

THE House of Assembly Debates

(OFFICIAL REPORT)

SECOND SESSION 1961 - 66

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Friday, 17th December, 1965

A Special Meeting of the House of Assembly was held at 2.15 o'clock p.m. today.

PRESENT

His Honour J. E. T. BRANCKER, Q.C. (Speaker); Mr. L. E. SMITH, J.P.; Hon. C. E. TALMA, (Minister of Health, Housing, Local Government and Community Development); Hon. J. C. TUDOR, M.A., (Minister of Education); Mr. J. W. CORBIN; HON. G. G. FERGUSON, (Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries); Mr. W. R. COWARD; Mr. R. St.C. WEEKES, J.P.; Mr. W. R. LOWE; His Honour E. L. CARMICHAEL, J.P. (Deputy Speaker) and Hon. N. W. BOXILL, (Minister of Communications and Works).

Prayers were read,

Hon. A. DaC. EDWARDS entered the House and took his seat.

Mr. SPEAKER:

This is a Special Meeting which has been summoned in consequence of certain representations having been made to me by the Hon. Minister of Education, the Hon. Leader of the House, that the public interest requires that the House should meet at an earlier date than that to which it has been automatically adjourned, namely, Tuesday, 21st December, 1965. As this is a Special Meeting, only the business which appears on the Agenda may be dealt with.

Mr. MOTTLEYt entered the House and took his seat. GOVERNMENT NOTICES

Hon. C. E. TALMA:

Mr. Speaker, I beg to give notice of a Resolution to place the sum of \$200 at the disposal of the Government to supplement the Estimates 1965-66 Part I - Current, as shown in the Supplementary

Estimate, 1965-66 No. 86, which forms the Schedule to this Resolution,

Hon. J. C. TUDOR:

Mr. Speaker, I beg to give notice of a Resolution to place the sum of \$730 at the disposal of the Government to supplement the Estimates 1965-66, Part I-Current, as shown in the Supplementary Estimate, 1965-66 No. 37, which forms the Schedule to this Resolution.

I also beg to give notice of my Intention to proceed with these two Money Resolutions in all their stages later in today's sitting.

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

Hon. J. C. TUDOR:

Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that Standing Orders, 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.

ACTING CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES

Hon. J. C. TUDOR:

Mr. Speaker, before we proceed with the Orders of the Day, I beg to move that the hon. senior member for St. Joseph be appointed as Chairman of Committees for today's sitting.

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:

The First Order of the Day stands in the name of the Hon. Minister of Education, the Hon. Leader of the House- To move the House into Committee of Supply to consider a grant of sums of money for the service of the Island.

Hon. J. C. TUDOR:

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 Resolutions for the sums of \$200 and \$730, respectively, of which notice was given earlier today.

Hon. C. E. TALMA:

I beg to second that

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

Mr. HOLDER entered the House and took his seat.

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

SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATE 1965-66 No. 35 PRISONS - FURNITURE AND EQUIPMENT

Hon. J. C. TUDOR:

Mr. Chairman, the first Resolution is a Resolution for the sum of \$1,045, This sum of money is required to supplement Head 21 of the Estimates - Prisons - Item 88 - Furniture and Equipment. The Adcteikum to this Resolution sets out that the Frigidaire Freezer at the Prison is seven years old and a Board of Survey has recommended its early replacement because of the fact that a lot of money has been spent in the last two years in repairing it and it is giving inefficient service. A Board of Survey has also recommended that the two I.B.M. Peg clocks which are six years old and which are beyond re-pair should also be replaced and this amount is required to cover the cost of the new Frigidaire Freezer as well as the two peg clocks, I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

HON. C. E. TALMA:

I beg to second that.

The question that this Resolution do now pass was put 2nd resolved in the affirmative without division.

2.40 p.m.

Hon. J. C. TUDOR:

Mr. Chairman, before I proceed, I should like to know if hon. members have received their copies of these two Resolutions. They are supposed to have been circulated with the notice for this meeting, and I know that some hon. members have received theirs.

This Resolution for \$200 is for Item 61 (New) -- House Allowance, and this sum is required to pay a house allowance of \$50 a month from 1st December to the Head Male Nurse -- Mental Hospital, pending the handing over to him of quarters now occupied by the Tutor, or alternatively to pay a similar allowance temporarily to the Tutor on vacation of the quarters and until other quarters are allocated to him. As I have said, it is a small amount to cover House allowance from 1st December to the end of the current financial year.

I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

Hon. C. E. TALMA:

In seconding the passing of this Resolution, I should like to add these further points for the benefit of hon. members. The salary and conditions of service of the Head Male Nurse-Mental Hospital have been revised and certain decisions have been recently made with effect from 1st December, 1965, and the salary scale of post of Head Male Nurse will be \$5,592 instead of \$5,400, the same as Matron of the Mental Hospital, The qualifications required for recruitment to the post of Head Male Nurse should be the same as those required for recruitment as Matron, and as a condition of service attached to the post of Head Male Nurse is a rental allowance of \$480 per annum with servant or \$400 without servant.

