

THE
House of Assembly Debates

(OFFICIAL REPORT)

SESSION 1958

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Thursday, 10th April, 1958.

Pursuant to the adjournment the House of Assembly met at 2 o'clock p.m. today.

PRESENT

His Honour Dr. H. G. H. CUMMINS, C.B.E., M.D., C.M., (*Speaker*); Hon. Sir GRANTLEY ADAMS, Kt., C.M.G., Q.C., B.A., (*Premier*); Mr. W. A. CRAWFORD; Hon. M. E. COX; (*Minister of Trade, Industry and Labour*); Mr. L. E. SMITH, J.P. (*Chairman of Committees*); Hon. R. G. MAPP, (*Minister of Communications, Works and Housing*); Mr. T. O. BRYAN; Mr. F. C. GODDARD; Hon. F. E. MILLER, (*Minister of Social Services*); Mr. E. St.A. HOLDER; His Honour Mr. V. B. VAUGHAN (*Deputy Speaker*); Mr. J. C. TUDOR; M.A.; Mr. C. B. SEARLES; Mr. L. St.A. THORNE; Hon. D. D. GARNER, (*Minister of Agriculture, Lands and Fisheries*); Mr. H. A. DOWDING, M.B.E.; Mr. T. W. MILLER; Mr. F. G. SMITH, B.A.

Prayers were read.

MINUTES

..... Mr. SPEAKER: I have the honour to inform the House that the Minutes of the last meeting are not yet ready for confirmation.

RESIGNATIONS

I have the honour to inform the House that I have received the following:

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY,
10th April, 1958.

"Sir,

Owing to the fact that I have been elected a member of the House of Representatives of the Legislature of the West Indies, I beg to give notice of my desire to withdraw from the General Assembly of this island as from Tuesday, next, 15th April, 1958.

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
Yours faithfully,
GRANTLEY H. ADAMS."

Also

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY,
10th April, 1958.

"Sir,

Owing to the fact that I have been elected a member of the House of Representatives of the West Indies, I beg to give notice of my desire to withdraw from the General Assembly of this island as from Tuesday next, 15th April, 1958.

I have the honour to be, Sir,
Yours faithfully,
VICTOR VAUGHAN."

In accordance with Section 90 of the Representation of the People Act -

"Any person elected a member of the General Assembly may, either before or after taking his seat, withdraw from the Assembly by signifying that he is desirous of withdrawing from the Assembly; and if the Speaker is satisfied of the authenticity of the letter purporting to come from such person, he shall upon the reading of the said letter in the Assembly direct that the receipt thereof be noted on the order paper; and at the following meeting the matter shall be called as the first order, when the Speaker shall direct the letter to be recorded upon the minutes, and upon this being done the seat of such person shall be vacant;

Provided that, if a motion be made in the House that such letter of resignation be not entertained such letter of resignation shall not be entertained and such seat shall not be deemed vacant except a majority of two-thirds of the number then present agree that such letter and resignation be entertained and such seat be vacant."

I now direct that the receipt of these letters be noted on the Order Paper.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

Mr. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, I beg to give notice of the following Addresses.

THE HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY
TO
HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR

The House are of the considered opinion that immediate steps should be taken, wherever possible, to ensuring a reduction in the abnormally high cost of living

in Barbados, and respectfully request that a Committee of Enquiry be appointed whose terms of reference should include a comprehensive investigation of the existing position and the submission of recommendations for improvement thereof.

THE HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY
TO
HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR

The House desire to express its dissatisfaction over the rates imposed after the recent revisions of omnibus fares in Barbados in consequence of the fact that such fares are calculated to impose an intolerable burden on persons of moderate and small incomes and respectfully request that there be a further revision with the view to making any essential increases more reasonable.

THE HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY
TO
HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR

The House desire to draw to the attention of Your Excellency the absolute inadequacy of wages paid to certain categories of public employees, with special reference to the unestablished and casual staff, in view of the the current high cost of living, and respectfully request that steps be taken to make effective immediately.

(a) a minimum wage of not less than 40 cents per hour, and,

(b) a revision of salary scales, on a similar percentage basis, of all employees whose earnings are not in excess of \$120 per month.

THE HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY
TO
HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR

The House are of the opinion that women employed in any public or private industrial or commercial undertaking or in any agricultural undertaking, other than undertakings in which only members of the same family are employed should not be permitted to work during the six weeks following confinement, and should have the right to leave work on production of a medical certificate stating that confinement will probably take place within six weeks and are entitled to be paid for this twelve-week period at workmen's compensation rates.

If a woman is absent from her work in accordance with these provisions, or if she is absent for a longer period because of illness ensuing from pregnancy or confinement, no employer shall, until her absence has exceeded such maximum period, as may be determined by a competent authority, give her notice of dismissal during such absence or give her notice of dismissal at such a time that the notice would expire during such absence.

The House respectfully request that Legislation be introduced to give effect to the above.

Hon. Sir GRANTLEY ADAMS: Mr. Speaker, I do not know whether I am in order: but if I am, I want even if it is my last address, to repeat what I have said so often, that if I have anything to do with advising the Chief Executive of this colony, I will advise him to take no notice of such things. There are Ministers and these things should be addressed to the particular Ministry. Theoretically, you can address the Queen and send her a petition on anything you like, and people do it; but she immediately - and we follow the practice - passes it on to the appropriate Minister.

2.25 p.m.

If any hon. member has any grievance, let him ask any Minister to look after it. As long as I have anything to do with this country there will always be a big "No" to such Addresses.

Mr. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, if I am in order, he will not decide that; the people will.

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS POSTPONED

Mr. SPEAKER: The first Order of Government Business cannot be taken today because it is out of order, no Sunday having intervened since the notice of the Resolution was given.

Hon. M. E. COX: Mr. Speaker, I do not propose to proceed with any Government Business today. But I would like to inform this Honourable House that I intend to take Order No.1 which is a Resolution to place the sum of \$150,000 at the disposal of the Governor-in-Executive Committee to supplement the Estimates 1958-59 Part I, Current and which is a Resolution to provide money for Government business as the first Order of the Day next Tuesday.

I have agreed with the hon. junior member for Christ Church to take the Bill which stands in his name today.

PRIVATE BUSINESS

Mr. SPEAKER: There being no intention of Government to proceed with Government Business today, I now turn to Private Members Business.

The First Order of the Day stands in the name of the hon. Junior member for Christ Church; Second reading of a Bill to amend the Barbados Fire Insurance Company Act, 1881.

THE BARBADOS FIRE INSURANCE COMPANY
(AMENDMENT) BILL, 1958.

Mr. GODDARD: Mr. Speaker, this Bill is an amendment to the Barbados Fire Insurance Company Act, 1881. It is a very simple Bill and it seeks to achieve three objects. The first is to permit the company to operate outside of Barbados. The present Act only permits them to operate in Barbados.

The second object is to permit the company to be able to provide pensions and credits to their employees. That has been granted to most other companies operating here but because this was omitted in the early days, it is not in the Act; and therefore this company is not legally authorised to do so. In asking for this permission they are going further than what other companies are doing. I shall read what is set out in the Bill to give hon. members an idea of what they are seeking permission to do. They are seeking permission "to provide for the welfare of persons in the employment of the company or any holding subsidiary, allied or associated company, or persons formerly in the employment of the company, or any holding subsidiary, allied or associated company and the dependants of such persons by grants of money, pensions, pension and insurance schemes or other payments, and by providing or subscribing towards places of instruction and recreation and hospitals, dispensaries, medical and other attendance and other assistance as the company shall think fit; and to form, subscribe to, or otherwise aid benevolent, religious, scientific, national or other institutions or objects which shall have any moral or other claims to support or aid by the company by reason of the nature or the locality of its operations."

That, Sir, is a very worthwhile amendment in itself because at present many companies when they are approached for such charitable objects, refer to their Articles of Association and they say that they are not permitted to do so. That really does deserve an amendment by this House.

The third object of the Bill is to permit the company to increase their authorised capital from £168,000 to £500,000. That might seem a large sum, but authorised capital does not mean that it would be taken up immediately. This company is doing quite a large business; it is developing a great deal and it is unable under its existing capital to further develop unless it increases it. I may mention that this and all the profits are spent in the Island. They pay not only large sums by way of trade tax, but large sums are paid into the Treasury by way of company tax. Therefore anything which can be done to further their interest is in the interest of Barbados.

I think there are certain small amendments to be made to the Bill as advised by the Crown Law Officers. They are only in the form of commas and semicolons and rather than my reading these amendments now, I will ask the Clerk to put them in the proper place when we are dealing with the Bill in Committee. Sir, I think that covers the entire aim of this Bill. I now beg to move that this Bill be read a second time.

Mr. DOWDING: I beg to second that.

Mr. F. G. SMITH: Mr. Speaker, the amendments as suggested by the hon. junior member for Christ Church are not likely to meet with any opposition from this side. We are only a bit worried. We feel when certain private companies come to the Legislature for amendments in order that they may operate more efficiently that such companies must show not only to the people who run them but to the public that their policy is a liberal policy. As far as I know, this company is not as liberal and modern as I personally would hope. I have been in there on several occasions, and I am not altogether convinced that this company adopts that liberal attitude towards employment that one would find in modern communities. We are not opposing these amendments as long as the hon. Introducer can give us the assurance that what we say here would be brought home to the Directors of this particular company and that their attitude towards persons in the employ of the company would be more liberal, more fair and more justifiable.

2.35 p.m.

Mr. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, on that score, while I agree in substance with the remarks made by the hon. member on my right, it may appear invidious that these principles are only to apply to firms who, at some time or other, may have to seek legislative sanction for something which they want to do as in the present case. In other words, now that the Barbados Fire Insurance wants to liberalise the conditions under which it works, it has to seek the approval of the Legislature, while the opinion has been expressed here that we should also liberalise its employment policy and allow it to employ people without prejudice, and in spite of varying racial characteristics, yet it does not appear to me, Sir, that we should be satisfied merely to pronounce this doctrine on an occasion like this. I think that a principle like that should be more or less implied in the operation of all business in Barbados. There are several concerns which may or may not have to come here for legislative sanction for what they want to do and they may be adopting the same practice which impliedly has been condemned by the hon. junior member for St. Andrew.

Therefore, I hope that the House will consider, in suggesting the enforcement of a policy such as this, that it must apply to all firms in the country at all times. All business places in the Island should be legally compelled to employ a certain percentage of coloured people. There is no reason why we should specify any one business place because the matter concerning it is before us, when there are so many others like the Trumpeter Cigarette Company and others making a fortune out of the masses of this country and refusing to employ anybody except those who belong to a particular race. In my opinion, the principle should have general application and not merely to be expected to apply on a particular occasion; it should apply to other businesses who may or may not have to apply to the Legislature.

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

On the motion of Mr. GODDARD seconded by Mr. DOWDING, Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair and the House went into Committee on the Bill, Mr. L. E. SMITH being in the Chair.

On a similar motion, the Preamble was postponed.

The five Clauses of the Bill were called and passed. The Preamble was called and agreed to.

