

THE House of Assembly Debates

(OFFICIAL REPORT)

SECOND SESSION 1961 - 66

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(OFFICIAL REPORT) SECOND SESSION OF 1961-66 HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, 31st August, 1965.

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

PRESENT

His Honour J. E. T. BRANCKER, Q.C., (Speaker); Hon. W. A. CRAWFORDi (Minister of Development, Trade, Labour and Social Security); Mr. L. E. SMITH, J.P.; Hon. C. E. TALMA, (Minister of Communications and Works); Hon. J. C. TUDOR, M.A., (Minister of Education); Hon. G. G. FERGUSSON, (Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries); Mr. R. StC. WEEKES, J.P., Mr. W. R. LOWE; Mr. G. V. BATSON. (Chairman of Committees); Mr. N. W. BOXILL and Hon. A. DaC. EDWARDS, (Minister of Health, Housing, Local Government and Community Development).

Prayers were read.

Mr. HOLDER and Mr. HUSBANDS entered the House and took their seats.

MINUTES

Mr. SPEAKER:

I have the honour to inform the House that the Minutes of the meeting of the 17th and 24th instant have been duly circulated and unless there be any objection, these Minutes will be confirmed. (A PAUSE).

There being no objection, I declare the Minutes for the 17th and 24th August, each to be duly confirmed.

PAPERS LAID

Hon. W. A. CRAWFORD:

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Hon. Premier, I am commanded to lay the following-

Statement of sums of money paid over to the Accountant General by the Commissioner of Police during the Quarter ended 31st December, 1964.

GOVERNMENT NOTICES The following notices were given:

-Hon. W. A. CRAWFORD On behalf of the Hon. Premier

Resolution to place the sum of \$52,085 at the disposal of the Government to supplement the Estimates 1965-66 Part I Current as shown in the Supplementary Estimate 1965-66, No. 17 which forms the Schedule to the Resolution.

Hon. A. Da C. EDWARDS:

Resolution to place the sum of \$4,000 at the disposal of the Government to supplement the Estimates 1965-66 Part I Current as shown in the Supplementary Estimate 1965-66 No. 16 which forms the Schedule to the Resolution.

Sir, I beg leave of this House to deal with this Resolution in all of its stages today. Copies are available to hon. members.

Hon. W. A. CRAWFORD:

On behalf of the Hon. Premier

A Bill to amend the Supreme Court of Judicature Act. 1956.

A Bill to amend the Judicial and Legal Service Commissions Act, 1961.

A Bill to make provision for withdrawing the jurisdiction of the civil courts of the Island to try members of Her Majesty's forces or of a civilian component of those forces for offences against the law of the Island committed whilst on duty and for certain offences committed whilst off duty.

ORAL REPLY

Hon. A. Da C. EDWARDS:

Mr. Speaker, I beg to give notice that Oral Reply to Parliamentary Question No. 56/ 1964, asked by the hon. senior member for St. Thomas, is now ready.

Hon. W. A. CRAWFORD:

Mr. Speaker, I beg to give notice of my intention to move the House into Committee of Supply at its next meeting to deal with one of the money Resolution which was given notice of today. The other one will be dealt with today.

Mr. GODDARD entered the House and took his seat. STANDING ORDERS SUSPENDED

Hon. W. A. CRAWFORD:

Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that Standing Orders Nos. 5, 14, 16, 18, 40 and 45 be suspended for the remainder of today's sitting.

Hon. C E. TALMA:

I beg to second that.

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

QUESTION Mr. BATSON:

To enquire of the appropriate Minister

Will Government consider making Broad Street a two-way street to vehicular traffic between the hours of 6 p.m.

and 6 a.m. every day in order to reduce to a minimum the chance of accidents occurring on the Wharf Road between the said hours?

BILLS READ A FIRST TIME

On motion of Hon. W. A. CRAWFORD, seconded by Hon. C. E. TALMA, a Bill to amend the Supreme Court of Judicature Act, 1956, was read a first time.

On motion of Hon. W. A. CRAWFORD, seconded by Hon. C. E. TALMA, a Bill to amend the Judicial and Legal Service Commission Act, 1961, was read a first time.

On motion of Hon. W. A. CRAWFORD, seconded by Hon. C. E. TALMA a Bill to make provision for with' drawing the jurisdiction of the civil courts of the Island to try members of Her Majesty's forces or of a civilian component of those forces for offences against the law of the Island committed whilst on duty and for certain offences committed whilst off duty, was read a first time.

12.25 p.m.

QUESTION TIME

Hon. W. A. CRAWFORD:

Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that Question Time be now taken.

Hon. C. E. TALMA:

I beg to second that.

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

Mr. SPEAKER:

It is now Question time. I am advised that the Oral Reply to Parliamentary Question No.56/1964, standing In the name of the hon. senior member for St. Thomas, is ready, and, in fact, has been laid.

ABSENCE OF PUBLIC TOILETS AND BATHS IN SHOP HILL - POREY SPRING AREAS

Mr. B ATSON:

Mr. Speaker, to enquire of the Appropriate Minister-

Is Government aware of the embarrassment that the residents in the areas of Shop Hill and Porey Spring in the Parish of St. Thomas are subjected to by not having Public toilets and baths erected in the said areas?

Will Government make provisions for facilitating the people in the areas complained of, by erecting toilets and baths in the above mentioned areas?

Hon. A. DaC. EDWARDS:

Mr. Spaker, the Reply to the hon. member's Question is as follows

"Government is considering the erection of public toilets and baths in places where the need for such facilities is evident. The sum of \$225,000 has been included in the Development Plan 1965-68 for the construction of 36 units over the plan period.

In this context additional sites are under consideration and the needs of the places mentioned will be examined.

Mr. SPEAKER:

There are no other Replies to Questions ready and that Reply therefore concluded this matter of Replies to Questions.

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

Hon. W. A. CRAWFORD:

Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that Government Business be now taken.

Hon. C. E. TALMA:

I beg to second that.

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

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

Mr. SPEAKER:

It is now time for Government Business. The first Order of the Day under that Head stands in the name of the hon. senior member for St. Philip- To move the House into Committee of Supply to consider the grant of sums of money for the service of the island.

Hon. W. A. CRAWFORD:

Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that Your Honour do now leave the Chair and the House go into Committee of Supply, and that it be an instruction of the House while in Committee to deal with the Resolution for \$4,000 of which notice was given earlier today and copies of which have been circulated to hon. members.

Hon. C. E. TALMA:

I beg to second that.

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

Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair and the House went into Committee of Supply, Mr. BATSON in the Chair.

Mr. F. L. WALCOTT came into the Committee and took his seat.

SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATE 1965-66 No. 15

MINISTRY OF FINANCE Resolution for the sum of \$10,650 was called.

Hon. W. A. CRAWFORD:

Mr. Chairman, this Resolution is a Resolution for the sum of \$10,650 under two Heads of the Estimates. The first Head is Head 9 - Ministry of Finance - and there is Item 23 - a new Item - Research. In connection with this Item, hon. members will see from the Note that the sum of \$10,000 is required to carry out a survey, or part of it is for the purpose of carrying out a survey, into certain aspects of the structure of the Distribution System and Mark Ups in this Island. It is estimated that this survey will cost \$2,500. As hon. members are aware, the Government has been, for some time, concerned about the question of the cost of living in this island and it has taken steps to see what can be done about it. Any investigation into this matter must necessarily concern itself with an investigation not only into the profit margins allowed to the mercantile community of this Island, but also with the manner in which goods brought into the Island are distributed before they reach the hands of the consumer. Barbados is possibly unique in that there are more levels of distribution involved here than in most parts of the world.

You will see, Mr. Chairman, that the idea is that we will bring in an expert for carrying out a proper survey into the aspects of the existing distribution system. We have already had a preliminary report on the structure of the distribution system as well as on the Mark Ups, but this preliminary report disclosed the fact that a further investigation into the distribution system was imperative. We are hoping to get the services of a very distinguished economist from one of the Major Universities in Great Britain to carry out this further survey; as a matter of fact, he should have been here in August, and we have asked someone who is in England now to ascertain from him exactly what time he will be able to come here. If

he knows, he will recommend someone of a similar calibre for the purpose of carrying out this additional survey. 12.35 p.m.

Presumably, Sir, by this and the end of September, if the survey has not been commenced, at least we will know

who is coming to do it, and it will be commenced soon after that. This survey is not expected to cost the entire \$10,000 asked for in this Resolution. We estimate it will cost in the vicinity of £500, a quarter of this amount, but we have found that it has been necessary from time to time in an adhoc manner to ask for supplementary votes for in-vestigational work of this kind, and therefore the decision has been rather than coming to the Legislature on this adhoc basis from time to time, to include, as we are doing now, a sum of \$10,000 under Head 9 - Ministry of Finance, as a new item exclusively to be used for research of one form or another. In this case it is research occasioned by the necessity to Inquire into the cost of living and to discover what steps might be taken, if any can be taken, to reduce this cost of living. Hon. members will, I am sure, readily agree that this matter is of considerable import to the community, and while it is true the Government has at its disposal a certain amount of the information required, it will also be generally conceded that an inquiry of this sort involves much more than merely considering import costs and the distribution costs which are more or less generally known.

This, Sir, is one aspect of the problems of the community today in which the experience and knowledge of experts are necessary in order for the most accurate decision to be arrived at, and I am sure that hon. members will readily give their support to this Resolution in order that the services of the person in question might be made available to the Government to assist in the exercise now underway.

I beg to move that Head 9 - Ministry of Finance - stand part.

Hon. G. G. FERGUSON:

I beg to second that.

Mr. GODDARD:

Mr. Chairman, this is a very big question and we support it entirely. Very useful information can be got from a survey. The mark up in this Island has been very great in the last 15 years; there has been a change from the pattern of Roebuck Street Shopkeepers; there is a system of distribution by way of vans to shops and also to markets of different types, there are more commission agents than ever, and we are forever seeing new agencies opening up both from outside and within. The only thing I would ask the Minister to do when this expert comes is to make sure that he sees the Chamber of Commerce and has interviews with different sections of the mercantile community. Do not let him go around and get just an official opinion and go back in office and write a Report. If he is an economist of any standing, he should seek out those people who come daily into contact with this, from the shopkeeper to the direct importer. I know that Government will have their point of view; the Marketing Board, which is semi-Government should be able to contribute something, because in the year and eighteen months that they have been established. I am sure that they have found that the mark up is not what it was when they first opened up.

I welcome this because any information of this kind will be valuable both for Government and the public to see in true perspective what it should be. I welcome this Resolution, and I only repeat that this

expert should be told or asked to interview the Chamber of Commerce, the direct importers, the Commission Merchants and the retailers so that a more valuable Report will be presented to Government.

Mr. WALCOTT:

Mr. Chairman, my view on this is that this is an extremely important Resolution, because it deals with a very challenging subject. I will approach it even a little differently from the Introducer and the hon. junior member for Christ Church. This Resolution states that it is proposed to carry out a survey into certain aspects of the structure of the Distribution System and Mark Ups. I did not hear all that the Minister had to say on what is meant by the distribution system. I would prefer to say, not certain aspects of the structure of the distribution system as it relates to retail prices, not as it relates to mark ups, because the distribution system and the mark ups will

be inter-related. But what it is important to know is the economic system of this Island, and I am going to say some things now that are not going to be very pleasing to everybody's ear. All Governments of Barbados unfortunately have been living with a system which either they do not understand though they criticise it, or have no means of fully dealing with it. The Hon. Minister spoke about the cost of living. What do you mean by the cost of living? Are you talking in terms of this cheap chat that you hear ignorant people talking about in relation to the cost of living when they do not know what they are relating to? The cost of living is reflected in many factors of people's lives, and is bound to be different today from what it was twenty-five years ago; so when someone comes along and tells you that the cost of living has gone up, what does he mean? Does he mean that wages should be the same as they were twenty-five years ago, and that the cost of living should be the same as it was, twenty-five years ago, or does he mean in relation to those things that there are not enough savings from what an individual has to spend on some of the essentials of life, and therefore his reserves and savings are worse off today than they were some years ago?