The quarters now occupied by the Tutor will be vacated by him at the earliest convenient moment and handed over to the Head Male Nurse, and he will be paid a temporary allowance at the rate of \$50 a month until Government quarters are provided for him. Since it is not convenient for the Tutor to vacate the quarters immediately, a House allowance of \$50 a month will be paid to the Head Male Nurse with effect from 1st December 1965 until quarters are provided for him. I thought I would give the House that bit of information, because it is a question of reorganising and putting the Head Male Nurse on a better footing than he formerly enjoyed in so far as salary and conditions of service are concerned.

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

SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATE, 1965-66 No. 37

Hon. C. E. TALMA:

Mr. Chairman, the Addendum to this Resolution sets out that it is proposed to contribute the sum of \$500 towards the funds obtained from Service Organisations for the purpose of offering suitable prizes and meeting other incidental expenses in connection with the village Choirs Christmas Competition. The balance of \$830 will meet extra expenses for other Christmas festivities organised by the Ministry of Health and Community Development. The other Service organisations like the Lions Club and the Jaycees are making a contribution of \$500 each to assist in the competition by Christmas Choirs. An attempt is being made to revive these Choirs, and the Government feels it should make an equal contribution to bring back some of the things we cherished at Christmas time; This is Just a contribution being made by the Government in order to match contributions which are being made by the Lions Club and the Jaycees, and we are asking hon. members to agree to this sum of \$730 to assist in these festivities.

I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass. Hon. G. G. FERGUSON:

I beg to second that.

Mr. MOTTLEY:

Mr. Chairman, I am sure that the Hon. Minister who is in charge now with this portfolio will not take umbrage if I pay tribute to his immediate predecessor, the Minister of Trade, for his interest in reviving this ancient custom of having Village Choirs in Barbados to contribute to the festivities of the year, because when people return to Barbados from overseas they look forward to hearing these Village

Choirs. I know that the Minister of Trade is very interested in this matter, but I hope this will not only be confined to competitions. What makes this seem a real Christmas is not only the prizes offered in the competition, but the encouragement which people get for marching through the various villages singing and contributing songs which makes you remember Christmas when you were a boy.

I do not think anyone would have anything to say against this, especially with the contributions being made by the Lions Club and the Jaycees, and you could hardly expect people to pay buses to come from all over the island to make this contribution without some little compensation. I know the Minister of Communications will not take umbrage if I paid that tribute to the Minister of Trade who is very interested in this matter, and I would say that it would be well if before the day of the competition, these people could be brought together and we could hear them perform publicly as when we were boys, because they would be doing a service for the benefit of the general public.

I have much pleasure in supporting this Resolution.

Mr. CARMICHAEL:

Mr. Chairman, I should like to say to the Minister that when he is preparing the amount for entertainment, especially for the Councils, he should look at it with a certain amount of sympathy. We in the Council are given a certain amount for these Choirs and very often it is a strain on the Matron and some of us particularly in St. James. Some years we often get nineteen or twenty Choirs all doing a very noble job, and although you are not bound to offer any form of entertainment, it shows a certain amount of appreciation; so if even next year he finds the amount that has been granted is exceeded, it is exceeded in spite of individual efforts by some of us to make it last. 2.50 p.m.

Hon. C. E. TALMA:

Mr. Chairman, I think I should say at this stage that I am grateful for the contributions made so far, and the points made have been noted.

I made this point in my opening remarks that the Hon. Minister of Trade and Labour, my predecessor in office, has been dedicated to these functions, especially this, and he is more adept in these matters and more equipped to deal with these matters. The Hon. Minister will therefore say something further on this particular matter.

The Hon. Leader of the Opposition, the hon. senior member for the City, will remember hearing something of the choirs which are to take part. They are: Eagle Hall Choir, Silver Sands Choir, Halls Road Choir, Chapman's Lane Choir, Licorish Village Choir and Deacons Road Choir, There are six Choirs competing, but this does not mean that these six alone were consulted. All were consulted.

I will ask the Hon. Minister of Trade who has handled this matter to give an explanation to the Committee,

Mr. SMITH:

Mr. Chairman, I agree with this Resolution and I will go a step further, I do not know if the last Minister who was in charge of this portfolio was born long enough to know that we had men going around on Christmas day and on Boxing Day dancing on stilts as well as this Christmas singing. Seeing a man dancing on stilts was very enjoyable. Since the Hon. Minister is reviving the Village Choirs, I will

also ask him to take into consideration the revival of dancing on stilts.

As I have said, the present Minister of Labour may be a bit young, but; the present Minister of Community Development may know about it I think it may be very enjoyable to tourists if they come around and see these men dancing so high on stilts.

I also hope that the Hon. Minister is thinking in terms of the choir for the Animation of the Sick and Incapacitated by trying to help them a bit financially because they do a very good job, especially at Christmas and the New Year. They work very hard and I feel that their only set back may be through a lack of finance because seldom their transport does not fall down on the road. This may be due to their inability to hire one which can stand up and down the hilly parts of St. Andrew. I say that because the Choir generally gets to the place where they are to sing a bit late, and I feel that the Minister may not have pressed it home so forcibly about the necessity for a little finance for that Choir because he takes a great part in its activities and may be afraid of saying something for it, lest he be criticised,

I do not think we should begrudge giving a few dollars to help this worthy cause. As a matter of fact, we are quite willing to help these people who on these days give up all their time to serve others while other people are going sightseeing, spreeing and having a nice time. These people who belong to this Choir tie themselves down to doing a good service for those who cannot do it for themselves,

I may say that we are too late now to do anything to help them this year, but from next year when we are dealing with the Estimates, the Hon. Minister should consider the Choir for the Animation of the Sick and Incapacitated.

