

THE House of Assembly Debates

(OFFICIAL REPORT)

SECOND SESSION 1966 - 71

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THIRD SESSION OF 1966-71

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Friday, 20th November, 1970

A special meeting of the House of Assembly was held at 3 p.m. o'clock today.

PRESENT

His Honour Sir. j. E. T. BRANCKER, Q. C.; F. Z. S., (Speaker); Hon. K. N. R. HUSBANDS, J. P., (Minister of Agriculture Science and Technology); Hon. c. E. TALMA, Minister of Health and Social Welfare); Mr. J. W. CORBIN. J. P. Mr. R. St. C. WEEKES, J. P.; Mr. W. R. LOWE, J. P.; Hon. N. W. BOXILL, (Minister of Labour, National, Insurance and Housing); Mr. W. C. B. HINDS; Mi. C, A. E, HOPPIN, J. P. Mr. J. B. SPRINGER; Mr. H. B. St. JOHN, Q. C., (Leader of the Opposition).

Prayers were read.

Mr. CRAIG entered the Chamber and took his seat.

Mr. SPEAKER:

As hon. members have been notified, this is a Special Meeting of the House.

GOVERNMENT NOTICES

Hon. C. E. TALMA:

Mr. Speaker, I beg to give notice of a Resolution to grant the sum of \$2,370 from the Consolidated Fund and place it at the disposal of the Government to supplement the Estimates 1970-71, Part I - Current, as shown in the Supplementary Estimates 1970-71, No. 9.

Hon. K. N. R. HUSBANDS:

Mr. Speaker, I beg to give notice of a Resolution to approve the Order entitled "The Sugar Industry (Rehabilitation, Price Stabilization and Labour Welfare) Order, 1970. "

Hon. C. E. TALMA:

Mr. Speaker, I am asking leave to deal with¹ these two Resolutions in all their stages at today's sitting. You will recall that this is a Special Meeting of the House specifically summoned to deal with these matters. .

Mr. SPEAKER:

The hon. Acting Leader of the House is asking leave to deal with these Resolutions in all their stages today, and if there is no objection, leave will be granted.

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

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

Hon. C. E. TALMA:

Mr Speaker, I beg to move that Standing Orders Nos, 5, 14, 16, 18, 19, 40 and 45 be suspended for the remainder of today's sitting.

Hon. K. N. R. HUSBANDS:

I beg to second that.

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

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES

Hon. C. E. TALMA:

Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that the hon. junior member for St. George be appointed to act as Chairman of Committees during the temporary absence of the Chairman of Committees.

Hon. K. N. R. HUSBANDS:

I beg to second that.

The question was put and resolved in affirmative without division.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

Mr. SPEAKER:

Order No. 1 stands in the name of the Hon. Leader of the House to move the House into Committee of Supply to consider the grant of sums of money for the service of the Island.

Hon. C. E. TALMA:

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

Hon. K. N. R. HUSBANDS:

I beg to second that.

The question was put and resolved in the affirmative without division, and Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair and the House went into Committee of Supply, Mr. HOPPIN in the Chair.

SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES 1970-71 No. 9

Hon. C. E. TALMA:

Mr. Chairman, I am asking leave to take charge of this Order standing in the name of the Hon. Minister of Finance.

Mr. CHAIRMAN:

The Hon. Acting Leader of the House is asking leave to take charge of this Order, and if there is no objection, leave will be granted.

There being no objection, leave is granted.

Hon. C. E. TALMA:

Mr. Chairman, this is a Resolution for the sum of \$2,370 to make provision for the payment of the former Clerk of the House of Assembly. The Addendum states that because of the abolition of the office of Clerk of the House of Assembly with effect from 12th November, 1970 by virtue Of the bringing into operation of the Parliament (Debates and Establishment) Act 1970 on that day, there is now no provision from which the former Clerk of the House who was granted three months¹ leave with pay as from 1st November, 1970, can be paid in respect of the remainder of the period of his leave This Resolution seeks the provision of the amount of \$2,370 required as pay in lieu of leave for the former Clerk of the House. I think the Resolution speaks for itself.

I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass. Hon. K. N. R. HUSBANDS:

I beg to second that.

Mr. CRAIG:

Mr. Chairman, I would like the Acting Leader of the House to tell this Committee if the former Clerk of the House would no longer be having his leave and is taking this money in lieu of leave which would give him this lump sum, or if he is going to be given this lump sum of \$2,370 and still be entitled to leave.

Hon. C. E. TALMA:

Mr. Chairman, the former Clerk will be in receipt of his normal pay, and this is to make provision to give him his regular salary up to the end of his leave; so he will get his leave and his salary. The question of compensation for the Clerk is being worked out. At the last meeting of the Debates Committee this question was being looked into, and the former clerk will be entitled to full pension rights for fifteen years of service, or to a reduced pension and a gratuity.

Mr. CRAIG:

Have you arrived at what gratuity he will get or is this being worked out? He must be paid for each year of service. Has this yet been done?

CHAIRMAN:

; It I may interrupt the hon. member, we are only considering pay in lieu of leave for the former Clerk. I think the Addendum sets out what the hon. member is asking.

Mr. HINDS:

Mr. Chairman, I should like to enquire if this amount of money is going to be paid to the former Clerk in equal monthly instalments or whether he is going to be paid a lump sum.

Hon. C. E. TALMA:

As far as I am aware, it will be paid on a monthly basis,

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

3. 25 p.m.

