

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

Tuesday, 12th December, 1944

The Council met at 12 noon, His Excellency the Governor, Sir Gordon Lethem, K.C.M.G., President, in the Chair.

PRESENT:

The President, His Excellency the Governor, Sir Gordon Lethem, K.C.M.G.

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary, Mr. W. L. Heape, C.M.G.

The Hon. the Attorney-General, Mr. E. O. Pretheroe, M.C., K.C.

The Hon. the Colonial Treasurer, Mr. E. F. McDavid, C.B.E.

The Hon. E. G. Woolford, O.B.E., K.C. (New Amsterdam).

The Hon. J. A. Luckhoo, K.C. (Nominated).

The Hon. C. V. Wight (Western Essequibo).

The Hon. J. I. de Aguiar (Central Demerara).

The Hon. H. N. Critchlow (Nominated).

The Hon. M. B. G. Austin, O.B.E. (Nominated).

The Hon. F. Dias, O.B.E. (Nominated).

The Hon. Percy C. Wight, O.B.E. (Georgetown Central).

The Hon. J. Gonsalves, O.B.E. (Georgetown South).

The Hon. J. B. Singh, O.B.E. (Demerara-Essequibo).

The Hon. Peer Bacchus (Western Berbice).

The Hon. H. C. Humphrys, K.C. (Eastern Demerara).

The Hon. C. R. Jacob (North Western District).

The Hon. J. W. Jackson, O.B.E. (Nominated).

The Hon. A. M. Edun (Nominated).

The Hon. V. Roth (Nominated).

The Hon. C. P. Ferreira (Berbice River).

The Clerk read prayers.

The minutes of the meeting of the Council held on the 7th December, 1944, as printed and circulated, were taken as read and confirmed.

PAPERS LAID

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Mr. W. L. Heape) laid on the table the following documents:—

Report of the Transport and Harbours Department for the year 1943.

Report of the Department of Agriculture for the year 1943.

Report of the Colonial Audit Department for the year 1943.

Copy of a Resolution passed at a General Meeting of the British Guiana Teachers' Association held on 28th October, 1944, expressing the Association's appreciation and thanks for the improved salary scales recently approved for Primary Schools Teachers in the Colony.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

TRANSPORT & HARBOURS (AMENDMENT)
ORDINANCE

The PRESIDENT: Before proceeding with the Order of the Day I have one or two comments to make. One is as regards legislation passed at a recent meeting of Council—the Transport and Harbours Ordinance (Amendment) Bill. After further consideration of the papers and discussion in Executive Council I have assented to the Bill. I have satisfied myself as to the fairness of the procedure which will now become possible. There will be General Orders to be approved by me either precisely the same or as near as possible analogous to Colonial Regulations and to General Orders of the Colony, which are in accord with Colonial Regulations issued by the Secretary of State. Colonial Regulations are the result of many many years' experience. The procedure will be in the common interest of good discipline in the Department and the interest of the employees.

FRANCHISE

With regard to the subject of Franchise mentioned at the last meeting, I have had a telegram from the Secretary of State confirming what I had imagined would have been the case—an Order in Council dealing with the question of Membership of this Council and our own Ordinance dealing with Election, the qualification of Electors and the procedure of elections. I said last week that I would appoint a small Committee of three Members of this Council to consider what amendments of or additions to existing Regulations are wanted to carry through the new procedure of the new franchise. I have asked the hon. the Fourth Nominated Member, Mr. J. A. Luckhoo, to be in charge of that Committee with the hon. Member for Eastern Demerara (Mr. Humphrys) and the hon. Member for

Essequibo River (Mr. Lee) as members, and they have agreed to serve for that purpose.

HOURS OF SITTING

Now we have the question of the hours of this Council to be decided. As hon. Members know, we sounded Members of Council individually and a very substantial majority — sixteen — are agreeable to the hours suggested—2 to 4 in the afternoon and 8.30 to 10.30 in the evening. Only a small number is pressing either for the old hours or the hours we are having now. I propose on adjournment today to adjourn to 2 o'clock tomorrow afternoon.

EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

During the last day or two I had a look at the position touching educational development, and I got from the Director of Education how the position stands. He supplied me with this note:

“The Educational Development Committee appointed by His Excellency the Governor to consider Mr. Hammond's Memoranda on Education in British Guiana has had a very onerous task to perform, but in spite of this the Chairman is pleased to be able to report that nine out of the eleven sub-committees have now completed their deliberations.

“The sub-committees have dealt with the following aspects of the Memoranda:—

Reorganization—report is completed;
Building Programme — report is completed (Application has gone forward for funds.)

Dual Control of Schools—report not completed;

Books and Stationery—report completed;

Teachers' Housing — report completed;
(Funds already granted);

Training of Teachers—report completed;
Prevocational Training—Supervising

Teachers—4-H Clubs—report completed;

School Meals — report completed (Application for funds in preparation);
Secondary Schools—report not completed;

Vocational Training (Non-Agricultural) Men — report completed (Application for funds gone forward);

Vocational Training (Women)—report completed (Application for funds actually approved).

"It is therefore seen that only two sub-committees dealing with "Secondary Schools" and "Dual Control" respectively still have to report.

"The special Committee appointed to deal with Teachers' Salaries submitted its recommendations to Government and these with the concurrence of the Secretary of State received the approval of the Legislative Council on 6th October, 1944.

"Up to the present the following grants have been approved by the Secretary of State in addition to several of minor importance:—

Teachers' Housing—\$125,000.

Vocational Training (Women)—\$31,200
and applications for financial aid have gone forward or are now being submitted to the Secretary of State in respect of—

Building Programme—\$200,000 per annum for six years totalling \$1,200,000;

Books and Stationery—The actual amount not yet decided on;
School Meals—The actual amount not yet decided on;

Vocational Training (Non-Agricultural)—Men—The actual amount not yet decided on.

"As soon as all the sub-committees have completed their work, Government intends to print the final report for general information."

Some of the minor projects, hon. Members are possibly aware of are—

Institution of Evening Class at Carnegie Trade Centre—£625;

Song books, school libraries and cupboards—£1,000;

Film projector for Queen's College—£295.

As regards the provision of "Song books, school libraries and cupboards," the matter is still under discussion in connexion with a larger project. On the general question of Education and that very difficult question—one of the most difficult we have before us — the financing of the Educational programme, one or two aspects I have mentioned in Council, I have just now received further correspondence from the Secretary of State and I hope in due course to be able to publish it for the information of Members of Council. That cannot be immediately but I hope to be able to do it very soon.

As regards the provision of "Song books, school libraries and cupboards," Head by Head. The fullest opportunity will be given Members afterwards for discussion of a general character. So I call upon the hon. Treasurer now, as I expect he desires to do, to move that the Council proceed into Committee.

ORDER OF THE DAY

ESTIMATES, 1945.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: (Mr. McDavid): I move that the Council resolve itself into Committee to consider the Estimates of Expenditure to be defrayed from Revenue during the year ending 31st December, 1945.

Mr. JACOB: I do not know whether you will rule me out of order!

The PRESIDENT: A motion has been moved but not yet seconded.

Mr. J. A. LUCKHOO: I second the motion.

The PRESIDENT: Now the hon. Member may speak.

Mr. JACOB : I think it is the custom in this Council for Members to speak on the Budget proposals first, and further it had been the custom—I think Your Excellency has changed it—to get some pronouncement from the Chair as to the plans of Government for the next year. It would seem that you are not in favour of even Members having the opportunity of discussing the Budget proposals. They have been framed by Government. They have been put forward here and, as indicated by you, Members will not have an opportunity of discussing or saying anything on the proposals made.

The PRESIDENT: That is quite wrong. What I said was, there will be ample opportunity for the fullest discussion. What I am anxious to do is to get on with the business in a practical manner—to consider the Estimates in front of us Head by Head. There will be ample opportunity for consideration of the Budget Statement at a later stage when we move the approval of the Committee's Report on the Estimates.

