousness of those people was more or less dead to the duties and responsibilities towards their employees. It was not until the middle of 1930 that persons (perhaps I should say a few persons) of democratic views came to this House and brought with them that inextinguishable spark of justice, love, desire and anxiety, which showed that there must be some realisation of the part played by the workers in the economy of this island. In short, it was only then that those persons began to regard the workers as partners in the production of the wealth of this country and as such were entitled to better conditions, or in short a share in the wealth which these said people produced.

I think that each and every individual will agree that housing is a prime necessity in so far as our social set-up is concerned; I think I can say that with some degree of certainty. I think I can say with justification that with every intelligent, useful and self respecting individual in this country it is his or her desire and ambition to acquire his own home, and in addition to owning that house, to have it settled on a bit of land in order to prevent landlords from removing him under the flimsiest pretext; a situation which is very embarrassing and costly.

In order to emphasize the importance of proper housing, I am forced to quote part of the speech made by His Lordship the Bishop of Trinidad on the 30th March. He said that good housing is the basis of society. It comes before anything else. Many of the social and educational services are wasted unless there are homes where people can be helped and taught to live as a family.

Mr. Speaker, provision of adequate housing facilities for the people who cannot directly provide such services for themselves is in my opinion, the duty and responsibility of Government; and it demands the unstinted and universal support of each and every individual whose desire it is to see a high standard of living set and maintained. It is beyond dispute, Mr. Speaker, that bad housing is a breeding ground for all vices and diseases; in other words, for all social evils. This statement has been supported by Commission after Commission making investigations at times into the causes of disturbances and other similar conditions of that nature.

3.35 p.m.

I think it was in 1943 when Dr. W. S. Gilmore at the invitation of the National Association for the Prevention of Tuberculosis in the United Kingdom carried out a survey in the West Indies, stated that the spread of T.B. was associated with poor housing and overcrowding; and that nutritional deficiencies did not appear to be the major cause of T.B. in the West Indies. It is also on record that Dr. Bengoa who prepared a report for the Venezuelan Ministry of Health and Social Assistance based on the study of 500 rural families, declared that the cause of a great majority of diseases reported in the colonies including T.B., Pneumonia and intestinal diseases, could be traced to sub-standard housing. We also have the report of the Royal Commission which visited the West Indies sometime in 1939. This report was released in 1945 and reference to that report will show the emphasis which the Commission laid on the question of providing proper housing and sanitary arrangements for the people in this area. With those and other reports and from experience in other respects, I am satisfied that good housing is

the pre-requisite of our social development, advancement and maintenance.

Having made those general remarks, I desire at this stage to give a brief record of the activities of the Government in so far as housing is concerned over the last 19 years. The first practical step made by the Government towards improving the deplorable housing conditions existing in this island was in 1936 when by an Act of the Legislature the Bridgetown Housing Board came into existence. That Act provided amongst other things the authority for the Board to erect suitable housing, to accommodate families, the removal of overcrowded and bad housing areas, the purchase of land, the provision of watermains, streetlighting, etc., in housing areas acquired, to prepare houseplots to accommodate houses removed from congested and unsuitable areas and to remove and re-erect houses in developed areas. It was not an island wide scheme; the activities of this Board were limited to Bridgetown and its suburbs. Many of us will remember that it was the 1937 disturbances which climaxed the establishment of a housing authority for the City, because it was said (and great emphasis was laid on it at the time) that Golden Square was a bad environment inasmuch as there were many old broken down shacks in that area. It will be remembered, that immediately after the 1937 disturbances action was taken to clean up that area. It was not until 1940 that the Housing Board acquired its first housing area. Six acres of land were purchased at Deacons Road and on it sixty-six houses were erected. I think some hon. members will remember that originally they were no waterborne sanitary services supplied to these houses, but in 1946 a Supplementary Resolution was brought to this House for the provision of water borne services during that year. The cost of these houses ranged from \$500 to \$750 each and they were offered to tenants on the hire purchase agreement. The Housing Board embarked on another phase of its functions when in 1941 it acquired a further six acres of land at Belfield, Black Rock. This area was laid out in lots; water, roads and street lighting were provided and 68 houses were removed from congested areas and re-erected thereon. In May 1946 a Committee was set up to advise on the use which should be made of the Pine Estate which had been purchased by the Government in 1945. That Committee recommended among other things that an area of 200 acres of this estate should be reserved for housing development. The area as hon. members will see is defined in the Schedule of the Housing Bill which is now before us. A new housing area was established in 1948, and to date approximately 150 new houses have been erected and 25 houses removed and resited thereon.

3.45 p.m.

The cost of these houses falls between \$2,400 and \$4,000. It is estimated that additional accommodation will be found for some 6,000 people beside the improved conditions for the occupiers of the 25 houses removed to that area.

In 1947 the Government purchased what is known as the Bay Estate, an area of 116 acres, and the whole area was replanned. A majority of the houses which stood on the tenantry were resited and some 617 houses removed there from congested areas. In addition to that 104 houses have been erected at a cost between \$1,800 and \$2,000.

The condition of the tenants of that area has been vastly improved; they have been provided with roads, water and street-light-

ing; and a considerable number of persons who previously lived in congested areas have benefited from these improved conditions. Additional accommodation has been provided for some 400 or 500 persons. Both the Bay Estate Scheme and the Pine Estate Scheme are being administered by the Housing Board; that Board acting as an agent on behalf of the Government.

Another field of housing activity is the Labour Welfare Housing Loan Organisation. An Act was passed in 1945 creating that organisation, but it was not until 1950 that this establishment had begun to function. It is needless to remind the House that this Fund was established in 1947 as a result of the decision of the Labour Government in the United Kingdom whose sympathies in common with the sympathies of Socialists Governments in the West Indies, were directed at the removal of some of the degrading and appalling conditions under which the labouring classes especially those who worked in the sugar industry existed. Hence, they decided to pay an increased price for sugar, with the understanding that \$2.40 of the increased price per ton would be set aside for the purpose of assisting workers whether directly or indirectly engaged in that industry to improve their social lot, especially in the field of housing.

The Labour Welfare Housing Loans Organisation is responsible for advancing loans to such persons working in the Sugar Industry for constructing and repairing, altering and extending their houses. The latest figure released is \$3,000,000. and as hon. members know, the Executive Committee is responsible for the administration of this Fund. Approximately 7,000 loans amounting to \$2,780,639 have been advanced; while repayments have been around \$600,000. The reason why I say that is because I remember well that when the proposals to advance loans to workers were first considered, quite a few people felt that these workers would not repay the loans. As a matter of fact, some would-be politicians or legislators went to the extent of instructing persons not to repay these loans. I am happy to say that with the exception of a few cases, that advice fell to the ground; and to-day over a half million dollars has been repaid already.

In 1953, Government entered into a new phase of housing development. With the experience gained from other countries, notably Puerto Rico, Government embarked on a scheme of Aided Self Help Houses. First of all, we had the Clinketts Housing Scheme; and despite the length of time that it took to finish those houses, I am also happy to say that there were finished in December last year; and as far as I can ascertain, all the occupants are in those houses. I think hon. members are well aware that the cost of those houses to the owners is \$1,165; and those occupants are given a fifteen-year period to repay that money. They will also pay a 2% interest which is to cover administrative expenses.

3.55 p.m.

At a later stage last year, the Government purchased 20 acres of land at Cave Hill and started a Scheme of Aided Self Help Housing. So far there are 30 Aided Self Help houses. The remainder of the area is being replanned and developed to provide accommodation for houses remove from unsuitable areas, and also from other areas where people receive ejectment notices and are unable to obtain suitable alternative places elsewhere. The area can accommodate 190 houses when completed.

