

THE

House of Assembly Debates

(OFFICIAL REPORT)

SESSION 1954—55

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Saturday, 24th September, 1955.

A Special Meeting of the House of Assembly was held at 12 o'clock noon 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. F. L. WALCOTT, O.B.E., Mr. E. D. MOTTLEY, Hon. R. G. MAPP, (*Minister of Trade, Industry and Labour*); Mr. F. C. GODDARD, (*Leader of the Opposition*); Mr. F. E. MILLER, 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*); and Mr. J. C. TUDOR, M.A.

Prayers were read.

MR. SPEAKER STATES OBJECT OF MEETING

Mr. SPEAKER: I have the honour to inform the House that I have considered that there is a State of Emergency existing. In the interest of the public, having been informed by the Hon. Minister of Social Services that he considered there should be a meeting of the House called, I have acquiesced to his suggestion and have summoned honourable members to consider a Money Resolution which relates to the State of Emergency.

Mr. LEWIS: Mr. Speaker, did I understand you to say that you have summoned the members of this House?

Mr. SPEAKER: I said that I had acquiesced in the suggestion to summon the members of the House.

Mr. LEWIS: I think that the facilities which were put at the disposal of whoever circulated this document, (nobody knows where it has come from, there is nobody who has signed it,) should have been put at your disposal.

As far as this document is concerned, a meeting of this House is still to be arranged. I feel that this is far too important a matter for us to hold

up, but the same facilities which were put at the disposal of whoever sent out this document should have been put at your disposal. I think, that the whole Police Force, the Army or whoever is engaged should have been acquired to issue your summons to the members of the House to come out.

I hope that there is no carelessness on the part of the House. This is not a summons for this House to meet and we are here because we feel that we were obliged to come out and give the Government some money to go on with. I am waiting to hear what facilities were given to Your Honour. The postal services might have been broken down but this is not the way for this House to meet.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Minister of Social Services contacted me and asked to give my permission for a meeting of the House today. An Army officer came to me and I instructed him to inform the Minister that he could get in contact with the Clerk, and the Librarian and Secretary and have the summons despatched through the Police Force.

Mr. F. L. WALCOTT: I should like to say that everything must be done in a proper manner; there can be no possible excuse in these circumstances for not being able to summon the House in a proper manner. This summons came to me through a Policeman yesterday and in the same way that the Policeman could have done that, Your Honour could have had a motor car put at your disposal.

All available transportation should have been put or made available to Your Honour so that you could have appended your signature to summon a meeting of the House. We have money for this purpose; but people who are placed in authority must act in an emergency to suit the authority which they possess.

There is absolutely no excuse for what has taken place; why is it that none of the motor cars available to the Government was sent for you? We know that the communications have been broken down but the transport communications have not been broken down. We want to be summoned in the proper manner and in the same way as members are summoned to Government House in Executive Committee.

This is purely a matter of the gradual disrespect which is shown to the House of Assembly by those members who feel that it is within their province to disrespect the House. I have heard remarks being made in this House and in other places and there you have honourable members who are grinning and

sitting smuggly by. We are here to meet every day in the year but why could not the Speaker be treated in the same way as the Chief Secretary was treated? This note says:

"As a result of the hurricane which occurred on Thursday, 22nd September, it has been proposed" by whom has it been proposed? By the Governor "That a meeting of the House should be summoned for 12 noon on Saturday, 24th September."

12.25 p.m.

"The Leader of the House has undertaken to consult His Honour the Speaker about this. If permission is granted, it is proposed to introduce the attached Resolution." Therefore, Mr. Speaker, this was sent before you had seen it. [A VOICE: You mean consulted]. This document says that you had not been consulted.

Now if you have not been consulted, what we want to say is this: first of all, your signature should have been appended. If hon. members present had not been public spirited and had acted in a manner similar to that in which they have been treated, there would have been no meeting of the House today. The matter before the House is of such that anyone would meet to discuss; but in future if you are going to summon the Legislature and the Speaker is available (considering that the means of getting to him is possible) the correct procedure of obtaining his signature should be followed.

Mr. SPEAKER: There is nothing before the House.

Hon. Dr. H. G. H. CUMMINS: Mr. Speaker, I have some papers to lay.

Mr. E. D. MOTTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I do not want to prolong the debate, but I do not think that there is one member of this House who, if he knew that we had to meet today, would stay home. I do believe it is an error; but what I want to say is this: we have heard so much about being masters in our own houses that some people are becoming drunk with it. If the House was obliged to meet today on this Resolution (nine members form a quorum) and the Government consisted of nine members, it would have been done. I believe that it is an oversight. Some people become panicky—

Mr. SPEAKER: What sort of oversight?

Mr. E. D. MOTTLEY: That this House has not been summoned at all. I am saying that it is an oversight. As soon as I got my papers I decided that I must attend; but that the House has not been summoned is—

Mr. SPEAKER: I think I told the Deputy Speaker that I acquiesced in the suggestion of summoning the House; and I said that the Government would have to assist in the summoning. I make that clear to all hon. members, Government and otherwise. I acquiesced in the suggestion of having the House summoned and I told the Major how to get in touch with members through the staff of the House. That was what I did and I could do no more.

Mr. E. D. MOTTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I am being charitable.

Mr. SPEAKER: I want no charity; let that be clearly understood.

Mr. E. D. MOTTLEY: What my colleague said is right. I am merely saying that some people become panicky at the slightest provocation. Actually, in your words, Mr. Speaker, you delegated the authority which rests with you and suggested the means by which the House could be summoned. Hence, not merely as a politician, but as a school teacher (you were once in that position) would agree that this House was not summoned at all. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, with the greatest respect, considering

what has been written here *re* the Leader of the House etc., you will agree with me that even the means to summons members were not carried out. I do not want to waste any time about it.

Mr. SPEAKER: It is obvious that the means have not been carried out.

Mr. E. D. MOTTLEY: Well, Your Honour, having intimated—

Mr. SPEAKER: Not intimated; it is obvious.

Mr. E. D. MOTTLEY: Those persons to whom you intimated the means to carry it out should have said in their own language that the Speaker has agreed to so and so.

Mr. SPEAKER: But I said just now that the means have not been carried out.

Mr. E. D. MOTTLEY: I agree with you; but I do not want you to think that I am dispensing any charity. However, I am going to be as charitable as this: every one knows that at present the Hon. Ministers would be somewhat overworked and overstrained; and I am glad to say that this is why you should have competent people to staff the Ministries. If it had come from the honourable Leader of the House, there should have been somebody in there to tell him how it should be worded.

No one is accusing the Hon. Minister of anything. After all, he is not expected to do everything himself. It is a strain on them now; but I must agree with my colleague. You have to have some people in that office with some common sense. I know that in this particular Ministry you have one of the best if not the best of all men; the ablest, most mannerly, up-to-date and everything else; I am referring to Mr. Charles Springer; and I say that something must have happened for the Minister to act like this.

12.35 p.m.

I would just like to say this: do things however you like; we are here to do this business in the interest of the people. We are not satisfied to come in here and let the Minister talk about laying papers and doing this and that. I do not think you should do such a thing.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member should not worry himself about that. I am here to take care of that. The papers that are to be laid concern this matter.

Mr. E. D. MOTTLEY: I object to the laying of any papers. Ministers should not take advantage of members of this House.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member is out of order. He is absolutely wrong. Any matter unrelated to this emergency I am not allowing. The papers to be laid concern this matter.

Mr. E. D. MOTTLEY: You are wrong. They should lay nothing at all. (Laughter) Let them laugh. I do not work at them.

Mr. SPEAKER: There can be no House without Order. Hon. members must remember that they have to obey the Rules of the House. You cannot consider anything for the people unless you first have order. If I say hon. members are disorderly, that will be just telling the public that they did not intend to do their business.

PAPERS LAID

Hon. Dr. CUMMINS: Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Hon. Premier, I am commanded to lay Message No. 26/1955 from His Excellency the Acting Governor to the Honourable the House of Assembly informing the Honourable House of the declaration of a state of emergency. The Message reads as follows:—

MESSAGE No. 26/1955.

*His Excellency the Acting Governor
To
The Honourable the House of Assembly*

His Excellency the Acting Governor has the honour to inform the Honourable the House of Assembly that the hurricane of the twenty-second day of September, 1955, resulted in severe damage to property, and in loss of life.

In consequence thereof it appeared to the Governor-in-Executive Committee that a state of emergency had arisen. Accordingly by a Proclamation made the twenty-second day of September, 1955, pursuant to the provisions of section two of the Emergency Powers Act, 1939, I have declared that a state of Emergency exists.

A copy of the Proclamation is attached for information.

R. N. TURNER,
Acting Governor.

Government House,
Barbados,
24th September, 1955.

Hon. Dr. CUMMINS: On behalf of the Premier, I am commanded to lay Emergency Powers (Hurricane) Orders, 1955.

Mr. F. L. WALCOTT: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of Order. The Honourable Leader of this House has just laid a paper dealing with Emergency Powers. That is something of a different character to what we have come here to deal with.

We are here to deal with a Resolution to grant the sum of \$200,000 to meet expenditure in connection with Hurricane Relief. So far as Emergency Powers Orders are concerned, you will find them contained in the Emergency Powers Act. Section 2, sub-section 2 says that where an emergency has been made, the occasion thereof shall forthwith be communicated to the Houses of the Legislature, and if the Houses of the Legislature are then separated by such adjournment or prorogation as will not expire within five days, a proclamation shall be issued for the meeting of the Legislature within five days and the Legislature shall accordingly meet and sit upon the day appointed by that proclamation, and shall continue to sit and act in like manner as if it had stood adjourned or prorogued to the same date. That is to say you must bring these Emergency Orders to the Legislature and if Legislature does not rescind them, they become the law of the land.

How can the Hon. Minister give notice of these Emergency Powers Orders today when he knows we cannot deal with them today? The Emergency Powers Orders have to be approved by this Chamber. They can be made and can go into operation from the date they are made but as soon as the Legislature meets, we must sit and approve of them.

What the Hon. Minister is now doing is informing the House that Emergency Powers Orders exist, and these are the Orders which exist. We cannot discuss them today, and I am suggesting that if they are laid they must be laid at a time when we can discuss them.

Hon. Dr. CUMMINS: There is nothing wrong in laying them.

Mr. F. L. WALCOTT: You cannot lay some thing which we are not going to discuss today. I repeat: the notice which I received was for the purpose of dealing with a Resolution to place the sum of \$200,000 at the disposal of the Governor-in-Executive Committee to meet expenditure in connection with Hurricane Relief.

Hon. Dr. CUMMINS: Under what Rule can they not be laid?

Mr. F. L. WALCOTT: Under the Emergency Powers Act. The Act says that you must bring the Emergency Powers Orders in within so many days, therefore, it means we will have to discuss them, because after they are laid for a couple days they become law. We are not summoned to deal with them. You could have called an Emergency Meeting to deal with them. Why did you not put down the two things to be dealt with at this special meeting.

12.45 p.m.

These Powers are made under the Emergency Powers Act, 1939, and it says that where a proclamation of emergency has been made the Legislature should be given notice of it. We will have to be summoned in order to consider these Regulations. The reason which has been given for this meeting today has been stated in this note which is appended to the Resolution for \$200,000.