Mr. JACOB: If I may disagree with you, the Budget proposals have certain things that Members will not have any opportunity of discussing under any particular head. They are so wide and varied. If Your Excellency wants to conduct the business of this Council in an arbitrary way, you can rule me out of order, but to my mind it is a retrograde step to attempt to prevent Members debating on the Budget proposals.

The PRESIDENT: I again most flatly deny that. There will be no stopping of Members from discussing the Budget proposals. If Members of Council like to take the present opportunity of discussing them, they may do so. It rests with the Council. I made a suggestion as to what may be the most expeditious way of proceeding, but the Council is at liberty to have a long discussion now and to have another no doubt after.

Mr. JACOB : I have made my suggestion. I have got my notes and ask that I be given an opportunity to speak on the Budget proposals now.

The PRESIDENT: It rests entirely with the Council. If Members desire, they may refuse the motion and go on discussing the motion as it stands, but most Members may prefer to proceed in Committee.

Mr. WOOLFORD: May I again remind the hon. Member that he is not very sparing in lecturing Members in this Council from time to time — of course he has the right to do so—but again he has lost the opportunity, which he has in addressing the Council first, by not moving the adjournment at the conclusion of the hon. the Colonial Treasurer's statement. That would have given him the right to speak and the right to debate the Budget. I have previously suggested that course. I know it has general approval in the procedure in other places. It has been done here over and over again, and I am rather surprised at the hon. Member forgetting that he has that right. If he wishes now he can move that the Council adjourn. I do not want to protect the President in any way. The hon. Member is complaining that he is being prevented from doing something when he himself is overlooking his right to do that something in certain circumstances.

The PRESIDENT: My position is, I will proceed to put the question and if it is not accepted by the Council then we will resume this debate. I therefore propose to put the question and if it is passed then proceed in Committee to consider the Estimates head by head. Question put, and the Council divided and voted as follows:—

For: Messrs. Ferreira, Roth, Jackson, Peer Bacchus, Percy C. Wight, Dias, Austin, Critchlow, de Aguiar, J. A. Luckhoo, Woolford, the Colonial Treasurer, the Attorney-General and the Colonial Secretary—14.

Against: Mr. Jacob—1.

Did not vote: Mr. Edun—1.

Motion carried.

The Council resolved itself into Committee and proceeded to consider the Estimates.

GOVERNOR.

Mr. JACOB: Sir, I take it—

The CHAIRMAN: I must have something put forward before the hon. Member can speak.

Mr. JACOB: The whole thing is a laughing stock.

Mr. de AGUIAR: The hon. Member makes it so.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: I invite the attention of Council to the first page of the Estimates in order to move the approval of the items shown therein. I should like to say that item (a) "The Governor" and item (d) "Allowances" along with other items which appear in other parts of the Estimates will have to be amended in accordance with the Civil List Amendment Ordinance which the Council recently enacted. I do not propose to move the actual amounts because I do not think it is necessary, but I will indicate in each case the amendment in proper form when the Estimates have been revised.

(b) *Clerical Establishment.*

There is one item (b) "Clerical Establishment", the second item on the page, which is embodied in practically every departmental head. That follows the procedure, which we adopted some two or three years ago, of showing the details of the Clerical Establishment in the Appendix. Last year, after we had gone through the Estimates, I invited the Council to consider the Appendix. I think that was putting the cart before

the horse. I will, with your permission, since item (b) under head I is really the first to be considered, invite the Council to turn at once to Appendix K—General Clerical Establishment—on page 52 and the succeeding pages, where the allocation of the staff is shown. Possibly we may get through the whole of that at once, so that whenever the item "Clerical Establishment" appears in the departmental votes to be passed they can be passed without further discussion.

The CHAIRMAN: That suggestion by the hon. Treasurer, it seems, may help in expeditiously dealing with that item. If hon. Members are agreeable I ask Council to look at Appendix K.

Mr. de AGUIAR: I do not think I can really accept that suggestion by the hon. the Colonial Treasurer. It might be an expeditious way of dealing with the Estimates as a whole, but after all Appendix K merely gives the number of Officers and the status of the Officers and their allocation.

The CHAIRMAN: Then we will take the item under the different heads as we go along.