Hon. A. DaC. EDWARDS:

Mr. Chairman, last year, around November, it was considered that there should be a vigorous revival of the Village Choirs. I know that the hon. senior member for the City has tried to have that revived, and although we have Village Choirs from the St. Michael area singing around Christmas time in the Lower Green and this is mainly due to the efforts of the hon. senior member for the City -- we do not feel that that in itself brings back the spirit of Christmas which we used to have years ago.

I thought then that in my capacity as Minister for Community Development, we should try and go a little further. The hon. junior member for St. Joseph said that I might have been too young to know of the Village Choirs which sang on Christmas. He is quite aware of the fact that I can read, and I have read about the past history of Barbados and of what was happening in the past, and as a result of that, it was felt that we should bring back the spirit of Christmas which prevailed twenty or twenty five years ago.

As I have said, we thought of the resuscitation of these Village Choirs last year but it was too late to do any thing about it then. When we tried to get some of them, they said that they did not have sufficient time to practise their road marches and so on.

A sort of Prospecting Committee set out to work out proposals. This Committee was comprised of two members. They set out to find out how many of the old Choirs could be found and how many of the old

Choirmasters could lend us their support in this venture. We contacted a few, and then a large Committee was set up of members of these Village Choirs, representatives of the Jaycees and of the Lions Club, eminent Choirmasters, the Director of Music and a representative from the Ministry of Education. This Committee worked very hard in trying to have a revival of the Village Choirs. It is true that all the going was not smooth. We had some complaints, We had these Choirs singing before, but they gave it up because they said that money was collected and they were not given sufficient of it, although they were the people who spent nights of practice for the occasion.

People who know about it know that training a choir is very expensive. These Choirmaster shave to pay rent for a meeting place for the Choir. They have to buy music and have to pay for additional electricity. 3.00 p.m.

It was therefore thought that some sort of assistance should be given to these Choirs, It is to be noted that every

Choir in this competition is given a consolation prize, whether that Choir comes first, second or third. The other Choirs are given as high as \$275.00 as the First Prize, \$150.00 as the Second Prize, \$100.00 for the Third Prize and, I think, \$75.00 for the Fourth Prize. With the \$1,000 which is collected from the Jaycees and the Lions Club, that would not be enough to give the Choirs a First Prize of \$275.00. That would only give them a First Prize of \$175 and I will explain the reason why that is so. This is not a competition merely for the Choirs to sing the Test piece; there are also Prizes awarded for the Road March and Prizes for the \"Stars\", You will see, therefore, that this sum of \$1,000 could not cover the amount for awarding prizes adequately. We would like to see these things dealt with by voluntary contribution, and at this stage I will appeal to hon. members now to make an early contribution to the funds for this Choir competition next year. I appeal to the hon. junior member for St. Joseph who is so keen on having a recommendation for Mr. Stiltman\" and that sort of thing; I would suggest that the hon. junior member for St. Joseph \"fix-it-right\" by making an early contribution to the funds for these Village Choirs.

Mr. Chairman, the main competition will be held in the Public Buildings' Yard (Mr. MOTTLEY: In the Public Buildings' Yard?) Hon. members will remember that we introduced a programme in the Public Buildings' Square and that is where it is going to be held. (Mr. MOTTLEY You did not say so just now.) We expect to have thousands of people witnessing this programme. We do not want to go to Kensington with the programme where we would have to pay for these Choirs being heard. We think that everybody should be given the opportunity of hearing these Village Choirs. We think that children as well as their parents should hear the Village Choirs and watch the Road March and the demonstrations. As a matter of fact, it was only last week that we had the Eagle Hall Choir and other Choirs give a demonstration of the Road March. We are offering prizes for the best Road March and for the Choir which sings the Test piece the best, and some of the most eminent musicians in Barbados will be the judges of the singing of that Test piece. We hope to have a Steel Band competition with carols also, and they will have their Road March too. We know that this arrangement will bring back the spirit of Christmas to the community. We think that we should retain the Barbadian Christmas culture and this is an attempt to revive it. I am glad that hon. members do show their appreciation for the revival of this Christmas festivity and I hope they will not only give it their support in this Chamber but they will encourage their constituents to come and witness this programme and they themselves will come and see what good can come out of Nazareth again.

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

Hon. J. C. TUDOR:

Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that you do now report the passing of three Resolutions in Committee of Supply.

Hon. C. E. TALMA:

I beg to second that.

The motion was put and carried.

The CHAIRMAN reported to Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER who took the Chair and reported accordingly.

On motions of Hon. J. C. TUDOR, seconded by Hon. C. E. TALMA in each case, the Resolutions passed in Committee of Supply were read a first and second time and agreed to.

**RESOLUTION TO APPROVE CIVIL ESTABLISHMENT (GENERAL) (AMENDMENT)
(NO. 8) ORDER, 1965**

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER:

The next Order of the Day stands in the name of the Honourable and Learned Premier- To move the passing of the following Resolution-

A Resolution to approve the Civil Establishment (General) (Amendment) (No. 8) Order, 1965.