As far as I am concerned I am not against dealing with the Emergency Orders, but what I want to know is this: we are not going to be permitted to deal with these Emergency Orders and the Act says that these Orders shall be laid before the Legislature as soon as may be after they are made, and shall not continue in force after the expiration of seven days from the time when they are so laid unless a resolution is passed by both Houses providing for the continuance thereof. With this Act before them, why did they sit down in Executive Committee, agree to have this meeting and not inform the Legislature that they are sending down these Orders?

Mr. SPEAKER: Nothing in the Act has any suggestions about that.

Mr. F. L. WALCOTT: The Act says: "Any Orders so made shall be laid before the Legislature as soon as may be after they are made and shall not continue in force after the expiration of seven days from the time they are so laid unless a Resolution is passed by both Houses providing for the continuance thereof."

You are allowing that period for the purpose of getting the approval of the Legislature. I want to draw to your attention, Mr. Speaker, that there must be consistency as regards rulings. I am quoting your ruling; on the last occasion we met under similar circumstances Your Honour ruled that you were not allowing anything to be dealt with other than the matter for which the House had been summoned. You cannot by any amount of elasticity say that the Emergency Powers Act of 1939. [ASIDES]. If you will take time and consider these matters—

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member must address the Chair.

Mr. F. L. WALCOTT: The asides must not be so loud. I am sure that you will assist me in saying that the asides should not be so loud as to attract the member who is speaking.

Mr. SPEAKER: But the hon. member must not go out of his way to answer them.

Mr. F. L. WALCOTT: I am sorry for that. As I was saying sir, you cannot summon the House for a specific purpose and then when the House meet you take the opportunity to deal with something with which the House should not deal.

My only contention is that if you are permitting these Emergency Orders to be laid, the Legislature must be in a position to discuss those Emergency Orders today. That happens in Great Britain; four months ago there was an emergency and the Orders

were laid in the Legislature and the members were able to deal with them.

Why should the Government want to bring in Emergency Orders today unless they are prepared to lay these Orders to-day when we are not able to discuss those Orders and agree to them or disagree with them.

Mr. SPEAKER: I think the hon. member has mentioned all the points he wants to make. I have re-read what has been circulated by the Hon. Leader of the House [Mr. E. D. MOTTLEY: It does not say so.] Well I can only presume that it has come from him and I think that that is a reasonable presumption.

In connection with the point raised by the hon. junior member for St. Peter as regards the laying of Papers, I will not permit any discussion on those Measures; therefore I will not allow this Order to be laid, [Cheers] although we must of necessity deal with the other Measure.

Mr. ALLDER: Mr. Speaker, I would like to say that whatever inconvenience hon. members might have suffered it is nothing in comparison with the inconvenience which the people in the different areas of this island are suffering. We have let ourselves down as hon. members on many occasions; and if an error shows up itself now, I feel that the Emergency situation through which the island is passing at the present time deserves that we should overlook it. [VOICES: Hear! Hear!] [MEMBERS: Even Alder!]

Whatever papers the Government might have pertaining to this catastrophe through which we have passed, let them handle them. Even if the procedure in connection with the Emergency Regulations has been overlooked, inasmuch as it is bound up with the present situation in this colony, let us overlook such a thing and get ahead with the Resolution and set up our District Committees so that the people can get immediate relief. (Cheers).

Mrs. BOURNE: Mr. Speaker, the honourable member who has just sat down said—

Mr. SPEAKER: Order.

Mrs. BOURNE: Mr. Speaker, it is true that I arrived late; but my being late was due to the fact that I have been all over the district trying to assist —[Mr. F. L. WALCOTT: Are you the only one who has been assisting?] Mr. Speaker, should I be interrupted by the hon. member? Sir, what I have heard spoken by honourable members since I came in here, in my opinion, just shows the type of mentality of those who have been speaking.

Mr. SPEAKER: The honourable member should be careful.

Mrs. BOURNE: I am sorry, sir, if I have said anything offensive to Your Honour.

Mr. SPEAKER: I am only reminding the honourable member not to make any personal reference to other honourable members.

Mrs. BOURNE: However, I think that what we should have been doing here this afternoon is to try to give as much help as we can to the suffering people of Barbados. Instead of coming here at twelve o'clock and wasting all this time, perhaps we should have passed this Resolution in fifteen or twenty minutes and each and every one of us would be out doing our duties. We should forget every mistake.

The members of the Government are all human beings; and if they have made a mistake it might be overlooked under the circumstances. It is our duty to try and assist the people instead of coming here and wasting time in debating something that should only take, as I said just now, fifteen or twenty

minutes. I repeat that our aim should be to try to assist those who are suffering.

Hon. M. E. COX: Mr. Speaker, I think it is within my right, with great respect to Your Honour, to ask under what rule are members of the Government not permitted to lay Papers when this House meets?

I say that for this reason: for all the years that I have been a member of the House, and even before I was a member of the House, no meeting of the House has been held without some papers being laid. I am surprised to hear some honourable members say that this House was not summoned. [A VOICE: Do not talk that.]

Long before I was a member of this House I have always seen the ordinary routine of the House to be something like this: that is to say, your papers are first laid and afterward it is clearly stated that you are only going to discuss the particular matter for which the House has been summoned. It has never been known in the history of this House that on such occasions no paper should be laid. I should like to find out under what Rule are we prohibited from laying a paper.

Mr. SPEAKER: There is no parliament that I have ever heard of that is not guided by Rules. And parliament is not guided by Rules alone, but also by usages and precedents; unless the Parliament of Barbados is now about to make itself an exception. I have been given to understand that by a former parliamentarian and Clerk of this House.

In the early days of my Speakership, there was a similar occasion when I sought his advice and he said that when a special meeting had been summoned, papers were not laid. I have been so guided by that parliamentarian on former occasions and I intend to be guided now by what I regard as a precedent. All Parliaments have their precedents. I have made my ruling, and my ruling can only be challenged on substantive motion.

Mr. VAUGHAN: Mr. Speaker, despite all that has been said I think that the House is the supreme guide to its own affairs. When any Minister finds himself in difficulty, there is a simple thing which he can do; that is, he can make a motion that so and so should be discussed, and if that motion is carried by a majority, nothing can prevent this matter from being discussed.

Mr. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, honourable members of the House are so jittery that I am just asking that we should put aside personal recriminations and get down to the business before us.

I should like just to ask that the House be free to discuss any matter including the Emergency Powers as long as it is related to the Resolution for the \$200,000. I am simply asking that they put aside any personal feelings.

Like human nature in emergencies such as this, one is inclined to get jittery and want to do everything in one moment. But I should like to ask that although it is rather nice to be very important, there are occasions when we are bound to realise that it is equally important to be nice. There are also occasions, such as today when we learn things which we never expected.

Mercy has never been strained. There are those who are regarding us with some concern of their misery; that is why I should like to ask honourable members to deal with the Resolution immediately.

Hon. M. E. COX: Your Honour, I heard you state not long ago that we abide by usages and precedents. I agree with you that we abide by usages and precedents, but with an exception. Sometime last month when the question was raised

by the honourable junior member for the City that no papers should be laid, it was argued that on all such occasions whenever the House was summoned Papers were laid just as usual, and that is why I am protesting.

Hon. R. G. MAPP: Mr. Speaker, I speak with great feeling. I think that this is the first time in the life of all of us that we have experienced a catastrophe such as this. I do not think any honourable member in his life time has ever experienced anything like this. I should like to make an appeal to the House—[Asides] Mr. Speaker, I cannot hear myself.

Mr. SPEAKER: Is the honourable member getting an interruption from somewhere?

Hon. R. G. MAPP: I am making an appeal to the public spiritedness of honourable members.

[Asides.]

1.05 p.m.

Mr. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. What is before the House?

Mr. SPEAKER: Absolutely nothing.

HON. R. G. MAPP: I take it, sir, that you have ruled; but I rise just to say that all the Emergency Powers Act says is that the Orders shall be laid in five days. If what the hon. member is protesting is that—

Mr. SPEAKER: I have made a ruling: I will allow no more comment.

Mr. LEWIS: Mr. Speaker, why should the hon. senior member for St. Andrew criticise hon. members for merely drawing something to your attention. Hon. members over on this side are most anxious to get on with this business. Were it left to the hon. senior member for St. Andrew and the hon. senior member for St. John, there would be no meeting today to vote this money because they came here long after the time when the meeting was summoned.

Mr. ALLDER: Mr. Speaker, in view of the fact that the hon. junior member for the City has mentioned my name, allow me to assure him that even although he might have come before my arrival here, yet he has done less.

Mr. SPEAKER: Will the hon. member desist from saying anything more?

Mr. ALLDER: The hon. member is only wasting time about rules.

Mr. SPEAKER: Will the Hon. member desist?

GOVERNMENT NOTICE

Hon. Dr. CUMMINS: Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Hon. Premier, I beg to give notice of a Resolution to place the sum of \$200,000 at the disposal of the Governor-in-Executive Committee to meet expenditure in connection with hurricane relief.

I would just like to say before there is any discussion that the Resolution was first for the sum of \$100,000, but just before we came here, we had another meeting of the Executive Committee and we decided to increase the sum to \$200,000.

RULES 88 AND 89 SUSPENDED

Hon. Dr. CUMMINS: If necessary, Mr. Speaker, I am moving that Rules 88 and 89 be suspended in order to proceed with this Resolution in all its stages today.

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

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

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

Hon. Dr. CUMMINS: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that Your Honour do now leave the Chair and

the House go into Committee of Supply to deal with this resolution of which notice has just been given.

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

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

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

Resolution for \$200,000 for Hurricane Relief

Hon. Dr. CUMMINS: Mr. Chairman, this Resolution is for the sum of \$200,000 to meet expenditure in connection with Hurricane Relief. It speaks for itself. Apparently, some hon. members do not know we have an emergency. [Mr. LEWIS: Do not talk nonsense now.] I am just copying from you.

As I was saying, Mr. Chairman, this \$200,000 is for the purpose of granting immediate relief in the present emergency. Hon. members ought to remember that £100,000 was set aside to be invested abroad for such a purpose as this. It is proposed that this Government will want \$200,000 at once to proceed with immediate relief; and when the emergency is over and we know then how much has been spent, then we will withdraw that amount from the fund that is invested abroad. At this stage, when we are not sure how much we will need, it has been agreed that \$200,000 should be advanced.

As I have said before, the Resolution which was circulated at first was for the sum of \$100,000 but this morning the Executive Committee met and decided that the situation as regards housing and the restoring of them needs some immediate attention and agreed that the sum should be increased by another \$100,000. The first \$100,000 is for clothing and feed. I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

Mrs. BOURNE: I beg to second that.

Mr. GODDARD: Mr. Chairman, I thought that the Government through their Departments would have been in the position to have given this House a much clearer indication of the damage caused by the hurricane to this island. So far, we have been told nothing; but perhaps, it is presumed that we should know for ourselves.

I know of the damage which has been done to the parish of Christ Church but I do not know for all the other parishes.

There is much damage done in Christ Church. That part of the island has been the most devastated and the damage has been so great that it would be wrong for the Government to come down for a sum like this which I consider to be a pittance. It is much too small to talk about reconstruction. If the Government had said that they have come for \$200,000 but that they do not know the exact extent of the damage, but that this is something to get on with immediate relief, that would be all well and good; but that has not been stated.

1.15 p.m.

When devastations like this take place we have always given assistance to other colonies; and if we make very light of the damage which has been done here, or if we underestimate the damage done to this island, we will be the sufferers for it. You will see now that there are hundreds of houses which have been damaged in the parish of Christ Church; there are damaged, very many houses the remains of which, if you can find them, will not make new dwellings. That, I hope, the Government knows. [Hon. Dr. H. G. H. CUMMINS: We know that.]