On the motion of Mr. GODDARD seconded by Mr. DOWDING, the CHAIRMAN reported the passing of the Bill in Committee.

Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

On motions of Mr. GODDARD seconded by Mr. DOWDING in each case, the Bill was read a third time and passed.

ADDRESS Re PENSION PAID TO OLD PEOPLE

Mr. SPEAKER: The next Order of the Day under the Head "Private Members' Business" stands in the name of the hon. senior member for St. Lucy:- To move the passing of an Address to His Excellency the Governor relative to the pension at present paid by the Government to Old People.

Mr. TUDOR: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move the passing of an Address relative to the inadequacy of the pension paid by the Government to Old People. The Address reads as follows:-

THE HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY TO HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR

The House of Assembly wish to draw to Your Excellency's attention the inadequacy of the pension at present paid by Government to Old People and the hardships they suffer from rising food prices.

2. The House accept the principle that care for the Aged should be among the first charges upon this Islands Revenue and are therefore willing to make generous provision for a substantial increase in Old Age Pensions, if Your Excellency were to submit any proposals for their consideration.

Mr. Speaker, a matter such as this ought not to demand any great persuasion or need any great eloquence on the part of any member of this House. Before I make my comments on this Address, I should like to say something generally with respect to the moving of Addresses in this Chamber under the Head "Private Members' Business." I am very sorry that an ancient privilege of this House which has been enjoyed from time immemorial, so far as I know, is being assailed for such spurious reasons. When private members move the passing of Addresses to the Governor, they do so on the belief and in the knowledge that the Rules of the House of Assembly permit them to do so, and I, for one, will not lay aside any privileges which I have enjoyed as a member of this House so long as the Rules of the House clearly and adequately give me the opportunity to make use of it. I am sorry to see that the Premier, on the eve of his departure, is still arguing in that way and is handing on such a doubtful heritage of controversy to his successor.

Well, Sir, the plight of the Old People in this Island is very severe. The tendency has been in recent years not to consider an increase in the Old Age Pension, except perhaps, on those occasions when an election is near.

2.45 p.m.

It is true, as you will recall, Sir, that two years ago in the very year in which the last General Election took place, there was a substantial increase in old age pensions, substantial on the rate which then existed; but a substantial rate is not necessarily the best increase and not necessarily the most adequate one to meet the demands of the particular situation. Everybody complains nowadays that it is difficult to make ends meet. One of the arguments used in this Chamber when the salary and emoluments of the Head of the Administration were increased was that he himself found it difficult to make ends meet on the enormous salary and privileges which he was enjoying. If it is true and arguable that persons who are well placed find it difficult to exist nowadays with the cost of food and other necessities being what they are, it must be doubly true in the case of the very poor. I have never heard even the most determined supporter of Government argue that what is at present paid to old people is adequate. Nobody could possibly be in his right senses if he were to argue that \$1.80 per week at the present level of prices can keep any human being above starvation level; but the great difficulty with the members of the Government is that they have never been able to accept a principle with respect to the old people, and in this Address, this principle is laid down quite clearly.

It is not a matter of what exactly it takes to keep an old person, important as that is. The principle on which we should assess this matter is simply that when you have old people in a community, they are to be looked after in the best possible way. The question therefore turns on whether what we now give to them is the best possible amount and whether in giving it to them we look after them in the best possible way. An investigation, Mr. Speaker, of rise in food prices since December 1956 shows quite clearly that even for the very well-to-do there has been an enormous jump in the cost of living, and my colleague, the hon. senior member for St. Philip, in consultation with the rest of us, has quite rightly sought to draw the attention of the House to this problem in the Address of which he has given notice. Debate on that will of course be more technical and perhaps more exhaustive, but it is a good thing that the House will shortly have the privilege of debating quite fully this whole question of the cost of foodstuffs, because we are finding on all sides that even when increases of wages are granted, in a very short time dissatisfaction again crops up. If this is true in cases of those who are receiving salaries- and in the case of some people good salaries- it is even more true that there will be greater dissatisfaction in the case of those who receive little or nothing.

Mr. Speaker, the great thing which we must bear in mind in considering the possibility of increasing old age pensions is this. People who are in receipt of old age pension are persons who are not like Your Honour or members of this House who enjoy a pittance elsewhere in other walks of life, or they are not persons who by and large have relatives of moderate and well-off means to assist them; they are, generally speaking, the bulk of the large working class of this island, and therefore they are people who, even when they were working, were working for very low salaries and at a great disadvantage. It is not members of the House, Civil Servants, Ministers, members of the Federal Parliament or any of those categories of persons who look forward to drawing old age pensions; it is people who have been agricultural labourers or domestic servants, shop assistants or people like that, carpenters and masons - in short, the large bulk of the manual labourers of this island who have looked forward to nothing but that.

Now there are people who have had a raw deal throughout almost all their working lives, I would hate to use the word "exploited" because it is so loose a term now - from whom a large part of their true worth had been kept in the conditions of their work in years gone by; so that if you accept that as being true, an attempt on the part of Government to pay Old Age Pensions should be an attempt to make up to those people for what they have not had in their working lives. It is no more, there-

fore, than ordinary common justice that an adequate pension should be paid. Do not look at it as charity being handed out, but look at it on the contrary as a successful attempt on the part of the community of rewarding those of its members who have not hitherto been enjoying the best of what life had to offer, and it would be a matter of earnestness on the part of the community so to recompense them; if any sacrifices are needed, that sacrifice will gladly be borne by the rest of the community whether in higher taxes or by other methods of self-denial.

It is not the best reputation for a community that its old people should be living on the borders of starvation. You cannot argue that \$1.80 per week keeps a woman from starvation. I have had occasion in this House rather to remind the House of the plight of one of my constituents, an old woman of ninety who has to pay sixty cents a week for rent and who has to use the remainder of the \$1.80 as best she could to feed herself for seven whole days. In very startling and dramatic fashion, I brought to the notice of the House a typical example of the thousands of them.

The argument that at present Government spends over \$800,000 a year need not detain us as being very serious, because it is expected that the number of old people must increase as the years pass and that adequate provision must be made even at the present levels for the increasing number of pensioners who get added to the list as time goes on. The point here is that Government must make a bold and determined attempt to set aside the largest possible sum in excess of what it now puts aside so that a minimum pension, perhaps of \$3 per week or even \$2.50 to start with, can be given immediately. This is not a propaganda speech or argument that we raised on this side of the House, because if it were so, it would only be necessary for us to show that it is Old Age Pensioners who live in our own constituencies who fare the worst. The truth is far from that hon. members opposite themselves represent, in the majority, poor people; there must be poor people in St. John, in St. Thomas, St. James and St. Joseph, who undergo the same hardships and who suffer the same disadvantages; so therefore it need not even be a matter for political controversy. It is just a case of recognising what is a basic fact in the community - the basic distress of these people and doing what we can do to help them.

Now, I know that a possible argument against the passing of this Address might be that Government's financial commitments are heavy, and that it has earmarked every cent of its expenditure, and that even if Government is sympathetic to the case made out for the increase of Old Age Pensions, nothing can be done at the moment. That is an argument which I reject entirely.
2.55 p.m.

Things can never be so bad in this island that you cannot find \$1.20 or an extra 70 cents per week to give to each of the Old Age Pensioners immediately. If it can be argued and demonstrated that you cannot find that extra amount immediately, then the Government of the island should pick up their traps and make way for their successors because it would prove conclusively that they cannot manage the affairs of Government. We know that there are sums available; we know that money can be found for cases which are not as worthy as this; we know that the money can be found to give the old people a little more pension. I am therefore making a plea to hon. members on both sides of the House to ignore the fact that the person who now introduces this Address is perhaps one of the bitterest critics of the Government- and, as a matter of fact, I have refrained from being provocative in the speech I am making because I do not want to make it appear to hon. members on this side of the House or on the side opposite that any political capital is being made out of it.

All of us have had very sad experiences of old people coming to us and explaining in great detail what their plight is like every week. I know that there are hon. members, other than those of the Opposition, who have had to explain to these same old people that they themselves think that the pension given them is inadequate.

The cause therefore for an increase for them is not a hard one to make out. The rising cost of foodstuffs, the inadequacy of the amount paid itself, and the fact that it is paid to people who have very little or no other means of subsistence for themselves are arguments which should convince even the stoutest defender of Government's policy that a case has been made out for an increase of pension to these poor people. With these words I beg to move.

Mr. CRAWFORD: Sir, I would like to second the motion which has been so ably moved by the hon. senior member for St. Lucy.

Mr. SPEAKER: I was wondering whether the motion had been made.

Mr. TUDOR: I started out by saying "Mr. Speaker, I beg to move the passing of the following Address."

Mr. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, I beg to second the motion which has been so ably and comprehensively moved by the hon. senior member for St. Lucy. All the principles which he has enunciated find favour with this side of the House, and there is only one point which has been omitted which could have lent weight to his arguments and that is this. If the arguments against the increase of the old age pension would be on the grounds of financial stringency, well then, they cannot hold water for the simple reason that the Government has just budgeted for a surplus of over half a million dollars in a community with economic conditions such as those which obtain here. Normally speaking, no government has any right to budget for a surplus; but when that surplus becomes available at the expense of leaving unattended to such things as the plight of the aged, the position becomes even more indefensible; and therefore, Sir, I support the passing of the Address with all the strength at my command feeling sure, as the hon. mover has intimated, that in implementing it we are doing nothing more than discharging our obligations to those people whom it is desired to benefit.

As the hon. Mover has intimated, these are people who toiled in the heat of the midday sun when the wage scale in this country was miserably low, and was below subsistence level; therefore, anything that we can do now to improve their present position should be done. On the one hand, they toiled for little or nothing, and on the other, they are living at a time when the cost of living makes existence almost intolerable even for people in receipt of a good income: so that between these two points - low wages in the past and the high cost of living in the present - the case for an increase of old age pension is undeniable. Any Government conscious of its obligations to these people must see the good sense and the rationality of implementing the proposals contained in this Address.

Having said that, Sir, I want to say a word or two on the absurd comment of the Hon. Premier with regard to the procedure of presenting Addresses. Now, we know what to expect from him. Mr. Speaker, we know that when he objects to a thing in principle, he likes to dodge behind some parliamentary technicality and he brings in this technicality as a smoke screen behind which he can hide and also to present his own reactionary policy. Instead of coming right out and saying that he is opposed to any increase in Old Age Pensions or the taking of steps to decrease the cost of living, he wants to raise some mythical, constitutional obstacle against the admission of Addresses in this House by hon. members. Well now, this sort of behaviour may be all right in his own personal parliament (if and when he has all twenty-four where more or less he would be able to lay down his unorthodox unparliamentary rules and regulations and expect them to be put in force, but not in a Parliament like this. There is absolutely nothing in the rules of this House preventing a member from passing an Address to His Excellency the Governor; therefore, nothing he says can prevent any hon. member of the Opposition from exercising his right in doing that.

3.05 p.m.