During the month of September in the same year, the Government purchased eight acres at Sayer's Court, Christ Church, and an Aided Self Help

scheme of 15 houses has been started. When entirely developed the area will accommodate 130 houses. On the Government owned land at the Bay Estate and in Six Roads in St. Philip there are 30 Aided Self Help houses in progress in each of those areas. The latter mentioned Schemes which are not yet completed, are progressing very favourably despite the insidious propaganda used by supposedly responsible people in an attempt to undermine the Government's policy in assisting the working class people to also own wall bungalows. Investigations Mr. Speaker, are also been undertaken in other parishes: but I regret to say that we are unable to get around to the constituency of the senior member for St. Andrew as yet, and also those of the honourable members for St. Peter and St. Joseph. As I have said before, we are investigating every possibility of acquiring suitable areas, and as soon as areas become available, I would like to assure honourable members that negotiations for the acquisition of these areas will be entered into. Speaking for myself I feel that plantation owners can, with the necessary safe-guard, lease on a long term policy either to Government or to persons employed on those plantations, land suitable for the housing of their workers under the supervision of the Housing Authority. Why I say that is because the price of land is very high in this island; and if some arrangement can be made whereby land could be used without Government having to purchase the land, the Government could do much more in providing houses for many homeless people and those who are living in homes which are not quite fit for human habitation. Going a little further, I would say that the question of the high price of land is really preventing the speedy development and establishment of housing in this island. This has been experienced and commented on by the Royal Commission of 1939, and also in the Report of the Comptroller of Development and Welfare on Housing in the West Indies in 1945; and if I am permitted to quote what is written on that question: that the West Indian Governments should have easily applied powers for the compulsory acquisition of land for housing. Most, if not all West Indian Governments by now already have land acquisition legislation on their Statute Books; but it has been suggested by the Comptroller for Development and Welfare that this legislation should be reviewed in the light of the following three points:

- (a) the need for an adequate definition of the purposes for which land should compulsorily be acquired in order to ensure that it can be so acquired for housing schemes;
- (b) the need for provision whereby work on vacant land could commence without awaiting the outcome of any legal proceedings which might arise in connection with the abolition of slums.
- (c) the need for provision whereby land could be acquired at a reasonable price."

I can see the force of that statement; because it has been my experience that in any attempt to purchase land for various schemes, the Government has had to undergo very long delays while these transactions are being carried on.

4.05 p.m.

I strongly agree that the machinery for purchasing or acquiring land for Government purposes should be much easier and simpler in order that various Schemes can be dealt with more quickly. Following upon that, Mr. Speaker, the Report says: "The acquisition of land at a reasonable price presents a difficult problem which must be tackled firmly if rapid progress is to be made with Housing

Schemes. Land speculation has recently become common in some colonies and is likely to increase as the Colonial Government announce their intention to purchase land for housing and other public purposes. The speculation is due in parts to the willingness of working men, if they have money available, to pay extravagant prices for small plots of land. Such men have been able to save sums of money in connection with war employment and are eager and willing to spend their savings in acquiring houses regardless of the price of the land. These and other purchases are often made in spite of the fact that they will be able to provide houses for themselves on their new lots."

That was written in 1945; that was the comment in the Report by the Development and Welfare on Housing in the West Indies. That Statement is very true today as regards land values. As I have already said, I do not think it can be too often repeated that the high cost of land is definitely a bar to the provision of houses for the working classes of the island. The Housing Board has no doubt done a good job when one takes into consideration the limited resources financially and otherwise at its command. The same thing is true of the Labour Welfare Housing Loans Organisation; the Government has however, as is stated in paragraph one of the Objects and Reasons of this Bill, come to the conclusion that with the housing Administration split up as it is at present, there is bound to be fragmentation with its attendant lost of productive effects. The Government has therefore decided that an establishment of an authority such as the one proposed in this Bill would be more efficient to cope with the housing demands of the community and to meet those demands with a greater measure of efficiency and satisfaction. That brings us now to the Bill as it is before us to-day.

As a preliminary to this Bill honourable members will remember that on the 27th July, 1954, I laid a White Paper in the House in which there were set out the various proposals as detailed in the Objects and Reasons to this Bill. I have already stated that the co-ordination of the functions of the present Housing Organisations into one authority will, it is believed, make for more efficient administration in the execution of the housing programme. Included in the functions of the projected Housing Authority is the responsibility of administering the Public Officers Housing Loan Fund. That fund although under the same administration, will be kept separate and distinct from the funds provided for the construction of houses for the working classes in this Bill; it is arranged thus for administrative convenience. In addition to the houses which will be constructed for Civil Servants from loans which will be available out of the Public Officers Housing Loan Fund, the target aimed at by the Government is in the vicinity of 600 Aided Self Help Houses and ten four-unit houses per annum. The four-unit houses will of course be constructed directly by the Housing Authority and rented out to persons, since it is still necessary to provide accommodation for persons who for one reason or another cannot fit into the building programme. In other words, while we aim at encouraging people to build their houses under the Aided Self Help Scheme and otherwise there will be cases both of men and women who will not fit in; and there will also be cases where people are not able to take even the risk of paying for a house over a period of years. It has been decided that it will be necessary to construct houses for rental to such persons. I should like to add at this stage, that I am fully con-

scious of the fact that due to the difficulty experienced in acquiring suitable land for the construction of houses, the Housing Authority may not in the earlier years reach the goal which is herein proposed. However, it has always been this Government's motto to aim high; and that is what we are doing.

Mr. Speaker, this Bill is divided into eight parts. Part 1 to 4 contains 24 Clauses dealing with the establishment of the Housing Authority, its functions, powers and duties. Part 5 to 7 gives the Housing Authority certain powers and duties in relation to slum clearance and re-development schemes in relation to certain buildings which are ruinous or unfit for human habitation. That has been inserted in this Bill due to the fact that there is no Town and Country Planning Act in existence at the present time. In the absence of that Act, it has been felt desirable that such powers should be placed in the hands of this Housing Authority in order to provide for orderly development of areas if this programme is to succeed.

I should like briefly to draw hon. members attention to the various Clauses in this Bill. As you will see, sir, Clause 2 deals with the definition of the various expressions in the Bill.

4.15 p.m.

I have decided not to deal in detail with every section of this Bill in my second reading speech, because some sections I think, are not as important and controversial as others; consequently I have picked out a few sections to which I should like to draw honourable members' attention. Section four, sets out the constitution of the Board which as you can see is to be a body corporate with perpetual succession. It will be comprised of seven members, one of whom is to be the Chairman. Later on you will see in another section that a quorum is to be four and so on. Section 7 gives the power to provide for the remuneration of members.

Section 8 deals with the appointment of the staff of the Board. As you will see, the staff is to be appointed by the Governor. Section 13 makes it obligatory for the Housing Authority to keep proper books; also for those books to be audited by the Auditor General, and a report of the audit submitted to the Board and to the Governor-in-Executive Committee. Clause 16 provides the capital which is to finance the Housing Authority. I shall deal with that in further detail when I have finished going through the various sections.

Clause 17 authorises the transfer of the assets and liabilities of the Housing Board and other Government agencies to the Housing Authority, as well as land which is now held by the Housing Board as an agent for the Government. Clause 18 sets out certain functions of the Authority including the payment of the cost of acquisition of land and certain other expenses. Section 20 sets out the general powers and duties of the Housing Authority, and includes subject to the other provisions of the Bill, the acquisition of land, the letting and leasing of land, and also is in connection with general powers in relation to the construction of churches, workshops and that sort of thing. Section 21 prevents the Housing Authority from using any of their funds other than for the purposes set out in the Act.

Section 22 empowers the Housing Authority to enter into agreements with private or local bodies for the construction or the acquisition of houses etc. in other words, if the Authority considers it desirable to build house by contract they can contact Mr. "A", Mr. "B" or Mr. "Z" as the case may be for the construction of those houses. Section 23 permits the

Housing Authority to compel persons to complete or remedy dwellings unfit for habitation. The Authority may also carry out the necessary work and recover any finance which might be incurred in carrying out of those works. Under that section, Mr. Speaker, the Housing Authority has power if there is any building in a dilapidated condition and the individual to whom it belongs is not in a position to effect the necessary repairs in order to make that building habitable, the Housing Authority can go in and carry out those repairs and charge them to the individual and collect the cost over a period of time. That, sir, was taken from the English Act. We feel that it would be a good thing to have it done too. There are many people whose houses are in a bad condition and are unable to purchase the necessary material for the carrying out of such repairs; consequently, the house goes from bad to worse until it falls to the ground. This provision would help to prevent such houses from reaching that dilapidated condition.