If you know that, then you should say that this is just a beginning.

Hon. Dr. H. G. H. CUMMINS: I said that the situation needs immediate attention and that is just a beginning.

Mr. GODDARD: I am very glad I got him to make that statement because I did not hear him quite clearly. [Hon. Dr. H. G. H. CUMMINS: Well say that.] I am not here to make capital out of the suffering of the people; I want to see the Government moving as quickly as possible to give immediate aid to those people who have no shelter.

There are hundreds in Christ Church who are in homes other than their own and I know that the distribution of food alone will absorb a large part of this money. I think that the people should know the position clearly and let them help themselves as much as possible; but let them know that the Government is behind them in the re-construction of their homes.

I hope that all the Ministries will be put to work on this matter and drop the other things; let them contemplate on the people who are homeless. I am thankful for this \$200,000 but do not let them think that this amount will go anywhere near the re-construction of districts which I have seen.

Hon. M. E. COX: Mr. Chairman, perhaps a word from me at this stage might prevent a very lengthy debate. The Hon. Leader of the Opposition has referred to the amount which the Government proposes in this Resolution as a mere pittance is so far as the re-construction of houses is concerned. I should like to say here and now that this is not a Resolution for the rebuilding of houses; this is a Resolution, a part of which is for the rehabilitation of the houses.

What we have agreed to, and what I believe is in active force, is for the Public Works Department and the Manager-Secretary of the Housing Board to take immediate action by getting certain supplies of lumber, galvanize and so on; and there will be two organising departments. One will be responsible for one half of the building and the other responsible for the other half; they will get workmen from all over the island and get these houses put back in order in as quick a time as possible so as to relieve the situation.

We will get as much materials as possible and lorries will go to the various villages and we will re-construct houses so that the people can be relieved as quickly as possible. As regards those houses which cannot be re-constructed, that is something which has to be considered and dealt with after a proper survey has been made, and the Government is able to see whether it will cost "X" dollars for rebuilding these houses.

The question will also arise as to whether the houses should be rebuilt of wood or whether they should be of a more permanent structure. I just want to point out at this stage that since this catastrophe took place, all efforts have been made on the part of the Government to see that the people are made as comfortable as possible.

We have done everything possible in connection with the food situation and we are still appealing to the people to assist in giving of their best to make these people as comfortable as they can be made; but I would like to emphasise that work has already been started on the reconstruction of the houses. A number of houses which were removed from the slum areas to the Pine have been either blown down or damaged, and about 2 o'clock on the evening of the hurricane there were only about four of one hundred of those houses standing.

I got into contact with the Manager-Secretary of the Housing Board and he immediately responded to the situation, and now there may be only four houses to be re-erected. Yesterday afternoon I noticed that quite a number of houses were re-erected and a number of persons had moved into their houses.

I think it would be better in the circumstances to have an island wide organisation set up in so far as the rehabilitation of these houses is concerned; and we agreed that the two Departments (the Housing Board and the Public Works) should take charge of the rehabilitation of these people.

From our experience on the last occasion, the wheels of the Parochial Authorities cannot move as quickly as we would like them to move; and we have agreed to get the Public Works Department and the Housing Board to go throughout the island and get these people back in their houses as quickly as possible.

1.25 p.m.

I agree with what the hon. junior member for Christ Church has said about people helping themselves. We have stressed that point. We have also made the appeal to those whose houses can be put back and who are in a position to do so, not to wait wholly and solely on the Government; because during that time they will still be suffering considerable inconvenience. That is why we are appealing to them wherever possible to get their houses up as quickly as possible and not to wait on the Government.

No doubt this is a very great calamity; thousands of houses are down many of which cannot be rehabilitated because of being too old; and that is another reason why we have appealed to them. In addition to that, there is the question of employing carpenters all of whom are not readily available to carry out the work of reconstruction and repair.

So far as this Resolution is concerned, part of this money will be placed at the disposal of two departments: the Public Works Department and the Housing Board. The island will be divided into two sections; each section will have its own head and each head will work as quickly as possible in the various areas. That is as far as I can go.

I must emphasise again that where the construction of houses is concerned, I think hon. members will readily agree that from our own experience now we should concentrate upon permanent structure.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The hon. junior member for St. Peter.

Mr. F. L. WALCOTT: Mr. Chairman—

Mr. LEWIS: I am sorry to interrupt the hon. member, but the Minister has criticised certain things and he has not given due attention to the fact that many of us are trying to be helpful.

On a previous occasion it was ruled (by Mr. Speaker's direct ruling) that a non member of the Executive Committee could not initiate or second the motion for the passing of a Resolution for a Money Vote and I am drawing to your attention that this has hapened today. It would have been a good idea if all the information that the hon. senior member for St. Michael had, had been circulated.

Mr. Chairman, I am drawing your attention to the fact that a non-member of the Governor-in-Executive Committee has seconded the motion for the passing of a Money Vote. Let them put it in order now, do not wait until it is dug out of them.

Mr. F. L. WALCOTT: Mr. Chairman, I believe that that was the occasion when to show the feminine exuberance, the hon. senior member for St. Andrew

took it upon herself to pick up the fire-rage of somebody so as to chastise us. But we are always charitable to the weaker sex; and even if she were mistaken we have to pardon her since someone could have advised her in the right thing.

Mrs. BOURNE: Mr. Chairman, in view of the fact that I am not a member of the Government, I beg to withdraw my seconding of the motion. As regards making any reference to the hon. member I wish to say that he also told me to say things which I had no right to say.

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

Mr. F. L. WALCOTT: Mr. Chairman,—

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The hon. senior member for St. Andrew has asked leave to withdraw her seconding of the motion. [Mr. E. D. MOTTLEY: There is nothing to withdraw.]

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

Hon. M. E. COX: Mr. Chairman, I respectfully beg to second the motion for the passing of this Resolution.

Mr. F. L. WALCOTT: Mr. Chairman, now that that motion has been seconded I can proceed. The hon. senior member for St. Andrew has made statements which she must withdraw with dignity. That is to say, she has said that when I was a member of the Executive Committee.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The hon. member did not call your name.

Mr. F. L. WALCOTT: I was the only one speaking here this afternoon on this side of the House who was a member of the Executive Committee; and I am saying that that implies that when I was a member of the Executive Committee I brought out secrets and told them to her. She has said that I told her to say things which she had no right to say. [Mr. E. D. MOTTLEY: It may have been things about her husband.]

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Are you objecting to the remarks used by the hon. senior member for St. Andrew?

Mr. F. L. WALCOTT: They are saying that I should have objected the moment she said so. But the hon. member speaking, usually has to sit down before another member rises to object. I wanted to regularise the proceedings, if you can appreciate my point. [A VOICE: Will you sit down?]

Mr. VAUGHAN: Mr. Chairman, I have heard the hon. junior member for St. Peter referring to the hon. senior member for St. Andrew as "she" and "she". I do not know whom he means. I think that the proper way of addressing any hon. member of this House is the "hon. member for so-and-so."

Mr. F. L. WALCOTT: Mr. Chairman, I never knew that it was unparliamentary to use a pronoun in speech. I may say that that gender would have been appropriately applied to other members. Maybe it is appropriate to the hon. junior member for St. John. [Mr. MILLER: Mr. Chairman, I want to know what is the meaning of all this talk about genders; whether it is neuter gender or what?]

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Will the hon. junior member for St. George behave himself.

Mr. F. L. WALCOTT: Mr. Chairman, I have obeyed your ruling.

Mr. CRAWFORD: Mr. Chairman, if I may intervene in this debate, I may say that it has degenerated to the point where we should do something about it. I am going to make a motion that we should adjourn for five minutes [Mr. WALCOTT: That is out of Order.] We should report progress

at this stage, ask the Speaker to resume the Chair, adjourn for five minutes and come back to the House in an entirely different mood. This is not the proper mood in which to conduct the business before us.

Hon. members cannot hear themselves, and the whole Assembly corresponds to the atmosphere of a public market. We have not come here to waste time. I am going to move that you report progress with leave to sit again.

Mr. F. L. WALCOTT: I think that the hon. member is out of Order. You asked me just now to wait.

1.35 p.m.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I am asking the hon. junior member for St. Peter to listen for one moment to the Chair. I am appealing to you to be as calm as possible in this matter and not to carry it to the length which you may feel that you should carry it. I admit that I asked you to wait pending a decision; but here now is a rule which I shall read in a moment. Rule 132 reads as follows:

"Every such objection is to be taken at the time when such words are used and not after any other member has spoken."

Now I am appealing to the hon. member to drop that matter and let us adhere to the Rules. You may carry on.

Mr. F. L. WALCOTT: Mr. Chairman, you do not have to appeal to me. You have just read a Rule to me and I must admit that when I rose to speak you asked me to wait. Had I barged in then, what would have been the situation! You also made some reference to me asking me to drop the matter. I am not afraid to say that the hon. senior member for St. Andrew is speaking an untruth; I have never told her anything that I have spoken in Executive Committee.

Mrs. BOURNE: I have never accused the hon. member of telling me any Executive secrets; nor did I say that he brought out any Executive secrets therefore he cannot tell me I am speaking an untruth. I did not make any reference to him; I never said the hon. junior member for St. Peter. If, Mr. Chairman, any hon. member around this Table thinks because I am only a female member I can be intimidated, I will stand up against any one of them.

Mr. F. L. WALCOTT: Mr. Chairman, I think all hon. members heard what the hon. senior member for St. Andrew said with the exception of the hon. member herself. I am not afraid of what anybody has to say about me. If you say something about me and you do not want to withdraw it, that is your right; but I am not going to sit here and allow the hon. senior member for St. Andrew by intimation or otherwise to say that when I was a member of the Executive Committee I told her something I did not say. I will not do like the Hon. Premier to ask for records to embarrass people.

This is a matter which we have to deal with, and I really want to point out that those of us who came here today and made any objection about procedural matters did so in the interest of good government. If we were not interested in this affair we would not be here.

Personally I have some interest in what is taking place here today; relatives of mine have suffered considerable damage by the hurricane. I am not one of those people who walk about and look for political kudos. I have some family who on account of the hurricane had to seek shelter in a cellar, and I have to look for over \$1,000 to repair

their houses. This is not anything which I am dealing with merely for political kudos.

This is a very important matter with which we are dealing; and you have to compliment all those who have acted expeditiously in handling this matter.

I think despite one or two cases, the matter has been handled well and the people have shown the commonsense and fortitude that speak well for the community as a whole. As Barbadians we all are very pleased to see that in a disaster such as this the people have risen to the occasion and have equipped themselves in a manner that should make us as representatives feel proud, and should spur us on to do more.

Now Mr. Chairman, this is where I do not agree with some hon. members. Some hon. members think that this is a well-known Resolution before the Chamber, therefore you ought to know all about it and pass it quickly without making any comment. I am sure Mr. Chairman from this disaster, certain things have come to the fore.

Just as the Hon. Minister of Communications has said that from the disaster they have seen that they need to build houses of more permanent structure, I am sure other hon. members have also seen certain things which should be done; therefore when you discuss this Resolution you should take the opportunity to say something which you think should be done in the interest of the community.

Now an hon. member has said that we should take opportunity to clear up all the Slum areas. I will make this suggestion to the Government: I think that the time has come in this island when the Government should declare certain areas as prohibited areas so as not to call upon the community to bear considerable damages: especially people who just for the sake of those who want to find a spot to put their houses, put them on spots which they know that in case of the slightest disaster it would be destroyed.