It is hardly necessary for one to remind him that if he carries this absurdity to the Federal Parliament they will make very short shift of him; you will soon have him flying back here, but to no base. Under the Rules of the House, Rule 196 refers to Addresses to the Governor, not to any Minister, and even if it be argued that in the House of Commons Addresses are presented to a Minister and they are not -- even if that were the argument in the House of Commons, there is also Question Time. The Hon. Premier's argument is that if you want to know anything, you should ask a Minister, but ask him when? There are questions now over a year old to which no replies have been given. What really would be the object in April of asking a Minister a question on such a matter as the increase in the Old Age Pensions? Four weeks ago they presented the Budget and they made no estimate at all for any increase in the Old Age Pensions. An increase in this Old Age Pension would have involved a very large amount, but it is an amount which should be included when the Estimates for your financial year are presented to the Legislature. Therefore, it is obvious from the Government's failure to include an estimate for an increase in Old Age Pensions in the Budget, that they do not intend, at least in this Session, to increase the Old Age Pensions. Why therefore, should we waste time by coming in here and posing a question along that line to a Minister who will reply in 1965 and in respect of whom we have no method of making him reply a little earlier?

I have taken the opportunity to look up "May's" as to what the position is in the House of Commons with regard to Addresses, and I see that the practice is for Joint Addresses to be presented to the Crown or separate Addresses from the House of Commons. And in no way ----

Mr. SPEAKER: To what page is the hon. member referring?

Mr. CRAWFORD: I am referring to page 804 of the Fifteenth Edition of May's Parliamentary Practice. With respect to Joint Addresses, they are sometimes agreed upon by both Houses and jointly presented to the Crown. That is what we do here. When we have Joint Addresses, they are presented by Joint representatives to the Governor. With regard to separate Addresses from the House of Commons, the procedure upon a motion for an Address is the same as upon an ordinary substantive motion. It requires notice and admits of debate, amendment and division. Usually, the motion for an Address is made in the form "That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty" - not to any Minister - and the subjects upon which the Addresses are presented are varied. They comprise every matter of foreign or domestic policy. That is what May's lays down. In other words, Addresses relative to the cost of living or to Old Age Pensions come under the category of domestic policy and in short, May's says, representations upon all points connected with the Government and welfare of the country. Can you want anything better than that? Addresses are allowed in Commons on that score to be presented to the Sovereign.

In Barbados, under the special Rules of parliamentary procedure authored and published by the Premier himself, we are supposed to bring forward Addresses so I understand, to be presented to a Minister. At this stage I do feel that the House should express its appreciation of the circumstance that Your Honour has refused to be misled by these irresponsible, absurd pronouncements on matters affecting the procedure in this House. If Your Honour were spineless enough and partial enough, as evidently you are expected to be, to listen to everything that comes from certain people regardless of whether or not these statements have any foundation either in law or in fact or in truth, then, sooner or later we will become the laughing-stock of every Parliament in the area, if not of the whole world. It is therefore to be hoped that when, in due course, Your Honour vacates the Chair and your place is filled by another member of this Chamber, he will exercise the same good sense and impartiality and refuse to be bamboozled by any would-be dictator

into transforming an ancient colonial Assembly into something approaching an asylum for the mentally unfit. 3.15 p.m.

At the same time, Sir, we have had a lot of this nonsense from time to time in this Chamber, and now that those days from moonlight madness are rapidly drawing towards their close, it is not surprising that there should be further attempts to leave a sort of party gesture in the proposals for even further inadequacy when the Legislature is by the good fortunes of fate deprived of counsels of which it might have well been rid long ago. It does appear to me, Sir, that whether it be old age pensions, whether it be the cost of living, whether it be increased wages for certain categories of Government employees, so long as it is a matter concerning the Government and the welfare of the State, any member of this House, even the most inarticulate backbencher, is entitled to come in here and present an Address to the Governor; but in any case I certainly in conclusion should like to set the minds at rest with the Premier. It is immaterial to me whether or not he or the Government implements the suggestions contained in these Addresses; it is immaterial to me whether rightly or wrongly, foolishly or sensibly, rationally or irrationally, he uses some technical obstruction to prevent them from passing because, in my own mind I remain convinced that the matters to which these Addresses refer are in the very near future going to be resolved by the people themselves, and not by him or one of his Ministers. In other words, the people in this island will say whether they want old age pensions and the matters comprised in these Addresses here, and the sooner he realises that, the better it will be for all concerned.

Hon. Sir GRANTLEY ADAMS: Mr. Speaker, I have one simple remark to make. The Governor does not even sit in the Executive Committee. Do you want anything more stupid than sending an Address to the Governor? I slept most of the time he was speaking, thank God.

Mr. F. G. SMITH: Mr. Speaker, I think that with the purpose and intention behind this Address, no honourable member of this Chamber could disagree. My argument, Sir, is that in the Summer of 1954, the present Government invited Professor Richardson to this country to undertake an exploratory investigation with the object of assessing whether, having regard to the financial and economic situation of Barbados and the other obligations to be faced by the Government in the immediate future, Barbados was in a position to support any measure of Social Security, and if so, to what extent.

It is true, Mr. Speaker, that I came into this Chamber in December, 1956, but taking an active interest in politics, I have not read where the Government has given to this Hon. Chamber an opportunity of debating that Report. The learned Professor arrived in Barbados from London on the 2nd August, 1954, and this is April, 1958.

Mr. SPEAKER: I want to draw to the hon. member's attention that the House can debate Reports at any time; Government does not have to bring them. Any hon. member may move or give notice that at the following meeting he will adjourn the House to discuss a Report.

Mr. F. G. SMITH: I do appreciate that, Mr. Speaker, but I take it that in view of the fact that Government brought down Professor Richardson, it would be their duty to attempt to implement some of the recommendations and suggestions as given in the Report by the learned Professor. Not a single recommendation in Professor Richardson's Report has been implemented by the Government including old age pensions. (Hon. M. E. COX: That is not true.) Do you mean increasing old age pensions from \$1.20 to \$1.80? Since the hon. senior member for St. Michael mentioned that, I will just submit that Professor Richardson also recommended that at the beginning of 1958 they should be increased to \$2.40.

On page 8 you will see where the Professor says: "it is therefore recommended that the pension rate be raised immediately by 50 per cent to one dollar and eighty cents

(\$1.80) a week and that, provided economic conditions in the island and the financial position of the Government remain favourable, the rate be raised at the beginning of 1958 to two dollars and forty cents (\$2.40), that is to double the present rate."

It could not be said, Mr. Speaker, that in 1954 when the learned Professor was here the economic position of Barbados was gloomy. As a matter of fact, in this very year the Government in power is still calculating for a surplus in their Budget. As I said, Mr. Speaker, I do not want the Government to go bankrupt. Next year if the drought continues, you will see what will happen to you.

Mr. Speaker, the reason why I am supporting this Address at this stage is because this Socialist Government as at present constituted has no sense of priority. Air conditioning the Legislative Council is no priority over old age pension. Increasing the travelling allowances of Ministers did not send you bankrupt; giving the Attorney General furniture did not send you bankrupt; but giving 60¢ to old people where the cost of living is increasing will send the Government bankrupt! Increasing the salaries of members and Ministers did not send you bankrupt; but I would willingly have voted for an increase in old age pensions rather than in my own salary. What is \$1.80 per week for a woman who has toiled and borne the heat of the sun to help us to live here? The Government has not yet given a satisfactory explanation, economically or otherwise why Old Age Pensions in this country cannot be increased. As a matter of fact, the poor Old Age Pensioners will have to pay more money if they travel by bus to collect the \$1.80 which they are getting. You will have noticed that in debating this Address we have not even argued for lowering the age of old age pensioners from 68 to 65; we are just saying that there is a good case for an increase. You increased everybody in the Godsall Report in 1956 and some Civil Servants got a substantial increase, but old age pensioners still must remain at \$1.80! As I have already said in this Chamber, a lot of people in this country will have to die before they learn any sense. Every year they vote and would not learn sense, because that Government over there has no sense of priority. Of course, the Premier is leaving this Chamber and on somebody's shoulders will fall the duty of running this Government, and I do hope that, whoever the person happens to be, he will consider the case of old age pensions. I recommend to whoever is likely to be Premier that this matter should be given priority in his policy for the future. I agree that the members over there might be quite willing to give an increase, but you must find ways and means, and the moment you can budget for a surplus, you have the means. You have money lying all about this place which you do not know how to spend. For the last seven years you have been accumulating money which you could have spent on the old people. What about the \$2 million surplus which you now have? Is it going to take \$2 million to give Old Age Pensioners \$2.40?

Mr. Speaker, I have never argued a case which cries out for more immediate attention than the case of Old Age Pensioners. These old people have toiled in years gone by for starvation wages in the service; some today under this Socialist Government are getting starvation wages. 3.25 p.m.

Those who are 65 today must have known the 1898 storm and important happenings before that time; yet in 1958, the Government is telling you that \$1.80 is sufficient for Old Age Pensioners. I do hope that the next Premier of this country would see to it that not only the recommendations of the report by Professor Richardson are implemented but that special attention is given to the case of old Age Pensioners. Let us find money to do it from one source or the other. If you ask me, I will tell you where you can get the money from. Although I do not belong to the Government, I will give you advice free. I am recommending it. Mr. Speaker, I shall never tire of arguing a case for these poor people who have helped Barbados to reach the economic stability and the position which it has reached in the West Indies.

Hon. R. G. MAPP: Mr. Speaker, it is very interesting to listen to the hon. member and to hear him so generously offering free advice to the Government; but this Government is always wary of taking free advice from amateurs and especially from lawyers. (VOICE: Hear! Hear! That includes the Premier.) The Premier happens to be Minister of Finance. The hon. junior member for St. Andrew may laugh but he is laughing at himself. Sir, it is easy for hon. members of the Opposition to say: "why don't you give an increase to old age pensioners" and on another occasion say "why do you not give free secondary education" and on another occasion say that workers should be paid more and that throughout the island there should be an increase of \$2 a week given to every worker. On other occasions they come in and say "why do you not do this and that" - but the hon. members over on that side do not have, and will not have for a long time, to run the Government of this island; therefore they are free to repeat such things ad lib. The hon. junior member for St. Andrew went down St. Andrew and told the people in order to get some votes that the old Age Pensioners got the lowest relief and that it was because they objected to it that they got the back pay. This debate is simply an extension or a follow up to the kind of electioneering speeches the hon. member made last year.

Of course this Government is sympathetic to Old Age Pensioners. But this Government also has to watch its budget and has to watch the demands of every section of the community. It also has to pay attention to education, roads, deep water harbour: and this Government goes according to priority. The first priority this Government has to pay attention to is development which can give work to the unemployed, especially due to the possibility of a drought.