4.25 p.m.

Section 25, Mr. Speaker, forbids the use of land where demolition has been effected, and where the Housing Authority has declared the area to be an unhealthy area and defined as a slum clearance area. The right is also given an aggrieved person to appeal to the Court in respect of restrictions and gives the necessary authority for the Governor to allow reasonable expenses to the person thus opposing. Sections 42 and 43 provide for the Housing Authority to make allowances in the case of persons who have been removed from insanitary surroundings. If for example a demolition order is issued and persons have to remove from the house which is to be abolished provision is also made in those two sections to help the individuals who have to remove. Provision is also made for persons who might be carrying on business and whose business place is to be abolished, for the Housing Authority to give those persons a reasonable allowance for the loss of the income which might occur as a result of the removal.

Section 48 deals with conditions of selection of tenants for the various houses.

Sections 55 and 56 exempt the Housing Authority from paying income tax, trade tax and also stamp duties in the case of conveyances, mortgages, leases, agreements and other documents issued by this body.

Now, Mr. Speaker, those are a few general remarks in so far as the Bill is concerned. Now, the question of financing the Housing Authority has been carefully considered by the Government; and the proposals which I shall read to hon. members are considered to be the best that can be offered at this time.

It is proposed to give the Corporation a guaranteed capital of \$2,500,000 to be provided from loan funds raised by the Government and advanced to the Corporation from time to time for a period of say, eleven years. It is also proposed that there should be an annual contribution of \$500,000 from Labour Welfare funds to the Corporation, which represents half the total amount to be spent on construction. This has nothing to do with the repairs. The cost of these houses which we propose to build will be in the vicinity of a million dollars. If the Government were to borrow \$2,500,000 at 4½ % plus 1½ % Sinking Fund the Annual Loan charges would amount to \$150,000; so it is proposed to limit Government's annual contribution from revenue to this amount.

I think hon. members will remember that in the Five-year plan the Government proposed to spend

\$750,000 on houses for workers other than those engaged in the Sugar Industry. You will also remember that on page 13 of the Five-Year Plan of Development and Taxation that the figure under Loan Funds included for Housing generally was \$750,000; on page 17, (Housing Loans, General), the note says: "It is proposed to make loans to workers other than those engaged in the Sugar Industry to repair their homes or to assist in providing homes."

Hon. members will recall from that note which I have just read, that that was the pledge given to the people of this island by this Government when the Five-Year Plan was drawn up and debated in this House and agreed to by a majority vote; therefore, it is proposed to limit the Government's annual contribution from General Revenue to this amount.

For example if the Corporation calls for a capital of a million dollars and Government raises the loan locally, the Loan charges would be $4\frac{1}{2}\%$ and $1\frac{1}{2}\%$ Sinking Fund. That would be \$60,000 and the Government's contribution to the Housing Authority would be \$90,000, which would make a total of \$150,000.

It is calculated that the Corporation's revenue in the first year would amount to \$724,350 made up as follows: Rents from the present Housing Estates, \$40,000; less bad debts about $8\frac{1}{2}\%$, \$3,400, cost of collection, \$3,000, making a total of \$6,400, leaving on the outside, \$33,600. Interest on Labour Welfare Loans, \$30,000; contribution from Labour Welfare Funds, \$500,000, contribution from Government, \$150,000, rent and repayment of houses completed in that year, \$10,750, making a grand total of \$724,350. The expenditure would be \$1,071,680, made up as follows: Administrative expenses; personal emoluments, staff of fourteen, \$38,680, travelling expenses, \$4,000, incidentals, stationery, etc., \$3,000, making a total of \$45,680. Expenses of present Housing Estates: street lighting, \$2,000, maintenance of houses and water, \$9,000, drainage, weeding and clearing \$2,000 making a total of \$13,000. Erection of 600 Aided Self-Help houses at \$1,500 each and 10 four-unit houses at \$10,000 each, making a total of \$1 million, and the grand total would be \$1,071,680. This leaves a deficit of \$347,330, which together with non-recurrent expenditure (this is the first year because provision has to be made for plant, furniture and so on) as follows: Office furniture, \$2,000, plant, \$100,000, supplies of materials for three months, \$150,000 making a total of \$252,000. The total deficit on the year's working would be \$599,330 or approximately \$600,000.

It is also estimated that the annual increased revenue resulting to the Corporation from one year's building programme, as proposed, will be as follows: interest, repayments insurance and rent on Aided Self-Help homes at 100 a year, \$60,000, less 4 per cent for arrears and bad debts, \$2,400, making a total of \$57,600. Net returns from 10 four-unit houses allowing $8\frac{1}{2}\%$ for arrears and bad debts, 2% for maintenance, collection and insurance and 40% to the local Body for maintenance of roads and services, \$665 less in respect of Aided Self-Help houses, cost of collection; \$1,500, insurance, \$13.60 per house, per annum \$4,080 making a total of \$5,580. The figure in respect of insurance has to be revised because we have been able to get a reduction of the premium from at least one firm recently. That makes a total of \$52,685. It is anticipated that the Corporation will call for capital annually as follows: In the first year, \$600,000, representing a deficit on the first year's working. In this \$600,000 is excluded approximately \$252,000 of non-recurrent

expenditure. In the second year the Corporation's expenditure will be reduced by the cost of items of non-recurrent expenditure of the first year. Government will give the Corporation \$114,000, this amount representing the \$150,000 less \$36,000 loan charges on \$600,000 advanced the first year. This will reduce the Corporation's revenue by \$36,000; it will reduce the amount which the Government advances to the Corporation, but the Corporation will get that or more in rent collected from the first lot of houses constructed. Its revenue will be increased by \$52,685, which is the estimated increase result from the first year's building programme. The deficit on the year's working will be approximately \$330,500; this will represent the Corporation's call for capital in the second year. At the end of the second year the Corporation will have called for \$930,500 capital; in the third year the Government's contribution to the Corporation will be further reduced by the amount of loan charges on the additional \$330,500 advanced in the second year, while the Corporation's revenue will be again increased by the additional revenue from the previous year's building programme, so that the deficit would be \$298,000. At the end of the third year the Government's total capital paid up to the Corporation would be \$1,228,500.

The fourth year the Government will be called on for a capital of \$263,000; fifth year \$226,000; the sixth year \$187,000; the seventh year \$147,500; the eighth year \$101,500; the ninth year \$55,000; and the tenth year \$5,500. In the eleventh year it is hoped that the Corporation's revenue and expenditure will even up. By that year, the Government would have provided capital contributions to the Corporation to the extent of \$2,212,000. In each year, the Government's contribution to the Corporation out of revenue would be reduced by the amounts being paid as loan charges on capital advanced. In the eleventh year, the Government's contribution will amount to about \$18,000 while loan charges will be about \$132,000. In case the Government in any year can provide amounts out of the General Revenue Balance, its contribution to the Corporation would be reduced proportionately, e.g., if Government has raised loans totalling \$1,500,000 and provides out of the General Revenue Balance \$500,000, the total Capital paid up would be \$2,000,000. The Government's annual contribution out of General Revenue would be \$90,000; Loan Charges on \$150,000 and \$30,000 contribution to the Corporation making a total of \$120,000. The \$30,000 savings represents 6% on \$500,000 capital paid up to the Corporation on which no loan charges are payable. That is assuming that the Government instead of raising the loan will make that \$500,000 advance from the General Revenue.

I know sir, that hon. members might not be aware of the way in which Government intends to finance this scheme. As I have said before, it has been gone into very carefully, it has been worked out by people experienced in this type of thing, and it is felt that this is the best method of financing.