We are only fortunate in that we did not have any large rainfall during the hurricane to make the damage to those houses greater. Let the Government be bold enough to take a step in that direction. The philosopher Socrates wrote: "It is your duty to save certain people from themselves." Let us face it. We know that it is in the outcome of disasters that governments are able to pass laws and do certain things which ordinarily, for political purposes they would not be able to do; the reason being that in quiet and peaceful times, people feel you are disturbing their equilibrium when you do certain things.

I have not seen the damage done in the parish I live well enough, but I have seen the damage in eight of the eleven parishes of this island; and I can say that the greatest damage has been done in Christ Church, St. Michael and St. Philip, though not necessarily in that order. It is necessary therefore that any comments or suggestions which any hon. member can make on the disaster to do so.

1.45 p.m.

I am a man who works in a positive organization in this community. I have tried to do my little bit.

I, like the hon. senior member for St. Andrew know that cables have gone abroad. On behalf of my organisation I have sent cables with letters attached to kindred organisations telling them of the severity of this damage. [Cheers] I have sent cables to the American Federation of Labour, the British Trade Union Congress, the Canadian Con-

gress of Labour, the Congress of Industrial Organisation (C.I.O.) and the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (I.C.F.T.U.)

I am not the sort of person who sits down and waits until something happens; the Government cannot do all that the people need. We are not like the people in the street who will expect that because they have lost a piling the Government has to give them back every nail. In a disaster like this we are people who believe that those of us who can assist people should assist.

From this disaster the Minister of Social Services and the Government can see that it was an error of judgment to have removed the Public Address System or Rediffusion sets from around certain places; this is one of the surest means of giving the rank and file information not only in a disaster but in other circumstances as well.

I am going further; and this is a suggestion which I am making to the Government: out of the Labour Welfare Fund, I would like to see the Government using Capital Expenditure in providing these sets in such centres as are available. I am sure that hon. members will agree that the greatest information is necessary.

As regards the suggestion of the Hon. Minister of Housing, he has said that it is their intention to examine the question of Housing and see what permanent structures they can provide. This is a national disaster and you cannot hold suggestions to yourself, therefore if I have a bright idea you can give me a little credit for it. You have not got to pay me for it.

You cannot at this stage begin to reconstruct houses on a permanent basis unless you are reconstructing them for my grandchildren; you have to provide what you can quickly. I suggest that they send to the United States or the United Kingdom and ask the Authorities to send down as much Army kit in the sense of so many thousand tents and make use of them for this temporary provision for these people. I am suggesting whatever means of temporary shelter there are for people. I do not say that you should put these tents in ponds.

We know the temporary provision which has been made in schools; you cannot put in schools those who are infirm because the provision is not suitable; therefore what temporary provision can be used? I mentioned the use of tents because that will give the Government the opportunity of assessing whatever is the damage. I am asking them for Heaven's sake not to allow the assessment to be so long in coming off that the whole thing will be lost, because some of these people are homeless.

With regard to the dispensation of aid and assistance, I am asking the Government to see that they use people in the community who are of the highest integrity, honesty and ability to carry out that function. There are some unscrupulous people who are waiting to get rich out of this disaster, and others who are waiting to get into political life out of the disaster.

Some disasters can bring some people kudos, not that they ask for it; if you handle things well you may get kudos. There is nothing wrong in kudos; that is what you are living for.

The point I am making is this: the Government should get people who can dispense this aid to the sufferers. I say that because on the last occasion when we had a disaster, not of the same severity as this one, we were aware of the injustices which were meted out to the poor people who had suffered. Many undeserving people received things and the people who suffered did not get them.

I am not afraid of saying that there are people who are waiting to do the same thing now; but we want people to come forward and give assistance without the hope of reward for the assistance which they are giving. I am not saying that the Government is not making use of people of the highest integrity.

I hope the Hon. Minister of Communications, Works and Housing is aware that there are some members of this House of Assembly who pay attention to matters which come before them; and if those honourable members are critical and ask questions in this monumental disaster, no one should say that you do not want to assist the people. I have to assist in my own way; I am not like members who have to be seen in their parishes for a vote; I am one of those who is in the position of coming to the aid of people's relatives; therefore I would be the last person to do anything to delay the passing of this Resolution.

This Chamber is the highest authority in this island and therefore it must be treated as such. Just as we say that the Ministers must be respected I say that we should not be pushed around; and not even the emergency of a Hurricane should prevent us from working as we should work.

1.55 p.m.

We know this: there are some Hon. Ministers who possess an overdose of conceit; but we know that some of them also possess an understanding of what we regard as fairplay; and therefore if you have to treat the Assembly in a certain way, that is no occasion to burk the issue.

I want to counsel the honourable senior member for St. Andrew to be careful about the remarks she uses to honourable members of this House. I have a very great respect for womanhood; and that is one of the things which would prevent me from making certain remarks in reply to her that I would otherwise make in reply to members of my own sex. I am warning her; because sometimes the temper of man is not always the same. Today, I am in a very ugly mood and that is why I was inclined to look upon the remarks of the honourable senior member for St. Andrew in a certain light.

My attitude in any matter that comes before this House (do not regard me as having any ego) is to object to something that has been done without my consent. I was born in freedom and nurtured in freedom; therefore, let me die in freedom. That is the prime reason why I never joined the army.

I was very disturbed about the remarks which cast a reflection on my integrity, and that is why I have stood up for it. You cannot destroy my character.

Mr. J. C. MOTTLEY and Mr. MILLER *rose to speak*.

Mr. MILLER: Mr. Chairman, did not your eye catch me first?.

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

Mr. J. C. MOTTLEY: Mr. Chairman, on the day after this tragedy I want to say that I am thankful for the privilege of being here again to say a word on behalf of my stricken people in the island of Barbados in general and the parish of St. Philip in particular.

I am sorry for the spirit that is manifested thus far in this Chamber with regards to this Resolution. I want to say that in spite of the fact that we were made aware of the possibility of being visited by a hurricane, it still seems to have caught us with minds unprepared. I am thankful to God for his mercy in lessening the intensity of the effects of that hurricane upon my people.

It could have been worse; and I want to appeal to honourable members to desist from any selfish motives that might have actuated them; to forget all such things and let only the plight of my tragic people be in their minds. [*Cheers*]. Forget about irregularities as to whether a member was right or wrong in saying or not saying something at a particular time. Destitution, starvation and nakedness are in our midst; people are crying for shelter and here are honourable members wrangling over the formalities of a meeting.

I know that this Resolution for \$200,000 can hardly fulfil one iota of the immediate demands. But the only thing I am asking the Government to do is to see that those men who may be put in charge of this relief be urgent with the job. In St. Philip up to now there is a certain route which has not had a visit from any one of the members of the Relief Committee; nor do they seem to know what is happening.

I want to suggest to this Government the idea that this island stands greatly in need of underground shelters in every parish; something similar to the air raid shelters in England used during World War II. They will provide a fair measure of security in such times.

I know that the Government is burdened with a lot; but it is remarkable that many of the buildings to which the people resorted for shelter have let them down; and this is due, to a great extent, to the fact that the buildings which they are erecting nowadays are too flimsy.

The Hon. Minister of Communications in his remarks in support of this Resolution, stated that the Government was appealing to the people not to wait on them, but to go ahead and try to put back their houses wherever possible. This is one of the things in particular which I should like to know from the Hon. Minister of Communications: if any of my poor people should make a borrow in order to make their houses habitable again, I am wondering if the Government would furnish the necessary help afterwards when the loan has to be paid? Some people are borrowing with the understanding that the Government is going to render some assistance later.

Suppose these people should borrow \$50.00 to repair their houses, will the Government promise to underwrite at least, half of it? If they should go ahead with building or repairs, is the Government going to help them later, or is the Government going to say: you do not need help; your house is in good repair already. I hope that the Government will bear those points in mind.

There is another thing that is worrying the minds of the people. There are many people in the agricultural district who have to borrow money from the Labour Welfare people. These houses are insured and the Labour Welfare people will get money from the Insurance people. [Hon. M. E. COX: No: they are not insured.] Oh, I thought so.

2.05 p.m.

I beg your pardon if I am mistaken on that. I hope that whatsoever this Government intends to do, it will do quickly. I know that the parochial authorities through their Churchwardens are responsible for dispensing the funds that the Government will be giving to aid people in the various parishes. I hope that they will see that the most needful people are helped first, because in a crisis like this, a lot of people who should be helped do not get it while others who are not so much in need of it get it. I also hope that the help given will go as far as possible and will reach the most needy.

I compliment the Government for summoning us so expeditiously; and I hope that their efforts will

bear the necessary fruit and restore the necessary confidence of my people in the integrity of the Leader of this House and this Government.

Mr. HAYNES: Mr. Chairman, it seems a pity that on an occasion like this when there is so much in common that there should be so much quarrelling. However, I get up to put forward a few suggestions which perhaps as usual may fall to the ground owing to the lack of vision of certain members of this Government.

First of all, I want to say that I was very shocked yesterday afternoon when I received this Resolution for \$100,000. Anyhow, I have since seen that it has been amended to \$200,000 which is something better than nothing; and the Hon. Minister of Communications, Works & Housing has cleared the atmosphere by his explanation that this amount is only for temporary relief and for general repairs to the houses which are not very badly damaged.

I have not been all over the island since the hurricane, but in the parish which I represent I was very astounded to see that the old houses did not fare very much worse than new houses. I think it is the honourable junior member for St. Philip who said that high wind will find an old house, but this time high wind did not find only old houses; it also found new houses.

In my going around, I also found that most of those houses built out of Labour Welfare money were also damaged; and from my investigation I found that the reason why they fell was because they were put up without any proper support from the ground.

My advice to the Hon. Minister of Communications is that he should issue a directive to the Department concerned, saying that no money should be given for the repairing of those houses unless some is going to be spent in the erection of a proper foundation for them. I think that is a most important matter.

Now, sir, the honourable junior member for St. Peter struck a most constructive note. He said, let us reorganize small tenancies which have badly sited houses. In the parish of St. Andrew and perhaps St. Joseph land owners with different ideas from my humble self, have never enforced the movement of people's houses to the side of the public road. I think we should take this opportunity, to see that houses which are damaged in tenancies off the road should not be repaired publicly unless they are put on spots to the side of the road where the people living in them would be able to get good roads, water and light. I also think that now is the opportunity you should take to clear up some of those overcrowded slums in the parishes of St. Michael and Christ Church.

It is no use crying over spilt milk, Mr. Chairman; but picture the lack of vision when one considers that this House unanimously passed an Address to the Governor of this island suggesting that an immediate coverage of insurance should be placed on houses of certain size throughout the island. In that Address I made out that perhaps there would be 40,000 houses of a smaller size which would have to be covered. That is a big number, it is true, and I shall imagine that they would be worth an average of \$1,000 a piece.

I do not think you will have to be a big mathematician to see that that is around \$40,000,000; and that is a lot of money for this little island to stand responsible. We should not be responsible for it. I suppose I will be told that nobody would take this coverage, but I would like to inform the Hon. Minister of Housing that that is a joke. If the Financial Secretary was instructed on his various

visits to the United Kingdom and sometimes to the United States to make some enquiries from an institution called Lloyd's, he would have found that most of this coverage could be effected and at a small premium. I can say that Lloyd's cater for all sorts of coverage; they are there to take any risk that they can get.