I have already said that this Government would like to go to the limit recommended by Professor Richardson for Old Age Pensioners, but we have to take the overall view of the finances of this island and we have to balance expenditure on our own social services against expenses on other things. We have to give priority to certain things, and we have to pay attention to the position facing the unemployed in the island especially during the out-of-crop period. All those things we have to do. We, therefore, cannot get up and agree to an Address and say "give" Old Age Pensioners this or that." We cannot indulge in such an irresponsible display. We have a Five Year Plan to work on and we stick to it; you cannot have a plan and then depart from it. It does not make sense. This Government will never come down here with such financial nonsense as the hon. member has indicated. We have to take account of all that we are spending and we cannot afford to go about things willy-nilly or haphazard. We cannot take things out of turn and by themselves, without regard to the whole set up.

I hope hon. members opposite will accept that as a statement of our policy; that is to say, we do not oppose the principle of paying Old Age Pensioners more, nor do we oppose the principle of paying workers more. We believe that the right time to have raised this matter was at the time of the budget and, as a matter of fact, any policy which appeals to them should have been raised at that time. That was the proper time to raise this matter. As a matter of fact, this order should be wiped off the Order Paper altogether. No responsible person would say after your presenting a budget that you should do this. All this seeks to do is to give those hon. members the opportunity to continue with a lot of electioneering propaganda, and we will therefore vote against it.

Mr. DOWDING: Mr. Speaker, I want to make it quite clear at the outset that I shall vote on this matter and I will give my reasons for so doing. It is regrettable that we cannot have a standard of discussion in here which is an exchange of intelligence rather than a standard of argument which is an exchange of ignorance. What the Hon. Minister who has just sat down has said I cannot find out; I am unable to do so. If he is relying on the fact of one man's popularity which has been given to him over the years, I think he will have to look to some other source soon.

Sir, can we not get a simple answer to a simple question on matters such as this? This Government has spent the taxpayers' money to import people into this island to give it expert advice. Time and time again reports are made and time and time again hon. members of the Government seem to have taken the attitude that the views of hon. members on this side of the House should have no consideration. If the views of hon. members on this side of the House were given consideration, a debate such as this would not occur.

Mr. SPEAKER: As I have said earlier, every hon. member has the right to move the adjournment of the House to discuss any report.

Mr. DOWDING: I fully agree with what Your Honour says but Your Honour knows what the Hon. Premier has said.
3.35 p.m.

What must we do? The numbers are there. We are here supposedly to try and give some assistance in discussion and debate and we have a right to be here. That does not seem to be the idea on the other side, but we have a right to be here. It is our right to be here and we are going to carry out the duties of our office; if they, with their numbers, would give us the opportunity of discussing matters such as these, they would rise in the eyes of the local people and in the eyes of the world. That is my main reason in rising to speak on this Address. I agree with Premier to a certain degree that there is no need for Addresses. If this House were allowed Question Time, the Ministers would have to stand on their feet and we would know whether they are capable or not of answering questions as takes place in any civilised part of the world; then you would be able to hear if they are carrying out their duties. Out of discussion must come something, and something may come out of this discussion. At some time in the future, some part of the discussion in this House may be put into action. We are carrying out our duty; but if we are not given the opportunity of a Question Time, in order to find out, first of all, if a Minister is a Minister, and secondly, what is the Government's policy on "A", "B", "C" or "D", what other alternative have we got to conscientiously carry out the duty which the people have given to us by electing us here? If the Government allows the Opposition to be an Opposition in the true sense of the word, they would be acknowledging the fact that placing before this House matters which should be discussed and asking questions at the proper period on so many Tuesdays a month or whatever they decide, there will not be any need for Addresses in 99.9% of the cases. However, as long as they insist on using their numbers purely and simply to keep the Opposition in a type of slavery and not being allowed to discuss anything openly or without fear of its numbers being voted against, whether rightly or wrongly, the present state of affairs must continue. We have nothing to fear; let us have good, sensible and useful debate concerning the Government wherever we turn. We could have a sensible debate on this matter and a proper decision arrived at. There are pros and cons on this subject.

Sir, I heartily agree with the main part of this Address. The old people in this Island are not getting the consideration which they should get. There is a regrettable trait in this Island that filial gratitude is lacking; there is a regrettable circumstance today that those who can help the old people do not help them. The Government has done something, but it is my humble opinion that something more could be done for these people. There is a most unhappy feeling which one gets; if you travel in any part of this Island and see the condition of some of the people who have reached the age of probably 80 years or more, you will find that many of them are bedridden. I have spoken to many people who have tried to do something about the matter, and I have heard one say that very often you go into one's house and it is impossible for you to bear the stench. That is not good enough for these days. What we want is a co-operative effort on the part of everyone - the Government, the Opposition the public, the rich, the middle-class and the poor - to get this blot off this beautiful Island.

Recently, a very good man was in this Island and I do not know if many people knew it. In spite of his faults, at his instigation and knowledge a Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children was formed. His name is Dr. Humby. Mr. Speaker, I give credit where credit is due. I sincerely hope that in the very near future we will have a Society which will have the blessing of the Government in a similar way for the old people. If I had elected to come here to speak on this matter, I would speak at much length and with great volume, but I do not intend to becloud the atmosphere with any bombardments. I do hope that I have contributed something to this debate. The two main points which I want to emphasise are, in the first place, that the presentation of Addresses must of necessity remain the privilege of this House as long as the Opposition is not allowed any Question Time and or the opportunity of debating matters of this importance; and, secondly, that something more must be done by all and sundry in this Island - the Government and everybody else - for the old people who are so greatly in need of assistance.

3.45 p.m.

I am certain, Sir, that the Government should bring down a Bill to remove the terrible blot that exists on this country from those who know about it. Unfortunately it is very seldom seen; but those who visit and know the districts of this island know what I am talking about and it is a definite blot which I would like to see removed.

Mr. TUDOR: Mr. Speaker, I really did not intend to exercise my right as Mover to reply to Government, but I am constrained to do so after the speech and lamentable display which we have just heard from the Minister of Communications. As I understand him, the proposals which come from this side of the House that Government should increase Old Age Pensions immediately constitute - and I quote him - "financial nonsense." I understand him further to have said that we on this side who advocate it are incautious and do not take into account the financial commitments of Government, and if we had the opportunity, which he says may not come, we would not be so easily led into advocating this preposterous nonsense.

Mr. Speaker, it is amazing that persons who in their private lives are very kind and charitable and who would not turn away from their doors a starving or hungry person immediately as you collect a group of such persons together in a Government like this and invest them with a little power, they become callous and hardhearted collectively, which they are not as individuals. Which of those Ministers or indeed, which of the members opposite would be bold enough to turn away from his door or out of his house any Old Age Pensioner who came to him and said he could not live on \$1.80 a week, that he can only eat food two days a week with it and for the rest of the time he is dependent on charity or must starve? I like to put the case in all its starkness because unless you see it that way you will not understand the clarity of the stigma which Government has allowing to continue when they refuse these increases.

If there were any of us here this afternoon who could conscientiously refuse a sympathetic hearing to any old person who asked for an increase, well then, that member would be quite justified in taking the same stand here this afternoon, and it surprises me to think that persons who would be prepared in their private lives to exercise a certain amount of charity and humanity, when they meet collectively as a Government Party would be the most callous persons you would see. I go further and ask which of them individually as members of this Chamber, would undertake at this present moment or from tomorrow's date to exist for any period over a stand here this afternoon, and it surprises me to think that persons who would be prepared in their private lives to exercise a certain amount of charity and humanity, when they meet collectively as a Government Party would be the most callous persons you would see. I go further and ask which of them individually as members of this Chamber, would undertake at this present moment or from tomorrow's date to exist for any period over a day on \$1.80.

The whole point, Mr. Speaker, resolved itself to this; it is no use your saying that as a Government you have got to watch the finances of the country. There comes a time when the feeding of the hungry is much more important than the hoarding of money in the Treasury. I go further than that and say that there comes a time when the feeding of the hungry, when it is set over against the hoarding of money, becomes a reproach and a shame to any community. The old people of this island are not asking for charity; the members of this Chamber - the Ministers, their backbenchers and the rest of us - enjoy emoluments of one sort or another which are provided from the very people who in their capacity as taxpayers fill the Treasury every year. It is the same people who fill the Treasury every year out of their taxes; and the crime of the situation is this: that even with the \$1.80 you give them, the actual amount which they enjoy is probably only half of that, because fully half of what they purchase they pay Customs Duty on, so when you pay them \$1.80 a week they are only enjoying about 90¢ or 95¢ in actual value. So in the very act of receiving that pittance from you, they are contributing and putting into the Treasury the same money which the Ministers say you cannot spend on them. It is a bad thing when people become so overfed, so accustomed to good living and so comfortably off that they can afford to condemn poor people with such specious nonsense as saying that they are watching the financial situation." I am convinced that if there was the last dollar in the Treasury, no Government could undergo any criticism or could be reproached if it took it up and spent it on the old people. That is not an academic question or a question as to whether the people who are in receipt of old age pensions are voters on one side or another; that is entirely out of the question. The people for whom we are asking this increase are people who are hungry several days a week, and no amount of excuses whether financial or otherwise can justify a Government withholding that increase from them. If you refuse on the grounds that you have other things to do with your money, you are deliberately telling them that it does not matter to you whether or not they starve, and I would rather see the Treasury empty for the old people to eat and drink more and drink more and shelter from the hardships which they now meet; it is better to have that and an empty Treasury.

Mr. Speaker, when some people ask certain questions, it is well that they should ask them because all of us have not always had an easy time of it. There were times when some of us, before we were members of this House, were prepared to beg people for pennies and four cents - people who could ill-afford it - in order to make up their own lunch money when they were in less affluent circumstances. There are people who used to beg poor people for money to buy their lunch, and if they have got so well off that they can laugh at the starvation of the people, it speaks a lot for them.

It does not need any eloquence to plead this case. The Minister said that the time to advocate an increase in Old Age Pensions was just before the budget was introduced or when the budget debates were going on. Now if you are going to argue that, you should argue it in all contingencies. Last year when the members of this House were bullied and brow-beaten into granting salary and other emoluments to the Head of the Administration, it was done out of the budget time; it was done after the Estimates were introduced, and no member of Government and no backbencher, Mr Speaker, said to us that the time was inopportune for increasing the salary of the Governor.

3.55 p.m.

They are telling you that you should have done this before the budget was presented. When you reflect that in the two extreme cases, there is one person who can well afford to wait for his increase without any appreciable drop in his standard of living, and there is the other person who needs it so badly that it makes a difference between starvation and happiness, it is a sad commentary on political thought. Sir, a Conservative member of this chamber, the hon. senior member for St. George, has found it necessary to add his voice in pointing out to the

Government that nothing is being done for these poor people. I think that is the most eloquent commentary on the whole situation. Mr. Speaker, we do not expect, with things as they are, that members on the other side would feel themselves free to defend the old people of the Island. We do not expect that they would consider themselves independent enough to extend in their public life the charity which they extend in their private life, because of the fear of what would happen to them, and of the fear of what the big people of this island would do for them if they extend the charity which they have extended in their individual consciences. We are glad to see that it has been set on record that an attempt was made in 1958 to do something for these Old Age Pensioners and we do hope that this would bear some sort of fruit.