Now, sir, before I sit, there are one or two things which I should like to say. On the last occasion when we were discussing the Annual Estimates, the hon. senior member for St. Philip and the hon. junior member for St. John made reference to the cost of constructing houses in Surinam as compared with those constructed in Barbados. We have gone into that question very clearly, and I am not prepared to believe that it was deliberate by those two hon. members to mislead the House, but perhaps they did not

take into consideration the fact that one might be referred to in Barbados as the one for which direct labour is paid as against Aided Self Help Housing in Surinam. I think I can disclose the name of the individual who gave the hon. members the information about the cost of construction in Surinam as compared with Barbados, because he has to deal with these Aided Self Help Housing Schemes; I refer to Mr. Donald Hanson who with Mr. Garcia actually started out the pilot scheme and did quite a lot to assist us. The information came from this gentleman; and I think every member will agree with me when I say that this island as a whole and the Legislature too, have to thank these gentlemen very much for their kind assistance and advice. We are convinced that Aided Self Help Housing is the easiest, quickest and most economical method of housing the population of this island. The information which came from Mr. Hanson is that a comparable two-room house under Aided Self Help in Surinam cost around \$1,500; in Barbados the cost is \$1,166. So I think it was more appropriate to refer to the Aided Self Help Housing in Surinam in the light of the comparison with the house the Board built houses which Government has built at the Pine Estate with direct labour, than to compare Aided Self Help Housing in Surinam with Aided Self Help Housing in Barbados. If I remember correctly, it was said that our housing cost is much higher than the cost in Surinam for similar type of housing.

I would also like to clear up a mis-statement which was made in the report of the Social Welfare Officer. In that report on page 4 it is stated that Barbados spends only 0.3 per cent. of its revenue on house. That is partly true in that 0.3% only represents the administrative cost of the Housing Department. Only that has nothing to do with the construction of houses such as provided under Capital Expenditure which is voted from time to time by the Legislature. Our figures for 1952 to 1954 referred to in the Report are 1.36% instead of 0.3%; in 1954-55 the figures are 1.77%.

I take this opportunity to clear up that error because when this is widely read (as I presume it will be) throughout the world, it might be felt that we are very niggardly in our Housing Programme.

Mr. Speaker, this is an attempt to rehouse the working-class people of this island; and I am well aware of the fact that it is not a question which can be adequately solved by any one section, or in other words, by a Government. In my own opinion, it has to be lifted out of the realm of politics; (I say that with regard to politics being what it is); today it has to be lifted out of the realm of politics, and if it is to succeed, private individuals as well as the Government will have to do everything that is humanly possible to assist in providing suitable houses in which the populace can live. It is heartrending, when going around the various districts in the country and city alike, to see the houses in which many working class people live. It is to my mind, un-Christian. It is hard to understand how people whose financial positions are good, can have their employees living under such conditions and continuing to pay them such meagre salaries or wages, knowing that such wages and salaries are not sufficient to keep body and soul together let alone to provide homes.

I feel that a more humane approach to the Housing problem is necessary. Indeed, I wonder sometimes, if persons who employ domestic servants for example, take the trouble to see where those servants live. It is difficult to appreciate how, and

one wonders whether, if they were to see those houses (those shacks in which their servants live) they would still want those individuals to come into their palaces and prepare meals etc.

Mr. Speaker, the housing of the working classes of this island has been neglected for many years. I refer again to the Royal Commission's Report. The Royal Commission when investigating the causes of disturbances in this island said among other things: "It will be clear from what we have said that the Housing problem in the West Indian colonies is so acute that no means which makes for a solution of it should be neglected however partial or limited its remote results may be every line of construction should be adopted and pursued with vigour to assist a complementary effort by Government, Local Authorities, private enterprise and the people themselves is not merely necessary, but pressing."

That is an extract from the Report of the Royal Commission which was released in 1945. Then a little further on in the Report one reads: "Housing generally is deplorable and sanitation primitive in the extreme, although sporadic improvements are being effected by Government as well as by private individuals."

(3) The standard of the houses of most of the poor people is deplorably low; maintenance of houses is being completely neglected by landlords some of whose tenants are not in a position to effect improvements."

That is what the Royal Commission discovered as far back as 1939.

The surest means of making the workers feel a sense of self-respect, a sense of dignity and a sense of security is to get down to business and tackle this housing problem. It is not fair for a man to work from his boy-hood days till he becomes old and unable to work, and then find that not even a house in which he can rest comfortably is provided for him. Some people may say that he lavished his money in his youth; but it is also true to say that in the majority of cases where workers, (when I say 'workers' I do not mean the manual labourer alone; when I say 'workers' I mean from the 'white-collar worker to the barefoot man) those persons were never paid as much as would give them proper meals, let alone to purchase houses.

5.05 p.m.

I should like to quote part of a statement which was said by the Director General of the International Labour Organisation. This is what he had to say: "The worker's home is said to be the most tangible expression of his state of well being. It is the centre of his family life where he eats, sleeps and spends much of his leisure time and creates his family life and background. It is the place above all where the worker can best realise his sense of dignity as an individual. The quality of his house more over probably does more than any other single element of his living standard to determine his sense of community and citizenship." That has been published in the report of the Director General of the International Labour Organisation; and I think that everybody will agree that that is the most worthy and sound statement made by any individual.

Mr. Speaker, I realise that this Bill is not the panacea for our housing deficiency, but I am sure that if given the co-operation, goodwill and support of each and every individual, this Bill will go a long way in solving the housing problem of this island. It is said that the population is increasing by 4,000 a year, and that it would necessary take at least another 600 houses to cope with the growing

population. We cannot afford either from a financial point of view; nor from the point of view of land space to build on can we afford any more than the 600 houses at which we aim; because, as I said earlier, one of our greatest difficulties and handicaps is to find land available for the purpose of constructing houses. A little lower down on the Order Paper we have a Bill which, when passed, should help considerably in providing a greater measure of security for the many tenants who occupy spots and who, at a moment's notice, are called upon to remove their houses. I said not long ago that it is a very costly matter and I know that many people can be put to very great inconvenience in having to remove their houses and spending a considerable sum of money in re-erecting those houses, many of which are never put back as well as they were before, with the result that the occupiers have had to wait for a very long time before they can find the funds to make those houses habitable again. As I have already said, land is our biggest problem; and in the absence of land we know that we are handicapped to a large extent. Two of the most promising parishes so far as building land is concerned are the parishes of St. Lucy and Christ Church; and although I would like to see the production increased in order to cope with the growing population, I sometimes regret that from a housing point of view, many of these other parishes have not got similar land. I think that St. Philip also has a good amount of inarable or marginal land; but it is still a problem to get land for the construction of houses.

One last quotation I should like to make before I sit; this is by Professor Richardson who came here and carried out a survey of the Social Services in Barbados in September last year. On the same question of housing, this is what he said: "The ownership by workpeople of the houses in which they live is one of the most effective methods of ensuring social security and stability." With suitable safeguards, it is one of the best forms of thrift. If the houses are well maintained, they will retain their real value free from effects of inflation which can reduce the value of the savings in terms of money; because in periods of inflation, the purchasing power of the monetary unit falls. If workpeople say that in order to become owners of the houses they occupy, they are making provision for a better standard of living during the later years of their working lives and they are also providing for their old age because they will then be rent free and would be the owners of valuable property, thus emphasis should be laid on that." In a report on the Conference on Social Development which was held in August, 1954, this is stated: "Culture grows through peoples' sense of value and homemaking; and family relationship can offer the means of property values which are common to all civilised people to show that life can be satisfying and dignified even in humble conditions. Wanting a good home is to have a wholesome and realisable ambition to go outside oneself."

With those few remarks, Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this Bill be now read a second time. I commend this Bill to this honourable House for their favourable and sympathetic consideration.

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

ADJOURNMENT

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

Mr. GODDARD: I beg to second that.

Mr. CRAWFORD: Before you put the motion for adjournment, I propose to make a reply to the quotation in which the Introducer of this Bill—

Mr. SPEAKER: Not at this stage.

Mr. CRAWFORD: All I want to do is to draw to Your Honour's attention that I actually rose to reply to the Introducer's speech when the motion for the adjournment was made.

Mr. SPEAKER: It is unfortunate that you did not catch my eye.

The question that this House do now stand adjourned for half an hour was put and resolved in the affirmative without division, and Mr. Speaker adjourned the House accordingly.
5.20 p.m.

HOUSING BILL—Cont'd.

On re-assembling,

Mr. SPEAKER: The question is that this Bill be now read a second time.