2.15 p.m.

I am asking the Minister to let this matter take precedence over all those important things which they have to decide in the near future; otherwise I counsel this House that this island is in for a lot of trouble. It will come to this: we will not be able to put back these houses because the money will not be available for that purpose. There is very little money in Barbados; there is no money in Barbados to buy any property. It is not available in your pocket just like a shilling, and you have to take all the precautions you can so as to protect these people. I have always regarded the mention of doing things as lipservice unless you can do them on a proper basis. Lipservice is a very poor reward for labour.

Mr. Chairman, I do not want to delay the passing of this Resolution. I should be glad if the Minister concerned would take note of the few useful remarks which have been made; of course such remarks usually go through the window. Anyhow I have done my part and I hope that the Government will do theirs.

Mr. MILLER: Mr. Chairman, I should like to add that greater calm and courage have been exhibited by the sufferers in this island as the result of this calamity than has been expressed by this Chamber today. Hon. members are jittery as to what has been done as expressed in the first part of the debate. However, I have a few suggestions to put to the Government and I hope that they will pay some attention to them.

We are up against a very great emergency; and I am wondering whether they will eliminate all the unnecessary red tape which hangs in bales from the Government Departments. We see reams of unnecessary speculation written in documents pertaining to this emergency, and I believe it is common agreement that no one would venture to dogmatise to find himself condemned or even protected by another storm. I am however asking a peculiar request of the Minister of Communications; we realise that this money has got to be handled by the Parochial Authorities, and I ask the Minister to pay some attention and also admit at all discussions in connection with this matter, members of this House, the representatives of the people, so that they can have a word in the discussions among the Committees and in the dispensation of the funds. That should be compulsory.

We have seen too many calamities and people waiting because of some of these Parochial Authorities; and I am therefore asking that the representatives of the people be given a word in the discussion of these Committees which are spending taxpayers' money. We are all eager and anxious to do something for the suffering people in the community.

The Minister of Communications, Works and Housing has referred to the question of the sudden realisation after the Hurricane that the type of houses was by no means suitable.

Hon. M. E. COX: On a point of Order. That is not correct; I have always maintained that we should build permanent structures wherever possible. I said that that is the question which the Government will consider: whether we would continue with these houses or build permanent structures.

Mr. MILLER: Mr. Chairman, if the Minister realises that the Government should decide whether or not they will go on with more permanent structures than we have seen, well at least they are decades of reports all over this House that the idea was to stop constructing these wooden houses, because you will be perpetually subsidising the wood ants in these structures.

We know what the position is, we realise that there will be hardly enough in this amount to carry out the temporary repairs which would be required over the last two days. The Minister should see that the age is here and that now this is the only opportunity in his life span he will have to remove houses from the back districts and the gullies and give people the advantage of bringing their houses to the grasslands which now border the streets.

The honourable junior member for St. Andrew has been talking about insuring houses, but do you believe people can do that for five years? The honourable member fears that further taxation would be required to keep these houses going. I am asking the Hon. Minister to take a broad view of the matter and get an understanding of the position. The time is now, but the Minister must object and consider what I am saying as nonsense. Who has displayed more nonsense than he as a result of his own authority? One merely wants to make him aware of the importance of this matter and we know that he must take it with some measure of concern to himself.

The Hon. Minister considers what I am saying is nonsense as anything that falls from his lips can bear the stamp of being something original. When anything is communicated on paper to you, it is second hand but you want to get the best that man can achieve. You continue with this petty-minded belief that what you do by way of this emergency should be paid to you as a perpetual homage. No doubt the Minister will have a lot of anxious moments because as his responsibility, these things will naturally follow.

We have seen many of these unfortunate circumstances and I believe, Mr. Chairman, you will forgive me if I repeat that members of this House, the representatives of the people should be given an opportunity of serving on these Parish Councils.

2.25 p.m.

That sir, I believe is one of the ways in which the Government will be in a better position to see that not only the mercy which in itself cannot be strained, but that the help will be given to those who need it. The courage exhibited by these suffering people was something colossal; whether it was a matter of Christian or religious fortitude or not it was something remarkable.

I believe that this is one of the things I should draw to the attention of this House today. I am in a position to speak of an incident which occurred with a man, his wife and three children. A family of five applied for relief and when they examined the parcel, the family found that this was what was sent for them: half a pound of sugar, a pinch of salt and six Wibix. Could that be regarded as a form of relief? What I would like to know is: why the pinch of salt? And what is to be expected of a family of five with six Wibix and a half pound of sugar.

Another point: this morning I saw two soldiers armed with rifles and bayonets at the gate of the Agricultural Department. I thought that they were more or less overnight watchmen. In a community of development that age is gone. It is probable that they might be needed, but that age I repeat is long gone when you posted a sentry with a gun and bayonet in circumstances such as these.

I am asking that something be said or done about it, and I am asking the Hon. Minister of Communications now to see that this is changed, I do not believe when you are moving towards a federation with a civilised population such as ours, that a thing like this should occur even in a Hurricane. Use the Police or whatever else you may like, but never a gun and bayonet. In a community like this that is reminiscent of one of the things that we have been striving for centuries to remove.

In closing I am asking the Minister of Communications and the Government generally to see that all of us who are willing to help are given the opportunity of doing so. I speak as one who has suffered myself. I am not asking for any relief; it is only that I too have been a sufferer, and I and other hon. members of this Chamber would like to have an opportunity to help. In so doing you would reduce some of the embarrassment; and I repeat that a scoundrel can enjoy equally the confidence of his job. Finally, I ask that we will all be given an opportunity to serve the people.

Mr. E. D. MOTTLEY: Mr. Chairman, I suppose that if ever an occasion presented itself in this country for all parties to give of their goods and services to the people, it is this. I suppose that everyone (member of the House or non-member) Barbadians abroad or in Barbados, within the past few days must have been concerned with the plight of his relatives in this community.

It is with mixed feelings that I am supporting this Resolution today. There is, on the one hand, Mr. Chairman, that element of sadness, and on the other hand, there is an element of joy, that is to say, it is a good thing that it has not been worse. Indeed, what we have read what has happened in places like Mexico and other places; after such a disaster, I think we have much still to be thankful for.

Before I say much, Mr. Chairman, on the entire question, I think it is rather fitting to say that I suppose, unlike the last great Hurricane which we had in 1898 today, with the advancement of science we have been spared much through the timely warning we have had.

The hon. junior member for St. Peter who spoke just now censured the Government for what he considered as a parsimonious attitude on a previous occasion in removing the Rediffusion sets which were posted outside of certain places to give the people notice. I want to say that although I cannot pass a Resolution for this, I want to have it recorded in these debates that we the representatives of the people show great appreciation for the services rendered by Rediffusion (Limited; and (this will sound strange possibly from me) more especially Colonel Oliver who, during the early hours of the morning, stuck to his guns and made an announcement every fifteen minutes which apprised the people of the approaching storm.

Indeed Sir, we are very thankful for the services of Rediffusion and more especially its Manager whom I understand made the announcements every 15 minutes to the general public. If a larger number of people were not apprised of the conditions by these announcements, the casualties would have been very many more than they really are.

What I think, Mr. Chairman, is going to be the greatest trouble in this whole catastrophe now is to actually get someone, someone with sufficient ability and interest, to be able to take charge of this all important situation.

2.35 p.m.

After fifty years we come face to face with an actual calamity; although it is not possible to

give an out and out estimate now, from my own estimation there are not less than 10,000 people homeless in this country to-night; and I am only thinking of those persons who have actually lost homes, including the children and dependents who actually lived in those homes. Because of that, it is going to cost this country a tremendous amount of money.

The Hon. Minister of Social Services in introducing this Resolution quite rightly said he could not give any accurate estimate, but at any rate, I am more concerned with the speech made by the Hon. Minister of Housing as the Hon. Minister of Social Services did not give any account as to what this amount was for.

Sir, if I recall rightly, he said that \$100,000 was for the purpose of allowing the Public Works Department and the Housing Board to start putting back such homes as have been shifted and slightly damaged. I consider that is the right approach because some of those persons whose homes are just partly damaged and just removed from the foundations would be able to live back in them in a short space of time.

The Hon. Minister also said that with respect to those persons whose homes were completely demolished the Government would come down eventually for a sum for making general repairs or general rebuilding or whatever the case may be. I think that is as reasonable an approach as can be expected right now. However, I must repeat (and I think it was the honourable junior member for St. Peter who drew attention to this) that this is a matter which we must sink any political or party differences, as well as any petty jealousies and what-not.

It does not matter to me who gets the kudos for doing something especially when there is human suffering; and that is how I counsel the Government to look at this matter. You must not matter who gets political kudos.

Now, sir, whether it is the Minister of Social Services, the Minister of Labour or the Minister of Housing, in an islandwide or national disaster, you cannot expect any one man to take care of the whole of the island. I think it is laid down in Holy Writ somewhere: "where there is no vision, the people will perish." It is also laid down somewhere else: "where there is counsel, there is always wisdom." I would say not only where there is counsel but where there is a multitude of counsel, there is always wisdom.

None of us would expect that in a national crisis like this any one individual can solve any situation; but there is this to say about it: there are occasions such as this when responsibility must rest with someone to act especially if there is suffering. Even modesty will not prevent me from mentioning one or two instances which I have seen, and which I would like to draw to the attention of the Hon. Minister of Housing although I understand that they are not within his portfolio.

I stated a while ago that I entirely agreed with his approach to the problem on the whole when it comes to tackling at once those houses which are slightly damaged or removed from their props.
2.45 p.m.

While I must agree that this is the correct way of approach, I just want further to suggest to him that no time should be wasted in getting the necessary information. I quite realise that you cannot get all the information as to the value of everything lost, but I am just throwing out the suggestion that no time should be wasted in getting the necessary information as to such houses on which he proposes to work on first.

The next thing would be to allocate such services that you are going to use for repairing those houses in the areas in proportion to those houses which are being dealt with. I have one of the strictest censures for the Government in this respect; I hope the Hon. Minister of Social Services will listen to what I am saying. When I have to praise the members of the Government, I praise them; and when I have to criticise them I do that without any fear of anybody.

I agree with the Minister that this is the approach, but we had the hurricane on Thursday and today, I understand, in the metropolitan parish the Government, up to now, has only seen fit to look for that gentleman, Mr. Chase, again, put him in a pair of short pants, put a bag in his hand and allow him to walk around getting information.

I ask the Hon. Minister this: is it really necessary all the time to look for this political football? Look at the thousands of people whom you have out of work. I am addressing my remarks to the Minister of Housing. If his answer is going to be that Mr. Chase is the only officer available for this purpose right away, let me say that you have other people who can do this job 25 times more quickly than Mr. Chase.

It has been laid down in Holy Writ that where there is a multitude of counsel there is wisdom. I do not know what the Government proposes to do, but I say this: in a calamity of this sort you must do your best; that I am prepared to do.

The parishes of St. Michael and Christ Church have been the hardest hit in this disaster; and I must confess that the Minister of Housing will be able to see the damage done immediately in the Government and other areas and probably start in the metropolitan area; but merely to have this officer going around getting statistics is not good enough. This is not the machinery which should be set up for the purpose of getting information so as to relieve the situation immediately.

I want to say this for the benefit of the Hon. Minister: I am the first person in this Chamber to be fully conscious that the petty-minded politicians will eventually say that I happen to be in the unique position of Chairman of various political Boards and I can act quickly in these matters. I am the first to realise that you will not get praise from everybody; I am the first to realise that I will get abuse from some people, but I do my best and look for that after.