Mr. de AGUIAR: I am afraid it may be very difficult for Members to follow the Clerical Establishment merely by reference to Appendix K, without having the financial implication.

The CHAIRMAN: We have to do that head by head, and it may be useful for the hon. Treasurer to elucidate what he has done.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: I do not quite agree with the hon. Member. I think he is mistaken. The first page of Appendix K contains a summary of the Establishment as a whole, whereas on the next two pages is shown the distribution of the staff in each Department and under each head, and on the other page is shown the tentative allocation of the charges against each head which appears in each

departmental vote. So the hon. Member need have no fear. Each item will in turn come forward, but in order to get a proper picture it is desirable that we should look at the picture on the whole as shown in Appendix K on page 52 — the Summary. If hon. Members look at the footnote they would observe first of all that there is going to be an increase, if the Estimates approved, of 31 clerks on the total General Clerical Establishment. That is to say, 21 Class II and 12 Typist Clerical Assistants have been added while 12 Class I posts have been abandoned because it is proposed in every Department to substitute a Senior Clerk post for those clerkships. The increases are shown on page 54. If hon. Members look at the first two columns — Authorised Staff, 1944, and Proposed Staff, 1945, respectively — they will be able to see the comparison of the total numerical strength. For example under the Head we are now considering — Governor — there are four clerks for 1944 and the same for 1945 allocated as follows:—Class I — 1, Grade A — 1 and Typist Clerical Assistants — 2. The next Head — Colonial Secretary's Office — it will be seen has 26 clerks for 1944 and 29 for 1945, an increase therefore of three (3). The Agricultural Department has an increase of one, while the Audit Department has a reduction of two for the reason that 1 Chief Clerk and 1 Senior Clerk have been substituted for 2 Class I clerks. The Education Department has an increase of four; Queen's College, an increase of one, the Forest Department, a reduction of one merely because one of the staff has now become a Technical Assistant and therefore is not a Clerical Officer; Local Government, an increase of five; Medical — Hospitals, a reduction of one merely because the status of the particular clerk has been changed to Hospital Clerk and he is therefore no longer in the General Clerical Service; Police Department, an increase of one; Post Office Department, an increase of six; Public Works Department in its two sections, — Public Works and

Drainage & Irrigation — an increase of nine altogether; Registration, Births and Deaths, an increase of one; Supreme Court, an increase of one; Treasury, an increase of three, making a net total increase of 31.

I ask hon. Members to return to the footnote (3) on page 52 which states "Status of 9 Class II Clerks improved to Class I . . ." That is a special provision which Government has made in the reclassification scheme. We have laid it down that where Class II Clerks who have proved to be of exceptional merit and are given duties which are of a higher nature and not commensurate with their salaries this Government must take special steps to invite this Council to improve their status. That is proposed in these estimates. Provision is made for 9 Class II Clerks in various Departments to go to Class I. The last foot-note (6) records that Government has decided to award additional increments to the normal increments to 12 Class I and 4 Grade A Clerks. The reason why that note is specifically put is because the actual normal increments should be provided for. I propose always to record that when it is being done. Comparison in the total amounts voted — \$325,145 in 1944 and \$380,688 to be voted for 1945 — does not show any extraordinary increase. In fact the increase is really greater because some of it appears in the new Senior Clerk posts which have been substituted in the main departmental estimates. So the difference between these two figures represents the cost of normal increments to the ordinary staff and the cost of the new posts created less the cost of those Senior posts.

I hope to get an expression of opinion from this Council as to this increase of staff, because as we go on from estimate to estimate it may not be convenient to revert back to these increases in the Clerical Staff. I said in the Budget Statement that the work of Government cannot be carried on at the present time unless it gets an adequate staff. The Departments are cry-

ing out for increased staff, and sometimes it is found very difficult to meet their wishes. I say that because I am in the unfortunate position of being Chairman of the Appointments and Promotions Board. Requests have been made for Senior Clerks but there are not enough to go around. We try very hard to expand the staff from the bottom up and to train as many as we can before allocation. Lastly on Page 55 there is a statement showing the tentative allocation of total charges for the General Clerical Establishment under the various departmental heads. That is the position of the Clerical staff. I would suggest if hon. Members have anything to say about them they should do so now.