Now my view of it is that as long as the economics of the distribution system remain in the hands of a few people in Barbados, the economics of the country will not be motivated by the aspirations of the broad masses of people. 12.45 p.m.

This is a small ethnic group where there is no unemployment among them and their only problem is, "Can I live better than my predecessors?" They are not exposed to the poverty that the broad masses face, and you have a twin society in which you have that same ethnic group, as was in the days of slavery, controlling the economics of the country.

The Government through the processes of Adult Suffrage came through and controlled the country, but without any economic control. As a result, part of the thinking of members of the Government is not dissimilar from those who hold the economic power, and therefore, you have these conflicts that people do not want to disturb the economic structure which exists and as a result, we have these spirals and what we regard as the cost of living as what we have here.

Not only should the cost of living, but the Chamber of Commerce should be looked into. A close examination would reflect what I have said earlier. As an example, what is the Chamber of Commerce today? I read some time ago that three big firms in Barbados amalgamated and became part of a triumvirate. They are: Messrs. Wilkinson & Challenor Ltd., Mussons Son & Co. Ltd., and Da Costa &

Co. Ltd. Add the three of them together and that will give you a classic example of the economy of this country and this talk of distribution.

Messrs. Da Costa & Co. Ltd., control sugar factories and sugar plantations; Messrs. Musson, Son & Go. Ltd., controls sugar factories and sugar plantations; Messrs. Wilkinson & Challenor Ltd., also controls sugar factories and sugar plantations. When you add them together and the average acreage of industrial land which they possess, you will find that the country's economic position resides in the hands of an extremely small minority, where a son marries a cousin or a cousin marries a brother-in-law and you find this sort of oligarchy, this family tree, controlling the economic life of the country.

Now, under these circumstances, they are very challenging, but what I find in dealing with the other issues and with the other matter is that you cannot control the cost of living unless you have a searching investigation. Not only should it be in the distribution system but also the mark-ups because they all join together and say what are to be the mark-ups.

The hon. senior member for Christ Church said that the distribution system has changed. The system has changed a

little, but the control remains the same as it was. The big importers of food in this country are the same, that is to say, Messrs. Da Cost & Co. Ltd., Musson, Son & Go. Ltd., and Messrs. Wilkinson & Challenor Ltd., Look at any ship manifest coming to Barbados and you will see the quantity of goods manifested for Messrs. Da Costa & Co. Ltd., Musson, Son & Co. Ltd., and Messrs. Wilkinson & Challenor Ltd. That would give you some indication of what that triumvirate controls.

You will find as regards the distribution system among the Supermarkets that these three firms control the majority in some form or the other. Some people talk of free enterprise. There is no free enterprise in the distribution trade. When you see a building in the course of construction here, it is being erected in somebody else's name. That name is only used as an offset to disguise the real identity. If the person in whose name it is suddenly dies, as Mr., Adlai Stevenson died in London, then the true identity would be revealed. Therefore, in our circumstances, an investigation into the distribution system means that you are having an investigation into the economic structure of our distributive trade.

Island for island or country for country, these three names which I have mentioned hold more control over Barbados than any similar groups which I call easily; even the Krupp Works in Germany and Imperial Chemical Industries in England as well as other big groups. Whatever groups they are in Barbados, nobody can challenge them for coming together. The only challenge is that of the masses of Barbados who are still asleep and are not aware that they will be asleep for a long time with this type of control we have taking place. This group controls the economy of the country and it becomes extremely difficult for any one to penetrate this curtain around this country.

The hon. senior member for Christ Church mentioned the Marketing Board. Fortunately, the Government has made an attempt with the establishment of the Marketing Board, but I am going to say to the Government bluntly that they will never be able to control the cost of living until they have some economic control. I do not mean that you should take over, but I mean that you should make provision so that others can get into the market, and all of these Super-markets, and control in an indirect manner with the three or four big groups which reside in the island.

The hon. junior member for Christ Church is outside of that ring, but he and his family are a ring in themselves. The way in which they have invested their money is one where they have exemplified a very good image of the family concept, and by their being able to compete, they have created a ring themselves. Fortune has smiled on them in such a way that what happened fifty years ago was that the hon. member's family being such a large family, they got a blessing in disguise by the fact that they could venture out in their own family without having to go outside for aid and, therefore, they have become a part of the ring. This is not anything personal. That is why the hon. member's family ring could keep outside of the bigger ring. The hon. member's family group is a safe unit by itself. If you examine that, you will find that that is where the power of distribution resides.

Mr. Chairman, I say this without any narrowness of being opposed on the grounds of colour of a man's skin or even a man's political philosophy. It is purely an economic fact and reality which we have to face that the economic control of the distribution system does not reside in the masses of the people of Barbados, nor in the hands of the Government, but in the hands of a few. 12.55 p.m.

It resides in the hands of a few and I do not even know how the few are thinking. Now those are the ones who control the cost of living; they are responsible for wages and conditions of employment to a large extent because they can create a scarcity of employment and a crisis. Just to give you an example, Sir, each time that we in the Trade Union make a demand for more wages, because the economic control resides with a person, he can create a condition of

scarcity by saying: "If you force me to do this, I will dismiss more people and therefore you have more unemployment". That is the threat in a community where unemployment exists; and it creates fear, not only in the minds of those who are negotiating in such matters, but also through the community as a whole. That is so because the power of creating fear resides in the hands of a few. I do not go in for discussion by the grape vine; we have to watch the economic development in this country* I was asking the question as to why it is that the Natural Gas service is going through to a certain point and it is not going through to another point. This is not with any self-motive; the Natural Gas Service goes to the top of Rendezvous -I am the sort of man where eating does not mean so much because I eat one meal a day. Somebody asks do you know to whom the manager of the place which controls the Natural Gas is married? He is married to someone who is interested in producing Natural Gas. Therefore you get a situation where economic control is in the hands of a few and it will not be too easy to dispossess somebody. If another member of this Chamber wants to speak on this matter, he is more capable of making things more dramatic than I am; but I say that the economic structure or the economic system is what I am concerned about.

I hope that when this matter is examined by the expert, the enquiry will be a very searching one. It is not only that I do not know who the expert is, but it is a question of the sort of outlook which the person would have in relation to matters such as this. On the question of Mark-Ups as such, I doubt very much if you could get an expert who could deal with Mark-Ups only in relation to what a Mark-Up means. The Mark-Up in itself is not any criterion of assessing that the retail prices are fair, because the Mark-Up on an item could be 50%, 60% or 70%. If you went to buy something which nobody buys but once in every 15 years, it does not really matter to anybody what the Mark-Up on that item is; but if you are purchasing things which are selling by the millions, then the Mark-Up on those items is an important matter. Here they have a snobbish way of saying that the Mark-Up is 33 1/3%; but on what? If the

community were to begin to utilise these things - if you have toothpaste and that sort of small items which you are turning over, when you say that the Mark-Up on these items is the same as what you have said the Mark-Up is on something else where the turn-over is different, then the distribution system is to be related to the type of business which you are running. There is no point in a man going in for business if he does not understand the techniques, and what are the types of business which should be carried on. The hon. member spoke about the small shopkeepers; well, let us be frank. The small shopkeeper as such will be a memory in years to come in a place of 166 square miles. If your transport system is an excellent one, then the question about the distribution or the movement of people into areas to purchase what they want to purchase will no longer be a matter of importance, because there is no longer any question of remoteness. In my own constituency, for example, when I went there in the beginning there was a big shop in Indian Ground. That was the shop for that corner of the island in going over that part of the island to St. Andrew. That man is dead; but nobody in his right senses would go there and construct that kind of tiling where, by population or movement of people, they are driven into better housing areas. You will find that the centre of a village especially is no longer what it used to be and people are no longer worried about waiting for tilings to be thrown out for them. This Resolution is a supplementary Resolution and when you speak about accuracy, I will say more about that later on. 1.05 pm.

The distribution system as a distribution system has changed. Women will cease to walk about and hawk fish on their heads and smell in that odorous manner as when we were boys, because the days are ended for that type of thing. You now have mobile transport and you can move quickly, so you can see all the primitive methods that you knew about have changed. I feel this is very challenging.

Mr. Chairman, I support this, and like the hon. junior member for Chirst Church I hope it will be so searching and penetrating that they will invite all aspects.

Before I sit down, I will say this: you should invite not only the Chamber of Commerce and people of business, but the Workers Organization. In modern times these organizations have as much right and interest in these things as any of the other organizations, nor do I feel that we are incompetent, because sometimes we make studies of these things ourselves before Government starts. I must say quite frankly, notwithstanding the interest which the Government has shown in these things, that we must still press on. These are things for the nation, and when they are things for the nation, the workers' representatives and organization feel that they are part of the nation, and therefore, they expect to be represented in equal form as any other sector of the community, I hope that with the interest we have always given to the Statistical Department, when it comes to this survey we will endeavour to the best of our ability, to give the maximum assistance we can, and we look forward with interest to doing this, and I hope that the Minister will come back to us sometime with the Report and let us know what the expert had to say on it, so that we will be able to give it the sort of examination it deserves and have the information for which we are today paying.

Mr. HUSBANDS:

Mr. Chairman, I listened to the outlining and the purpose of this Resolution by the Minister in charge, and though I feel inclined to give this Resolution my assistance, to be quite frank I am not as enamoured of it as I have heard hon. members pronounced themselves to be. To begin with, it says it is proposed to carry out a survey into certain aspects of the structure of the distribution system and markups, I take it that these certain aspects are such aspects as do affect the population very generally. I regret very much

that these certain aspects have not been distinctly mentioned. These certain aspects come to my mind quite readily food, clothing and shelter. I do not propose to go into the economic structure and who controls the economic structure of this Island, because although it is a very interesting exercise and one in which I would be interested, yet as far as it would affect this particular survey, I do not think it matters. It does not matter who controls the economy of this Island as far as this survey is concerned; the thing is to find out if there is justification for the existing markups and if the present existing methods of distribution encourage the constant rise in cost of living. That is factual, vital and fundamental. If you are going to stick to what we would conceive this Resolution to have as its aims and objects - certain aspects of the structure and of the distribution system of markups.

Another point I would raise, Mr. Chairman, is this: undoubtedly certain patterns of distribution of goods in the Island have changed. We may as well be as frank about this as we can. In the rural areas the shopkeeper is going; the agricultural people still live in the same communities on the plantations, and the point is that their pattern of life is such that outside of the crop their earnings are very limited; they exist on a short weekly pay which the shopkeeper cannot bear. We now see the supermarkets are spreading, and it is no secret, as the other member for St. Peter has said, that these supermarkets are in some sort of control by the big merchants. We know also that there are in circulation a great number of vans which go to the rural areas and carry on trade on wheels. In many respects the consumer benefits very greatly when he buys in small quantities. The people in the retail trade in the country are worried; they see unfair competition and they say so; but the consumer benefits. The housewife who looks through her door when a van stops and purchases a few bars of soap, she definitely benefits,

I think, Sir, that this survey is going to reveal a lot if it is done very searchingly, because when a housewife has \$10 to spend, it is to her interest and the interest of her family to spend it as economically as she can. You do not spend money at a shop because you love a shopkeeper; people of limited credit are forced into a sort of trade when they are from hand to mouth. When they have cash, they go and buy where the cheapest can be found, 1.15 p.m.