On motion the of Hon. C. E. TALMA, seconded by Hon. K. N. R. HUSBANDS, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported the passing of one Resolution in Committee of Supply, and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

On separate motions of Hon. C. E. TALMA, seconded by Hon. K. N. R. HUSBANDS, the Resolution was read a first and second time and agreed to.

RESOLUTION THAT "THE SUGAR INDUSTRY (REHABILITATION, PRICE STABILIZATION AND LABOUR WELFARE) ORDER, 1970" BE APPROVED

Mr. SPEAKER:

The next Order of the day is in the name of the hon. senior member for St. Peter, the Minister of Agriculture, and it is to move the passing of a Resolution to approve the Order entitled "The Sugar Industry (Rehabilitation, Price Stabilization and Labour Welfare) Order, 1970".

Hon. K. N. R. HUSBANDS:

Mr. Speaker, Sir, in moving this Resolution I regret that we had to call the House back at this time, but this Order must be approved annually before the 30th day of November in every year. The House was adjourned until December 8, but it was not then foreseen that we had to come back to have this

Order approved. This is an annual Resolution and it is almost by way of routine; this year no change is being made in relation to the order as it stood last year. As hon. members well know, we have fallen below the average price of sugar in the preceding five years, and so there is no addition to be made to the Labour Welfare Fund.

I do not know if I should attempt to go into the way these levies are being fixed; the present method of fixing the levies is based on an arrangement agreed upon between the Barbados Sugar Producers' Association and the Barbados Workers Union in respect of the years 1956-58 and thereafter, until revised. Since then, arrangements have been agreed upon for meeting the costs of a Severance Payments Scheme and a Provident Fund Scheme.

The rates fixed for 1969 were as follows: -

\$

(i) Capital Rehabilitation Fund 4.80

(ii) Price Stabilization Reserve Fund 2.55

(iii) Labour Welfare Fund

(a) Basic Levy \$4.80

(b) Severance payments Fund. 05

(c) Provident Fund 1.00 5.85

13.20

The basic levy of \$13. 20 is authorised by the Sugar Industry (Rehabilitation, Price Stabilization and Labour Weljs) Act, 1947 (1947-13), for the credit of the three funds. The Price Stabilization Fund was reduced by 40 per ton in the years 1956 to 1960 and by \$100 per ton from 1961 to accommodate the Provident Fund Levy for sugar workers.

In 1964 and 1965 the Price Stabilization Fund was further reduced by 50 per ton and in 1966, 1968 and 1969 by 30, 63 and 5 per ton, respectively, while the Labour Welfare Fund Levy was increased by similar amounts to accommodate the Severance Payments Scheme. The purpose of the reduction in the Price Stabilization Fund Levy and the increase in the Labour Welfare Fund Levy was to provide for

advances made from the Price Stabilization Fund and more recently from the Labour Welfare Fund for making severance payments to be refunded. The Sugar Factory Workers Severance Payments Act, 1965, as amended in 1967 to enable advances for making Severance Payments to be made from the Labour Welfare Fund instead of from the Price Stabilization Fund, but adjustments in the levies are still made since it is not intended that the Labour Welfare Fund should meet the cost of severance payments from the existing basic levy.

The Ministry of Agriculture has been advised that it is not expected that there will be any calls on the Severance Payments Fund which will necessitate any advances to be made from the Labour Welfare Fund for making payments under the Severance Payments Scheme this year.

An Above Average Levy payable to the Labour Welfare Fund is levied when the crop produced exceeds the average for the previous five years. The rate of levy is calculated to yield to the equivalent of a levy of \$1.80 per ton on the negotiated price quota under the Commonwealth Sugar Agreement. The 1970 crop of 153,922.78 tons has fallen below the average (173,218.88 tons) for the preceding five years, consequently there can be no above-average levy.

A Marginal Difference Levy is raised for the benefit of the Labour Welfare Fund when in any year the average price to the producer is the same as or greater than the negotiated price. Up until 1964 the rate of levy was determined by the level of the index figure produced by the price fixing formula of the Commonwealth Sugar Agreement - that: figure being based on a base year, the latest being the year 1958. By agreement, in any year that the average price to the producer falls below the negotiated price the "marginal difference" is waived to the extent necessary to eliminate the difference between the average return to producers on all sugars sold at the negotiated price. Where the amount of the "marginal difference" is insufficient for this purpose, the adverse balance (calculated on the basis of the production figure for the year in which the shortfall occurred) is carried forward. 3.35 p.m.

It is proposed that -

(a) the rates of levy to be imposed on sugar and fancy molasses manufactured during 1970 should be \$13. 20 per ton and 290 wine gallons respectively;

(b) all moneys received by the Sugar Production and Export Control Board by way of these levies should be allocated by the Board as follows: -

per ton sugar and per 290 wine gallons of fancy molasses

(i) to the Capital Rehabi- \$

litation Reserve Fund 4. 80

(ii) to the Price Stabilization Reserve Fund 2. 69

(iii) to the Crown in Right of its Government of the Island for the Labour Welfare Fund

(a) from basic levy \$4.80

(b) from Provident Fund levy 1.00 5.80

13.20

That, Mr. Speaker, is how things stand at the moment, because there is no above-average price for the last five years.

I beg to move that the Resolution do now pass. Hon. C. E. TALMA:

I beg to second that.

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

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. SPEAKER:

There is no other business; this is a Special Meeting and the House therefore, remains adjourned to that day on which it had previously been adjourned, that is, Tuesday, 8th December, 1970, at twelve noon. 3.40 p.m.

