
THE SENATE DEBATES

(OFFICIAL REPORT)

FIRST SESSION 1991 - 96

SENATE

Wednesday, December 15, 1993

The Senate met in the Senate Chamber, Parliament Buildings, on Wednesday, December 15, 1993, at 10.15 a.m.

PRESENT

His Honour Senator M. deL. JORDAN, (President);
Senator the Honourable L. V. H. LEWIS (Minister of the Environment, Housing and Lands) (Leader of the Senate);

Senator A. J. N. PHILLIPS;

Senator the Honourable Dr. C. D. CLARKE
(Minister of State, Ministry of Economic Affairs (Deputy Leader of the Senate);

Senator Mrs. M. BARKER-WELCH;

Senator Dr. E. A. SIMMONS;

Senator Mrs. A. STRAUGHN, G.C.M.;

Senator Mrs. M. WALCOTT, S.C.M.;

Senator J. A. F. COLE;

Senator T. E. BARKER.

Prayers were led by Fr. Errington Massiah.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

SENATOR THE HON. L. V. H. LEWIS: Mr. President, I wish to move the First Reading of a Bill entitled an Act to authorise the payment of a gratuity and pension to former handicraft workers, and secondly, a Bill to authorise the payment of a gratuity and pension to Frank Neville Watson.

I beg to move that these two Bills be read a first time.

The question was put to the Senate and agreed to.

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDER

SENATOR THE HON. L. V. H. LEWIS: Mr. President, I am reminded of the necessity to move the suspension of Standing Order 45(2) to enable the Honourable Senate to deal with both these Bills during today's sitting.

The question was put to the Senate and agreed to.

PUBLIC BUSINESS

ORDER NO. 1 - THE HANDICRAFT WORKERS PENSIONS BILL, 1993

SENATOR THE HON. L. V. H. LEWIS: Mr. President, this Bill and the other one before us represent the culmination of a long series of discussions which have been taking place as a consequence of the folding up, so to speak, of the Handicraft Division of the former Industrial Development Corporation.

These three employees, namely, Mr. Gené Brereton, Mrs. Arlene Bourne-Welch and Miss Ione Butcher, are now being compensated in relation to services which they rendered to that Corporation. In the case of Miss Butcher and Mr. Brereton, they are receiving now the full pension based on emoluments which they earned, amounting to \$19 452 per annum, and in the case of Mrs. Arlene Bourne-Welch in respect of 296 months of service up to the point of time when she ceased to be employed by the IDC.

Under normal circumstances these pensions would have been paid automatically, but with the abandonment of the offices it becomes necessary for a special Pensions

Act to be passed to enable us to pay pensions to these handicraft workers. The other one is similar, but we will deal with that as we come to it.

The calculations for the pensions are based on a presumption that if they had been in the Public Service under Civil Establishment General Orders, they would have been entitled to salary at a certain level. What happened in fact is that the office of Craft Supervisor had been omitted from the Civil Establishment General Order 1990 when it was revoked and hence the post of Craft Supervisor was abolished. That is why it is necessary for us to have this special Pensions Bill called the Handicraft Workers Pensions Bill, which will now authorise the payment of a gratuity and pension to these former handicraft workers.

I beg to move that this Bill be read a second time.

The question was put to the Senate and agreed to.

SENATOR THE HON. L. V. H. LEWIS: Mr. President, this Bill has been certified as a money Bill and I beg to move that it be read a third time.

The question was put to the Senate and agreed to.

SENATOR THE HON. L. V. H. LEWIS: Mr. President, I beg to move that this Bill be now passed and cited as the Handicraft Workers Pensions Act, 1993.

The question was put to the Senate and agreed to.

ORDER NO. 2 – THE WATSON PENSION BILL, 1993

SENATOR THE HON. L. V. H. LEWIS: Mr. President, Frank Neville Watson was also a Craft Supervisor at the Barbados Industrial Development Corporation. It was realised when Mr. Watson retired that the payment of retiring benefits, if calculated on the basis of the Pensions Act, would put him at a disadvantage compared with the pension he would have received had he held office with the IDC and it be based on the salary he had been receiving from the IDC, because at the time when the post was on the Civil Establishment it was at a different salary level. Originally his pension emoluments were calculated and it was realised, after consultation with the Auditor General and others, that rather than disadvantage Mr. Watson it was desirable that a Pensions Act be brought to Parliament.