They cannot be blamed for that. My view is that the only thing which would save the shopkeepers is that they form themselves in a big and powerful bloc. That is the only thing which would save them now. It is obvious that the Supermarkets are here to stay and that is because, according to the trend of trade in Barbados, more money is in circulation during the past 20 years. As a result, we find today these supermarkets have increased in number.

However, Mr. Chairman, as regards what this Resolution proposes to do, I am not as sanguine as the Hon. Minister may think. The Report which this Survey will be issuing to the Government will be dealing with certain facts. Although, I am not condemning this Resolution for \$10,000 of which \$2,500 it to be spend on this Survey because the remainder is going to be left there for further researches from time to time. I do not think this survey is going to reveal anything further, I do not expect much from the markups and the distribution system. I do not know nor see how it can reveal much unless it reveals that there should be more small retailers, I do not see how there can be any change unless that is going to be heard and as a result that the markups would be lessened. That is the only benefit I think is likely to obtain,

Mr, Chairman, I do not think there is anything else to say on this issue unless the Hon. Minister represents in his reply that he would say what has been made known to him of what this matter is all

about. As I have said, I am not very sanguine about the results of what this Resolution provides for. I do not think that this Survey would reveal much, I do not anticipate any big change unless there is going to be some control based on fact,

Mr, SMITH:

Mr, Chairman, according to the note to this item, it is proposed to carry out a survey into certain aspects of the structure of the Distribution System and markups. It is estimated that this Survey will cost \$2,500.

Well, Sir, listening to the Hon. Minister in charge, I would believe that something is wrong with the distribution system and markups, but it does not seem to me that he knows what it is, I too believe that something is wrong with the distribution system because in some cases, as regards some of the commodities, some shopkeepers can get them to sell them as they like while other shopkeepers can get very little of them to sell. I believe that something is wrong; therefore I hope that this survey will be able to tighten up the screws if there are any that are slack.

With regards to the distribution system, I believe it all depends upon the turnover of business because if I were supposed to be an agent and I was selling goods to various people, the particular person who gives me the biggest order, if I have something in short supply I will have to look out for and give him the most of it. If this survey can remedy that sort of thing, then we would not be spending this money in vain; but forasmuch as one particular merchant can buy big and the other can only buy small, the time will come when the small merchants and their customers would want something just as the big merchants can get for their customers, I hope that this survey will be able to right that wrong, 1.25 p.m.

As to the markups, I do not think that we would have been obliged to import such an expert to go into this matter. We were dealing with markups for so long that we should know how to go about such matters ourselves rather than allow a stranger to tell us how to deal with these matters, unless, of course, the Government is thinking that the markups are too high or they are too low. However, Sir, the Hon. Minister has failed to let us know what is wrong with the markups. We know that these markups would be related to the particular items. There are some items which we cannot get fast enough; you cannot expect to put markups on items of that kind in the same way as you would put them on items which do not move too quickly and in respect of which there is the possibility of their getting spoiled. You will have to throw away a good part of such items before you can get rid of them by selling

them. Along those lines, I would put markups on such goods, unless there is something wrong which the Government cannot find out - and I expect that the Government should have their own expert - if that is so, by all means they should get one now.

Mr. Chairman, I believe that there is something more to this Resolution than what the Hon. Minister has explained. It is expected or estimated that this survey will cost the Government \$2,500 and we are now asked to vote \$10,000. That means that there will be a lot more work involved than what the hon. member expected. I do not mind spending this money if we are going to get value for it. As one hon. member has said, the Government should not withhold this Report from us. If this Report is going to be one of 10, 40 or 100 pages, let them give us the whole Report; that is to say, if it is a Report of 100 pages, do not let them give us only 10 pages. If you are going to do that, then you should not ask us to vote this money. Some of us on this side of the House are unhappy over these Reports because after we

have gone so far and spent so much money, we do not get the best results. If we are going to get what is written by the Commissioner or whoever conducts the investigation - if he makes a Report of ten pages and we are going to get only two pages, then we may as well close down our shop and do not spend the taxpayers' money like that. I hope that the Hon. Minister in charge of this Resolution is listening to me because I am expecting him to see to it that when this investigation, enquiry or survey is finished this House will be in receipt of a true and correct copy of it. The Government should not allow what has happened some time ago to happen in this case. There is something wrong somewhere. I am not against this matter of self-service because that would be a question of trying to keep down the cost of living. I know, Mr. Chairman, that you are very busy now writing your book and you will have very little time to listen in to the radio, but at some time you may be able to listen to it. Sir, have you ever heard that somebody has a self-service business and he is able to offer goods at retail prices which are cheaper than the wholesale prices? Something must be wrong there. I still feel that these people are making money. No businessman will sell goods at a loss when he knows there will be a loss. He will sell certain goods at a loss rather than lose everything, that is to say he will dispose of articles which are perishable; but he is not going to draw out nonperishable goods today and let them go at a cheaper rate than that at which he bought them. If he did that today, he would not do it again tomorrow.

I am glad to see that the Government is going into this matter, and I hope that they will not create a bigger hardship than before by going into the matter. If they make the wrong approach, then they will not help those people whom this survey is designed to help. If they make the wrong approach, they will not help the people who know business, and if they make the approach on their own, they will fail because they do not know anything about it. An ordinary Civil Servant would not be able to tell you the pros and cons of this type of business on which they want to tighten up, and you cannot learn it in any black and white or political manner. You must know something about the other way around. Even in relation to the Price Control list, you will notice that where one bag of rice is supposed to weigh 180 lbs you should be able to get 210 or 205 pints; but, in some cases, you may only get 190 pints. That is where you are going into figures and it is not always that your figures will prove to be true. I am warning the Government that they are treading on very dangerous ground if they start this matter in the wrong way. If they start it in the right way and they have the right approach, then that will be all right. Just thinking that a man is living in a big way and is getting rich is not enough for the Government to go on. They must not go on that way of thinking; otherwise they may go and get into trouble. 1.35 p.m.

I do not know what will become of the small trader if such conditions are allowed to go on much longer. The small shopkeeper has to rely on the merchants, and they are always complaining to some of the merchants about the prices at selfservice shops. There are some people who

believe that the shopkeeper can do better. He already owes the shopkeeper money, but he takes his money into town and buys cheap goods. If everyone does that to the shopkeeper and the shopkeeper is already heavily indebted to the merchant, you will have to increase the Public Assistance vote in various parishes. If some of the merchants were being "hit" hard, they would have cried out and said something is wrong. One has to find out where the merchants are getting their goods to sell at such a price, I understand that the majority of these selfservice shops belong to the merchants, and if that is so, you cannot expect anything more to happen. I sincerely hope the Government will find out something, because it is not a good reflection on the business people of this country, whether or not they are making money. It is creating a doubt in the minds of everyone that a person can sell at a retail price cheaper than one can buy at wholesale, and it makes some of the consumers look at their shopkeepers as robbers,

because nobody is going to believe that a person is going to do business at a loss. Nobody is going to buy a case of milk containing 48 tins and sell them to lose forty-eight cents, and there are some people who are offering gifts along with the cheap prices.

As I said in my opening remarks, I am glad that this survey will take place, and I would be glad if goods can be sold more cheaply, because it would keep down the cost of living. If the prices which these people are charging are fair, then we do not have a case; but if any unfair actions are being carried on, I hope they will be remedied. I hope the Minister will carry on as fast as he can and pass on some of these markups to the small trader. If you find that the markup is too much on one side, you will take some from "A" and give it to "B", so that everyone of us will be able to do business in a happier atmosphere,

Mr. YEARWOOD:

Mr. Chairman, I must at this stage commend the Government for what I may call a very happy piece of legislation for the small shopkeepers. When one sets here the distribution system of mark ups, one would realize that the smaller the businessman is, the more pressure he has to undergo, I am very unhappy to have to sell at prices higher than any supermarket, and I believe that if the markups were the same for the small man as it was for the big man, you would be able to get the same prices in the country as operate in the City. It is true that competition has always done much for a country, and I have no grouse to make with those who have set up their supermarkets, because in my opinion it is the small shopkeepers' fault that the people who are selling them goods to sell again are now selling the consumers at the price they are selling the shopkeepers to sell again, thus causing the consumers to believe that the shopkeepers are robbing them. Those of us who could have seen what would happen tried to get the shopkeepers into an Association, but our efforts failed. I still maintain, however, that without the cooperation of the shopkeepers, they are bound to go out of business, because wherever a supermarket is established, the small shopkeepers around must perish. It is a very awkward thing to say that sardines are on a scheduled list, and that the small shopkeeper must buy them at \$13 per case of one hundred, when you get some of the supermarkets advertising the same sardines to be sold at thirteen and fourteen cents a tin. 1.45 p.m.

Something must be wrong, and there are a lot of items which I am sure shopkeepers would like to sell as low as they possibly can, but they are forced to sell them without any profit because of the price which the Supermarkets are charging. I am not at all dissatisfied with the proprietors of the supermarkets because everyone of them is selling for business. But what I am surprised about is that most of these supermarkets are owned by the same merchants who sell their goods to the retailers, and this is an effort to destroy the shopkeepers of this island.

Sir, I am hoping that this distribution system and markups would work out equally. That is what I am hoping. I am hoping that the owners of supermarkets would have to buy at the same price as the small shopkeeper, that is to say, if the shopkeepers have to buy a case of sardines \$13 and \$14 that the supermarkets will have to buy at the same price.

Another thing is this. There are divers of times that you find changes in the prices of goods. A few months ago, we had a scarcity of potatoes in this island and at the same time there were thousands of pounds stored up in bonds just waiting for a higher markup in the price. I am hoping that when these things happen, the Government will take stock of what merchants have in their bonds and when the

increase in price comes along, what they had in store awaiting the increase the price would come right back to the Government. You cannot get certain items, but the merchants have them in store awaiting an increase in price of a penny more, and as soon as the price is increased you can get them. I think it is unfair to the Government when merchants withhold these things. I feel that the Government should take a particular line of action on this in a way where everyone would be able to benefit.

Another thing which I have discovered is that there are certain items which shopkeepers would like to sell, but find that, although they are locally made or produced, the price of the local commodity is very much higher than the price of that which you import. I feel something is wrong with that. I can call the names of certain items of local products which cost more than the foreign products. It is true that we would like the cost of living to be as low as possible and at the same time we would like the local things to be a little more reasonable.

Mr. MOTTLEY:

Mr. Chairman, I noticed that by this Resolution it is proposed to carry out certain surveys in the distribution system and markups. I know that you are very kind and you do give a certain amount of latitude on some occasions. This affects business in this country. It is true that those of us who have been examining the question of supermarkets being established more and more in this country realize that the small shopkeepers are on their way out. This is happening all over the world, and it is only a question of time and each being able to serve each other and so on.

The business of Barbados is run by a group of manufacturers representatives, agents and so on and the small importers who go around and get certain orders and ask people to sell the commodities for them.

They have been able to do that and put a certain amount of money by. Mr. Chairman, I think that you know how it is done. The other system is one where we find that the commission agent is well established and has a name. It is not that at all times one has the collateral security, but in some businesses you have the name and by having that name you can get what you require. There are other sources where people can get goods into this island, and they pay for them immediately as they are landed, and as a result of that, those people in turn make a better profit.

I have always said that people like R. D. N. Maxwell & Sons have lacked the initiative to carry on business in a big way. Sometimes I look around and ask myself, why such people have not been able to make their sons who have had better education than they, and tell them, \"As far as I am concerned, you can have a look around this shop; take a note of the things in it - salmon, salt fish, and so on - sit down, you have more education than I; get some agencies and let us instead of having to take such goods from Mr. So-and-so, import those goods from our agencies and sell for ourselves.