I want to say to the Hon. Minister of Social Services that while as Churchwarden of this parish I have authority to do certain things, I want to offer very severe criticism of the Government's organisation which I have found strutting around putting pamphlets on cars, writing up data, and not even going to schools and churches to find where the people are and rendering them their services. The Official organisation is supposed to be set up through the Social Welfare Officer or whoever it is, an organisation on which I declined to serve.

I declined to serve on it for the simple reason that I predicted that what would happen in a hurricane has actually happened. There are people who want to recline in chairs and ask you to get figures for them; and they are trying to work for O.B.E.'s. and M.B.E.'s. and are not really interested in the people. I am still at a loss to understand how this thing is working; those of us who have had the opportunity of visiting some of these centres will appreciate that there is a great deal of suffering going on at many of them.

Mr. SMITH left the Chair and the Deputy Speaker took the Chair.
2.55 p.m.

For some time now under the Chairmanship of the Social Welfare Officer, elaborate correspondence and all sorts of red tapes have gone through; but the only thing we can find when we have a hurricane is that everybody would want to get on the telephone and tell everybody what to do, but were not prepared to come out and face anything.

This money is really for housing but I want to say that you are faced with a more difficult situation. Your present situation affects the portfolio of the Minister of Social Services more so than anybody else in this country. I should like the Government to be aware of the fact—

[A PAUSE]

Mr. ACTING CHAIRMAN: Is the hon. member finished speaking?

Mr. E. D. MOTTLEY: I am standing; I am entitled to do that.

Mr. ACTING CHAIRMAN: You are not; you are delaying the business of the House.

Mr. E. D. MOTTLEY: It is very important, sir, for the Ministers to realise that this hurricane not only affects the people who have lost their houses, but it will be some time now before some of our schools can be opened. To me it seems difficult, after visiting all the centres in St. Michael, to understand how any school can be kept in the places formerly housing the children, for another couple of weeks. Combermere, Wesley Hall, St. Giles and all of the Schools up to today, are still packed with families who not only lost their houses but a tremendous amount of their belongings.

I should not mention the Churches because it is still my considered opinion that people can worship without going to Church. The Minister of Social Services and the Minister of Communications, as we have got to carry on our educational system, should devise some means whereby we can remove the families from the schools and house them somewhere else in the immediate area so that the schools may be able to continue.

Again I say, where there is a multitude there we would have wisdom; but if there is no vision the people perish. If you have in this country tonight 400 children in St. Giles' School and another 200 in St. Barnabas (and let me pause here to say this Mr. Chairman) the most pitiable sight to see is to go into some of these schools and see some of the people with their children, some of them naked.

When you think of these people in these schools, it does not matter, Mr. Chairman, that some of those are housed in the other Government buildings.

I am wondering whether or not, together with the approach which the Minister says he is making, under the Emergency Powers, the present lumber supply should not be commandeered, and whether in every area temporary shelters should be put up to house the people so that the schools can be continued. At present no school can be kept.

It is not good enough to come in here and say you are getting money. If you should go in the schools every morning you would see here and there a lot of suit cases, a lamp, a bundle, etc.; I should not like to have the job of asking them to find somewhere else to dwell. That should be the duty of the Minister of Communications to tell us what it is proposed to do with that situation right now.

You have had these elaborate organisations which have been set up; but as I have said before you have to find some people around with some commonsense about them. A hurricane takes place on Thursday at 11 o'clock in the morning and on Friday evening a man comes up to you and wants

to know what is your name before he sends two biscuits for you to eat.

I do not accuse any individual Minister for this. When people are in jobs and drawing money and do not care what is happening to other people, you know what can happen. A man walks up to you to get some sort of thing done and he cannot get it. Often you get something done two days afterwards; that is not good enough. It is said, that you must not mention the Head of the Administration so as to influence a debate.

3.05 p.m.

What I am going to say is by no means to influence him, but I think the Acting Governor himself was very sincere on Thursday night when he went around in his car taking things around to the various schools, churches and centres for the people. It therefore remains the duty of the representatives of the people to pay him tribute and say we do appreciate any gesture like that coming from the Acting Governor. That is a fine example for a man to set in his exalted position.

There are some petty officials who think themselves tin gods and Medes, and who think they cannot be approached. We do appreciate sincerely that heart-felt sympathy and sincerity which prompted the Acting Governor to go around and offer some measure of tangible relief to the people who were stricken in the various centres where they were housed.

Now, Sir, you can divide the persons who have suffered into three or four categories. The Minister of Housing mentioned category No. 1. Then there is category No. 2 for which the Minister thinks they would want an organisation so that they can work the whole island by it. There are people whose houses have been blown down but not broken up, and I think those houses can be put back and repaired quite easily. There are also those houses which are completely destroyed; therefore, you cannot put them back.

Now, Sir, where is your Hurricane Organisation? I am Chairman of the Commissioners of Health of this parish, and statutorily I can exercise that authority vested in me if there is a hurricane or national disaster to do what I consider is necessary for the good health of the community. We are using people in all the villages under the direction and control of the Sanitary staff for the purpose of removing those houses which have been blown down and lying on the streets and by-ways, and we are also helping persons to salvage them.

It is the duty of the Government through some organisation not only to think of building and repairing houses, but to help persons to salvage their houses and so relieve the Government of finding material to rebuild these houses. That is a suggestion which I think should be carried out in places like the parish of Christ Church where I have gone and seen that conditions there are really bad.

If you can get somebody with some measure of authority such as the Sanitary Authority to go through the parishes and salvage belongings of the people within two weeks, your entire force of labour would have worked to such a point that you could start off with your general repairs to be done by carpenters; and I do not think you will need all grade A carpenters. That is a suggestion which I throw out to the Government.

You also have a number of persons whose houses are broken down with trees across them. I think if you send a labourer to help such persons you will be doing a wonderful service.

I would like the Hon. Minister of Social Services to know that the immediate thing which you should do to-night, to-morrow and for the next few days will be to get something for the people to eat. What are you going to give those people to eat? As far as the parish of St. Michael is concerned I am doing my best as Churchwarden; but I have discovered that at no less than four of the centres in this parish the Government organisation is doing nothing in this respect.

For the first time and that is to-day, an Inspector of Schools came up the steps of the House of Assembly to see me and asked to whom should he give something to relieve the people at the St. Stephen's School.

Who is Chairman of the Hurricane Relief Committee? Let me say that none of your teachers would be able to do any work of teaching but they can do other work. I feel the greatest credit must be given to a number of your school masters and school teachers who have been putting in work at their schools since the hurricane.

In passing I would like to compliment the Headmaster of the St. Barnabas School who although the roof of his house blew off leaving his family exposed, went and opened the school to rescue the people who had sought refuge in the school but which roof eventually blew off. I hate to single this one Headmaster out for praise, but I know that there are also a number of teachers in this parish who have given humane assistance in this disaster.

2.15 p.m.

Now sir, there is also the big question of providing against infectious diseases such as Typhoid; that in itself is an organisation which must be put into operation. I do not want to blow my own trumpet, but I want to say that in the parish of St. Michael I have organised the District Nurses into a First Aid Organisation and they have been visiting every Centre since Thursday carrying out first aid assistance; and they will continue to do that for the next few days.

I feel that when you have these Schools and Churches with the numbers packed in them you will have to give anti-typhoid injections. I hope the Hon. Minister of Social Services will see to it that something is done in that respect. I understand that the Government has concentrated its efforts in the parish of Christ Church; I would like the Minister of Social Services to give me some assurance as to what is to be done in the parish of St. Michael.

A few moments ago a member of this Chamber said *sotto voce*, (I take these things from people whose minds are like their faces) that I have been administering things only for people in the City. Somebody has also said that although I was taking the people's money I only gave them corned beef and bread. When it is said that I was giving relief only to people in the City, I will say that when I found myself at 8.30 o'clock at St. Barnabas the conditions I saw there were so appalling that they brought tears to my eyes. [A MEMBER: You can cry too!] [ANOTHER MEMBER: I would like to see you crying!] Not even one fish cake had the people got.

I was told that the only person who gave the people anything was the Hon. Minister of Communications, Works and Housing who had taken up salmon on his own. That was very commendable of him. I repeat, I would not serve on any Committee on which there was that South African bump. I will say this: at 2.30 o'clock on Thursday morning when the news came over about the

opening of schools and so on, the only schools which were opened were those to which I went and got the Ministers out of their beds. In St. Michael the schools were opened after the Hurricane.

As a matter of fact immediately after the Hurricane one man came to me and informed me as to what was happening, and I instructed him to break the door of the school.

At this stage the CHAIRMAN of COMMITTEES resumed the Chair.

Mr. E. D. MOTTLEY: In times of rationing it is better to give some people more than is necessary than not to give other people enough; what difference does it make if somebody gets more than what is his due. It is just a question of something to eat.

I am criticising the organisation in St. Michael. I say this for the benefit of the Hon. Minister of Social Services: I understand that one Minister has said that the St. Michael's Vestry is responsible for the working of the Hurricane Relief Committee. I am not responsible for people if they want kudos; whatever you do their minds are like the Sahara Desert and they will besmirch it. I am very naive to say that.

At Buxton's Boys' School I saw Government cars with a lot of paper stuck against them; they were 12 families there and there was nothing for them to eat. I realise that the Hon. Minister of Social Services has been Churchwarden of this parish and when he sees the facts he will appreciate what has happened. On the other hand you have not only the Government Schools and Churches, but the Non-conformists and others, are providing homes for people who have been deprived of their homes.

3.25 p.m.

Yesterday, Mr. Chairman, we distributed 1,100 hot meals in Queen's Park and that number has been increasing steadily. We have an organisation there and we have been trying to get people to send in, if they have children, for hot meals to take to the various Churches for their children. I do not know if the Minister of Social Services thinks that that will be part of this \$200,000. There is a staff to cope with the situation at Queen's Park.

It is alright to give some corned beef and bread, coffee and biscuits; but it is very pathetic to get people telling you: "We have not had a hot meal since Wednesday night." But at that time the Minister of Social Services and the Minister of Communications were trying to get some statistics as to those people whose houses had been destroyed.

I find that it is impossible to go on the way we have been going on. I was hoping that that Committee for the parish of St. Michael would have by now, summoned some sort of meeting and discussed the matter to find out what is the real situation and how it affects the poor people of the parish of St. Michael.

This is what I have heard from a Minister of Religion: that the Social Welfare Officer has advised if nothing came to their centres that they should get something from the shop. It is really amusing when we talk about getting something from the shops. I think it was the hon. junior member for St. George who talked about six Wibix for a family of about four or five.

You have not got housing only to think of; you have to think of more important relief such as schools to put children in, getting some clothing and food, and helping those persons whose houses are partly destroyed to put them in order. I believe it was the hon. junior member for St. George who also said that he considered that there should be

other people on the Committee. I am sure that he could not be more right and I entirely agree with him.

I think that the Government should send out help more quickly. The Minister of Communications was not in here when I made certain statements and I want him to know this: that despite what was said by another member that I, as Churchwarden, have not only been distributing to the people of the City of Bridgetown, I want to draw it to your attention that the Hurricane Relief Committee had not been sending anything to the out schools. When I went to St. Barnabas I found that the Supervising Minister was the only person who had given something out of his pocket.