10.25 a.m.

There was a difference between Mr. Watson's benefit using the Civil Service salary of \$10 289.84 and that of the IDC salary which would have been \$14 550. Mr. Watson was the most senior of the 4 employees and it was felt that if his Civil Service post salary was used he would be disadvantaged vis-a-vis the 3 other employees.

After advice from the legal officers and after being shown the position by the Accountant General, the Ministry of the Civil Service recommended as a consequence of the abolition of Mr. Watson's post and the problems relating to the payment of salary to him that consideration should be given to basing his pension on the IDC salary of \$14 550. That is exactly what this Bill before us seeks to do, which turns out that he will receive a gratuity of \$60 625 and during his lifetime an annual reduced pension of \$14 550 with effect from January 1993.

I beg to move that this Bill be read a second time.

The question was put and agreed to.

On separate motions of Senator the Hon. L. V. H. LEWIS the Bill was read a third time and passed.

SEASON'S GREETINGS

SENATOR THE HON. L. V. H. LEWIS: Mr. President, this is the time of the year when we usually send festive greetings to all Honourable Members of Senate and to all members of the staff who have served us so faithfully during the year. It is unlikely that there will be another meeting of the Senate before the Christmas festivities descend upon us and I wish to take this opportunity on behalf of all members of the Senate to wish each and all of us and the staff of Parliament especially the best wishes and good tidings and greetings of the season: a season when peace reigns, a season when all persons are reminded of their Creator and a season after which many of us make promises, pledges at the time of the New Year and rekindle ourselves to meet the challenges of the New Year.

I wish on this occasion to express the sentiments which are connected with the season.

We had hoped today to pay tribute to those members of the Senate who were recently the recipients of National Honours. Unfortunately, we are not able to do that and I believe that at our first meeting in the coming year we will do so.

ADJOURNMENT

SENATOR THE HON. L. V. H. LEWIS: With those very brief comments, I wish to move that this Senate be now adjourned *sine die*.

SENATOR T. E. BARKER: Mr. President, I just want on behalf of my colleague and members of this side to extend the best of the season to all members of the Senate, to the staff of the Senate and also to the staff in the dining room. I want to extend the best wishes to them and

to thank them very much for the courtesies and care that they have given us during the past year and I look forward to a new year with optimism.

I look forward to locking horns again with members on the other side and I can assure them that I will spare no quarter. I ask none and I give none. I want them to know I like to think that I am working on behalf of the people and when I say things I know that it is taken in good spirit; although at times maybe I mashed the crease once or twice; but that happens, Sir, sometimes. I just wish that members on the other side would also confess – since this is the spirit of good will – as to their misdeeds.

Sir, I want to wish you and all of us the best for the season and I want to admonish all of us that we should

remember the reason for the season and that we should find our way to the cradle, so to speak, and make sure that the true spirit of Christ is in Christmas and not too much of the other spirit. Sir, I look forward to January and hope the Senate will continue to work on behalf of the people of Barbados as it was mandated to. Thank you, Sir.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Thank you very much for your kind wishes. I, too, should like to reciprocate and I very much wish every member of Parliament a very blessed Christmas tide, filled as you said with the spirit of the Christ Child.

The question that the Senate do now adjourn sine die was put to the Senate and agreed to and Mr. PRESIDENT adjourned the Senate accordingly.
10.35 a.m.

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2. The Watson Pension Bill, 1993.

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDER

SENATOR THE HON. L. V. H. LEWIS 1568

Suspension of Standing Order 45(2) for the remainder of the sitting.

PUBLIC BUSINESS

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Senator the Hon. L. V. H. Lewis, 1568.

ORDER NO. 2 – THE WATSON PENSION BILL, 1993, ... 1569

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SPEAKERS IN THIS ISSUE

BARKER, Senator T. E.
LEWIS, Senator the Hon. L. V. H.