If you watch how things go today, you will see that nobody goes to a shop like in the old days. Another thing is this. If you want a bottle of rum, you do not want it like what obtained in the old days when that bottle of rum had a lot of dust on it. You do not have today that sight of going into a shop and seeing cockroaches running all about the place? It is a question today of the improvement in health standards. If shopkeepers would change that, I believe things would be quite different for them.

You do not have here today people running business as it was done in 1940. You had an agreement here at that time

when a man was an agent who had a particular commodity to sell, would not sell it unless he sold it to the merchants in Roebuck Street. 1.55 p.m.

The hon. member told us that the shopkeeper is going out. People in Roebuck Street are bound to go out and become retail men. That is so. I had the pleasure of charging a fee in 1940 and I appeared before the Control Board in order to set up a case for a number of shopkeepers who had been doing things at the time apart from the commission merchants, that is to say, through the backdoor. In other words, they knew that certain goods had good turnovers and they were selling them unknown to the Commission Merchants' Association. As long as you could prove to Sir John Saint that you are doing things, he was nothing to do with any Commission Merchants' Association. I won the case, but it is difficult in these days. You either have the money or the name. Some people have not got the money, but they have the name and the Bank Managers will take the name. You say that you have an agency for rice meal or flour as the case may be; they regard people who have the agencies now, but they must have the name with the Banks. If somebody is manufacturing an item in Canada.....

Mr. SMITH:

On a point of order. Mr. Chairman, the question of Banks and all of these agencies are not in this Resolution. You are allowing the hon. member to stray all over the place.

Mr. CHAIRMAN:

When the House is in Committee on a Money Resolution, any hon. member is at liberty to make references.

Mr. MOTTLEY:

You are absolutely right, Mr. Chairman, (Laughter) As I was saying, Sir, they are not going to send out to ask you if such-and-such a person has integrity in any matter, but they will enquire of the manager of the Bank. The enquiry will be made however, as to whether a person has the integrity. The people who carry the debt or the loan are the importers, and the people who also carry these things are the shopkeepers. They carry debt from the end of one crop to the beginning of another crop. This is a matter which calls for great study because we feel the need for full employment in this country. With 30,000 people not fully employed, that is the time when the shop-keeper has to carry the people. The hon. junior member for St. John knows that what I am saying is true. A person may owe the Roebuck Street merchant \$300, but he can only pay \$100 and when the crop comes in, he will go in and pay the remainder of the money. The man in Roebuck Street has had to go into the small business. I say this is a matter in which you have to begin at the root; you have to go from the Chamber of Commerce, the importers, the manufacturers and the representatives right down to the shopkeeper and see how the distribution is to be done.

The question that Head 9 stand part of the Schedule was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 27 - MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES

Head 27 - Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries - was called.

Hon. W. A. CRAWFORD:

Mr. Chairman, under this Head there is Item 122 - Equipment - and the sum of money required is \$650. This money is required for the purchase of fish weighing scales for the fish markets. Apparently, Sir, the public has been complaining that when they purchase fish in the fish markets the fish vendors are not giving them accurate weights. It has therefore been agreed by the Government that we should have these scales installed at the fish markets at Oistins, Bay Street, Cheapside and Speightstown, and that the Chief Supervisor of Markets or the Police should be responsible for seeing that purchasers have the weight of their purchases checked. We have therefore provided four Hobart scales at a cost of \$162 each. Since we have made no provision in the Estimates in March this year for funds to be used for the purchase of these

scales, we have to come back here with this Supplementary Resolution in order to get the money which is now required. As I have already said, Sir, the amount required is \$650 and it will mean that when any member of the public buys his fish from a fish vendor, the weight of the fish which he has bought can be checked on the Government scales instead of relying on the fish vendors' scales alone.

The allegations are that there might be anything under weight when you buy a pound of fish. It seems to me that, generally speaking, apart from the excessive prices which are charged for fish over and above the control prices, the outstanding grievance is that people are not given their proper weights. The placing of these scales in these markets under reference will therefore go a long way towards ensuring that the people who buy fish will get the proper weight for which they are paying. 2.05 p.m.

All we have suggested, Sir, is that the public, when they buy fish, should make use of the scales that are placed there to ensure that they get the proper weight.

I beg to move that Head 27 - Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries - stand part.

Hon. G. G. FERGUSSON:

I beg to second that.

Mr. MOTTLEY:

Mr. Chairman, there is one thing I do not understand. The Hon. Introducer of the Resolution said that scales would be placed at the Oistins Market, Cheapside Market, the Bay Street Market and the Speightstown Market and I thought I would have heard the Seconder of the Resolution give some elaboration on this matter, because the point the hon. member is making is that when a person buys fish the allegations are that he does not get his weight. The hon. member knows how many people sell fish in the Cheap-side Market, and there is usually a crowd of people waiting to get one pound, two or three pounds; so it would mean that everybody would be using the one scale. I have no objection to the Resolution, but maybe the Hon. Minister of Agriculture under whose Port-folio this comes will better explain this, because he knows better than any of us in the House. I would like the hon. member to enlighten us on how all these people are going to use this one scale.

Hon. W. A. CRAWFORD:

Mr. Chairman, actually I imagine that the placing of these scales there would have a psychological effect. It is more in the nature of a deterrent. Actually the hon. senior member for Bridgetown does not

mean that every purchaser of fish will want to weigh his fish. The necessity for checking every sale does not arise since every seller is not dishonest; but since there may be dishonest sellers around town - there are none at all in St. Philip - the fact is that any person who doubts the weighing of his fish can go and weigh it on the scale. Knowing that the scales are there, fish vendors are going to be very careful to give honest weight; so you do not have to think that every purchaser will have to queue up to weigh fish every time he buys it. It is merely a question of the facilities for a check being there, and since they are there, the vendor will be more careful and the purchaser will be more confident that he is getting his due weight. If he doubts it, he can check it.

Mr. MOTTLEY:

Mr. Chairman, quite frankly I have a better suggestion to put up. The hon. member says there are no persons in St. Philip who give short weight, but I am absolutely certain, and the hon. senior member for St. Michael would agree, that you hardly find short weights in the Cheapside Market. The Hon. Minister of Communications knows that the fishermen at Oistin never give short weight at all. Everybody is honest in Speightstown, and the hon. member for St. James would say that you do not need one in St. James. You know, Sir, that there are no fishermen in St. Thomas; so they are bound to be honest.

Mr. HOLDER:

Mr. Chairman, on a point of order, I think the Hon. Leader of the Opposition has misquoted me. I did not say that we do not need a scale in the St. James market.

Mr. MOTTLEY:

I said that the hon. member would say in view of the fact that there is no mention of one for St. James, that the fishermen in St. James are so honest that you do not need one in St. James. Would it not be better in the case of a place like the Cheapside Market where there are ten or twelve people selling fish, to do what is done at Seawell? You have scales at Seawell which I understand are examined and checked because naturally people have to pay for excess baggage. Would it not be better to have the scales checked at the markets? You have at the Cheapside Market Government scales for the weighing of whole fish and so on, and it seems to me better to have a programme in which you have your Inspector of scales go in and have these scales checked every week or as the case may be, and then you would have things going much better. I do not object to the Resolution, but I do not think this would cure what goes on, because if you want fish and you have money, you either eat the money or take the fish.

The question that Head 27 - Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries -stand part, was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

Hon. W. A. CRAWFORD:

Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that the Resolution for the sum of \$10,650 do now pass.

Hon. C. E. TALMA:

I beg to second that. The question was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

Hon. A. DaC. EDWARDS:

Mr. Chairman, the sum of \$4,000 was provided in the current year's Estimates under Head 37 - Item 8 7, for assistance to people who unfortunately found themselves ill, and the type of ailment could not be treated satisfactorily here in Barbados. The most prevalent cases are those that need the services of a NeuroSurgeon, and it would be uneconomic to have a NeuroSurgeon appointed to the staff of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, because there are not enough cases. When these cases do crop up, investigations are carried out by the Social Welfare Department, after recommendation is made by the Physician Specialist or the Surgeon Socialist at the Hospital, into the means of those people as to whether they can contribute to the expense of sending them abroad. If they can contribute, they do so, but if they cannot, they are not asked to do so.

This year, more people have become aware of this Medical Aid Scheme and have been making greater use of it. Of the \$4,000 that had been provided in the current Estimates, \$110 have already been paid out, but there are commitments outstanding of \$3,349.90. Immediately we have two more cases to be sent to Jamaica for treatment, but there is only a remainder of \$650.10, and this cannot cover the expenses. We anticipate that there will be more cases during the year, and therefore in order to meet the needs of this Head, we are asking for a supplementary provision of \$4,000.

I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

Hon. G. G. FERGUSSON:

I beg to second that.

The question was put and resolved in the affirmative without division. 2.15 p.m.

On motion of Hon. W. A. CRAWFORD, seconded by Hon. C. E. TALMA, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported the passing of two Resolutions in Committee of Supply.

Mr. Speaker resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

On separate motions of Hon. W. A. CRAWFORD, seconded by Hon. C. E. TALMA in each case, the Resolutions were read a first and second time and agreed to. SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Hon. W. A. CRAWFORD:

Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that the sitting of this House be now suspended for half an hour.

Hon. C. E. TALMA:

I beg to second that.

The question was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. Speaker suspended the sitting accordingly. 2.20 p.m.

On resumption,

Hon. G. G. FERGUSSON:

Mr. Speaker, there is no quorum and I ask that the Bell be rung.

Mr. SPEAKER:

I thank the hon member for drawing that to my attention. Let the Bell be rung.

The Bell was rung and a quorum obtained. GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

Hon. W. A. CRAWFORD:

I beg to move that Government Business be now taken.

Hon. C. E. TALMA:

I beg to second that. The question was put and resolved in the affirmative without division,

THE QUEEN ELIZABETH HOSPITAL BILL, 1965

Mr. SPEAKER:

The next Order of the day stands in the name of the hon. junior member for St. Andrew, the Hon. Minister of Health Second Reading of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital Bill, 1965.

Hon. A. Da C. EDWARDS:

Mr. Speaker, prior to 1947, the Hospital was administered by a Hospital Board comprising of the President of the Legislative Council, the Lord Bishop, the Speaker of the House of Assembly, the Attorney General, the Solicitor General and one member appointed by the Governor, three appointed by the Legislative Council and seven by the House of Assembly. This Board was appointed by an Act of 1910, Chapter II. In 1947, the administration of the Hospital was completely changed and the officers there became Civil Servants. A Medical Superintendent was appointed. It was then run by an Advisory Committee of five members who was appointed with the following terms of reference-

To advise the Medical Superintendent (a) as regards the provision of supplies and services which are necessary for the Hospital; (b) as regards the provision of accommodation and the erection of new buildings in connection with the Hospital; (c) on any other administrative question which the Medical Superintendent may refer to the Advisory Committee.

The Medical Superintendent took care of the administration under the same conditions as the Chief Medical Officer or what is today known as the Director of Medical Services and he was responsible for the executive powers previously enjoyed by the Hospital Board, while staff matters were matters for the Public Service Commission.

In recent years, there was a tremendous shortage of doctors, not only in Barbados but worldwide, and in order to be able to recruit staff urgently whenever they were needed, it was necessary for quick action to be taken, especially in the medical field. Because of the lot of red tape which has got to be gone through by the Public Service Commission, we found that our shortage of doctors in Barbados became worse and worse and more or less aggravated. We found that on several occasions when we did get through to the appointment of these medical officers, they had already gone into new jobs. They had already forwarded their applications to Barbados, but hearing nothing of their applications for some time because it had to go through the long presence of the Public Service Commission, they had accepted

jobs in other territories.

There then became more unrest at the Hospital, and not only in the Hospital alone, but public-wise there was great anxiety. With the growing population, we found also that there was pressure for accommodation at the Hospital and, as a result, it was decided to build a new Hospital to accommodate 633 beds for patients.