If the Government is sending out things they should do so generously, because the purse of St. Michael's Vestry is not as deep as that of the Government. There are many centres which we have served and there is a tremendous number which we have not reached. But I say this: as the honourable junior member for St. George has rightly said, this kind of relief consisting of four or five biscuits, a little sugar and a pinch of salt is not good enough, and I hope they will do something in this respect and do it quickly.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The honourable senior member for St. Lucy.

Mr. BRANCKER: Mr. Chairman, we might have arrived at finality in this debate if it had not been for the discourtesy of those who did not tell us in the notice of a meeting of this Chamber this afternoon. Much as it is to be regretted that I have not even been notified of a meeting by the unsigned document, I think we should get down to business without any lack of unanimity in passing this Resolution for \$200,000.

I am glad to see that the honourable senior member for St. Michael has returned to this Chamber, because there are a few points which I have to make, and which he would be able to deal with at next Tuesday's meeting of the House. What I want to hear from him at next Tuesday's meeting is a statement as to the principle which the Government has decided upon; the principle on which Government's aid will be carried out in regard to building repairs and the principle of allocation of food. We want to be satisfied that they will be sent and that they will be carried out from the Harrison Point lighthouse to South Point lighthouse without any favour.

You know, some years ago when this island was overtaken by high winds, there was obvious discrimination shown by certain officials in regard to the recommending of Government assistance. There was pontifically announced that those buildings had not been hit by these high winds and so no assistance was rendered. We want to ensure that the people who are doing this job are people of integrity, people who are not affected by any feeling of grudge, and who also are not affected by any feeling that we are looking after the people in this district because this would help them if they are applying for an increase in their salaries. [A VOICE: Nothing is wrong with St. Lucy.]

Although I am reluctant to reply to *sotto voce* remarks, yet when they are so loud it would be impossible for me not to reply. The honourable member (who is a member of the Cabinet) although he has not yet officially arrived there, says that nothing has gone wrong. We are doing all the repairs we can and Government will receive the list in due course.

If certain people should borrow money to effect urgent repairs if they do not have it, they are as much entitled to have it refunded as those people who had to wait until repairs were effected by the General Organisation; because a person who is fortunate enough to be able to borrow \$100 or \$200 is in as much a position to receive help as they who wait until the person in charge of the Public Works Department comes on the job.
3.35 p.m.

Sir, I trust that the hon. senior member for St. Michael on Tuesday will let us know the particular principles under which Government intends to aid people as regards building and feeding.

Reference has been made by one speaker to something which I have heard but had not seen on the streets during the past few days concerning soldiers going around with rifles. I presume the hon. member was speaking from personal knowledge, because he confirmed what I heard from various individuals; but I did not care to mention it because I had not seen it. If it is true that soldiers are patrolling the streets with rifles without adequate reasons, it is high time that some directive should be given that that must stop. It should not be the case because we have arms and ammunition and the Barbados Regiment has been called in to assist in the present emergency, that they should drive around with rifles to scare children and intimidate adults.

There is one other point which was made by previous speakers which I would support, and it is in connection with parish organisations. Every parish organisation should have at least four particular individuals as members: the two representatives of the parish in the Assembly the Churchwarden and the Chairman of the Commissioners of Health because he has under him the whole sanitary staff who are the best persons to inform the people. It is well known that every sanitary inspector has to visit every house in his district at least once a month.

Sir, I was perturbed to learn of the gentleman who was going around with a book and pencil and making notes. The hon. senior member for the City mentioned that gentleman and described him as that political football, Mr. L. A. Chase. What we require at the moment as Chairman of that organisation is a person with efficiency and drive and a dynamic knowledge. One who has been so consummate a failure as that gentleman who has just managed to find himself on the Transport Board, fortunately not in the capacity of Chairman, should not be placed in that position. We do not want a jack of all trades and master of none for that job. We do not want people of that type to be in charge of organisations. There are other people who are gentlemen and who should not be overlooked and who in the interest of the people should be appointed. We should tell Mr. Chase we know you are willing but we have somebody else.

The hon. senior member for St. Michael used the phrase that carpenters are not readily available. I do not know what has caused that hon. member to be under that impression, but I do know that if he sends out a call over Rediffusion, within a short space of time he would find that hundreds of workers and carpenters would be readily available; he would be afraid to see how many will turn out for work.

Now, sir, one certain aspect of this Hurricane to note is that the information service outside has broken down almost completely. As late as 7 o'clock last night over the B.B.C. news service they were speaking of the lack of information of the damage

done by the Hurricane here, and referring to the highways still being blocked in Barbados. I really feel that in the 7 o'clock news this morning the B.B.C. should have been in possession of the facts. I do not know whose fault it is, whether it is that of the Government Electrical Inspector, but the B.B.C. should have been in possession of more accurate information than what they relayed.

However, this is one of the rare occasions that I must support the tributes paid to Rediffusion Service. They did a magnificent job on Thursday morning. Every quarter of an hour from 2.30 o'clock in the morning they relayed the news of the Hurricane until it was passed. Even when there was a lack of official news as to the "all clear" they took the opportunity to say: "We believe that the Hurricane has passed us. We think it has passed us." And then after: "We have taken a walk upon the street and we are confirmed in our view that the Hurricane has just missed us." When they received the official news they said: "The official news has just arrived and the Hurricane has definitely bypassed us." I feel on this occasion they have done a superb job and one should give credit where credit is due.

Now, sir, I have heard on the B.B.C. news that Her Majesty's Secretary of State for the Colonies Mr. Lennox-Boyd has asked what he can do to help us; that is something which the Hon. Minister of Communications should let us know on Tuesday. He should let us know what is the reply of Government in that case. He should let us know that they have sent a reply. In short, we would like to be kept fully informed of what is happening because unless we know we cannot fully co-operate.

In connection with the schools, I would like to know if there are certain Government-aided Secondary Schools which are not being used for the purpose of housing people. If those schools are not being used or would not be used for that purpose, I see no reason why they should not be re-opened from Monday morning. I have heard it suggested that of the seven or eight Government-aided secondary schools, one or two of them cannot re-open, therefore the others should remain closed until those which cannot re-open now will be able to re-open. I can see no reason for that suggestion.

3.45 p.m.

I have heard that come from certain normally intelligent quarters; I cannot see any justification for it. If you cannot re-open Combermere, is that any reason why the Coleridge-Parry School or the Alexandra cannot be re-opened? That is a matter on which I would like the Cabinet to let information come over the air on Sunday. This is a very important matter which requires immediate attention and certainly there is no point in one school being closed down out of sympathy for another which cannot be re-opened. Of course there are one or two teachers who would be glad for an excuse to close down the schools, but we are concerned about getting the children taught.

It has happened that transport at these times, and with fewer buses in operation, had almost broken down. I would be failing in my duty as a representative of a most distant constituency from the City if I failed to pay tribute to the "pick-ups" for the magnificent job which they do during these trying days. They were practically the only source of the people getting from the country to Bridgetown. You will agree with me, Mr. Chairman, that we should not fail to thank them for the services which they have rendered and also at the low cost to the very poorest section of the community.

I think I have dealt with the major points for now, but I trust that we may look forward not to any White Paper or Statement which we cannot discuss, but to a general debate which we can initiate as to the steps which the Government is taking in this connection; and we will be in a position to make our suggestions. Meanwhile let me, with this closing note, urge the Government to let the children know those who will be going back to school and whose schools will not be re-opened.

Mr. LEWIS: It is regrettable that any dereliction of duty on the part of anyone should have delayed the passing of this Resolution, because it is said that he who gives quickly gives twice.

When I got this Resolution I said that the Government is considering the City alone having regard to the immediate relief which was to be given. It is surprising to me to hear the Minister of Social Services say that because a little debate had taken place as regards the procedure, that certain honourable members appeared not to know that a Hurricane had taken place. That is another admission which shows that the Government did not know that a Hurricane had taken place; they were coming for a certain amount of money and then they increased it by 100 percent.

I am going to be very brief in my remarks. The recent high winds have shown us where our old houses were, some are still standing; and I sincerely hope that the matter will be dealt with as expeditiously as possible. There may be defects in the organisation but I hope that everybody who is given an opportunity will do his best.

I expected some more information than what was given today; information which one would expect to be laid before this House on an occasion like this. I would like to know what Message has been sent to the Colonial Office; I do not know whether it is in the Newspaper or not because some of the Newspapers were not Official; they were printed just for the purpose of making money. I repeat: I would like to know what information has gone to Great Britain.

We have been of assistance to people who have been visited by Hurricanes. It seems as if Messrs Cable and Wireless cannot give the information which they are supposed to give publicly at their Town Office. We know absolutely nothing of where the Hurricane went until we got the Newspaper later yesterday afternoon or early this morning; but I have understood that it went to Grenada and damage has been done there.

I think some Resolution of sympathy should be sent to the people of Grenada along with the passing of this Resolution. We know how to sympathise with the people of Grenada now because we have had our visitation of the Hurricane.

I am not now entering into any recriminations or criticisms because I know that our machinery for Hurricane Relief has been set up in a skeleton way for many years. I understand that this year they have not had a general meeting. [Mr. CRAWFORD: That is correct.]

3.55 p.m.

That is very unfortunate. I should like to issue a little warning to the Hon. Minister of Communications and it is this: at some future time I will want to know when the Government first knew that there was a Hurricane in the vicinity of Barbados. That is information that should be given out. We are contributing to these meteorological stations and there is nothing that we have got from these that would be useful. If people had heard they would have known.

I am not saying that it is not good to have information; but I want to know when was the Government first officially told that this Hurricane was building up in this area. They started off by saying that it hit the north and then the south. These are things for which we are paying. Let us get a service here that would help to protect us against Hurricanes. Let us try and get something to give us the type of information that I should like to see.

I am not considering it from the point of view of one who knows all about it; but as a layman it is to me, very unsatisfactory. It is deficient and to a certain extent it is nonsense; yet we are paying money to assist them with it.

We have a great deal to be thankful for. One is that the Hurricane did not hit us by night and that it was not accompanied by the things that usually accompany a Hurricane such as rain, thunder and lightning. If this Hurricane had happened at night our death toll would have been disastrous.

I am going to support this Resolution; but I wish that we could be given more information. This amount cannot repair many houses; in my opinion we have to get proper estimates. I hope that decentralised organisations will be given full power to deal with the people. Let this matter be decentralised. I hope that this is the one occasion in which the dying Vestries will come out and show their interest as decentralised organisations.

Mr. CRAWFORD: Mr. Chairman, I am sorry I did come here today; because normally, if the House had a quorum this money could have been voted already, for with the Emergency Powers which the Government now have, they could have allocated the money and spent it.

What I came here for was to hear from the Minister of Communications and other Ministers of the arrangements they had made to relieve the suffering people in the country. I did not come here to hear a lot of talk from a Government that is only asking for a hundred thousand dollars. What is the good of asking for a hundred thousand dollars and talking about Housing. They should know, if they do not know, that at least half of the people are starving, and that the parochial organisations for hurricane relief are not functioning.

In more than half of my constituency none of the people has actually been visited by any Organisation, and it certainly devolves upon the Minister of Social Services and the Minister of Communications and others to outline the arrangements which the Government has set in motion to relieve the situation. I hope that the public will get a full explanation about what is arranged to be done and what are the immediate plans of the Government to bring relief to the suffering people. Instead, we have come in here and not one iota of information with regards to the matter has been given.