Mr. MOTTLEY: Mr. Speaker, this Address is very dear to my heart. The hon. senior member for St. Lucy said that the highlight of the debate was to hear a Conservative member giving support to the Address. That Conservative member is singing no solo because here I am supporting it. It might be argued that it would be an easy thing for anyone outside the ranks of the Conservative to clamour for an increase in old age pension because a Conservative member would have to contribute more direct taxation if you were to put it into effect; and it is a fact that I would be among those who would have to pay more direct taxation; but because of that we are not afraid to express our views.

The second paragraph of the Address reads as follows:-

2. The House accept the principle that care for the Aged should be among the first charges upon this Island's Revenue and are therefore willing to make generous provision for a substantial increase in Old Age Pensions, if Your Excellency were to submit any proposals for their consideration.

First of all I blame the hon. member who brought in the Address. Why did he not put the Ministers on the spot? Why did you not bring it in addressed to the appropriate Minister? I am blaming the hon. senior member for St. Lucy for not bringing it in direct to the Minister and not pinning the Government down. If he had brought it in addresses to the appropriate Minister, we would have been able to pin the Minister down.

Sir, I am definitely in favour of the Address but I am awfully sorry that almost all hon. members of the Opposition have spoken on it because I am going to make an amendment which I would like one of them to second. I am not only in favour of the increase for Old Age Pensioners but, as a matter of fact, in preference to an increase, I am in favour of reducing the qualifying age. Do you know the reason why I am in favour of reducing the qualifying age? Only yesterday, I had the honour of having sitting with me at the Board of Guardians for St. Michael a very distinguished Barbadian, Dr. C. B. Clarke. Present for investigation were a number of people between 65 and 68 years who had worked all their lives in the fields of this country, and who had produced the wealth of it, but who at their ages were no longer able to work and who were not qualified to get one cent of pension. Mr. Speaker, I think you have a lot of experience in this matter too by virtue of your profession. I am sure that you have found that a great number of these people between the ages of 65 and 68 years are physically unable to work although you may not find any physical illness, the cause being due to the fact that they are worn out by the sun. For the twelve years I have been in this House I have always suggested that the age should be reduced to 65 years and I accept no compromise, not even from Professor Richardson. He said that there should be no change in the age at which old age pensioners should be paid because to reduce the age to 65 years would result in an increase of more than two thousand in the number of pensioners. I would not sit over on that side to run any Government and accept a report like that. Professor Richardson has not one drop of negro blood in his veins and he does not know anything of the hardship of working in fields barefooted. In the United States of America, they have just

reduced the qualifying age for pensioners to between 61 years and 62 years. Barbados is situated in the tropics where you have the heat of the sun and you have people here who started to work - and I am speaking of the time before you had any change in the political outlook - in the third class from the ages of five and six years old and who have continued for 45 years to work in the fields in the heat of the sun. In the report by Professor Richardson he goes on to say that if you reduce the age to 60 years it would involve an increase of more than six thousand pensioners.

4.05 p.m.

I, personally, think it reasonable to say that it would be impossible to reduce the age to 60 years. I believe that it would only be making a political splash and playing the fool to recommend that; but if we are giving consideration to those people who work in these fields, we will realise what the situation is. A woman who reaches the age of 65 years in England is practically a young woman; her vitality is not sapped because of the weather. You know what I am saying, Mr. Speaker. A woman at the age of 65 years in England has greater vitality than one here; with the heat in this country, the vitality of a woman who reaches that age would be sapped.

Whether it is Professor Richardson or any other Professor, this is one thing with which he cannot get me to agree. This is not a political matter; this is something which is near and dear to my heart. I have had the experience of seeing people who are between the ages of 64 and 68 years who apply for poor relief. I am quite sure that the Hon. Minister of Agriculture, if he wants to contribute to this debate without hurting his Party, he would have to admit that what I am saying is true: that is to say, that you have a number of people at the age of 65 years who are broken. Mr. Speaker, you will be on the floor in another few days. You have sat in this House and criticised the *Located Labourers' Act* and they purged you, because you had the nerve to say that it was wrong. It may embarrass you, Mr. Speaker, but it is true. Could you sit there and say that the number of women who work in the field barefooted and whom you have seen and examined - well, I have had the privilege of reading letters in respect of people, who at the age of 65 years, could not do anything more. Let them laugh over there; a lot of people laugh at their folly. You, Mr. Speaker, have seen what I am now saying on several occasions. I am not so much pressing today for an increase in the amount of the Old Age Pension, but I am pressing for a reduction of the age qualification. Do you think that Professor Richardson had any great-grand-mother who had to go into any field and work or drive any donkey cart?

The late Reverend Godson, the father of Old Age Pensions in this country, once invited me to sit in at a meeting - he was a wonderful man - and I told him that I would not compromise in this matter. I have had the privilege of going to a Northern country and seeing the difference between a woman at the age of 65 years and a woman at that same age in the Tropics. If we had to give ----

Mr. SPEAKER: Will the hon. member take his seat for a moment? It has been drawn to my attention that there is not a quorum present in the House. I will ask the Clerk to have the Bell rung.

On the Bell having been rung, a quorum was obtained.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member may proceed.

Mr. MOTTLEY: I am saying that a reduction in the qualifying age would bring about an increase of about 2,000 people and that would increase the cost of Old Age Pensions to about \$100,000 a year. I am not speaking as one who hopes to get any Old Age Pension; I am speaking as one who will have to contribute by way of taxation to giving people Old Age Pensions. I would rather do that, than to contribute to the payment of \$90 a month by way of Travelling Allowance to the Ministers or to give any Attorney General's furniture. I am not reflecting on any vote of the House; I am just telling you how I feel. You might be in a position to ask for Old Age Pension and

would you not like somebody to take the stand which I am taking now? How many people you see at the age of 65 years who are able to fork land or cut canes or do any agricultural work? You are not a baby, Mr. Speaker, neither am I; we have got experience. During the war, people were exploited; how many people you know had fifteen cents to put by so as to give some old person? You, Mr. Speaker, found that you had to attend to people gratis. Am I right, Sir? You are going to be the Head of a Party within a few days and are we asking too much of the Government to increase the amount of the Old Age Pension and also reduce the qualifying age? I suppose the Government feels that we are taking this stand so as to make a political splash. I am not doing anything so as to make any political splash. I happen to be in a position in which I have to pay taxation. I see the condition of people at the age of 65 years and am I to tell them that they must wait until they get 68 years of age so as to get this pension?

4.15 p.m.

I am sorry that I was not here earlier for the Address because I would have made certain amendments. I do not only feel that the age should be reduced to 65, but that the Powers should have the discretion wherever persons - just as you have done for blind persons over 25 - are over 50 and they can prove beyond any doubt to a Board that they are medically unfit to pursue their calling and have absolutely nothing, to give them a pension, even if it causes the hon. senior member for St. George to pay more or the Chamber of Commerce.

Somebody said the other day that poverty anywhere is a blot on prosperity everywhere. That is how I feel about it. It is not good enough to bring this Address in here; and while I congratulate the hon. member for bringing it, it is not the first that was brought here. If I knew that they were working on it, I would have offered an amendment to it, because I think the Committee which has been set up should have greater powers than merely to say that if you are 68 and your income is \$2 a week, you should be given a pension. I think we should be greater than that.

In the United States where there is great prosperity they have decided to reduce the age of men to 65 and of women to 63. What about us in this country who can be described accurately as parasites when compared with agricultural labourers and people who produced the wealth of this island? Why should we, the sons and daughters, grand-sons and grand-daughters of the people who produced the wealth of this country, allow them to starve in the Almshouses or the gutter when at 55 we can go home and draw a pension? Do you think it is right for my son or your son to enter the Civil Service and retire at 55 and draw a pension, and be able to go to St. James and see somebody whom he knew as a little boy walking about picking doncks and sucking cane unable to pull along his legs, with a Government constituted as it is? You would expect that from a Government with men in power like the hon. senior member for St. George; I am speaking of race. Alas, they have been disappointed in you; because somebody in the Opposition, is knocking at the door and saying you should reduce the age to sixty-five you therefore become stubborn like asses. I mean donkeys if you don't understand what I mean. You say it comes from the Opposition and therefore you cannot do it; you have not got sufficient money to do it.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, your entering the Chair will not change my tone; rather, I am on better grounds, not because you are elevated to be a Federal M.P., but because I remember the days when I was outside of this House and listened to your speeches, and I am only echoing you now when I say what I say this evening. I heard you in Boscobel when you had the honour to be elected to this Chamber on the first occasion saying that our class can only be described as a parasite when compared with agricultural labourers who have given their life blood to this country, and all I am doing this evening is supporting the Address of the hon. senior member for

St. Lucy which tells the Government that we would be sympathetic towards increasing old age pensions. With my experience as Churchwarden of this parish, I come into contact with 500 or 600 people a week who ask for public assistance. They sometimes come from other parishes to St. Michael and forget the time during which they have been living in St. Michael because they meet with a sympathetic Churchwarden. You can lock me up or try to run me out of public life because if there is one set of people whom I feel should be relieved, it is agricultural workers; and therefore while I support this Address - I am not merely supporting the Address for an increase, but I would like to see a reduction of the age to 65. I would like when I go through the parish of St. George or St. Philip or even in your own constituency, St. John, to see better conditions. I believe that if there is anybody who knows that I am sincere, it is you. The hon. senior member for St. George is not going to employ a woman at 65 when he can employ one at 30.

Mr. DOWDING: Mr. Deputy Speaker, on a point of personal explanation. I employ people until it is no longer possible to employ them, and then I give them a pension.

Mr. MOTTLEY: Thank God for that; there is a change of heart in the young people. No wonder he got elected in St. George. Money has its uses, but I once said at a meeting in St. Andrew that if I had the position of the former member for St. Andrew, Mr. Haynes, I would only come to the top of the hill; I would not buy votes. Human consciences react to kindness just as they react in the opposite direction. Why do you think that with all the abuse which you shower on me and despite the fact that I associate myself with a Conservative Party, you cannot even look at me?

4.25 p.m.

Human beings react and all sorts of things have been said. An hon. member said that you employ people up to a position where you cannot employ them any more. Sir, you have seen people who work in the fields at the age of 65 years and how they look. If you give them a little farm ground to weed, how much do you think they can do? In years gone by it was not like today when you get everybody with the great desire and push for education. In those days people went to work between the ages of seven, eight and nine years. Mr. Speaker, you were born in this country and you have seen when you were a boy in school boys and girls of your equal who are now old men and women. I know that in your heart you feel that the age should be reduced to 65 years. They come to you for medical attention. You see them dragging with their head tied up with an oil cloth. I see them when they come to the P.M.O., Dr. Manning. He looks at them and turns to me and say: "you know there is nothing particularly wrong with those persons but they are just worn out. They cannot go any longer in the sun." Let Professor Richardson or anybody else tell you something different from that. If you brought him here to tell you that, you are wrong. He can tell you how friendly societies work in England! There are some things about which only a Barbadian can tell you. There are some things which you must live here to know about and this is one of the things. Can persons who have worked in the noonday sun all their lives work up to 68 years before they draw a pension? Of course not. If you look at a man who has lived in England or America, you will see that at 68 years he is much stronger than a person of 65 years who has lived here all his life.