This new and larger Hospital necessitated greater skill more activity and a more efficient method to tackle the problems of administration there, A Committee was appointed to go into the affairs in 1960. That was the Gillette Commission. Later, in 1962, another Committee went into the question and this was done by the World Health Organization. This Committee comprised of Dr. Sheps and Dr. Shortliffe. They were appointed to advise on how best the Hospital could be run, how it was necessary to have greater efficiency in the Hospital; and such was the feeling of both these Committees that they came up with the advice on the administration of affairs at the Hospital that a Hospital Board was necessary if the Hospital was to function properly.

We have also been discussing the question of clinical teaching with the University of the West Indies. The University has represented to us that they can turn out at least 90 doctors per annum if the Hospital in Trinidad and that in Barbados can assist them with the clinical teaching. By this method, we would be able to ameliorate the actual shortage of doctors in the Caribbean area. We have had several discussions with the University of the West Indies, and it has been decided that clinical teaching be carried out at the Hospital. In these discussions which we have had with the University, they too made it a strong point that the Hospital be run by a Hospital Board.

The Gillette Report and that of Dr. Sheps and Dr. Shortliffe suggested that there should be certain other changes at the Hospital and those changes are provided for in this Bill. Those changes are basically (1) that a full time Chief Medical Officer or a trained and experienced man in Hospital Administration be put in charge of the Hospital.

Hon. members will remember that not so long ago, I came here with a Civil Establishment Order asking this Chamber to make certain changes in the personnel and establishment of the Hospital, and in those proposals a Hospital Administrator was provided for. We presently have Dr. Shortliffe who is a person trained in Hospital Administration. He is on loan to us from the W.H.O., and he would be here for two years. 3.10 p.m.

Consideration is being given to the people who are now applying for the post of Hospital Director. The Public Service Commission will soon be appointing an officer to the temporary post of Deputy Hospital Director and this person will be sent out for training. There again we are getting the assistance of the World Health Organization in the training of this officer. He will assume his duties as Director of the Hospital on his preferment, and Dr. Shortliffe will then give up the office of Hospital Director. We hope that we will have a young and intelligent Barbadian to take care of the Administration of the Hospital. We have some very capable and qualified Barbadians who are residing not only in Barbados but also in other countries, and they are making their contribution to this country. This person is presently abroad, but he will be appointed to the post. It has also been recommended that there should be a more expeditious system of making appointments and dealing with disciplinary matters. In matters of discipline, the Hospital administration found that when representation was made to the proper body, the

Public Service Commission, that representation took over a year before matters of disciplinary action could be dealt with. We feel therefore, like the Committee, that if there is a Hospital Board and some Committee of this Board be made responsible for dealing with disciplinary matters and with appointments, there will be quicker action taken. I do not say that the Public Service Commission purposely kept back their decisions on matters relating to the Hospital, but the fact remains that the Public Service Commission and the Personnel Branch have all branches of the Service to deal with, and sometimes matters relating to the Hospital are dealt with at a late hour. and when disciplinary action is taken too much harm has already been done at the Hospital. Therefore, the appointment of this Board will ensure a more expeditious manner of dealing with disciplinary and other matters relating to the Hospital. The association with the University of the West Indies would be a great asset to the country in that in relation to the cases dealt with in the Wards supervised by the University of the West Indies, which

are used for clinical teaching, a more thorough job will be done in these wards. This can only redound to the credit of the Hospital and it means better treatment for the people who have to depend on the services rendered them.

Those are the functions which were proposed by the Committee, and it is to be noted that the Hospital Board will be comprised of people who have already made their contribution to this community and who would best be qualified to do a job of this sort. We definitely have before us a Bill which seeks to provide for the administration of the Hospital and which would establish a Board of Management which is charged with the duty of discharging the functions of the Hospital on behalf of the Minister of Health. This Bill will also set up a Hospital Appointments Committee which would be responsible for appointments, dismissals and other disciplinary control of persons who are serving at the Hospital in established offices. Hon. members may wonder what I mean by that, but it will be noted that the Board itself will be responsible for the disciplinary action and it will have full control of the Unestablished Staff, but the established staff will be dealt with by the Appointments Committee. Why was that necessary? At the present time the Established staff at the Hospital is under the control of the Public Service Commission which is supposed to be a nonpolitical party. The Public Service Commission is supposed to have nothing to do with politics; it is supposed to be an independent body. The Hospital Board will be appointed by the Cabinet, but it is not necessarily the case that politicians have to do with the appointments to the Board. The making of the appointments to the Established staff is the prerogative of the Governor.

In order to preserve the right of the Established Staff at the Hospital, it is felt that there should be a separate Appointments Committee of the Hospital which will be responsible for the work of the Hospital which is currently done by the Public Service Commission. This Appointments Committee will be comprised of five persons, two of whom will be appointed by the Governor, the Chairman of the Public Service Commission and the fifth person will be the Chairman of the Hospital Board. These people who will be appointed by the Governor will be appointed by him in his discretion. Appointments to the staff will be dealt with by this Appointments Committee which will make its representation to the Governor. Hence it will be functioning in a similar way to the Public Service Commission. That is why it was necessary to have this Appointments Committee. The other reason for the appointment of this Committee is that the Public Service Commission or, to put it in this way, the Civil Service Association would not have been satisfied to have the Civil Servants put under the Hospital Board, although the entire conditions of service would be the same. It is felt that there should be this separate Committee set

up. They have made this separate recommendation and we have acceded to their request. These people will be dealt with by the various bodies which were consulted, and agreement was arrived at to have this Appointments Committee.

Part I of this Bill relates to the establishment, constitution and functions of the Board. The Board will be comprised of the Financial Secretary and his nominee, the Dean of the Faculty of Medicine at the University of the West Indies or his nominee, the Chairman of the Hospital's Medical Staff Committee and one other member of the said Committee and six persons to be appointed by the Cabinet. Provision is made under Clause 3 (2) for the appointment of the Board. 3.20 p.m.

An appointed member would hold office for five years, and the Chairman and Deputy Chairman would be chosen by the Cabinet from among the appointed members. A member of the House of Assembly would not qualify for nomination or appointment as a member of the Board.

Now the composition of the Board was discussed with the appropriate body, the Hospital Staff Committee. Several meetings were held with them and they represented that the Medical Staff should have representation on the Board,

and the Medical Staff has been given two members on the Board. The Board itself would be empowered to employ and discipline certain categories of employees approved by the Cabinet. The employees who will be employed and disciplined by the Board are as follows:

Attendants, Chefs, Cooks, Departmental Aides, Drivers Gardeners, Gate keeps, Laundry Workers, Linen Keepers, Maids, Messengers, Orderlies, Seamstresses and Assistant Seamstresses. Those are the people who will be disciplined and controlled by the Hospital Board itself.

Now Clause 4 of the Act provides for the incorporation of the Board with power to hold and dispose of property of any kind with the approval of the Cabinet.

Clause 6 of the Bill relates to the Board's meetings. A quorum of the Board will be five. The Hospital Director and Matron would be allowed to sit in on the meetings of the Board, but they will not have the power to vote, nor would they be counted in the quorum. That is, if there were three members of the Board along with the Hospital Director and Matron, there would be no quorum, nor would they have the power to vote, but they will be present at the meeting to give of their advice to the Board. The Matron would advise on nursing, and the Hospital Director would advise the Board on administration. The Board would also be entitled to require any member or other person present at any meeting to withdraw therefrom during the consideration of a matter of direct personal interest to such member or person.

Next we come to Part II of this Bill, and this relates to the established staff. Clause 13 in part II of this Bill provides for the Hospital Appointments Committee to consist of the person that I mentioned earlier.

Clauses 14 to 32 of the Bill contain provisions on the lines of those pertaining to the Public Service and other Commissions, the most important being those in clauses 22 and 23. These clauses would vest power in respect of the appointment, dismissal and disciplinary control over persons on the established staff in the Governor acting on the recommendation of the Committee.

Part III of the Bill makes provision in respect of financial matters, requiring the Board to prepare and submit to the Minister annually estimates of revenue and expenditure in respect of the next ensuing financial year and an audited statement of accounts. The Board would also be required to transmit to the Minister an annual report, a copy of which the Minister would have to lay on the table of both Houses of the Legislature.

Now it is to be noted that the fees received by the Hospital will be paid into general revenue.

Part IV of the Bill relates to miscellaneous matters. Clause 37 makes provision for the making of regulations and clause 40 for the recovery of fees in the name of the Hospital Director. The Hospital gets an annual grant, the estimates are prepared by the Hospital, and sent through the Board to the Ministry just as it is done now through the Director of Medical Services, and after they are processed, provision for an amount for running the Hospital for the year is made; so any additional sums accruing to the Hospital, fees recoverable and so on are paid into general revenue.

Clause 39 gives an unfettered power to the Board to receive in their corporate name any gift or legacy for the Hospital. Clause 41 relates to the procedure to be adopted on the discharge of patients sent to the Hospital by or on behalf of any Council. Clause 42 provides for the repeal of the Barbados General Hospital Act, 1947, 1947-28, but certain savings and transitional matters are provided for. Clause 43 provides for an amendment to the Public Service Commission Act, 1961, 1961-25 which follows on the provisions of Part II of the Bill.

Now hon. members might have been worried about the delay in the bringing down of this bit of important legislation, but delay could not be avoided, because of the significance of the Bill. We were forced to make sure that all was well before the Bill was introduced. By that I mean that we had to make sure that all the appropriate bodies were consulted and their opinions given some sort of consideration but the main cause of the delay was the fact that we had certain Establishment matters to clear the air. We were trying to avoid the question of compensation, and in order that this might be avoided, there had to be a clear understanding by all the parties concerned, and this took time. If it seems as though we delayed too long, it is because we preferred to be sure that all the questions which were raised were answered, and no one was dissatisfied through the provisions of the Bill,

The Ministry of Finance had to be consulted in matters of finance; the staff of the Attorney General's Office in matters of a legal character relating to the pension-ability of the Staff, and the question of the appointment and discipline had to be dealt with. The advice of the Medical Staff Committee had to be sought, and we had very long discussions with them because it was a question of how many people should be appointed from that group to the Board, and what representation they were to have vis-a-vis representation on the lay side. 3.30 p.m.

Now, outside of the Government, the Civil Service Association was consulted on matters pertinent to staff, the appointment of the Board and the Hospital Appointments Committee. The Public Service Commission was also Consulted, since they became involved on the Hospital Appointments Committee and some of their authority would have been taken from them when the Hospital is run by the Board. Therefore it meant that these consultations and so on took quite a long time.

While I thought that the Bill would have been introduced six months ago, it was then that we saw all

of these great implications. I would say that this Bill was prepared sinc; last year, but it has only come down now.

Mr. Speaker, I think I have said enough. We have got the provisions set out in the Objects and Reasons and I now beg to move that this Bill be read a second time.

Hon. C. E. TALMA:

I beg to second that.

Mr. SMITH:

Mr. Speaker, this Bill should have been passed long before the Queen Elizabeth Hospital came into being. The Hon. Minister for Health gave his reasons for the holding up of it, but it appears to me this afternoon that the horse has been put now in front of the cart.

Mr. SPEAKER:

Nothing is wrong with that.

Mr. SMITH:

Before, the cart was in front of the horse. A lot of water has gone under the bridge since then. Imagine that the Government said that this is one of the best Hospitals in the West Indies to be opened and to be run and they were thinking, I believe, that it could be run by a Minister! Any sensible intelligent person would have known that it could only have been run by a Board successfully and this is what this Bill is seeking to do this afternoon.