Hon. J. C. TUDOR:

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am asking leave to take charge of this Order in the absence of the Honourable and Learned Premier.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER:

The Honourable Leader of the House is asking leave to take charge of this Order in the absence of the Hon. and Learned Premier, and unless there be any objection, leave will be granted. (After a pause). There being no objection, leave is granted. The Hon. Leader of the House may proceed. 3.10 p.m.

Hon. J. C. TUDOR:

Mr. Deputy Speaker, this Civil Establishment Order and the Resolution approving it deals with more than one Government Department, and the Addendum sets out fully the provisions required. The first is in the office of Premier, Home Affairs division, the creation of a post of senior Assistant Secretary at a salary of \$8,160. The duties of this officer will include the examination of day to day arrangements for the security of Government documents, generally advising Ministries and Departments on security matters, assisting the Police with the arrangements for the protection of dignatories and distinguished

visitors, and such other duties as may from time to time be assigned to him by the Permanent Secretary, Home Affairs, particularly duties related to Police and Immigration.

Then in the Accountant General's Department, the creation of several posts: one senior Accountant, one Assistant Accountant, four Long Grade Clerks, one Abstractor, and one Departmental Assistant, and the upgrading of the post of Records Sorter.

Then in the Police Department the creation of two new posts of Cadet Officer, and this new grade is designed to attract young graduates who possess the qualities of leadership and wish to serve in the Police Force. The new posts have been bracketed with those of Assistant Superintendent of Police so that after a period of not less than three years of satisfactory local and overseas training the Cadet Officers may automatically transfer as Assistant Superintendents, thereby increasing the number of the latter posts.

There is also the upgrading of several posts in the Government Printing Office. Attention is drawn to the fact that when the Printing Office was set up in 1956, the grading of posts was at that time to a large extent experimental, because the Establishment Section of Government had nothing of a similar nature to guide it. Subsequent experience has proved that there is a need for upgrading several of the posts in that Department. Due to the heavy demand made on the Printing Office, it has been necessary to expand the premises, and this expansion justifies the proposed increases in salaries.

This Civil Establishment Order therefore is an omnibus Order for the creation of new posts, particularly in the Printing Office and the Accountant General's Office, as well as in the Home Affairs Section of the Premier's Ministry which is due of course to the increased volume of work in these Government Departments.

I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

Hon. C. E. TALMA:

I beg to second that.

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

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ORDINARY ELECTION OF COUNCILLORS) ACT, 1965

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER- The next Order is a Bill to enable the Governor to appoint different days for the holding of an ordinary election of Councillors under the Local Government Act, 1958, and for purposes connected therewith and related thereto.

Hon. J. C. TUDOR:

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am asking leave for the Hon. Senior member for Christ Church to take charge of this Bill in the absence of the Hon. and Learned Premier.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER:

The Hon. Leader of the house is asking leave for the Hon. Minister of Community Development to

take charge of this Bill, and if there is no objection, leave will be granted.

There being no objection, leave is granted the Hon. Minister.

Hon. C. E. TALMA:

Mr. Deputy Speaker, asset out in the Objects and Reasons to this Bill, hon. members are fully aware that some time ago, about two years now, Dr. Jackson submitted a Report on Local Government, and the Government is now about to implement certain of the proposals, and it is considered desirable that the ordinary election of Councillors which is due to take place in January, 1966 should be deferred pending the implementation of the Report. At present plans are in progress to have certain of the proposals in the Report implemented in the coming year. Among the Chief of these are-

(a) the transfer of all roads now under the control of the Southern District Council to the Central Government by 1st April, 1966;

(b)

(c) the transfer of Public Health, with the exception of Street cleaning, refuse disposal, public baths and public conveniences, from the Local Government Authorities to the Central Government by 1st April, 1966;

(d)

(e) the transfer of Public Assistance, with the exception of children's Homes and Day Nurseries, from the Local Government Authorities to the Central Government by 1st October, 1966;

(f)

(d)the transfer of street lighting from the Local Government Authorities to the Central Government by 1st April, 1966.

This Bill, therefore seeks to enable the Governor to fix a date later than in the month of January, 1966 for the holding of the ordinary election of Councillors and to pro-vide for the continuance in office of City and District Councillors who are in office on the date on which the Bill comes into operation.

Clause 3 of the Bill contains provisons enabling the Cabinet to fix the term of office of Councillors where an election takes place later than in the month of January, 1966. This, however, is subject to the express provision in the Bill whereby the term of office of such a Councillor will expire in the month of January in any given year.

This Bill, therefore, seeks to postpone the holding of the next election of Councillors for the City and the District Councils, but reserves the right for the Government to call an election at any given time without any notice, but com-plying with the necessary formalities and having the elections duly held and the matter dealt within the proper legal way.

Now the Jackson Report is being implemented and hon. members will remember that in Dr. Jackson's

Report on Local Government in Barbados, he recommended as summarised at page 82 of the Report that the following services should be transferred from the Councils to the Central Government. He made it very clear that Public Assistance, including outdoor relief, infirmaries and dispensaries, but excluding care of children. Public Health excluding scavenging, baths and sanitary conveniences, parish roads, tenantry roads of the Southern District Council only, and registration of vehicles and animals, should be taken over by the Central Government.

The Jackson Report went on further and stated clearly that if the services mentioned in the paragraph which I have

read are transferred, to the Central Government, the collection of trade tax and highway revenue should also be taken over by the Central Government for its use and for its purposes. 4.20 p.m.