My amendment therefore is that the qualifying age should be 65 years. I am only supporting the Address but I want it amended to include that. I am therefore asking the Clerk to draft such an amendment. I just want to make this clear to the general public. It is the duty of the Clerk to draft amendments and such pieces of legislation for elected members of this House. It is my right to say what I want done and ask him to do it for me. Therefore, the Clerks are not doing me any favour.

I say again to the hon. senior member for St. Lucy that you should not have moved this Address to His Excellency the Governor. If you pass it to the Governor,

the Hon. Ministers are not bound to notice it. If I were you, I would do anything to satisfy them and see if I can get them to soften their hearts to reduce the qualifying age for these pensioners. It is not a question of hon. members of the Opposition fighting them over this question. However, they say it should be done; I would do it. I agree according to this new dispensation that the Governor cannot do anything unless he consults his Ministers.

Sir, I understand that one of the Ministers of the Government said that they do not have the money to provide for this increase in Old Age Pensions and that this is vote-catching. I am going to ask him this: if this is vote-catching, can he accuse me of vote-catching? Every-day of my life I vote-catch; the very manner of my walking down Broad Street makes me vote-catch. I have not got a big pants on with my belly hanging over it; I am still a small little man; therefore not a soul can point at me and say that since I am drawing money from the House I am looking fat. I am not saying that it has happened to anybody. Sir, I do know that deep down in the hearts of some Hon. Ministers and in the hearts of some members of the Government that they feel that every word which comes from my lips is true and they feel that we should reduce the age to 65 years. You yourself know that that is true. Just as when a person is blind, he need not wait until he is 65 years to get his pension—he can get it at 25 years now—but it is a fact that if all of the doctors at the Hospital certify a person at the age of 65 years as having the worst heart in the world and cannot work any longer, that person cannot qualify to get this Old Age Pension. I hope hon. members have seen the point I am making. There are some blind people who are getting this pension who can still do something—at least they can feel—but, I say again, if a person at 60 years cannot work any longer and a doctor diagnoses that person as having the worst heart or the most malignant disease, that person cannot get this pension.

Let us say if you reduce the qualifying age at 65 years that it would mean that \$144,000 more would be required for Old Age Pensions. You give pensions now to Civil Servants, Teachers, and Policemen at the age of 65 years and it is possible if you do not have an opposition that the Ministers would also be able to get a pension after they have served. (*Laughter.*)

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Am I to understand you that if you reduce the qualifying age to 65 years you will have only 2,000 more persons?

Mr. MOTTLEY: Yes, Sir, that is what Professor Richardson said. He has recommended no change in the age for Old Age Pensioners on account of that.
4.35 p.m.

As you know, Sir, you at one time, felt that the qualifying age should be 65 years and I am sure that you have not changed from that. Professor Richardson has said that if you reduce the qualifying age to 65 years, that would result in the number of these pensioners being increased by 2,000. Which Minister could seriously get up in public and say that this country cannot afford to carry that increase? You take your Estimates, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and you will note how blind this Minister must be. You are budgeting for a surplus of \$1/2 million and you have been getting surpluses for over a period of seven or eight years; you have had these surpluses for so long that you have stopped the Revenue Equalisation Fund. Therefore, could a Minister get up in his wisdom and say that you are budgeting for \$500,000 more than you want, you have been doing that for over seven years and you could not afford this \$100,000 to be given to these pensioners? If he had decided that he would run a kitchen garden, because he would be kicked out of the Labour Party, he would not have been talking in this way; if he had three or four children and was still getting \$60 a month, he would not be talking in this way. Any Minister who can get fat can afford to talk in this way.

Mr. Speaker, my amendment to this Address is the addition of the following paragraphs:

3.. The House are also of the opinion that the qualifying age for receipt of Old Age Pension should be reduced from 68 years to 65 years, and that the Pensions Claims Committee for each parish be empowered to enquire into any claim for a pension from persons between the ages of 60 years and 65 years which in their opinion is deserving of consideration.

4.. The House will sympathetically consider any legislation introduced to carry these proposals into effect."

Let me say to hon. members of this House that if their grand-fathers did not work at Hannays, they worked at Bulkeley; let me see any of them saying today that they would begrudge the old people this benefit. I am no social climber and therefore, I can afford to say what I am now saying. There are those who have cousins who work in the field and if they meet them in the street, they will turn their faces in the other direction. (*Laughter*) I repeat that no one of us who is conscious of his responsibility to these people would begrudge them this benefit. Sometimes, I sit down and imagine what would happen if the Hon. Minister of Agriculture were speaking of this matter from over on this side of the House; all these seats would have been removed from here. (*Laughter*). When you come to deal with labouring people, I will say that the Hon. Minister of Agriculture has moved me to tears when he was finished speaking; I could never paint a picture like him. Let me see an hon. member opposing this proposal; not even the hon. junior member for St. James would do that. Through no fault of his own the hon. member possesses what some people prefer to describe as the national passport and he has thrown in his lot genuinely with the Labour Party; "when turkeys wings break you will flock with fowl." (*Laughter*).

Mr. Speaker, I have put forward my amendment. I am more than confident that the hon. junior member for St. James who has, for all his life, lived with people of the labouring class around him, knows what I am saying is true, and therefore, he could not, with any sincerity, oppose an amendment like this. I would honestly like to suggest that even although we did not get a reduction in the qualifying age, there should be an increase in the amount of the pension; but it does not seem to me that granting an increase is practical at this time.
4.45 p.m.

I would like an increase but it does not seem to me that the increase is practical at this time. We will have to wait a long time for the increase, but seeing that you have budgeted for such a great amount of money more than you want, all you need do is to come down and amend the Act in order to allow the age to be reduced to 65, and persons between 60 and 65 who are medically unfit and cannot work and have nothing at all should be considered for pension.

I beg to move that the Address be amended as I have read it. I have nothing more to say; let them oppose it. If the hon. member thinks that I am trying to catch votes, let him take me on in the Lower Green, Carrington's Village, Baxters Road or even St. John. I see the hon. member for St. John is trying to say that I would be wasting time. I can get a hearing anywhere.

Hon. D. D. GARNER: They hear anybody.

Mr. MOTTLEY: That is not true. I heard that that they do not hear anybody in Church Village, St. Philip; I hear that they will hear the hon. senior member for St. Philip. (Hon. D. D. GARNER: Hear, but not heed) I heard that even the hon. junior member for St. Philip cannot get them to hear the Premier. I may be wrong. I do not read the "Truth" and use it as any criterion to truth.

Hon. D. D. GARNER: The hon. member having said so, I get up to categorically deny that to get the records straight.

Mr. MOTTLEY: How can the hon. member deny that? I say that some people would not hear the Premier.

Are you denying that there are no deaf people? I said that there were some people in Church Village who would not hear the Premier; how do you know that some were not deaf, even if conveniently so? Is my hon. friend categorically denying that because we are in opposing camps? There are several hundred people in Church Village; how can he say that everybody heard the Premier?

I hope my amendment will win favour with the Government Bench. Let us get down to bed-rock on this. You must not get hot and lose your temper; we are all made out of the same gas-brass, and it does not worry me. If I depended on saying things to please Government members to get in here, I would still be outside looking in. I never say things which I think would please them, because I know what cannot be said of me.

There are a lot of people in this country who used to abuse the Premier from morning to night, at breakfast and at dinner, but as soon as he got power, they got on the wagon; I am not saying that of the hon. member for St. Philip, because I knew where he stood all along; but there are some people who within the last two years or more recently since the Premier got a Knighthood who have done it. There are some people from my Party who are opportunists and want to run, and feel that he can get them in the House. God help me if that happens; I would sit in my own house first. I have not got in here on anybody's shoe strings. I say things that will please the electorate of this island. (A VOICE: They do not seem pleased.) The hon. member said they do not seem pleased; he is making fun. There is one sure thing about me. The difference between us is that I can hold a meeting in any part of the island and I do not have to wait until the Premier comes or telephone to get him to come. I am the man doing the talking and I am not playing second fiddle to anybody.

I beg to move that my amendment as read be accepted as part of the Address.

Mr. TUDOR: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I rise only to say that I accept the amendment as moved by the hon. senior member for the City.

Mr. BRANCKER: Mr. Deputy Speaker, an Address of this kind as amended should hardly need any support in a Chamber with the protestations which this Chamber has of being Labour and more particularly Socialist, because how anyone could try to find any excuse, trick or device whereby they would vote against a measure of this kind surpasses one's understanding. I am told - and I regret that professional duties made it impossible for me to be here earlier - that objection was taken on the old grounds of the working of the Address, the caption "The House of Assembly to His Excellency the Governor."

Now, Mr. Deputy Speaker, if I am not mistaken, that is how the Address was worded which we passed only last Tuesday night. Every now and again when an Address is introduced by a Government member and is so worded, no exception is taken; but when an Address is introduced, particularly one which is so vital to the needs of the more suffering people of this community and they are looking for some grounds on which to oppose it, they refer to that most stupid argument that in these days there is a Cabinet Government and, before that, Ministerial status, and that Addresses should not be from the House of Assembly to His Excellency the Governor. That is the only way that an Address may up to now be correctly started and captioned because up to now the Rules of this Chamber have not been altered. Unless and until the Rules are altered, then and only then will it be correct if they are so altered that Addresses are to be to the Ministers and not to the Governor; then and then only will it be correct to head the Address "The House of Assembly to the Minister in charge" as distinct from His Excellency the Governor. We are working on the same Rules on which we have been working for the past ever so many years. You know, Sir, that a Committee is considering and has been considering up to the present time certain alterations, and we will have to sanction the alterations by the Committee in this House before the Rules of the House can be altered, and

until that happens these Addresses are in order, otherwise other Speakers in the past would have objected - and we have had in the past even more illustrious Speakers than we have had in the present. We can go back to Sir Harold Austin and Sir Frederick Clarke who knew their onions, and the Rules are the same as they were then and that is how the Addresses were worded and can only up to now be so worded. What they do not seem to understand is that when an Address is passed to the Governor, and I presume this Address will pass because I really do not see people in a Socialist Government rejecting an Address of this kind - it is his duty to pass it on to the proper quarters. He is the pipe that works from the Legislature to the responsible Ministers. That is the procedure and he has the power to summon a meeting of the Executive Committee; the Act remains unchanged so far as that is concerned, so that when a matter is presented to him, it is for him to summon a meeting of the Committee to put it before them and let them do what they like with it.

Mr. Speaker took the chair.

The blame can no longer be put on the officials, but rests fairly and squarely on the elected members of this Chamber who constitute the Cabinet.
4.55 p.m.

Now, Sir, as to the merits of the actual Address it does not seem to me to call for any special support because it speaks for itself and it can be supported by the most conservative member, the greatest reactionary, the greatest Tory on this side of the Table or any hon. member either facing me or on this side of the Chamber.