Sir, I am sure that the Queen Elizabeth Hospital would not have had to come under such attacks as those which were laid at it during the last few weeks if a Board of this nature was appointed before it was opened or if the Board was appointed soon after it had opened.

Hon. A. Da C. EDWARDS:

Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. The hon. junior member for St. Joseph seems to have been sleeping when I was speaking. I pointed out that there was delay in the bringing down of this legislation because of consultations with various bodies. These delays were unavoidable.

Mr. SPEAKER:

That is comment.

Mr. SMITH:

Was it a point of order at all?

Mr. SPEAKER:

Only my opinion counts. There was a point of order, but it tended to disintegrate.

Mr. SMITH:

I am saying, Sir, that the Hon. Minister should have known that this Hospital would have wanted a Board of this sort to run it before it was opened. The Hospital was being built long ago. The first thing which they should have done for this new Hospital, if they wanted it to be run successfully, was to go

into all these things and open it with a Board of Management to run it. But the Hon. Minister of Health waited until the horse got out of the stable to shut the Hospital door, and now he is telling me that he was hoping. Hoping was a good thing. When he was talking, what he was telling me was that his field was not my own. The hon. member should have appointed this Board long ago, and if he had done so, we would not have known his ability to run the Hospital. Everything would have been hidden and covered up. Now that everything is out, we are presented with this Bill.

Sir I still have to congratulate the Hon. Minister on this Bill because it is a very good thing which the Government has done. What I am going to say to the Minister now that we have been given the okay for the setting up of this Board is to see to it, if he has a say in it as he should have, that no yard fowls are appointed on the Board. See that people who are worth something, who are capable of running a Hospital of that magnitude, are appointed to the Board. Do not go and pick up anything to put as members of that Board and make the Hospital much worse than it is. Appoint members whom you feel know something about administration and the proper running of a Hospital of that size. Do not appoint people who can only ask some person for a vote.

Sir, I hear an hon. member over on the Other Side speaking.

Mr. SPEAKER:

I am afraid that I am hearing only the hon. member. When the hon. member said something about yard fowls, I want to tell him that there is nothing about yard fowls in this Bill. This Bill is making reference to human beings - not yard fowls.

Mr. SMITH:

I said that they should not appoint yard fowls.

Mr. SPEAKER:

The question of appointing yard fowls does not arise. I see in this Bill mention made of human beings - not poultry. (Laughter)

Mr. SMITH:

Well, Sir, on some occasions it is better to sit down and have poultry than to go and sit with some of those people whom they have on these Boards. If Your Honour wants to know who they are, when you go outside, I will tell you the names of some of them.

I am saying, Sir, that the Government is doing the right thing now. They are taking the administration of the Hospital far away from politics. I compliment them for that. The reason why I say that is this. Everybody was likely to suffer apart from them. Now that we are running the Hospital by a Board and we have competent men at the Board. Let the Board do its job and let the Minister do his. If he does that, I am sure that we would have a nice Hospital and we would be having some happy patients going in and out. The only thing that would happen is that they would be sorry when they have to leave the Hospital and go out. 3.40 p.m.

At this stage, before this Bill is passed and before this Board is appointed, lots of people would sooner go under a tree than go up there. I hope that all of that will take its place in the right direction and the Board will be allowed to do its job. I only wanted to allow the Minister to know that certain things are

responsible for the lateness of this Bill this afternoon. I am saying that it is a lack of foresight on the part of the Government. I do not believe that the Government ever intended to set up a Board; but the thing was so hot and things were so much going down the way in chaos that they are now forced to do the right thing.

Mr. SPEAKER:

If there is no other hon. member who desires to make his contribution to this debate, the Hon. Minister may now exercise his right of final reply.

Hon. A. DaC. EDWARDS:

Mr. Speaker, I have already explained what was responsible for the tardiness in the introduction of this bit of legislation. The hon. junior member for St. Joseph has said that he could not understand what I was saying. Well, Sir, it is only the people who did not go to school who would not understand what I was saying. The hon. member also pointed out that the Hospital should never have been run by a Ministry, and yet it was the Government to which the hon. junior member for St. Joseph was a party - he is Vice-Chairman of the Party - which in 1947 took the administration of the Hospital out of the hands of the then Executive Committee. That Executive Committee was succeeded by a Ministry, and the failure of the Hospital was due to the two nit-wits who were responsible for the administration of the Institution. It is the nit-wits of the Barbados Labour Party who were responsible for the low standards and the failures which we were getting at the Hospital. (A MEMBER The rats were eating the children.) The rats were eating the children in the Hospital; and some people were saying that there were too many people in Barbados and the rats could eat some of them. Mr. Speaker, I am not repairing the damage which was done by the Barbados Labour Party, The Hospital was being run by a Board from 1910 and it was more efficiently run by the Board than by the Barbados Labour Party of which the hon. member is a member. Now the hon. member is criticising us for the tardiness of this piece of legislation, but he does not remember that the same Report which recommended the establishment of a Board for the running of a Hospital was only brought before the public by this Party when it assumed office in 1961. That Report was hidden by the then Minister of Social Services under the then Government of the Barbados Labour Party. That Report was a question of public property, the property of the people of Barbados, and the then Government said that it was a Report to the Minister. Was that Report the property of the Minister or was it the property of the people of this country? The hon. member is now coming here with his nonsense. He is now saying.....

Mr. SPEAKER:

Is the hon. member referring to a member of this House when he uses the word \"he\"?

Mr. SMITH:

Mr. Speaker, I object to the Minister referring to me and saying that I am talking nonsense.

Mr. SPEAKER:

As to the word \"nonsense\" I have repeatedly ruled that the use of it is not unparliamentary.

Hon. A. DaC. EDWARDS:

When you did not go to school, how could you understand the meaning of \"non-sense\"? The hon. member also said that I should know the needs of the Hospital, but the high standards of the Hospital were reduced to nil by the Barbados Labour Party. There was a doctor who was running the Hospital

and the doctor who was responsible for the Ministry of Health made a mess of it; and another Minister who did not know what it was all about also made a mess of it. The Gillette Report was hidden from the public and I brought it forward here and allowed the public to see what it was. Among the recommendations in that Report was one for the appointment of a Board. When the Hospital was run by a Board it was run more efficiently than since 1947 when they took the administration of the Hospital out of the hands of the Board and put it in the hands of nitwits and nincompoops, and the children died as a result of being attacked by rats.

The hon. member has said that the Bill should have been brought here before now, but I say that this Bill to have the Hospital run by a Board should have been introduced in this House in 1961, I say that because it was in 1961 when the Gillette Report recommended that the Hospital should have been so run. The hon. member has changed his spots; he is no longer a leopard or leopardlike.,

Mr. SPEAKER:

I hope that the Hon. Minister is not speaking literally.

Hon. A. Da C. EDWARDS:

No, Sir, I am speaking figuratively and the hon. member will not understand me, 3.50 p.m.

The hon. member is no longer leopard-like; he has changed his spots and is now saying that the Hospital can be efficiently run by a Board, when it was not their policy to have the Hospital run by a Board, although it was recommended in the Report, I had to delve through hundreds of files to find the Report by Dr. Gillette which would have added to the improvement in the administration of the Hospital, and which was received by the Government of which he was a member. It was withheld from publication, and I had to bring it here, I agree that a Board can run the Hospital more efficiently, and if they had introduced a Board at the time, it would have exposed the ineptitude of the Barbados Labour Party, This Party has nothing to hide. I was criticised by the hon. member and his admirers in the newspapers for coming out and letting the people of this country know what was going on at the Hospital and how the people's lives were endangered. I could never be admired by the hon. member or his satellites on this, nor do I want to be. I want to be admired by the people of this country who mean something to me, but he is criticising me for exposing the maladministration of the Hospital and the people who have been employed there, I am not a hypocrite; I am an honest man.

Now the hon. member said that I should not interfere, but he has not read the Bill, The Board runs the Hospital on behalf of the Minister. Either he has not read it, or he could not understand what he has read. He said it was a lack of foresight that this Bill was not introduced before, but he did not say foresight by whom. It was a lack of foresight on the part of the Barbados Labour Party, but they will never have another opportunity of introducing a Bill of this sort in this House,

Mr, SMITH:

Mr, Speaker, on a point of order, the hon. member speaks of the Barbados Labour Party as if it is running this Government now or the Hospital. Everything is the Barbados Labour Party.

Mr, SPEAKER:

I am not sure that a point of order has been made.

Hon. A. DaC. EDWARDS:

Mr. Speaker, is the hon. member ashamed to hear the name of the Barbados Labour Party called for the maladministration it has caused in this country and at the Hospital? I am dealing with the Hospital Bill, and I think in order to say that the faults at the Hospital are due to the unsatisfactory way it was run by the Barbados Labour Party, and their having taken it out of the hands of a Board equipped to run it and put it in the hands of nitwits, (Mr. SMITH Due to your running away the doctoral) I run away the doctors because I am an honest man. I think, Mr. Speaker, that I have said enough to answer the stupid remarks of some people who could not see any further than their noses.

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

Hon. A. Da C. EDWARDS:

Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that Your Honour do now leave the Chair and the House go into Committee on the Bill,

Hon. C. E. TALMA:

I beg to second that.

Mr, SPEAKER:

Before the House goes into Committee, may I express my regrets and apology to the House, that in respect of the printing of this Bill, there does not appear on the cover that notice of this Bill was given by the Hon. Minister of Health, the hon. junior member for St. Andrew, and the day on which notice was given. That is a fault for which, I understand, only the Printery has to be blamed and not the Staff of this Chamber,

The question was put and resolved in the affirmative without division, and Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair and the House went into Committee on the Bill, Mr. BATSON in the Chair.

Clauses 1 to 25 inclusive, were called and passed. 4.00 p.m.

Clauses 16 to 23 were called separately and passed. Clause 24 was called. It reads as follows:-

"The Appointments Committee shall, for the purpose of discharging their functions under this Act, have access to the Governor."

Hon. A. Da C. EDWARDS:

I beg to move that Clause 24 stand part.

Hon. C. E. TALMA:

I beg to second that.

Mr. WALCOTT:

Mr. Chairman, I am sorry that I have to interrupt at this stage, but I wish to ask the Hon. Minister a question as regards the appointments. I was not in here when the Hon. Minister was introducing the Bill so I did not hear what he said as regards his policy on appointments to this Board.

The structure of his Bill provides that the Minister of Health appoint people to this Board.

Hon. A. Da C. EDWARDS:

If the hon. member would look at the section dealing with the appointments - that is section 3-1 would be glad to assist him.

As a matter of fact, if the hon. member would give way now, as soon as we finished, I will recommit the section to give him the opportunity to say what his views are on the matter.

Mr. WALLOTT:

Mr. Chairman, I am very thankful for that. In view of that.....

Hon. A. DaC EDWARDS:

I think it would be better that we finish the other clauses and then go back to that.

The question that Clause 24 stand part of the Bill was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

Clauses 25 to 36 were called separately and passed. Clause 37 was called. It reads as follows:-

"Subject to the provisions of this Act, the Minister may make regulations generally in respect of the Hospital and without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing provisions regulations made under this section may provide

for -

(a) the admission into, the treatment at and the discharge from the Hospital of any person or class of persons;

(b)

(c) fixing the Hospital fees to be paid in respect of persons obtaining medicines or surgical appliances at or receiving attendance or treatment in the Hospital."

(d)

Hon. A. DaC. EDWARDS:

I beg to move that Clause 37 stand part.

Hon. C. E. TALMA:

I beg to second that.

Mr. WALCOTT:

Mr. Chairman, on the question of fees, this is a subject which I am very interested in. I do not know what the Hon. Minister said on this matter in his opening remarks. In this section, it is stated that the

Minister may make regulations generally in respect of the Hospital and without prejudice to the generality of the

foregoing provisions regulations made under this section may provide for -

(a) the admission into, the treatment at and the discharge from the Hospital of any person or class of persons;

(b)

(c) fixing the Hospital fees to be paid in respect of persons obtaining medicines or surgical appliances at or receiving attendance or treatment in the Hospital."