Mr. GODDARD: Before you put the question—

Mr. LEWIS: I rise on a point of Order. The adjournment of the House during a debate is a postponement of the debate. That is in the Rules. I would like to know what are the rules for this procedure. I would like to hear the motion for bringing this Bill back before the House. I took it that the debate on this Bill was postponed.

Mr. SPEAKER: Has the honourable member made some reference to Rule 44? I have looked up Rule 79 which deals with (1) 'The question being superseded' and (2) 'The question being interrupted' and neither, so far, seems to say anything as to the motion for the adjournment. In my view, the motion for the adjournment was necessary in order that honourable members might observe the Tea Interval. The honourable senior member for St. Philip may now proceed with his speech.

Mr. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Minister in introducing the Bill made a passing reference to a question raised by myself in the debate on Housing during the Estimates with regard to the comparative figures of houses constructed under the Aided Self Help Housing Scheme in Barbados and those in Surinam, and he quoted as an authority (correcting this statement) in the person of Mr. Hanson one of the Aided Self Help technicians who has been made available to the Caribbean Governments under the Point Four Programme.

[Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair and Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER took the Chair.]

I merely want to say at this stage that if Mr. Hanson were his authority, my authority was no less a person than the Assistant Director of Social Affairs in Surinam itself—Mr. Wong. Well, it may be that Mr. Hanson is an expert on Aided Self Help Housing Schemes. Can it be said that he could be possessed of more intimate and accurate knowledge of Housing in Surinam than a Housing Official in Surinam itself? I will repeat what he said: "The plan decided upon provided for a space of 511 square living room 226 square feet, two bedrooms, 82 sq. ft., and kitchen 60 square feet." The basic house contains two bedrooms, but it is so defined that a third bedroom can be easily added. It is said that the cost of two-bedroom houses is 2,500 Guilders which is the equivalent of \$1,500; and the three-bedroom and five-bedroom houses cost 3,000 Guilders or \$1,800. The Hon. Minister must also bear in mind that in comparing the cost of

housing, consideration must also be paid to their respective sizes as the average area of a Barbadian house is 511 square feet; and in any case, who is the better authority? The expert Mr. Hanson, or the Assistant Director of Social Affairs in Surinam itself?

To get back to the actual Bill itself I understand that the consideration of this Bill will be postponed; but I merely want to say today that I am at a loss to reconcile the actual provision of this Bill with the Minister's exaggeration and extensive pronouncements on the question of housing in Barbados. Listening to him quoting Mr. Richardson on the advisability of enabling people to own their own homes and to maintain and enhance their self respect, listening to him decrying the wages paid to certain workers which everybody knows have been insufficient to enable them to own their own houses; listening to him expanding on the general merits of rehousing the population, one would think that this Bill was of such magnitude as to almost introduce a housing millenium in Barbados. It is absolutely impossible for any who heard his remarks today to read this Bill before the House, and see in it any justification at all for his ambitious pronouncements. Listen to what he has said here. He read from the White Paper on Housing in conjunction with the Bill itself, where it was foreshadowed that the Housing Schemes of the Government should include the erection of 600 Aided Self Help houses and 104 unit houses annually.

6.10 p.m.

Well now, the Bill before us calls for an annual expenditure by the proposed Housing Authority of \$1 million a year. According to this Bill, the proposals are to ensure that the Housing Authority has an available amount of \$1 million a year. The Hon. Minister himself told us how the Government envisages that this \$1 million will be expended; and he says that it is proposed to erect 600 Aided Self Help Houses a year at a cost of \$1,500 each, which will be a total cost of \$900,000 and 10 four-unit houses at \$10,000 which will be another \$100,000 and the entire \$1 million will have been expended in the erection of these houses. What is left for advancing loans to people or lending people money to help house the population? The Housing Authority itself tells you that it will have \$1 million a year; I am not yet referring to the absurd notion of erecting 600 houses a year. If you are spending \$900,000 a year on Aided Self Help Housing and \$100,000 a year on the apartment houses, your entire million dollars will be expended, and where will you get money to help people with loans from the capital of the Housing Authority? Are you going to act as a magician? The Hon. Minister refers to the low wages paid to domestic servants.

Hon. M. E. COX: I do not know whether the honourable member heard me or not, but I said that amount had nothing to do with loans.

Mr. CRAWFORD: The point is that they are spending \$1 million on these items and the capital of the Housing Authority is \$1 million! The Hon. Minister referred to domestic servants as an illustration of the low wages paid, which would not enable people to build their own houses; in other words, the domestic servants are paid so little that they cannot buy their own homes. I can see that; but how does the Government propose to help the domestic servants in getting their own homes? By the Aided Self Help Housing Scheme? Are they to join this Scheme to construct their own homes? In other words, the entire rehousing proposal of the Government constitutes a farce. On sober consider-

ation it amounts to actually nothing. Right now we are spending \$600,000 a year purely on housing from Labour Welfare Funds; do you mean to tell me that a country like this can only afford to add another \$400,000 a year to a rehousing scheme for the entire population, bearing in mind that in that \$400,000 is included a special scheme for loans to Public Servants [Hon. M. E. COX: That is not true.] I refuse to notice the remark of the Hon. Minister.

Hon. M. E. COX: I particularly said that this is nothing to do with loans to Public Servants. Those loans, although administered by the same Authority, will be separate and distinct from this. If the honourable member wants to make a point against the Bill let him do that, but let him be honest.

Mr. CRAWFORD: It comes very ill from somebody like the honourable member to be talking about dishonesty in this House; unless he does not know what the word means. A man who has made a living on all sorts of nefarious practices and schemes, and immoral ones too; immoral, degenerate and depraved schemes [Hon. M. E. COX: I am not surprised at anything he says] I am quoting this Bill which is the sources of my information; and since the honourable member has been so busy in reading files that he has not had time to read the Bill, I will read it for him. In paragraph two of the Objects and Reasons it says that "It is also the Government's intention to increase the rate of housing construction for persons in the lower income groups", and so on; and it goes on to say that there is a multiplicity of organisations under the present system and so on; and it is proposed to establish a single Housing Authority which will have a capital of \$1 million a year. But the Bill itself refers to the Civil Servants' Scheme from which they have not got one cent, and the Government says that better results will be obtained if the various organisations were concentrated under one Housing Authority. In other words, the Government wants to create one Housing Authority to administer general housing, Civil Servants' Housing, and Labour Welfare Housing Schemes; and the Bill tells us that this one Housing Authority will have a capital of \$1 million, therefore what nonsense is the Hon. Minister talking?

In the Objects and Reasons it is set out that the Housing Authority should have an annual expenditure of \$1 million. It may well be that what the Hon. Minister now wants to say may be the case, but he did not say so because he accounted for the expenditure of \$1 million in the manner in which I have told him. Therefore if the House misunderstands the Government's intention, it is purely the result of the downright misrepresentation of the Hon. Minister who introduced the Bill.

I was saying just now that we are now spending \$600,000 a year on housing from Labour Welfare Funds; these Funds apply roughly to 30,000 agricultural workers, and at the rate of \$600,000 a year approximately, we are only assisting about 1,500 sugar workers; that is all.

6.20 p.m.

The population of sugar workers comprises 50,000 people; and mind you, I am referring to what we believe this Bill proposes to do; not what the Minister says. It is proposed now to advance loans for Housing to the remaining working class population. If you begin to advance loans to these people even to the tune of 1,500 a year, obviously you will require another \$600,000; but if you are to get some proportion since the working people

non-agriculturally are nearly twice that of the agricultural working population, you should make your loans twice as much as that advanced to the sugar workers. In other words, if 30,000 sugar workers get \$60,000, then 50,000 working people should get over a million dollars; so that for sugar workers and non-sugar workers you will need \$1,600,000 a year, if you really want to begin to touch the fringe of the housing problem.