On this basis, the services which would remain with the Councils would be:-

(1) Children's home

(2) Scavenging,

(3) Baths and sanitary conveniences,

(4)

(5) Cemeteries and Burial grounds,

(6)

(7) Parks, playing fields and civic centres,

(8)

(9) Subventions to religious and charitable bodies,

(10)

(11) Educational assistance,

(12)

(13) Street lighting,

(14)

(15) Preparation of Jurors Lists, and

(16)

(10) Consultative functions and Town and Country Development Planning.

That gives hon. members the gist of his recommendations and the Central Government is now embarking on various phases of implementing them.

As the Bill sets out, it is not dealing with the taking over of the various services as such, Mr. Deputy Speaker, but the present Bill is merely seeking to postpone the life of the present Councils - the City Council, the Southern District Council and the Northern District Council -- so that when January comes, there will be no elections. This Bill, in the normal course of the events, only deals with the postponement of the holding of elections of the councils. We are asking for postponement. But when we are going to deal with the Bill to implement the recommendations of Dr. Jackson, hon. members would be given ample opportunity to deal with the services which are to be taken over. Therefore, any argument on the reasons, in my view, will be entirely out of place.

You cannot implement the Jackson Report by just touching a button. We need every possible advice, and too machinery has to be set up in every field, especially in Public Assistance in order to retain the high standards which have been set in the past; so I ask hon. members to bear this in mind. I do not mind having opposition, but let the opposition come in the right time and do not make opposition on the reasons when we are only prolonging the life of the Councils and allowing them to stay in office for six or more months. In any even many members of the Council will be thrown out of office.

I beg to move that this Bill be now read a second time. Hon. G. G. FERGUSON:

I beg to second that.

Mr. SMITH:

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the hon. member said that he does not want to hear any opposition on this Bill. If one speaks on the Bill, one cannot be termed as being opposed to it. We have to speak on this matter. From the beginning, I can clearly understand the Government's position in this matter, especially with this Bill I understand them as clearly as if I were a member of the Party, and as if I had met with them at their headquarters when they were deciding on this matter, I am in sympathy with them, and as far as I am concerned, personally, it makes no difference to me if they ever bring about Local Government elections. In other words, it suits me fine; so they will not be doing me any harm by suspending the elections year after year.

But, Sir, it is the electorate and the taxpayers and those people who are not happy about the day-to-day happenings of some of the Councillors. They are not happy because they are not sure of what is the outcome. When you get rumors going all around that an is not well in some of the Councils, I think the only thing to do would be to give the taxpayers an election and let them settle the matter, because if the Government cannot settle the matter, I am sure that the taxpayers would be in a position to settle it.

Hon. C. E. TALMA:

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I hate to interrupt the hon. member. I would like him to be more specific. What matter is he referring to? The Hon. member himself happens to be a Councillor.

Mr. SMITH:

Mr. Deputy Speaker, if the Hon. Minister was listening, he would have heard that I said that as regards the day-to-day happenings, all is not well with some of the Councillors. I believe the Hon. Minister might have heard that. It is not everything that you hear which is true, and I said that if the Councils cannot settle the matter or allay the fears of the electorate, let the electorate do it themselves.

The hon. Minister wants me to be more specific. If he was more specific in the introduction of the Bill I would be more specific. His reasons for the suspension are set out in the Objects and Reasons of the Bill, and I am saying that the suspension of the holding of elections for Local Government was going on since last year. The Government suspended the elections since last year, and they had a whole year more to do something as regards the Jackson Report.

The reasons which are given in these Objects and Reasons for suspending the elections can go on indefinitely, and that is not good enough because the reasons set out here have nothing to do with the holding of elections. If Government wants to put their house in order, a general election has nothing to do with that. A general election cannot help it. The services which Government wants to take over for themselves and the other services which they want to remain in the hands of the Councils - and election has nothing to do with that. You can have an election and still make the change. If the Councils had to do with the working out of your proposals and things of that sort, then I would say rather than take the chance of electing Council-lors who might not have a real knowledge of the matters, to give the Councillors who are now in office a chance to help you make the change. But in this case, the councillors have nothing to do with it. 3.30 p.m.

The reasons which are set out here are not worth the paper on which they are written. The Government could go ahead and make the changes with a new Council or with an old one. All the Councillors have to do is to wait and accept the proposals from the Government, If it be an old Council, it will have to accept the proposals of the Government, and if it be a new Council, it will also have to accept them. I am saying that it is not fair to be holding the election in suspense for so long when the taxpayers are quite willing and ready to have an Election and they are being deprived of their democratic rights. They are being thus deprived by withholding this election from them. I always say that the servant is not greater than the master, but in this case I can only say that the servant is trying to be greater than the master because the Local Government Act reads that in January in every three years, there should be an election held. The electors elect their councils for the various areas in every three years with that understanding.

Hon. C. E. TALMA:

On a point of order. I hate to interrupt the hon. member again. The Local Government Election entails great expenditure on funds. When the Local Government Act is amended whereby many of the main functions of the Local Government Authorities will be taken over and vested in the Central Government, that will entail the holding of a new election, thereby causing two elections in one year.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKERS That is a point of explanation.