(d)

I am wondering if the Hon. Minister in answering the debate, which was initiated by the hon. senior member for the City, gave his policy as regards the question of fees. I was not in the House at the time; so I would like to ask the Hon. Minister how a question on this matter.

I would like to say here and now that I am not one who believes that medical fees should be exorbitant. I believe in social medicine, and I have a Socialist philosophy about medical treatment. It is true that our Hospital is a cross between a free hospital and a paying hospital in that there are people who are admitted to the Queen Elizabeth Hospital who would not be paying anything at all and others who would be paying a small fee.

I agree with the hon. member over what he said about people paying for medicine at the Hospital as a charge. However, I am not a believer in making a charge for medicine if you are providing the sort of treatment that people cannot afford because, on the whole medicine is extremely expensive in Barbados as compared with doctors' fees. It appears to me that a doctor's fee in Barbados is more reasonable as compared with doctor's fees anywhere else, and our fees for medicine are greater than anywhere else.

People are placed in hard circumstances when they go to a doctor. It is not the doctor's fees; the hard thing is when they have to pay the medicine bill. I think that I should at this stage, now that we are talking about the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, express my profound gratitude to the doctors and nurses as well as the maids and everybody for the way in which I was treated when I went there recently as a patient. They were all very kind to me and I found it difficult to understand this criticism that I have been hearing of the Hospital. 4.10 p.m.

A friend told me that I am no example, that the treatment I got is not necessarily the treatment which everybody will get. I said that I do not know what should be so. I know, in a general way, that Barbadians will seek to do something for you if they know you, but it does not seem to me that this general state of criticism is something to which I can subscribe. It looks to me as if everybody was trying to do his best in the circumstances, because the Hospital is not a fully staffed one, and doctors and nurses have to work against the background of a lot of pressures. Be that as it may, I would like the Hon. Minister to say something about this question of fees. The sudden rise in fees is what people object to and not the fees themselves. I say quite frankly that I do not think the fees themselves are unreasonable.

Relative to this charge of a fee towards the cost of medicine, I say that it will not make any difference to the revenue of the Hospital. I hear some people say that there are people who take the medicine and then throw it away. That is systematic of a society which we have to change. I would like to see the complete abolition of this matter of asking people to pay for medicine. If a patient is paying for the services rendered him, he will have to pay for his medicine, and even in some cases people do not have to pay for their medicine.

We have to consider all these ways and means of making the citizen a better citizen by approach, by example and so on. The sick people in a general way are some of the poor people in a community. There are still some people whose wages are \$20 or \$25 a week and do not let us fool ourselves that \$25 a week is any wage for sickness. It may be all right when you are well, but not when you are sick. It is the people who have less knowledge of keeping in good health who will use the Hospital in great numbers.

Some people get ill out of ignorance, and the charge for medicine for them will not make much difference in the running of the Hospital. I do not think that we should have this unnecessary talk at the Hospital. I have been hearing a lot about the doctors, and I may say that some doctors are coming in for rather uncharitable criticisms. I know that the fees which the Physicians charge in Barbados are extremely reasonable as compared with fees which are charged in other parts of the world and also as compared with the standards which we have here. I would say that in defence of one of the doctors whose name has been called in the debates of this House, that is Dr. Forde. Dr. Forde is one of the best doctors in the West Indies as compared with doctors in other parts of the world. Having Dr. Forde here in his profession is saving this country the lives of people in measures which we cannot count in terms of money. I would like to warn those who make this uncharitable criticism against this doctor that a person of his integrity - he is a man of unimpeachable integrity, and I say it is most uncharitable for any one to make the statements against him that have been made on the floor of this House, and I regret to say, the charges made by the Hon. Minister himself. The Minister should not get into any professional dispute. Doctors may have rows among themselves, and if they cannot settle those rows among themselves, then we will not use the political forum for the purpose of settling what should be settled amongst the doctors themselves.

It is not because Dr. Forde is my physician, but I am dealing with the physician of many people in Barbados. If the man is a stiff man, there are lots of people who only have stiffness. If that is the fault, it is only one of the physiological idiosyncrasies which he possesses and none of us would worry about these idiosyncrasies. If that is his manner, it is his manner; but his professional ability is what we should be willing to deal with. It is being uncharitable to say that this doctor is willing to attend to people who can pay and not to attend to those who cannot pay. It is grossly unfair to say that. It is not fair at all to say these things about this doctor. I hope the Hon. Minister will say something about this matter because I say things without in anyway necessarily making any defence for a person or abusing anything. I say these things in the defence of what I consider to be right.

On this whole question of fees, I would like the Minister to say what is the policy of the Government. To ask people to pay 25 cents towards the cost of medicine, to my way of thinking, will not make any difference to the income of this Hospital. It takes about \$3 million a year to maintain the Hospital and you will have to multiply a lot of these 25-cent pieces to go anywhere towards the cost of maintaining the Hospital. People will feel that they are not satisfied with this medicine and they will say that it is of no use. That applies to many people. I have asked my wife why it is that she does not put up a glass

plate outside the house instead of going to a doctor. (Laughter) 4.20 p.m.

As soon as women do not get immediate returns from the medicine, no more of it will be used; and those are the people that pay for it themselves, but they do not use it. Because it is free is not an indication that people are not going to appreciate it, and I would like to see this idea of people paying 25 cents for medicine removed, because you can make those who go to the Hospital and can pay, pay, and none of us who are fortunate to be able to do so will begrudge what we have to pay so that those who cannot pay would be able to use it. That is my concept and I feel sure it should be the concept of every socialist.

Hon. A. Da C. EDWARDS:

Mr. Chairman. I rise to reply to the questions asked by the hon. senior member for St. Peter. The hon. member referred to the question of the fees and the question of retaining doctors. I made statements in this House and I stand by them. I spoke the truth and nothing but the truth and I stand by that.

On the question of the fees for medicine, since 1947 this provision was in the Act. What actually happened is that prior to the time that I laid the Regulations on this

Table, which was about two months ago, they were not brought to the Legislature, because there is nothing in the Act as such to have them brought here, but I thought that the question of the revision of fees was of momentous significance to this community and I brought them to the House. After they were brought here, they were perused and the hon. senior member for Bridgetown brought in a Resolution to discuss the fees; but since 1947 there was a fee of 24 cents charged for medicine. All that we have done is to put it into round figures, but it is not enforced, and I do not intend to enforce it either. It is therefore making a mountain out of a mole hill. We did not have to bring the Regulations here, but I thought they were of tremendous importance to the community and that the representatives of the people should see them. The new Regulations were in force before they were brought here, but the fees are not enforced and I have no intention of having them enforced.

I am glad the hon. member did mention that the doctors fees here in Barbados are smaller than they are in many territories. I myself would like to see the doctors charge similar fees, but they just cannot when you consider what is charged in other territories, and I said it here last Tuesday. After the doctors made representations, we on the Government side reduced their representations by 15 per cent and they were not satisfied, and even now they are not satisfied. But when you compare what they charge in the new Regulations with the fees charged in other places, they are reasonable, and I am glad I have found someone in this Chamber to assist me on this score.

Mr. WALOOTT:

I must thank the Minister for his reply. My only answer to what he has said in relation to the Regulations is, as he rightly said, that they are enforced when the Cabinet agrees with them. The Act gives the Minister power to lay down fees and charge, but if something comes in like that and you do not think this should be implemented, you do not, because as the Minister says, it would be stupid to implement them. There may come a time when you can implement a thing like that, but we do say that at this stage and for a long time to come it would seem that the implementation of that within the context of our economy would be difficult, not that they could not pay 25 cents for medicine, but It is what medicine and hospitalisation mean in the whole scheme of things to a person's life and economy when

they do take it. I thank the Minister very much for his reply.

The question that Clause 37 stand part, was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

Clauses 33 to 42 inclusive were called and passed.

Hon. A. DaC. EDWARDS:

Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Clause 43 stand part.

Hon. C. E. TALMA:

I beg to second that.

Mr. WALCOTT:

Mr. Chairman, I am taking this Clause to draw something to the Minister's attention. This Clause says that the Public Service Commission Act, 1961 is amended by the substitution of a semicolon for a fullstop at the end of subsection (3) of section 11 and by the addition of the following paragraph at the end of the said subsection -

"(h) any office comprised in the Hospital establishment as defined in section 2 of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital Act, 1965".

Now I would like to tell the Minister this. What he said in relation to the doctors at the Hospital is the truth. I would not like to be unkind to the Minister, but what I have to point out to him is that a doctor at the Hospital is a Civil Servant, and if an office comes under the Portfolio of any Minister, no Minister has to speak the truth about him in here in relation to the holding of his office for obvious reasons. You have a Public Service Commission, and if the Minister feels so strongly about the conduct of a public officer, he should be prepared to draw to the attention of

the Head of the Administration who is the Governor, that he considers the person holding the post or such office is not doing what could be regarded as in the best interest, and let that man go before the Public Service Commission, and there is scope and reason for doing it. I say that because a doctor at the Hospital is not like me. If the Minister gets up and says anything about me, I can get up and reply; but if you say something about a doctor that you say is true, what is the evidence? 4.30 p.m.

Truth in this context can only be evidence; therefore, are you going to proceed to lead evidence against a doctor to prove that these things which you say are true? If you are going to lead evidence before yourself or before a Court of arbitration. I would say to the Hon. Minister that in my view he made an error and he continued to repeat and confirm the error by saying from his seat in this Hon. Chamber that what he did say in here about a public servant was in order. I am saying that it is not in order for him to say that. If it is, then it is in order for a public servant to get up and say that. You cannot have a Public Service Commission Act which precludes Civil Servants from acting contrary to those behaviours laid down and cannot get up and defend themselves, and then you get a Minister getting up in this Chamber and calling by name a civil servant who cannot get up and say anything on his own part. It is improper for the Minister to do that because the Civil Servant cannot defend himself in the House of Assembly. Let us say that something happened to prove what the Minister said is not true. What redress are you going to give to the Civil Servant? Can you sue the Minister?

The Hon. Minister made a strong statement in the House about a professional man. If you want something to be done about that person, there are courses for you to take, but not by this open air Pentecostal meetings sort of way. I do not think that it is proper when the Hon. Minister says that he is satisfied that what he said is true. At what stage does any of us become the sole arbiter of the statements which we make about people? I can say whatever I like to the Hon. Minister because he is a member of the House of Assembly as well as I am. I also would be free to say whatever I like of a doctor at the Hospital because I am not a Minister, and because it is expected that the Minister will get up and defend the doctor. I will say this. The action of the Hon. Minister was either one of cowardice or lack of power or lack of understanding of his position. If you are a Minister and you cannot control the administration under your portfolio, then it is not our fault. If you cannot do that, then do not come in here and plead to members of this Chamber. It is just as if I come in here and ask an hon. member to deal with somebody in the Barbados Workers Union.

Therefore, Sir, I do not see the reason why the Hon. Minister would have to come to the House of Assembly and call a Civil Servant by name and say that he is not doing his work. It is not any of our business. If it is the business of the Government, tell the Government what you propose to do. Tell the Public Service Commission. If a doctor does something in a Department in which he is employed, go through the normal channels and deal with him; do not come in here with it because somebody baited you over the matter. Members of this Chamber can bait a Minister about anything, but it is for the Minister to make sure that when we bait him that he does not get caught in the bait. In other words, you must be clever enough not to catch at that bait. That bait which the Hon. Minister got caught was unfortunate.