(*Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER left the Chair and Mr. SPEAKER took the Chair.*)

Every member of this House knows that the agricultural workers themselves are very dissatisfied with the manner in which these loans are advanced because out of the large number of applications made by them, the Labour Welfare Authority deals with a mere 1,500; that means a mere 10% of them get loans annually. If we are to step up the rate of loans to agricultural workers, we will need over \$1,000,000 a year; and if you talk of Housing for the non-sugar workers, which will give you a total working population of 85,000, and merely increase your annual loans to \$1,000,000, you are doing nothing at all. All that you are going to do is to fool the population that there is a housing scheme, because every year a mere trickle would get attended to and the farce would be continuing for another half century. If the Government were really interested in housing the population and was endeavouring to assist the working class to own their own houses or improve them, do you think that they could not spend more than the \$1,000,000 proposed?

Now, out of the \$1,000,000 proposed a mere \$50,000 will be coming from Government Revenue. A Government which proclaims itself to be a Socialist Government has said all that can be given from Government Revenue to the service of Housing is \$150,000. We have no right at all including Labour Welfare Fund in our housing programme; that money does not come out of the Public Treasury. All the money accruing to the Labour Welfare Fund comes from the sugar prices received from the British Government and that price is paid for the express purpose of Labour Welfare. This \$600,000 does not represent one single cent of taxation of any sort from anybody in this country; and I want to go further and say that before we had the Labour Welfare Fund with which to re-house the agricultural workers, our annual expenditure on Housing was more than what the Government proposes to spend on housing today although the Government has increased taxation. If you are going to squeeze every cent from the people and if you cannot spend an appreciable sum back on them in Housing, what are you going to spend it on? You are going to spend \$300,000 on Ministerial Buildings, but you can only allocate \$150,000 from your Revenue for Housing, merely because you have the British Government money to play with. I tell you that it is scandalous for you to think in terms of adding the Labour Welfare Fund to your Housing Scheme. I know of no West Indian Government which is doing that.

The Price Stabilization Fund now stands at over \$600,000. It virtually was untouched since its inception. When we first agreed to the three funds, we gave the Government the opportunity to invest any surplus funds outside of the Government. I understand that the surplus money accruing to these funds is also invested in the local Banks on which the Government collects interest at the rate of 2% per annum. You will note that from the provisions of this Bill any loans advanced to workers for housing will also carry 2%. In other words, instead of your picking up surplus funds from the

Labour Welfare and letting the local Banks play with it and give you 2% per annum, why not utilise that money in the Housing Programme on which the borrowers will pay the same 2% per annum.

I need not in this year 1955 make reference to the advantages of spending an appreciable sum annually on Housing, because increased Housing in itself increases the assets of the country. I take it for granted that long ago we have passed the elementary stage at which we can appreciate things of that sort; but it does appear to me as if the Government has failed to appreciate the magnitude and the importance in really tackling this Housing problem in an effective manner.

5.30 p.m.

It is either that, or Government has allowed itself very stupidly to be deluded by the special funds we get from sugar and which we are spending on housing agricultural workers. And if we are to believe, as the Minister would have us believe, that the Government appreciates what previous Royal Commissions have said about Housing in the West Indies, and if like him they have read Professor Richardson's report and what he has to say about Housing, then all I can say, after considering the Bill before us, is that all the admonitions of the Royal Commissions and the recommendations of Professor Richardson have fallen on stone deaf ears. We can without any undue hardship, and without any increased financial burden on the people of this island, spend another million dollars a year on Housing and really attempt to re-house the people. All that we are doing here is making it appear to the general public that we are really doing something about Housing; but when you come down to the actual scheme of operations, you will find that you have done very little.

When the Public Servants Housing Bill was before the Legislature the same impression was created. Public Servants felt, that that Act would have heralded the dawn of a new day and soon they would have their own houses and what-not. But it was soon discovered that when the limited scheme did start to operate only a mere fraction of Public Servants would be attended to annually. The same thing will again happen here today under the provisions of this Bill with the 55,000 general workers in the country.

Now, let us before we postpone consideration of this Bill, pay a little attention to the Government's hopes of annually erecting 600 Aided Self Help houses in Barbados. Now, if you know Barbados do you really think, eager as the people are after houses in this country, that we can get 600 Aided Self-Help houses built every year? It is true that you have two Schemes in operation (one in St. Philip and one in Christ Church) and that there has been a certain amount of enthusiasm in the beginning which would doubtless come and be maintained until the end; but those two Schemes comprised, I think, less than 36 houses. Where are we going to get the material from in Barbados to erect 600 Aided Self Help houses every year? That is mere childish delusion on the part of the Government, if we really want to assist in helping to house the people, to think we have the money to pay for it. We were allowing the private banks in Barbados and other institutions outside the country to use our money to their own advantage. Under two sets of legislation recently passed by this House, we permitted public funds subscribed by people of this country to be used by foreign countries, and in some cases almost hostile countries at the expense of our own people.

On the question of houses we can afford very safely, and without little risk, to invest appreciably larger sums feeling absolutely sure that on the one hand, we contribute to social improvement in the country, and on the other hand that we also expand the island's economic position. Housing in Barbados today, and for some time to come at any rate I hope, will be done largely by stone; either coral stone or concrete blocks or bricks manufactured and produced in Barbados. It is true, that due to the shortsightedness of the Government, we shall still have to import cement; but enlarging to an appreciable extent on houses must accrue to the economic advantage of the island because a large proportion will be spent on local building materials and local labour. Let the Government come down to earth and stop fooling themselves about 600 Aided Self-Help houses a year, and make provision for making loans to people who will employ artisans in their own way to put up their homes. Do you think that with the average Barbadian tardiness and strong public spirited desire to own his own home, that you are going to get 600 people every year contributing to an Aided Self Help Housing Scheme which they will occupy by leasehold? The Barbadian wants to own a home; he does not want to work for a house in which he has a tenancy for 99 years.

I was not aware that the Government intended dealing with this Bill today. I only got the Order Paper today and they are other members in this Chamber who also got their Order Paper today; so that I only knew that consideration of this Bill was No. 2 on the Order Paper when I got the Order Paper today. In any properly conducted parliamentary Chamber, it is the Government's duty not only to acquaint the Opposition of their intention to deal with highly controversial matters, but also to ensure that members of the Opposition are fully acquainted with such intentions.

6.40 p.m.

I felt that in this introductory speech, some attempt should have been made to explain in more realistic terms the provisions of this Bill so that people will not be misled into thinking that immediately this becomes law, almost every man, woman and child can apply and get a housing loan. Let the Government read the terms and provisions of the new Housing Bill recently introduced in the Trinidad Legislature. Trinidad is a country which, up to now does not boast of a Socialist Government, it has no Socialist Party or so called Socialist Party dominating its Legislature; but still Trinidad has been able more efficiently to appreciate the housing needs of its people and has introduced legislation designed far more effectively to satisfy those needs. Let them go and read what it is proposed annually to spend in Trinidad; and after making allowances for differences in wealth and ability of the people, we would see how woefully lacking and how sadly inefficient are the sums proposed by the Government in this Bill before us today. I beg to move that the further consideration of this Bill be postponed.

Mr. GODDARD: I had intimated to the Hon. Leader of the House that I was going to ask for a postponement of this Bill. In order to do justice to this Bill we will have to consider it better than we have done today. Only today we knew that the Minister of Communications wanted to proceed with this Bill; and although I can appreciate the fact that it is high up on the Order Paper and has been on the Order Paper for some time, a Bill of this nature will have to be studied more closely than any in

dividual member apart from the hon. introducer has done. The general feeling on this side of the House is that we should have an opportunity of studying the opening remarks of the hon. introducer, and we hope that this Bill will be dealt with next Tuesday. I would also like to ask the Hon. Leader of the House when he is fixing the Order Paper which has so many items on it, to intimate to hon. members what he proposed to do on the following Tuesday; it is not always that we are here on the adjournment of the House, but we can gather from other hon. members who might have been here what Government proposes to do. I think it is the general feeling of this House that the further consideration of this Bill be postponed, and I beg to second the motion of the hon. senior member for St. Philip.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member may not second that motion. [Pause]. Is the hon. member prepared to make his second reading speech now?

Mr. GODDARD: No sir, I am not ready.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member will have to ask the Leader of the House to continue his speech.

Mr. TUDOR rose to speak.

Mr. SPEAKER: Is the hon. member seconding the motion for the postponement?