Mr. SMITH:

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I do not think that the hon. member is trying to get me off the trail, but that is not a point of order. The hon. member is in charge of this Bill and he has some sort of writing instrument there, so that he can take notes and he can reply. However, Sir, every time he is getting up on

a point of order and making a speech and that is not fair to me. I am accustomed to that; but the more he does that, the longer I would have to speak. I was saying, Sir, that an election is supposed to take place in every three years. Last year the holding of an election

was suspended for one year, and now this year we are again asked to suspend the holding of an election indefinitely. I am saying that it is all right for me as a Councillor; it does not worry me, but it is worrying the taxpayers. It is worrying the electors and those are the people who have the burden to carry. I am representing the electors both in here and on the Council.

The reasons which have been given for this Bill are not good enough, I am trying to point out to the House that the elections do not interfere with the changes which the Government is going to make. If the Councils had some- thing to do with the changes, then I would say that they would be more knowledgeable than the ones who are likely to be returned, and we might have a chance of help- ing to mate up this thing; but the Councils only have to await the decision of the Government, Whatever the Gov- ernment says, we will have to

At this stage, Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER left the Chair, and MR. SPEAKER resumed the Chair.

Mr. SMITH:

Mr. Speaker, I was saying that whatever the Government says we will have to abide by it; that is the case. Because we can suspend the holding of elections year after year, that is not good enough. The life of the Councils is three years and I can almost say that it will be five years, because four years have already elapsed. It is the same thing as in the case of the other elections which were supposed to last for a period of three years. We are now in the fourth year and we will enter the fifth year too. I can quite clearly see what the Government is leading up to; they must have their own way in whatever they go to do; whatever they agree to do must be done and they are completely ignoring the electorate because they can use their numbers and power which they have.

Hon. N. W. BOXILL:

You can vote against it.

Mr. SMITH:

Mr. Speaker, the action of this present Government reminds me of a motor car where the gear-box has been wrongly assembled.

Mr. CORBIN:

Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. I do not understand the hon. junior member for St. Joseph

Mr. SMITH:

Well, I cannot make you understand me.

Mr. CORBIN:

Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is saying that this Government is deferring the Elections again this year. Well, Sir, the last Government in 1956 deferred the Vestry Elections until 1958 and the members

of the Vestry for 1956 were kept going until 1959 in order that they could have things properly arranged.
3.40 p.m.

Mr. SPEAKER:

I am afraid the hon. senior member for St. Andrew is making a speech. I am just checking up to discover whether the hon. member has yet spoken on this Bill.

Mr. CORBIN:

I have not spoken yet.

Mr. SPEAKER:

The hon. member has not spoken yet, but he is going to defend his Government here now, and outside do something else.

Mr. SPEAKER:

Anyhow, let us deal with this subject.

Mr. SMITH:

I am not talking about the last Government, but if the hon. member is, the suspension by the last Government was pending the complete change over from the Vestry system to Local Government, and they had to im-port experts.

Hon. C. E. TALMA- On a point of order, the object of this Bill is to do nothing else but to amend and change the Local Government system as recommended by Dr. Jackson; so the hon. member apparently is not aware of that yet After the amendments have taken place, it seems as if the functions of the Local Government will be almost futile.

Mr. SMITH:

Mr. Speaker, you will notice that I have been very quiet, but if they want me to get hot, I can. Now,

Sir, the Vestry system was changed and the Government had to import experts from overseas to draft a complete Bill It was one of the most voluminous Bills I have ever seen. I cannot remember how many paragraphs there were in it, but you as a lawyer would know. The reasons they are giving here now would only take the Government, comparatively speaking, a few minutes, when compared with the change over from the Vestry system. However, that does not prevent me from saying what I have to say. They could make the changes without suspending the elections. Some members would be glad if they suspended them for 300 years; I would be glad too, but not the electorate, and I have been sent here by the electorate and I must please them. If the electorate wants elections in three years, I cannot fight them on it, though I might want it suspended for 600 years.

The actions of this Government remind me of a motor car's gearbox which has been wrongly assembly with the right gear put in the wrong place, and every time you put it in a forward gear,the car is going back. I think it is time that the gearbox be dismantled and overhauled, because every time you strike a first or second gear, the car goes into reverse. That is what is happening with this Government; so the only thing to do is to allow it to go to the right garage and have it fixed right.

I cannot remember the reason for the suspension last year, but if I am not mistaken I think the reason was that they did not have time to implement the Jackson Report, or they did not have time to study it. A whole year has passed and they are now asking for more time to do the job. It is not fair to the taxpayers for this Government from year to year to suspend the elections. They are not suspending the general elections, but they are going to the same five years as the Local Government elections will be, although pro-mises were made that Central Government elections would be held in three years. That is why I say that the gearbox of this Government is put up wrong in some way. I do not know who is their mechanic, but I think the Government might as well put their radiator behind, because anyone who sees the radiator and bonnet of a car knows that that is the front; so they should allow the electors of this coun-try to change it for them.

Mr. CORBIN:

Mr. Speaker, this is very important, but before I speak on it, I should like to read the Objects and Reasons of the Bill. They read as follows-

"In view of the recommendations contained in the Jackson Report on Local Government, it is considered that the ordinary election of Councillors which is due to take place in January, 1966 should be deferred pending the implementation of the Report. At present plans are in progress to have certain of the proposals in the Report implemented in the coming year. Among the chief of these are :-3.50 p.m.