Now, as to the financing of it, I understand that an Hon. Minister has said that it would be impossible to raise the money. Surely of all people, one would expect that Hon. Minister to be aware of the position of the Colony's finances and would not have forgotten that in the Barbados Estimates for 1958-59 the estimated balance of current revenue over current expenditure was put at \$551,788; in other words, that is over half million dollars. This increase will only cost us just under a quarter million dollars - about \$208,000 to relieve the sufferings of these very, very poor people and these people who are living in subhuman conditions. That amount is less than half of the estimated excess over current expenditure; so I am sure that we can come to the rescue of these poor people. Apart from that, as you know, and as everyone in this House should know, even hon. members on that side of the Table - I pay them that compliment - we have on interest \$2 million. Do you seriously suggest that with all that, the money cannot be found to relieve these people from their terrible plight? Do you mean to say that you cannot find \$208,000 to come to the rescue of these people? At least for the last twelve years I have tried to impress this House by Addresses - and I have had the support of my colleagues who joined me - that the age limit should be reduced for these people. The maximum age to which persons in the employ of the Government are allowed to work is 65 years, and yet you are asking these poor people to wait until they get to 68 years before they qualify for pension. Surely, a Labour Government has been too long in power for this state of affairs to go on. Anyhow, Sir, I trust that there will be a change. We hope at least that this House will as from next week possibly have a labour outlook. I have great pleasure in supporting this Address of my hon. colleague and with the amendments proposed by the hon. senior member for the City, which were accepted by my hon. colleague. It will be interesting to see if any hon. member would really say in his heart that he cannot justify himself for voting for this Address. I cannot see any hon. member voting against this Address except he feels he can go out on the byways and hedges and tell the people of this colony that he did not vote against it because he has some control over the Government Printer and the remarks of how he voted did not appear in the *Official Gazette*, as has already taken place in this Chamber. Sir, as I have said, this Address does not need any speech making because it speaks for itself. There is nothing in this Address for any reasonable person to have any possible or rational objection.

Hon. M. E. COX: Mr. Deputy Speaker, most of the hon. members on the opposite side have said that members on this side cannot vote against this Address. Of course, they know that what they have said is immaterial to me because on the last occasion when a similar debate took place in this House, and it more or less coincided with the General Elections, that our attitude was the same as it is today, and although we voted against that Address we came back in here with a larger majority to run in this country. I am sure that I am voicing the feelings of hon. members of my Party when I say that we are all sympathetic towards the plight of the Old Age Pensioners, and not only the Old Age Pensioners but the working class people of Barbados as a whole. As a matter of fact, it is on that feeling that we have built our foundation, and it is on that that we stand and stand firmly, despite the slander, hatred and things of that sort against us.

Listening to the Hon. Leader of the Opposition when he dealt with the constitutional side of the matter, I agreed with every word he said. Surely we can pass the Address and send it to the Governor but what happens after that? If he follows the constitutional advancement which was in force since 1946, he will know that the Governor cannot tell any member of the Executive to take this or that Item to the House of Assembly and have it passed. The Governor is powerless where that is concerned. Since 1946 we have had further constitutional developments. We have developed to Ministerial system and now Cabinet Government. To pass an Address like that is a waste of time today. While I agree that the Rules of this House say that you can pass Addresses to send to His Excellency the Governor, what is the earthly good of coming in the House today with our constitutional set up and pass an Address like this, except you are just doing it to air your views? You come in here and propagandise; you talk about this and that and, of course, it is a good means if you pass an Address like this to tell the electorate that you were instrumental in passing such an Address. When they hear that you passed such an Address or that we of the Government voted against its passing, it will serve as a means of propaganda. There are at least two bye-elections around the corner and hon. members on the opposite side are doing this in the hope that it will get for them the two seats.
5.05 p.m.

The position is this: as I have already pointed out the practical way of handling a situation like this is to come into the House with a question addressed to the Minister concerned, get a reply and then a debate takes place. That is the practical end of it. I will tell you something. Up to now, there are some hon. members - and the hon. senior member for the City has struck a good note. We have not changed any Rules, but the practise or the convention has been changed. We did not have a Ministerial or Cabinet System when these Rules were written. You have accepted the change, and therefore, you should accept the consequences of that change.

Mr. CRAWFORD: On a point of order. I should like to enquire this from the Hon. Minister; if the hon. senior member for St. Lucy had his Address presented to the Minister of Social Services, am I to understand that they would vote for it?

Hon. M. E. COX: That is an interruption; that is not a point of order. The position where some hon. members of the Opposition are concerned is that they have never really appreciated the existence of the Ministerial Government. Some hon. members still feel as they felt in the old colonial days when the Governor or Colonial Secretary, as the case may be, ruled the Island. At that time the Governor received the Address and put it before the Governor-in-Executive Committee; but nowadays, the Ministers hold meetings whenever they like without any let or hindrance. Those hon. members over there are suggesting that the Governor must summon the Cabinet and tell them that Mr. So-and-So has presented an Address, and it has to be considered. All we are saying is this: instead of having an Address dealing with something which concerns a Minister, you should table a question.

The hon. senior member for St. George has said that the Government has numbers in here and we can do anything. The hon. senior member for St. Peter has tabled a motion in this House in respect of this very report of Professor Richardson to have it debated. Nobody stopped him and the Speaker cannot prevent anybody from debating a question. (Mr. DOWDING: Numbers can stop him.) What is the use of having numbers and not using them? The hon. senior member for St. George was really saying this: "You have your numbers and whenever we get up and try to score something, you will not give us the opportunity of doing so." After all, we would not deserve to be representing the people if we were so silly as to sit down here at any time and allow those hon. members over there to put forward a motion and have it carried, which would be a matter of censure against the Government. The position is clear; any member at any time can raise any matter; he can raise any matter on a motion for the adjournment and the Rule says that that takes precedence over any other motion. An hon. member can come in here this morning, move the adjournment of the House and speak for the whole day.

Mr. MOTTLEY: On a point of Order. Is that correct, Sir?

Mr. SPEAKER: That is not so. (Laughter.)

Hon. M. E. COX: I am not bandying any words with the Speaker, but I should like to say that, according to the Rules of the House, the motion for adjournment takes precedence over any other motion. If the Speaker chooses to allow any hon. member to move the adjournment of the House and speak all day, that hon. member can do so.

The hon. senior member for St. George has said that in the old days there was Question Time. That Question Time was fixed because hon. members used to start off by debating the reply to a question and the Government had no opportunity of doing any work. I remember well - I was not a member of the House then, but I was following things so that when I became a member of the House I would be familiar with them. A Committee was appointed to go into this matter. I think the hon. senior member for St. Philip was the offender who caused the then Speaker of the House to appoint a Committee which recommended that no longer would an hon. member have the opportunity of starting off to debate a reply to any question, but that the Government would do its business first and then from 2.45 p.m. until 3.30 p.m. the opportunity would be afforded for the discussion of replies to questions.
5.15 p.m.

Since then, Sir, that Rule has been changed. The House used to meet at 12 o'clock at that time, but since we started with Party Government, we changed the hour from 12 o'clock until 3 o'clock in the afternoon, and therefore the question of answering questions or making replies does not exist under the old Rule, because as I said, the House no longer meets at 12 o'clock. I am sure that we have absolutely no objection to listening to any debate at any time from the Opposition. We do not want to muzzle the Opposition, but sometimes the Opposition is unreasonably unkind to the Government and sometimes pin us down to long hours of filibustering. As you know it has happened on many occasions in here.

Mr. CRAWFORD: On a point of order, ...

Mr. SPEAKER: On what point have you risen?

Mr. CRAWFORD: I am objecting to the statement that the Opposition filibusters for long hours.

Mr. SPEAKER: There is no rule by which you can object to a thing unless you have the right to speak.

Mr. CRAWFORD: On a point of order. I have risen to say that the statement is not true, and that he cannot quote a single instance in which we filibustered.

Hon. M. E. COX: Now Sir, I can remind the hon. member that we had at least two or three marathon meetings here. The hon. senior member for St. Lucy and then hon. junior member for St. George took us through a night until 6.30 in the morning, filibustering in a most silly and undemocratic way, because it meant that they were in the minority but were not prepared to allow the majority to pass the Laws which they wanted to pass. I have said over and over again that I appreciate the attitude of the Leader of the Opposition; he puts his point and after doing that he leaves it to the vote of the House. He has been doing that for the longest time; we cannot say one word against him. He has been trained; but some other members, I am afraid, come in here and pin us down on some trivial matters, sometimes watching and making a lot of gesticulations to the Gallery, begging for votes. (Mr. MOTTLEY: That is a leaf out of your own book) That is why it is sometimes difficult for the Government to give way and allow the Opposition to pass something. The hon. junior member for St. Andrew in his haste of course he is a young member and has a lot to learn as far as the procedure and what has been done in this House are concerned - started off by saying that we did not implement one of the recommendations which were made in the Richardsor Report....

Mr. F. G. SMITH: Mr. Speaker, I qualified it and said except for the increase from \$1.20 to \$1.80.

Hon. M. E. COX: That is exactly what the people want, money. Professor Richardson recommended that an immediate 50% increase be paid to the Old Age Pensioners. That is what Government did. In the Estimates for 1956-57 the amount was \$513,178 but the Government pushed it up to \$817,888. The increase was over \$1/4 million, but the hon. member got up and said that the Government has not implemented any of the recommendations which Professor Richardson made.

Mr. F. G. SMITH: I am objecting to being misquoted by you. I particularly read out the paragraph where Professor Richardson said that by 1958 the pension should be doubled.

Hon. M. E. COX: The year 1958 has not yet passed. Professor Richardson went further to state: "if the economy of the island could stand it". I am not prepared to say at this stage whether or not the financial resources of the island can stand these increases. As a matter of fact I have not got any figures to show that; but hon. members will remember, Sir, that in our Memorandum for the 1958/59 Estimates we budgeted for a Revenue of \$21 million and that was based on a sugar crop of 195 thousand tons. Now everybody reads and sees that largely due to the drought and the fires which we are getting this year's tonnage is going to be considerably reduced. Now the same Budget that gave you \$21 million gave you a surplus of \$1/2 million; you are not going to get that surplus of \$1/2 million now because the 1958 Budget which was based on an average crop of 195 tons of sugar will be reduced now since....

Mr. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order ...

Hon. M. E. COX: What is he interrupting me on?

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member has risen on a point of order; will you please sit?

Mr. CRAWFORD: The Hon. Minister said that the Budget was based on an average crop of 195 tons of sugar; that is not true.