The Hon. Minister said that what he said was the truth. We are not in here dealing with the truth in relation to Civil Servants. The truth when you are dealing with Civil Servants has to be told to the Public Service Commission. There is no point in our passing this section, and then the Minister coming back in here and telling us that he is going to dismiss a man. Let him go and act within the powers which we have given him. Do not come here and say that you want fresh powers to deal with somebody. That sort of dramatic action is not good enough, and you put a person up to public ridicule by your action. A Civil Servant

who is not on trial for his professional life and character should not be subject to Ministerial castigation on the floor of the House. It is something which I have never read or heard about. This sort of thing would not have happened in England. I cannot even see it happening in an ordinary mock Parliament because you would say that there are certain courtesies and conventions which you have to adhere to, and a Civil Servant is a person who cannot defend himself against charges by a Minister. It is even difficult for an ordinary member to come in here and do it at times, but we can make these sort of charges against a Civil Servant because in the final analysis, if it is not true, the charges can be supported or defended by a Minister. If it is true, it needed not to be done in here; therefore on any ground, it is wrong. If it is not true, this is no arena to bring it and if it is true, it is worse.

Sir, I can only come to the conclusion that it appears to me that the hon. Minister in his own normal functions does not feel himself capable of dealing with the issues which are within his powers, and so he has used this House as a means of buttressing his own powers. You must be big enough. If in your view you find that someone in the administration is wrong and you are the Minister under whose portfolio the

matter comes, you must be capable of dealing with it. These are the little things that make the people afraid of your having Independence. They query and say: if you get Independence, this is what you would do. I have heard it bruited around here. These are the sort of examples that people talk about. Therefore, I say to the Hon. Minister, I do not support you on it. If other hon. members have not told you so, they are wrong. There are some people who would like to hear you say what you have said, but two wrongs do not make a right. If the doctors at the Hospital were wrong, you were wrong to come in here and say what you did; you should have gone to the Premier or the Cabinet and put the matter before them. On top of that, if you were not supported, there are certain other machineries which you could have set the motion. Put your machinery in action and get your desires aired; but there is no point in your coming in here and saying that it is true. You are the administrator of the Hospital. You have the machinery for setting these things in motion. If there is anything wrong as regards the doctors, call those doctors to your office and say to them that you are responsible for the administration and tell them what you want to be done. If nothing is done about the matter, then go to the Public Service Commission and say that things at the Hospital are not run as they ought to be run. 4.40 p.m.

Those are the powers which a Minister has. Even if there are not legal powers, there should be the authority that you cannot have any of the doctors seeing your point without your encroaching on their rights as Civil Servants; you should do things right if you want them straightened out. When you have the administration to deal with you should not be taking sides. You can examine a matter without taking any sides. I have been in administration for a long time and I can give that to the Minister as excellent advice. Your good friends will tell you something about what people say, and you will find that they are some of the things which they themselves say. They will not tell you what they feel about you, but they will say it is something which somebody else says about you. I do not agree with the Minister that they have fear. As to the doctor in charge of the Hospital, I knew him from when he was a school boy. That doctor has always been stiff and he has always been a Victorian. It is not anything which he is now playing; he was a shortpants stiff boy. He was born in that way and you cannot take that from him. Let him keep that way as long as he is doing his work well. I know a lady who is always smiling, and I have told her that if this baby is not born smiling, then it is not hers. There are some people who cannot get a smile on their faces; even if you give them a dollar bill they will not smile because they are not born that way. I am sorry I have to raise this matter. When I saw this clipping which came to me far away in Geneva and Amsterdam, I felt like taking a plane and flying back to Barbados. The Hon. Minister may have his reason for saying what he has said. I am not dealing with the merits or the demerits of the issues; I say that in this House of Assembly we have passed a law setting up the

Public Service Commission, and I hope the Minister will understand that if they are giving the Commission these powers, he must act in accordance with those powers.

Hon. A. DaC. EDWARDS:

Mr. Chairman, certain questions were asked of me as Minister of Health and certain statements were made in connection with the questions and I came here and answered them. I said what was true and I also said what was not true. If you want a Minister to be a hypocrite, then you can get another Minister. I am not defending anybody where there is no defence, and when I am asked a question I will say what it is. If I am asked what is wrong at the Hospital I will not say that something is true when my conscience tells me that it is not true. You will have to get another Minister if you want that; you cannot have this Minister.

Mr. WALCOTT:

When the Hon. Minister says that he is no hypocrite, I should just like to say that hypocrisy is not the matter under discussion. I could ask the Hon. Minister what was the last decision the Cabinet made in connection with some matter and would you say that the last decision made in connection with that matter was so-and-so? The Hon. Minister could not do that because the Constitution does not allow him to do that. Are you going to ask somebody at the Hospital how many diapers a nurse put on a baby which was born last month? Do you think a nurse would keep a record of every diaper that she puts on a baby? A man may want to make sure that a baby was born, and not a diaper was put on it. If anybody were to ask you something which has nothing to do with the Hospital per se- you cannot ask any question about the dismissal of any person because that is beyond your province. The Minister has said that if he wanted to dismiss a person, he would ask for an amendment to the Act so that he could have that dismissal. The Hon. Minister does not understand the constitutional position.

Hon. A. DaC. EDWARDS:

What dismissal did I ask for?

Mr. WALCOTT:

I am now quoting from a debate in this House.

Hon. A. DaC. EDWARDS:

The hon. member is quoting from a report in a newspaper which is not necessarily right.

Mr. WALCOTT:

The hon. member said that he would make this post redundant because the person would not hold this post inasmuch as it would be redundant. If you want to make the post redundant, why do you want to do that? We want to protect, or we should be protecting, people in their jobs. We passed a Resolution here dealing with Severance Pay, not making any post redundant. We only make a post redundant when we do not require that post any longer; but if you want to make a post redundant with a view to getting rid of the person who holds the post, then you may have to reintroduce the post. If any Cabinet Minister thinks in that way, if that is going to be the conduct of Ministers in relation to any post in the Civil Service, then how will we ever be independent? I think that any Civil Servant has the right to defend himself against charges which are made against him by any member of this House. 4.50 p.m.

I feel that a Minister has the right to see that the administration under him is faithfully carried out by all Civil Servants from top to bottom. If that is not done, we have given power to the Minister, and the Administration will unflinchingly deal with it; so you need not feel that you do not have the power. What I would never subscribe to is the typical Barbadian gossip-mongering attitude of one person going to the other and telling him something with a view to getting somebody opposed to somebody else. These conflicting things you get at administrative and work levels are good enough for a Minister to become embroiled in, because it is one personality against another personality, and the Minister must understand that personality clashes in offices are things he should keep very far away from and act as Judge, and not Advocate. As a Minister he cannot be an Advocate, because in a small community like this, even doctors will play up to Ministers. People play up to

you when they think you have power, but I have been in this Assembly long enough to see that the people who play up to you today used to play up to the other Ministers too, and if by any accident you

are tomorrow not a Minister, some of them will pass you like Levi on the other side, and you would think they are blind. There are some people who have peculiar complexes; they like to be in company with big people. Some people have no use for you; but if there is something big going on, you can poison a nation and nobody turns back. I am aware of those things. I am sure that the Minister gets a lot of early morning calls. You are told that they always knew that you were brilliant and what would happen to you because it suits them to be on your side. Even among doctors you will find that happening. I would say quite frankly that you have to be careful with that sort of thing.

I would say that Dr. Forde is not the kind of man who plays up to people. I often wonder how easy it was for him to become a married man, but he is married and has two children. I wonder if with the affinities of life he has as much affection as they claim, though it is claimed that a man who is a little bit withdrawn is more abundant that way than some of us who are more effervescent; so for that reason it comes out more in some people in other fields than it comes out in others. I say that clearly to the Minister, and he would know that there is no ill feeling so far as I am concerned with him; it is purely a matter of what I would regard as constitutional and Parliamentary propriety that I am trying to preserve.

The question that Clause 43 stand part, was put and resolved, in the affirmative without division. Clause 44 was called and passed.

The First Schedule was called and passed. The Second Schedule was called and passed.

Hon. A. Da C. EDWARDS:

Mr. Chairman, the hon. senior member for St. Peter expressed his willingness to speak on Clause 3. I do not want to deny anyone the privilege of discussing this Bill, and I therefore beg to move that Clause 3 be recommitted.

Hon. C TALMA:

I beg to second that.

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

Mr. WALCOTT:

Mr. Chairman, I must thank the Hon. Minister. I will not be long, but I wanted to ask the Minister something in regard to the policy of the Establishment of the Board. I am aware that this Government's policy has been very forthright and liberal in so far as appointments to Boards are concerned, but on a Board like the Hospital Board, I would like to make it clear that we in the Barbados Workers' Union - and I speak as Secretary of that Organisation - feel that since it was agreed that \$2 million from the Labour Welfare Funds should be used for the construction of the Hospital, they should have some representation on the Board. I raise that now because I know that the Minister of Agriculture in setting up a Board recently in which considerable funds from the Sugar Industry were used did not, unfortunately, include any workers' representative on that Board, and that is the Industrial Agricultural Development Board and we feel it was strange that you could get a thing like tills taking place in Barbados at this time. We were called in and told that 60 per cent of the people attending the Hospital were workers, and though I do not expect the Minister to say to us that he is a member of that body, I wanted to get the opportunity of stating that we feel that in the composition of this new Hospital Board, the workers' representatives should be accorded rightful representation.

Hon. A. DaC. EDWARDS:

Mr. Chairman, I would Just like to advise the hon. senior member for St. Peter that in considering the construction of this Board, it is in the Act and we will discuss it, and consideration will be given to the the workers\' representative on this Board, because we feel that the workers have made a tangible contribution to the construction of this Hospital and they should be represented on the Board.

Mr. WALCOTT:

I should like to thank the Minister. The question that Clause 3 stand part, was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

On the motion of Hon. A. DaC. EDWARDS, seconded by Hon. C. E. TALMA, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported the pass* ing of one Bill in Committee, and Mr. Speaker resumed the Chair and reported accordingly. 5.00 p.m.

On separate motions of the Hon. A. Da C. EDWARDS, seconded by Hon. C. E. TALMA in each case, the Bill was read a third time and passed.

Hon. W. A. CRAWFORD:

Mr. Speaker, that brings the Order Paper to an end.

TOE ADJOURNMENT

Hon. W. A. CRAWFORD:

Mr. Speaker, I now beg to move that this House do now adjourn until Tuesday the 28th September, 1965, at 2 .30 p.m.

Hon. C. E. TALMA:

I beg to second that.

Mr. WALOOTT:

Mr. Speaker, I am sure that the Hon. Minister in making that motion is not aware that the first Monday in October is a bank-holiday. If he did, instead of making the motion that we adjourn until the last Tuesday In September and come back then, when the next Tuesday

there would be a holiday, he would have made the motion that we come back in after the bank-holiday which is the 4th October. I am wondering therefore, if the Hon. Minister would agree to that.

Mr. SPEAKER:

I think that the hon. member should better make an amendment to the motion.

Mr. WALCOTT:

I cannot move a motion for the adjournment.

Mr. SPEAKER:

But you can make an amendment to the motion for the adjournment.

Mr. WALCOTT:

Mr. Speaker, I therefore move the amendment to the motion that this House stands adjourned until Tuesday 5th October.

Mr. LYNCH:

I beg to second that.

Hon. W. A. CRAWFORD:

We do not resist the amendment.

Mr. SPEAKER:

The Hon. Leader of the House said that he does not resist the amendment; therefore I take it that he accepts the amendment which means that the motion before the House is that this House stands adjourned until Tuesday 5th October, 1965 at 2.30 o'clock.

The question was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. SPEAKER adjourned the House accordingly. 5.05 p.m.