Mr. TUDOR: Yes sir.

Hon. M. E. COX: If I am permitted to make an explanation, I should like to say I would not like it to be felt that I was forcing this Bill on hon. members to-day. It should be remembered that this Bill was on the Order Paper for a long time and it was Order No. 1. [Mr. LEWIS: It was not printed.] For the last three meetings it was Order No. 2; and therefore I do not want it to be felt that we were springing any surprise on hon. members. Surely if we come to this House and do expect to deal with no more than one order, then we are not doing any work.

The question that the further consideration of this Bill be postponed was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

CUSTOM TARIFF AMENDMENT BILL

Hon. Dr. H. G. H. CUMMINS: Mr. Speaker, it was felt that the Housing Bill would have taken up most of the evening and consequently there was not much to be done. I am asking leave to take Order No. 16 as the next Order of the Day. That Order stands in the name of the Hon. Premier, and I am also asking leave to take charge of it; it is a non-controversial and urgent Bill.

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

Mr. SPEAKER: The next Order of the Day now stands in the name of the hon. minister of Social Services. To move the second reading of a Bill to amend the Customs Tariff Act, 1921.

Hon. Dr. H. G. H. CUMMINS: Mr. Speaker I think that this Bill is a non-controversial one. It deals with the recently created Bellairs Research Institute. I think it is generally known that Commander Bellairs in the interest of modern research in Barbados, left all or most of his property to the McGill University. Out of that has been formed the Bellairs Research Institute. The Institute is asking the Government to assist it by way of exemption of certain Customs Duties on all chemicals, apparatus, articles, materials, and equipment imported by or on behalf of the Research Institute of McGill University for the purpose of constructing, equipping and maintaining its laboratory or for conducting research in Marine Biology by the said Institute.

I do not think that there is any single person in this island, let alone any member of the Legislature who would refuse, in the interest of research and because of the importance of it to Barbados, to assist this Institute. I beg to move that this Bill be now read a second time.

6.50 p.m.

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

Mr. E. D. MOTTLEY: I am very glad to see this amendment. None of us expect the blind or very stupid, would object to an amendment which would give assistance or ease in customs duty for any kind of scientific research work. I do not think any Government any part of the world would stand in the way of letting in free of duty chemicals and apparatus for doing research work.

Now, I want to ask the Hon. Minister one or two questions on this matter. Sometime ago, when we were dealing with something under the Education Act, I mentioned that opportunity should be given not only to the Government-aided Secondary Schools but to all the Secondary Schools to bring in free of duty chemicals and apparatus for use in their laboratories. Certainly, you should have a definition of what is a Secondary School. I want the Minister to tell us the Secondary Schools in this island. I am asking the Hon. Minister to give this House the assurance that any of the established Secondary Schools in the island other than the Government-aided Secondary Schools will benefit from this Bill. If I cannot get that assurance I am not voting for this Bill. If it is only brought in for this gentleman who is now doing research work at the Bellairs Institute I am going to oppose it. I am going to oppose it not because I feel that the Bellairs Research Institute of McGill University should not benefit, but because I think that charity should begin at home. It is a fact that there are Secondary Schools in this island other than those which are Government-aided that are being equipped with a scientific laboratory; and I want to know that they too are allowed to get in their equipment free of duty. If they are not allowed, I cannot see why we should allow the Bellairs Research Institute of McGill University this facility alone, because the McGill University is fed from the boys who pass through our Secondary Schools the Government Aided Secondary Schools in this island such as, Combermere, Foundation, Lodge. And because these schools are not always in a position to take in all the children pursuing secondary education, I consider that assistance in that respect should also be given to the other private Secondary Schools which are equipping and willing to equip themselves with laboratories for doing scientific work and teaching science to their pupils. I do hope that the Hon. Minister will give a reply to that.

Lest any hon. member should think that I am personal, I want to say here and now that this is nothing which can apply to myself. I do know that there are people who because of the difficulty in having their children educated, are getting down what they call school laboratories; not for the purpose of commercialising on them, but for the purpose of assisting in the education of their children. I think the Hon. Minister is aware of that.

Sir, it seems to be the considered opinion of honourable members that there should be a further amendment to this Bill. Not only have you inserted in the Bill the amendment "All chemicals and apparatus for use in the Laboratory of any first or second grade school," but you also have the amendment "All chemicals, apparatus, articles, materials and equipment imported by or on behalf of the

Bellairs Research Institute of McGill University for the purpose of constructing, equipping and maintaining its laboratory or for conducting research in marine biology by the said Institute."

I want to say that this House of Assembly, as a representative body of the people, should not let it appear that because Bellairs Research Institute of McGill University is doing something here, you will allow that institute to bring in chemicals and apparatus free of duty, while when Mr. Louis Lynch wants such things for a school which he is running, he will have to pay for it. The answer may be that Mr. Louis Lynch charges for such tuition; but the Government also charges as well as the Bellairs Institute. If you receive applications from any of these private Secondary Schools to get their chemicals and other apparatus for laboratories in free of duty you should grant them their request. I hope the Hon. Minister would give a reply to that effect.

Sir, I am in a very difficult position, because if I ask the Hon. Minister a question I may not be permitted to speak again after I sit. While I am on my feet, I am going to make an amendment if it is not unparliamentary.

Mr. SPEAKER: The honourable member may do that when the House goes into Committee on the Bill.

Mr. E. D. MOTTLEY: Sir, I am quite sure that the Hon. Minister in charge of this Bill would have no objection to that amendment with his knowledge of local conditions. I am sure he would have no objection to the Community School at Passage Road, as I have been made to understand, asking that they bring in the equipment for a laboratory free of duty. Nor should there be any objection to the Modern High School, the Barbados Academy or any school of this nature bringing in such equipment. I know that some people might smile and feel that some of these Headmasters are not equipped for teaching in these laboratories. Let me say that Mr. Hammond, Headmaster of Harrison College is not equipped for teaching in a laboratory either. You have efficient young men from Harrison College walking the streets of Bridgetown who are able to impart their little knowledge until the time comes for them to leave the island.

7.00 p.m.

The best proof to this (and you cannot deny it) is that you will find private Secondary Schools in this island at which boys who, having been turned out of Government schools have sat the General Certificate of Education and have succeeded in passing in nine subjects out of a total of nine.

This section in the Bill will be interpreted by the Controller of Customs as purely Government Secondary Schools. You cannot say that Schools like Lynch's Secondary School, the Modern High School and The Barbados Academy etc. cannot get in chemicals duty free in this country. Any Secondary School having a laboratory for educational purposes should be allowed to get in chemicals free.

I hope never to live long enough to ask this Government for anything. What the honourable member does not know is this—

Mr. SPEAKER: Do not generalise.

Mr. E. D. MOTTLEY: I am among those who will be proud to give laboratories to schools for educational purposes. With the poor type of masters you are getting and the selfish type of masters you are getting, one is bound to try to get what is offered in the United Kingdom or United States school laboratories. When you come to think of it, the circumstances under which some of our youngsters have to get their education and you realise what is

being offered in the United Kingdom, I say that this provision should be included here. Most honourable members are not interested in this; they will get on the floor of this House and curse all the people rich and big, who did well in times past; but as I was saying, there should be inserted in this Bill not only the words Government Secondary Schools but the words "all other schools"; and it would not be asking too much of the Government to see to it. I say that if honourable members would join me and let us see to it that these words are inserted in the provisions of this Bill assuring that schools other than Government Schools should be included, I think we should be doing a great service to the island.

Mr. BARROW: I am entirely in agreement, Mr. Speaker, with the honourable senior member for the City. The only thing that has surprised me is that the honourable senior member for the City talked so long on something on which there is general agreement. I think, Mr. Speaker, that it is unnecessary for me to retrace the ground which he has already covered so thoroughly; but I think that an amendment to the effect that equipment for chemical or scientific laboratories for the use of any school approved by the Department of Education should meet the Bill. I see no reason why the honourable senior member for the City should want to restrict the interpretation of Private and Public Secondary Schools, because for instance, science is not a subject at present on the curriculum of the elementary schools; and I see no reason why some benefactor should not endow some elementary school with a laboratory. This is a contingency which it is not difficult to anticipate at all; and with the growth of industry or the anticipated growth of industry in this colony, it is not unlikely that the elementary schools in the island will tend to become more and more scientific in their formal education.