Thousands of people are now housed in school-rooms and churches with hardly any clothing on their backs and no changes of garments. What arrangements are being made to distribute clothing? Are people expected to exist on corned beef only? What we want is the distribution of a hot meal in the southern and south-eastern parishes of the island. The honourable senior member for the City has related that so many hot meals have been provided at Queens Park. Far from hot meals being distributed elsewhere, some have only got food consisting of corned beef ladled by a spoon.

The Hurricane Relief organisations have broken down completely. Therefore, it is unnecessary to come in here and talk about Housing programmes when, if you do not act promptly, so many may be

found dead from starvation that there would be no need for houses.

What I am hoping is that the Government would immediately take the necessary steps to ascertain how ineffective the distribution of food is, to expand its distribution and to ensure that the distribution is effective. When it comes to one centre of distribution, it is remarkable that a few young people get all the rations and the older people, cripples and children are left with nothing at all. Districts which have got nothing at all since the disaster ought to be immediately attended to.

4.05 p.m.

In the very area which I happen to serve there are a number of people who are unattended and it is the business of Government to co-opt some persons. [A VOICE: Give us some of the names.] I have written Mr. Skeete about that. It is the business of the Government to co-opt people who are interested in these areas to assist and strengthen the Hurricane Relief Organisations in the various parishes in order that they may function more efficiently.

If you have 4,000 or 5,000 people homeless as you have in St. Philip and probably more in Christ Church, you cannot build houses for them overnight. So far as I can see, they will have to live in these centres for some weeks to come. At them, there is no proper toilet arrangement for sanitation or bathing. I can say that from the very first night which the people took shelter the stench in some of the churches was appalling; and as far as I can see, nothing is being done to bridge the situation.

In addition to that, there is a large number of people who are sheltering at private homes, or friends, or family, and they are constituting a burden to them because financially, the people at whom they are sheltering cannot afford to support them.

The Hurricane Relief Committee has gone on record as saying that if you want rations you must go to one of the centres. but you cannot get into them. You cannot tell people to go to Christ Church Parish Church where already there are 1,100 people. You cannot pack any more in at the Admiralty Building, the St. Martin or the St. Philip Girls' School. Those buildings cannot hold any more people. Therefore, I am saying that apart from sending food and rations to those centres, a proper investigation must be made of private residences at which people are housed and assistance given to the houses at which those people are residing. I can think of three houses in the Enterprise area with 300 people depending on the Relief Organisation for some sort of food for the last three days.

Mr. TUDOR: After so much has been said, there is very little remaining to be said about the nature and scope of the emergency which has befallen this island. However, it appears to me that the most surprising thing that has happened here this afternoon is that this House up to now, is not in possession of any of the facts relative to this emergency except that the emergency exists and that several thousands of our fellow citizens are destitute and homeless. The Ministers have not as yet told us about what organisation they have managed to set up or how it is functioning, or what demands would be made upon it in the days to come, and what further provisions we will be called upon to make towards the continuance of the emergency.

I have no hesitation in saying, Mr. Chairman, that they have not given us this information because they themselves do not know what is actually

happening. It is a fact that the whole island-wide Hurricane Relief Organisation has broken down and that there is fumbling, indecision and confusion and that the Parochial Authorities willing as they are to assist, have not been given yet any clear idea of what they are to do and who is to help them to do it.

There is no organisation, central or parochial, armed with sufficient authority to bring the necessary supplies at the times when such supplies are needed, although there is no lack of supplies. In addition, Mr. Chairman, the Government so far has not been able to enlist the support of all of those voluntary organisations whose business it is to render assistance in times of distress.

I might be wrong, but I have not as yet seen any evidence of work being done by the St. John's Ambulance Brigade. I am not saying that they are not working, but I say there is no evidence that there are the scores of voluntary organisations which exist all over the island, hard at work.

I have even been told the circumstances under which a consignment of food was sent yesterday morning to a centre at St. David's, Christ Church. The person normally in charge of the centre was not there, and the people who were then waiting for the food and had been waiting for it from the previous day, enjoyed if you may so call it the bitter disappointment of seeing the consignment of food taken back to the centre from which it was dispatched; that is not good enough.

In addition, there is the feeling in this island that this emergency will last for several days and in some cases might extend into weeks. When the people are destitute and homeless you cannot calculate their efforts on the basis of serving them only for a day or two. You must count at least on a full month. The time may be longer or shorter, depending on the time when their houses would become fit again for living in; therefore, we should think of preparing them with the least possible delay.

It may be a considerable time that you may have to arrange for and to extend these services to the destitute people. It is therefore, not merely a question of food but it must be nourishing food, and clothing also. There will be cases in which persons have lost their clothing in addition to their houses and clothing will have to be provided for them. I need hardly speak of medical supplies; that goes without saying.

4.15 p.m.

But there is something even more important; what about health facilities? I have been told that in Christ Church there is now housed a large number of persons in a centre numbering 1,000. One thousand people in a building must create a sanitary problem of great dimensions and if the Authorities are not careful they will soon have Meningitis, Typhoid or some disease on their hands; therefore the medical services have got to be re-organised and geared to suit that emergency. Vaccinations must be done, if necessary, and the whole procedure of inoculation against contagious and infectious disease must be speeded up, so that squads of Nurses and Medical Officers can move from centre to centre at least to check incipient signs of epidemic.

In addition to that, there is the question of school children. There are not all schools which will be commandeered and therefore some of them will have to be re-opened. If you are re-opening the schools and there are destitute children, arrangements will have to be made in the schools to feed them or at least give them one meal. You may find there-

fore that your organisation will have to be adjusted to meet any kind of situation.

Then there is the question of discipline and order without which proper service cannot be given, and proper conditions cannot be maintained. In any emergency the strong and able-bodied should do their best; and we may even find that people who are not in any way suffering from any privation are putting themselves to the forefront in the centres and rendering the distribution of supplies almost impossible because of their unfair and sometimes furious methods of pressing forward. That has got to be checked; and I suggest that here you have a field of activity which is well within the province of the Barbados Regiment to manage, not in order to terrorise and browbeat the population, but to ensure that supplies are given to those who need them most and the distribution of food and clothing is carried out in an efficient and orderly manner.

Turning now to the organisation in the island as a whole, I wish to say that it is nothing but a shame that 48 hours after a Hurricane has hit this island, the Representatives of the People in the Legislature other than the Ministers of the Crown have as yet not been given any clear direction, not even as a matter of courtesy, as to what the Government is doing. I have heard only by gossip that for the purposes of this emergency the island has been divided into four zones. There would probably be five zones if the Premier were not on the sick list, and each zone is under the administrative oversight of a Minister.

I have been told that the parishes of St. Lucy, St. Peter and St. Andrew are under the control of the Minister of Trade, Industry and Labour, that the Minister of Social Services will have the oversight of the parishes of St. George, St. Thomas and St. Joseph, that the Minister of Communications, Works and Housing will look after the parishes of St. Michael and St. James and the Minister of Agriculture, Lands and Fisheries will have the heavy task of the oversight of the parishes of Christ Church, St. John and St. Philip.

That is good news; but it should be given to us officially; and I think it is a great discourtesy to hon. members of this House that the rest of us have not been asked to take part in whatever is being done. It is also a discourtesy that hon. members are not kept informed of what is being done so that we can direct our constituents as to the proper procedure in matters affecting relief.

[Hon. R. G. MAPP: St. Lucy is all right.] It is not a matter of saying that this or that parish is alright.

Even if in some parishes the damage is not as great as in others, the services of members should be enlisted particularly in those areas where the organisation could be strengthened. I do not think I could give the Government the credit for keeping these things to themselves; they have a right to inform hon. members as to the nature of the organisations which they are setting up.

As to the financial implications of the matter before us, I treat it as a huge joke that this House is asked to provide the sum of \$200,000 which, according to the Ministers, will be mostly used for housing. I have no doubt that housing is an important matter especially when so many thousands are without homes.

I do not know that we should seriously feel that \$200,000 even as a temporary measure is sufficient to meet the demands which will be made upon the Government in this struggle. We have voted in this House precisely the same amount for the Civil

Servants' Housing Loan, and even then the House decided that more money should be put into that fund for housing Civil Servants. You can ask for any amount as a temporary measure because the vote is only a token vote until the full extent of the damage has been known. But it is little short of being realistic that this island has undergone damage to the tune of \$16 million and that is a conservative estimate.

When you take into account the loss of homes, lost of livelihood and loss of property, I would not be surprised if it were more than \$15 million or \$16 million. There are at least 25,000 people homeless and I am wondering if it would not be a better idea for the Government to ask the House to make a more generous financial provision and for the Executive Committee to decide to introduce an interim Budget. Their power to spend would have to be increased and their actual spending would have to be increased. It therefore follows that they have got to adopt a more real financial policy and decide quite quickly and re-organise the Estimates this year to bring them into line with this new demand.

4.25 p.m.

In conclusion, Mr. Chairman, I should like to say this: I am not convinced, (and I do not think other members are) that relief measures are as speedy or as effective as they could be. I am not convinced that supplies of food are reaching the distributing centres as quickly as they could, or in the quantities which are necessary. We want to be assured by the Government and to urge upon the Government the necessity of this matter which is going to occupy days, and possibly, even weeks and money. In addition to food, shelter and clothing, there must be full sanitary provisions made, and medical resources ought to be mobilised to the same extent as food and clothing in order that we should have no delay.

I am glad to see that the Government's buildings are used for sheltering women and children, and I am more than proud to see that the people whose money has been used to a large extent to build those colossal buildings should have been the first to reside in them. I am sorry that there are not more of them for this purpose; and even though it has been criticised on other and genuine grounds, I further hope that it will be used even before the end of October by persons who contribute to the well-being of this island and who are in need of shelter. It is their building and it is only right and proper that they should have shelter in it.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, I cannot impress upon the Ministers too seriously that they are not acting as persons in authority. Information should not have been withheld, and the services of persons should have been commandeered even when it seems that they may not be needed. It is better to be on the safe side of superfluity of personal services than to be asking where people are.

There already exists in this island a large number of voluntary organisations and I think that they should be called upon. It should never be felt that it is only on ceremonial occasions such as parades or when officials are to be decorated, that we want to see the St. John's Ambulance working. This is precisely an occasion on which they should be working, not only in the matters of frills and furnishings on ceremonial occasions, but in those down to earth.

I wish, therefore to state, that I am in sympathy with and give my support to the terms of this Resolution, although I urge the Government that they should show a greater awareness and act with more authority and with more information at their disposal.

I am sorry that the honourable senior member for St. George is not in his place today. He is away on business; but had he been here, I am sure he would have been able to tell us, in his customary forceful style, what he discovered in his own constituency and what the state of affairs is like in that part of the island and those other parts which he would have visited. Doubtless, when he returns in a few days time, we shall be pleased to hear him.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The question is that this Resolution for the sum of \$200,000 do now pass. Honourable members in favour of that please say "aye," those against, please say "no," I think the "ayes" have it.

Mr. ALLDER: Mr. Chairman, I have only a few remarks to make.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I have declared already. [VOICES FROM THE GOVERNMENT'S BENCH: Nasty! Shame!]

On motion of Hon. Dr. H. G. H. CUMMINS, seconded by Hon. M. E. COX, the Chairman reported the passing of the Resolution in Committee.

Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

On separate motions of Hon. Dr. H. G. H. CUMMINS, seconded by Hon. M. E. COX, in each case, the Resolution was read a first and second time and agreed to.

Mr. Speaker adjourned the House.

4.40 p.m.