(a) the transfer of all roads now under the control of the Southern District Council to the Central Government by 1st April, 1966;

(b)

(c) the transfer of Public Health, with the exception of street cleaning, refuse disposal, public baths and public conveniences, from the Local Government Authorities to the Central Government by 1st April, 1966;

(d)

(e) the transfer of Public Assistance, with the exception of Children's Homes and Day Nurseries, from the Local Government Authorities to the Central Government by 1st October, 1966;

(f)

(g) the transfer of street lighting from the Local Government Authorities to the Central Government by 1st April, 1966.

(h)

This Bill, therefore, seeks to enable the Governor to fix a date later than in the month of January 1966 for the holding of the ordinary election of Councillors and to provide for the continuance in office of City and District Councilors who are in office on the date on which the Bill comes into operation.

Mr. Speaker, this is something which I was long waiting for and desirous of seeing. The reason why I say that is first of all the Local Government is divided into three sections --the City Council, the Southern District Council and the Northern District Council. Because of that there are three kinds of rate paying, three kinds of employees and three kinds of assistance given, such as public assistance.

In St. Andrew, we are paying the people who work for us for all these years fifty cents a week and children twenty five cents a week. In the City they get more than that, and in the Southern District they also get more than that. Even in the Northern District in the Parish of St. Joseph an ill child gets a dollar a week, while, as I have said, in St. Andrew they only give a child fifty cents a week; yet both parishes are in the Northern District Council. In St. Thomas which is another parish belonging to the Northern District the people are getting more than that. In St. Lucy, they are getting more than that of St. Andrew. For that reason, we should have a uniform rate so that every man or woman would receive the same amount of public assistance.

This is something which every one of us in here should desire to see because we of the Northern District Council have cried out to the Central Government to help us. We have told the Central Government that we are unable to give more public assistance and to take it over and share out the money. We have told them so so that all the parishes would share alike. When you see the poor people in St. Andrew and St. Joseph going over the hills with a load of canes on their heads, you can see that their bones are crying out.

Mr. SMITH:

Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. The hon. member said that this is what this Bill is here for; it is to give everybody the same amount of public assistance. This Bill is here for the purpose of postponing Local Government elections. It is not for the purpose of giving anybody not even one cent.

Mr. SPEAKER:

The hon. senior member for St. Andrew is putting his point of view,

Mr. CORBIN:

The Central Government is taking over Public Assistance, What are they taking it over for? Do you think that they are taking it over to give different kinds of Public Assistance?

Mr. SMITH:

Mr. Speaker, what the hon. member says now is not stated here in this Bill.

Mr. SPEAKER:

The hon. senior member for St. Andrew is giving his point of view.

Mr. CORBIN:

Mr. Speaker, I am here to give my suggestions and my opinion. The hon. senior member for St. Joseph has given his own to the length, and I am in a position to voice my opinion as well as anyone else.

Mr. COWARD:

Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I just want to draw to your attention that the hon. senior member for St. Joseph has not spoken yet on the Bill.

Mr. CORBIN:

Sir, I am saying that if the Central Government take over Public Assistance, I believe myself that there would be a uniform rate, and each and everyone would share alike. If Central Government takes over Public Health as I see in this Bill, I believe that the Public Health In-spectors would be paid on the same basis because at present we have three kinds of payments; yet they are doing the same kind of work and have the same qualifications. The Public Health Inspectors of St. Andrew have their R.S.I and qualifications in (Meat Inspection; yet they get less money than similar inspectors who work with the City and Southern District Councils. As a result of this, everybody would share alike; so I am glad that mis is coming into operation.

The Central Government would be taking over all of that. It would take time to go into these matters and have

things ironed out. It cannot be done overnight. In 1956, I was a member of the Vestry of St. Andrew, and that Vestry was asked to hold on until 1959. We had to hold on until the then Government got things straightened out to implement Local Government. We now have to hold on until this Government get things straightened out. What is all this mad-ness which the hon. junior member for St. Joseph is speaking? This Government has to get things straightened out and we are asked to hold on. Of course, if the Bill is even right, the hon. junior member for St. Joseph is going to criticise it. However, these things take time; and I am certain if Government takes over Public Assistance and Public Health, the workers would share better and would be recompensed better than now. That is my opinion. I cannot say exactly what they are going to do, but that is my opinion.

The hon. junior member for St. Joseph was a member of the Public Health Committee and the Public Assistance Committee. He knows that the people are crying out and wishing that Government would take over these things. He knows that; therefore, I cannot see the reason why he is arguing about that. I would be glad if it were now that the Government was taking them over. Why should there be so many divisions now? We are only bringing confusion upon ourselves. It is time that we wound up our selves and give to each man equally. I am certain that all the Sanitary Inspectors, the Public Assistance paupers, and everybody working in the Councils would be willing to come under the control of the Central Government. They would be willing for the Central Government to control the affairs of the Councils because they believe that better would be done.

I am glad that this Bill is before us, and I hope when the Government decides over the various matters that my desires would come true and there would be better payment for scavengers and more money for Public Assistance paupers.

Mr. CARMICHAEL:

Mr. Speaker, the hon. member who introduced this Bill said that the question is whether these elections should be deferred and it was not a question of the Objects and Reasons. 4.00 p.m.