Hon. M. E. COX: He has to get up and tell me a little more. Anyhow, Mr. Speaker, we budgeted for a surplus of \$1/2 million; that is not going to be so now. Of course, everyone who wants to take his Parliamentary duty seriously will know that even though at the end of a financial year you will have a surplus of \$X, throughout the year you get a number of Supplementaries coming to the House of Assembly amounting to millions of dollars which are advanced from the surplus. The \$150,000 that we have sent down to the House for pensioners is

coming out of that surplus. No provision was made in the Estimates for that, but in order to advance that money to pay it to the people, you have to take it from the surplus. Other Supplementary Resolutions which come down here for Capital work pending the raising of a loan have to come from that surplus. It is all well and good to get up on the floor of the House and say that Government has all this money, as the hon. junior member for St. Andrew has said. If he had read the Five Year Plan carefully, he would have seen that every cent of that money is committed in it. Therefore when you have to deal with matters such as this and the ones suggested, it means that you may, if there is an increase, have to leave out the construction of a school, maybe a few houses or something like that to meet these requirements.
5.25 p.m.

That is a statement of fact and I challenge anyone to deny that. Now, Sir, I have heard an hon. member say sotto voce we can reduce the salaries of the members of this House. The hon. member who have said that no doubt is a millionaire; so he can suggest that. As a matter of fact, he can suggest that no salary should be paid to members at all. I want to tell them that I am glad for mine and I hope I would be able to prove worthy to draw mine. I am working for the people and I am proud that the people are paying me.

Mr. MOTTLEY: Sir, the Hon. Minister has expressed such great pride over the fact that he is working for the people that I want to ask him: whom are we working for? We must be working for crapaunts. What we are saying is that if necessary, reduce our salaries.

Hon. M. E. COX: The hon. member also raised the question of reducing the travelling allowance of the Ministers for this purpose. I am sure he should be the last person to raise it because he pays substantial travelling allowances to people who need not travel. (Mr. MOTTLEY: You are making fun.) That is not fun and you know that too. We have already justified that because it has been carried to the people in the campaign for the Federal Elections; we explained it to them and they voted for us. Therefore, do not think that your telling the people that this person is getting more than that other person can cause any upset over here. I say again that proportionately, the hon. member pays considerably more to his employees for travelling than any Minister gets.

Mr. MOTTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. Whom does the hon. senior member for St. Michael mean?

Hon. M. E. COX: I mean the hon. senior member for the City.

Mr. MOTTLEY: I object to that.

Hon. M. E. COX: He is in charge of the Vestry of St. Michael.

Mr. MOTTLEY: Do you mean that I employ the people there? I do not know what he means.

Hon. M. E. COX: I am going to quote one single instance. We know that Vestry employees are getting more than Ministers are getting for travelling and they are doing less travelling than what a Minister has to do.

Mr. MOTTLEY: Are you comparing your travelling with that which Mr. Merritt has to do?

Hon. M. E. COX: I am comparing it with that which Mr. Ashby has to do.

Mr. MOTTLEY: He has to buy goods every day.

Hon. M. E. COX: Yes; he can do much of it over the telephone. I am saying that so far as this Address is concerned, I am afraid that we on this side of the Table have to treat it as we have treated the other Addresses

which should be the concern of Ministers. This Address is different from the last which we passed in here dealing with the unrest in the Bahamas. This Address which the hon. member has just moved is an Address which should be addressed to the appropriate Minister in charge, the Minister of Social Services, by way of a question, and then there could be a debate on the reply given. We on this side of the Table cannot support this Address but I repeat that in so far as the views expressed by hon. members who have spoken on the question, we are in sympathy as regards the plight of those old people.

I think the hon. members who read Professor Richardson's report will remember that he specifically stated that the reason for the plight of these people was because of the fact that these old people were paid very low wages when they were able to work, and that is no fault of this Government. The hon. senior member for St. George said that they worked so hard that when they finished, they only had a few months to live. I was glad to hear him say that he gave them pension; but if they work so hard that they only had a few months to live after they finished working, then he will only have to give them very little pension. They get up in the House of Assembly and talk about these poor starving people, when they, the wealthy people contributed to it. When we got up in here and said that we are going to raise the Company's tax to provide money for these social services we got howls and strong opposition from hon. members on that side. I remember in either 1947 or 1948 when we were raising the Company's tax by 2%, we did not have a majority in the House and we were defeated; but soon after the 1948 election when we got a majority of twelve we were able to pass it. But we had strong opposition and even by some hon. members of this Chamber now who kept a lot of noise then. (A VOICE: Name them.) They opposed the Bill strongly.

I say again that when you bring in the rate of income tax Bill, they said that you were raising income tax too high and when you do anything to help to carry out these social services, you get strong opposition from wealthy people and hon. members over on that side of the Table; but now they are the first to come and shout loudly "Oh these poor people." They did not know that those people were poor when they voted against money which was needed to help these people. Let me say this. We are prepared for you when the Hon. Premier goes away. Say whatever you like, if you think you are running any horse and cart through this Party, you are sadly mistaken. You are now going to get something for your money.

Mr. MOTTLEY: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I hear the Hon. Minister say something with regard to the absence of the Hon. Premier. Am I to understand that the whole set-up would be changed and that there would be no more Premier?

Hon. M. E. COX: They say every now and then that when the big man has gone, they are going to take advantage of us. Let me tell them that they have their work cut out.
5.35 p.m.

It is not that the big man is going away and they are going to take advantage of the small boys. That is not true; you will have your work cut out. There will be blows to be taken and in super abundance to be given. (Laughter). I apologise to the House for speaking at such length, but I think we can all say that we are sympathetic with this Address, or rather we are sympathetic with the sentiments expressed in the Address, and I will promise hon. members, although we are not going to agree to the passing of this Address, that I will take the matter to the Cabinet. I will take the sentiments expressed on this Address to the Cabinet, and I am sure that the Cabinet, being a Socialist Cabinet elected by the labouring classes of this island, will give favourable consideration to the matter.

The question that this Address as amended do now pass, was put and resolved in the negative, the House dividing as follows:-

AYES: Messrs. TUDOR, MOTTLEY, F. G. SMITH, CRAWFORD, BRANCKER - 5.

NOES: Mr. L. E. SMITH, Hon. M. E. COX, Hon. D. D. GARNER, Hon. R. G. MAPP, Messrs. HOLDER, THORNE, BRYAN, T. W. MILLER and SEALERS - 9.

ORDER POSTPONED

Mr. SPEAKER: The next Order of the Day under this Head, also stands in the name of the hon. senior member for St. Lucy:- To move the passing of an Address to His Excellency the Governor relative to dissatisfaction among Government pensioners.

Mr. TUDOR: Mr. Speaker, I do not intend to deal with that Order now.

ORDER WITHDRAWN

Mr. SPEAKER: The next Order of the Day also stands in the name of the hon. senior member for St. Lucy:- To move the passing of an Address to His Excellency the Governor relative to the placing of the Rediffusion Service at the disposal of Political Parties and Candidates for the duration of Current Federal Election Campaign.

Mr. TUDOR: Mr. Speaker, I understand that the Federal Elections are now over, and there is therefore no necessity for worrying with this order. I ask leave to withdraw it from the Order Paper.

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

THE ADJOURNMENT

Hon. M. E. COX: Mr. Speaker, we would like to come back here tomorrow at 3 o'clock p.m., in order to accept the resignations of the two hon. members, the Hon. Premier, and the hon. junior member for St. John. The law says that at a subsequent meeting we have to agree to accept the resignations which have been tendered.

I therefore beg to move that this House do now adjourn until 3.30 o'clock p.m., tomorrow, Friday, 11th April. That hour should suit the Hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Hon. D. D. GARNER: I beg to second that.

Mr. MOTTLEY: The hon. member has said that that hour should suit the Hon. Leader of the Opposition; why did he not say that it would suit the Opposition? Anyhow, I should like to know why he wants us to come back here tomorrow.

Mr. SPEAKER: The procedure is this: letters of resignation were received today from the Premier and the hon. junior member for St. John, and the Law says that after these letters of resignation have been received, they must be passed on to the Clerk to be placed on the Order Paper at the subsequent meeting of the House. I understand that those two hon. members have to take away their clearance papers with them, so to speak.

Mr. MOTTLEY: If that is the Procedure, I accept it from you. The next meeting should be on Tuesday.

Mr. SPEAKER: I understand the Premier is leaving the Island on Saturday.

Mr. CRAWFORD: You cannot expect twenty-three hon. members to regulate their business in order to suit the convenience of one hon. member.
5.45 p.m.

If tomorrow, Sir, we had to come here for some pressing Government business, it would be all right; but since the Government knows so much they should have known before today what is the Law as regard the resignation of members of the House. In other words,

Mr. Speaker, the letters brought in today could have been brought in last Tuesday; if they did not study what they were doing, they should not expect us to penalise our duties for them. I am not in agreement at all with coming tomorrow, because in spite of their knowing everything, they know nothing. The Law is as plain as a pikestaff for anybody to see and I understand that it took the Clerk to point out to them what is the right procedure. If it were important public business I would come tomorrow, but I am not coming here to cover the mistakes of anybody.

I beg to move that as an amendment this House do now adjourn until Tuesday, April 15th at 3.00 p.m.

Mr. MOTTLEY: With Your Honour's permission, has the Leader of the House intimated to you that he would be doing nothing else?

Mr. SPEAKER: He said so.

Mr. MOTTLEY: Therefore you are not permitting anything else. I see no point in worrying about that.

Mr. BRANCKER: I beg to second the amendment of the hon. senior member for St. Philip.

Sir, I deprecate the way that we are treated in this Chamber, as children. I am not criticising the Hon. Leader of the House in any way because I gather that he is acting as he has been requested to act and out of Party loyalty; but, Sir, these resignations should have been handed in on Tuesday and there is no reason why with the whole of next week this House should meet before next Tuesday. There is no reason why we should meet on Friday just to suit the convenience or to satisfy the egotism of a particular individual, because next Tuesday would be good enough time for these resignations to be accepted; if they have to carry them to the opening of the Federal Legislature, I suggest it is a matter for the

Premier if he were so unmindful of that that he failed to hand in the resignation on Tuesday. That is not good enough for the House. We have been made to come here three times this week, Tuesday which is regular, today to receive the resignations which should have been handed in last Tuesday, and one really wondered whether they were really resigning. Anyhow we are to come again tomorrow just to suit these individuals' convenience when the matter could be dealt with at an ordinary meeting on Tuesday.

If the hon. member would assure us that the Executive Committee would meet tomorrow morning and increase Old Age Pensions, we would come out tomorrow, but not for the purpose of this. We must stop ourselves being treated like children.

Consequently I support the amendment made by the hon. senior member for St. Philip.

Mr. SPEAKER: I will put the amendment first.

The question that the House do now adjourn until Tuesday 15th April at 3 o'clock p.m. was put and resolved in the negative the House dividing as follows:

NOES: Mr. L. E. SMITH; Hon. M. E. COX; Hon. D. D. GARNER; Hon. R. G. MAPP; Mr. HOLDER; Mr. THORNE; Mr. BRYAN; Mr. T. W. MILLER; Mr. SEARLES and Mr. MOTTLEY - 10.

AYES: Mr. TUDOR; Mr. F. G. SMITH; Mr. CRAWFORD and Mr. BRANCKER - 4.

The question that the House do now adjourn until tomorrow Friday, 11th April at 3.30 p.m. was put and resolved in the affirmative without division, and Mr. SPEAKER adjourned the House accordingly.

6.00 p.m.