I would like to suggest that the restrictions of Secondary Schools be widened a bit more, and an allowance or a dispensation be granted to all schools approved by the Department of Education.

Mr. SPEAKER: The honourable junior member for St. Lucy expressed a desire to speak.
7.10 p.m.

Mr. TUDOR: Mr. Speaker, if I rise at all it is only to strengthen the argument put up with great force by the honourable senior member for the City and strengthened again by the honourable senior member for St. George. I think the honourable member will agree that it is the second time that all of us who are interested in education have been won by the depths of the facilities which are now being extended to schools and which is at present given by the Government. It seems to me therefore, that a case has been made out for extending this facility to the private schools, and indeed to all private schools irrespective of whether they are Government-aided schools or not. When one can concede that schools which have reached a certain standard in their teaching have shown results that justify that standard of teaching, once you concede that there are such schools, a case has been made out for giving them all assistance possible. Unless my memory deceives me, I seem to recall that in the case of some private schools, they are even now allowed to import books and other materials free of duty. If that is the case, then there is all the more reason why this facility should be extended to them with respect to chemicals and other scientific materials and apparatus which are needed for instruction.

So far as the Bellairs Research Institute is concerned, there could not be any objection to granting it this facility, as we are already committed to the furtherance of research and Higher Education generally; and I, myself, would wish that more Institutes of this nature would find their way to Barbados because it is certain that not only this island, but the whole Caribbean will benefit from what work they do. Their very existence is sufficient reason why this assistance should be granted; but I do not think it is the best thing to institute legislation which provides a facility for one kind of Institute and denies it to others, when those others are in a struggling position and they belong to your own home town and country. The case of the private Secondary Schools in this island, though being heard with greater vigour, is not put as often as it should be; and I feel very strongly that whatever facilities are granted to higher institutes of learning, and are granted to Government-aided schools should, in equal measure, be given to these private Secondary Schools because it is a fact that they are fulfilling just as valuable a service, to this community.

Lest it be thought by some people that we on this side of the House or those honourable members who wish to extend this facility to schools other than Government-aided schools are being wild and uncertain about it, I should like to say I would agree that when we go into Committee on this Bill, we should insert in Clause 2 the words "Schools approved by the Director of Education". Obviously, the channel for any such decision must be the official one and, of course, the Director of Education is the fit and proper channel for giving such approval; so we are asking that this facility for promoting teaching of a scientific nature be extended beyond the confines of the First and Second Grade Schools and the Bellairs Institute to other schools approved by the Director of Education. That is an amendment which we should make in Committee; but I want to emphasise that we feel very seriously about it and we have not mentioned the matter in order to be facetious, but in order to correct a great wrong and remove a possible disadvantage from which the promoters and Headteachers of these private Secondary Schools have been suffering. I think that it would be welcomed as a great boon not only to these promoters and Headteachers, but also to their pupils if this facility could be so extended.

Hon. Dr. H. G. H. CUMMINS: Before you put the question, Mr. Speaker, may I say this? The point which has been raised is a new one. It is true that First and Second Grade Schools are mentioned, but I have no information as to any private Secondary School having applied for assistance under this Bill. However, I am prepared to report this point to the Executive Committee with the comments made by hon. members; but I want to say this: it would be out of order for anybody to move an amendment to this Bill since that would create a charge on the Treasury. [MEMBERS: Of course not]. It is a question of the exemption of Customs Duty. [Mr. LEWIS: You are wrong; do not be misled.] I have not got much commonsense, but nobody can mislead me. [Laughter]. If hon. members will pass this Bill, I will report the matter to the Executive Committee, and if and when any such private Secondary Schools apply for this assistance, I am sure that sympathetic consideration will be given to them.

Mr. E. D. MOTTLEY: With Your Honour's permission. If you use the words "secondary and other schools with the approval of the Education

Department" will these private schools be in that?

Mr. SPEAKER: That question should not be put to the Minister because my ruling may have to be sought.

Mr. LEWIS: It is not a question of what form of amendment should be considered, but that the Hon. Minister is not prepared to accept the amendment at all. Therefore I would propose that the further consideration of this Bill be postponed until the next sitting of this House so that the Hon. Minister could report the feelings of the House to the Executive Committee and see if they would accept the amendment. I am not subscribing to the idea that making this amendment would be creating any charge on the Treasury because it is absolutely not so. Any member of this House can bring in a Bill to exempt the duty from anything and put it in the form which would comply with any convention. If you are making the provisions of the Bill retrospective as from the first of last year, then you will be taking money out of the Treasury to give it back to people which is another matter. Do not let us take away all the authority from the House; and do not let us be too quick to subscribe to this view about creating a charge on the Treasury; it is a serious tendency which we are getting in this House.

7.20 p.m.

The hon. member says that he applied his common sense to this point. Let me say that the last Hon. Minister who staked his reputation on a certain point lost. I am willing to put my life on this because I know it is not true. I would like to get some indication from the Hon. Minister as to the force of argument that we have heard, so as to prevent another amendment being made to the Customs Tariff Act.

The next thing is that if you read this Bill as it is printed, you will not be able to find where to apply this Bill to the principal Act. This Bill can not be read with the 1921 Customs Act, because that Act has no Schedule at all, that Schedule was taken out by a Bill passed in this House a few years ago. I think it was in 1953 that the Schedule of the 1921 Act was deleted and a new Schedule substituted therefor.

I would be glad if the Hon. Minister would say that he will report the feelings of the House to the Executive Committee and see if the Executive Committee would be in agreement with this proposed amendment or not. We should get their opinion on it. I myself feel that it is something which can work. As a matter of fact the terms first and second grade schools are purely Barbadianism. There is not such a thing as first and second grade schools outside of Barbados. You talk of Primary and Secondary Education; and your first and second grade schools are all in the category of secondary education. There is no Second Grade school in this island which had a laboratory when this measure was put in the Act. Even up to this day some of our first grade schools do not have it. I really am willing to get an indication from the Hon.

Minister as to whether he is willing to postpone this measure for a week. I am in sympathy with this Bill; but I am also in sympathy with the argument that we should assist out people first especially those people who want to do scientific work. Let me say that it is good to have these dabblers because it is from these dabblers that you have managed to get radar and atomic energy. The most scientific things are discovered from dabbling.

An ordinary amendment can be put in to this present Bill to cover what hon. members have in mind; so if the Hon. Minister presses the passing of this Bill tonight he might find he may get something included that the Government may dislike but would have to accept if the House wants it; because, after all, the Legislature is supreme.

Sir, we have exempted many things from duty. Instead of amending the Customs Tariff Act we even have brought in a special Bill for the World Health Organisation. It was merely a Bill given a name so as to amend the Customs Tariff Act.

I think what can be done in this matter is that the second reading of the Bill can be passed, and the Hon. Minister need not go into Committee on the Bill. I am quite willing to accept it if it is done that way. I just wanted the hon. member to know the view I share on the issue of creating a charge on the public Treasury. I am in sympathy up to a point with the views expressed by hon. members in giving duty free privileges to people who are willing to experiment in Laboratories.

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

Hon. Dr. CUMMINS: Mr. Speaker, as requested by hon. members, I am prepared to postpone this Bill at this stage. I am therefore asking leave to postpone this Bill at this stage.

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

Hon. Dr. CUMMINS: Mr. Speaker, that concludes Government business for the day.

In fixing the Order Paper, I heard it enunciated over on the other side of the House that the Government should indicate that they want to do such a particular Bill at the next meeting of the House. I agree that in some cases it is the correct thing to do. I agree that when you get to fixing your Order Paper and you fix No. 1 and No. 2 in that order, you mean to say that you will proceed in that order; however that is not possible in every case.

ADJOURNMENT

The Order Paper having been fixed.

Hon. Dr. CUMMINS: I beg to move that this House do now adjourn until Tuesday next 7th June, 1955 at three o'clock p.m.

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

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

7.30 p.m.