As the hon. member has rightly said, the Objects and Reasons will be brought into the form of a Bill and that will be an opportunity afforded when hon. members will be able to discuss the merits or

demerits of the Bill. What is now before the House is this: should the Local Government elections be deferred or not? The hon. junior member for St. Joseph has confined his argument to the point that these elections should not be deferred now, but if he were on this side, he would have said they should be deferred. If I were on that side of the House, I would say "Do not defer the elections now". But whether the elections are deferred or not, the hon. junior member for St. Joseph has no fear of losing his seat, neither would I have any fear of that either. The people in the North are not so much concerned now about the elections; what I think they are concerned about now is the question of services. If an election were to take place next January, that would not make the services any better. I speak now with all due deference to whoever may be elected; whoever is elected, things will be no better under the present circumstances.

I feel that, with regard to the elections as set out in the Objects and Reasons of the Bill, we will see that better provision will be made for the country as a whole. There is no alternative now, and I agree that things will remain as they are. However, the services will still be continued. I may agree with the hon. junior member for St. Joseph that things may not be as they should be, and when you say that, you may mean the Councillors as well; but as far as the Councillors are able to do so, they are doing their best and they have done their best to provide the necessary services for their people. What I agree with is that more could be done, and it may be for the reasons I have given that the elections are being deferred. I agree that there should not be any Local Government elections in January next year for many and good reasons. I know that when the time comes for these Objects and Reasons as set out in this Bill to be

discussed, I will have quite a lot to say. I am not saying that the people in the parish of St. James are not dissatisfied or worried that there should not be the holding of Local Government elections in January, but with a change of Councillors, whether they are of a better calibre than the present ones or otherwise, you cannot have the services any better than what they are now.

Mr. COWARD:

Mr. Speaker, I do not think that there is any hon. member of this Chamber who would be more anxious and willing to have an Election of Councillors than I am, because I know that all is not well where the Councils are concerned; but at this stage I can confirm the Government is not going on with an election, having regard to what is taking place now, I do not think it would be right for us to make a change, you should make that change from bad to good. As the position stands now - I was a Councillor and seeing the condition as it existed there, I did not attend any of the meetings to see what was going on because it was not in the interest of the masses. What was taking place was more in the interest of the Councillors. You go from one meeting to another meeting with a few small items on the Agenda. You will have a public Assistance Committee meeting, an Establishment Committee meeting and a General Purposes Committee meeting, and the Chairman alone would be drawing a certain amount of money. If we did not have the Report of Dr. Jackson, then there would have been all the difference.

Mr. Speaker, I do not think that we should call for elections now because things which are done by halves are never done right. I see that the Central Government will be taking charge of Public Health and Public Assistance because today you have Public Health Inspectors who may be better than those in the City and they are not getting the salaries which they should get, although they may be working harder than the others. You can not even get the Nurses to remain in their posts because the salaries are

too low. For years and years we have been trying to train Nurses, and as soon as they get better salaries, they leave their jobs. Mr. Speaker, I would be glad to get another change, but I do not think that we should rush into things, as the last Government did from the Vestry system to the Local Government System. I just rose to compliment the Government in this issue.

Hon. C. E. TALMA; Mr. Speaker, on this occasion it does not seem that there is much room for any reply in that most hon. members are aware of what has been set out in the Objects and Reasons of this Bill, and I may say that those Objects and Reasons are very clearly set out. However, Sir, in passing, I may say this for the benefit of the few Opposition members who are present. 4.10 p.m.

I just want to remind hon. members who were members of the last Government Party that the Barbados Labour Party which was in Office up to December, 1961, was in office when Sir John Maude was appointed to investigate and make a report as to the Vestry system. As far as I remember, Sir John Maude submitted his report some time in 1952, and arising out of his report and pending the implementation of the report, the Vestry system was frozen from 1954 to 1959, a matter of five years. If the Vestry system when it was being abolished and turned into the Local Government system took five years, and this one takes two years, is that too long? As a matter of fact, this may only take a year and a few months and elections may be in May, June or July; so the ones who are sitting in their seats can rest assured that there might not be elections until April, because some of the amendments to the Local Government Act will be implemented from April 1st next year, I draw also to their attention that this is a further step which is being taken in the interest of the people, by way of regularising the various mal-practices and mal-adjustments which have existed over the years, as referred to and exemplified by the hon. senior member for St. Andrew. He has really given the reply. It is true he has not dealt with the contents of the Bill, but as far as the reasons go, he gave very solid and concrete reasons for the proposed postponement and the amendments which will follow in their train. The functions of the Councils will be qualified and limited, and in God's good time, the Councils may breathe their last.

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

On the motion of Hon. J. C. TUDOR, seconded by Hon. C. E. TALMA, Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair and the House went into Committee on the Bill, Mr. COWARD in the Chair.

Clauses 1 to 3 inclusive were called and passed.

On the motion of Hon. C. F. TALMA, seconded by Hon. G. G. FERGUSON, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported the passing of one Bill in Committee, and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

On the separate motions of Hon. C. F. TALMA, seconded in each case by Hon. G. G. FERGUSON, the Bill was read a third time and passed.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. SPEAKER:

I am advised that that concludes all the Items on the Agenda of this Special Meeting, and as hon. members are perfectly well aware, there has been an adjournment until Tuesday of next week at 12 o'clock noon, which stands; and accordingly this House now stands adjourned until Tuesday, 21st December, 1965, at 12 o'clock noon. 4.18 p.m.