Mr. JACOB: I would like to draw your attention to the Order of the Day which states: "The Council to resume the debate on the following motion:—

"That this Council approves the Estimates of Expenditure to be defrayed from Revenue during the year ending 31st December, 1945, which have been laid on the table."

The CHAIRMAN: The Council is now in Committee. The motion approving has passed.

Mr. JACOB: I wish to say that by Your Excellency's ruling I was precluded from speaking on this motion and by the attitude Your Excellency has adopted the Council is in Committee. Of course the majority of the Council voted, and one Member did not know where to vote. I was the only Member who voted against this procedure. I think the whole thing is wrong. It is worse than dictatorship.

The CHAIRMAN: I am sorry I have to rule the hon. Member out of order. The Council with a single vote against decided to go into Committee. We are now in Committee on head I. Hon. Members have been asked, if they like, to discuss the general question of the Clerical Establishment while under

this head and, therefore, the hon. Member must confine his remarks to that. The hon. Member will have ample opportunity, as I said before, to discuss the motion later.

Mr. JACOB: I am submitting, sir, that the President with all his powers cannot rule against ordinary procedure, and I am protesting against that.

The CHAIRMAN: Will you please sit down. Does any Member wish to discuss the question of the Clerical Establishment?

Mr. FERREIRA: There have been some unfortunate incidents in the past, and the Public Works Department and the Advisory Committee have from time to time drawn Government's attention to the fact that the staffing of that Department is not what it should be. We have had an explanation from the Colonial Treasurer, but the position remains most unfortunate. In Berbice, and I think in Essequibo, we have posts held by junior officers. In Berbice, an officer in receipt of a salary in the vicinity of \$37 to \$48 per month virtually runs the office, because the Engineer certainly cannot carry out the duties he is supposed to. The district is much too large for him and he must rely on somebody. He has to rely on a clerical assistant drawing \$40 per month who has to handle thousands of dollars. I think it is most unfortunate that that should be, because I cannot believe that Government cannot improve the status and pay a man for the responsibility which he carries.

If in the Service there is no staff to carry out these duties. I think Government should look outside for men and pay them salaries commensurate with the jobs they have to do. If it is Government's intention to carry on in this manner it is asking for trouble and it will get trouble. Unfortunately, only occasionally there comes to light some scandal or some disaster, but these things have been happening for years.

I am asking that this matter be given serious thought. I speak particularly of Berbice because I have first-hand experience. I know what is happening there, and I feel that the same thing is happening in other parts of the Colony. I trust that the Chairman of the Advisory Committee, who has just come in, will strengthen the arguments I have put up.

Mr. de AGUIAR: I do not propose to raise any question with regard to any particular Department. On the general question I have been trying to obtain information, but the last speaker did not carry on as long as I had hoped. What I am concerned about is the number of officers on secondment. On page 53, Appendix K, it will be seen that the authorized staff in 1943 was 377; in 1944 it was 402, and in 1945 it is proposed to increase it to 433, but actually, if I interpret this statement correctly, there will be 394 on the fixed clerical establishment and 39 employed temporarily in order to fill the places of those officers on secondment. If that is the position it seems to me that 433 is the total strength, but 39 of that number are on secondment elsewhere, and in the meantime 39 substitutes have been taken on.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: If you look at page 53 of the Appendix, which indicates the position today, you will see that the total strength of the clerical staff is 402, but of that number 366 are actually employed in Departments and 39 on military service or war duties. Those latter places have been filled by 39 supernumeraries, and in addition to that, for various reasons Departments have been given authority to employ temporary assistants to the number of 31 men and 22 women. So that there are 455 persons actually employed, although 402 is the authorized number. In 1945 the authorized staff will be increased to 433, but we will have 394 actually employed and 39 places filled by supernumeraries. Extra

personnel may come in from time to time. Many of those new appointments about which I have been talking have been filled by temporary people who will be confirmed in their employment on the permanent staff.

Mr. JACOB: I take it that we are discussing item (b) — Clerical Establishment, \$3,539. I formally move a reduction of the item by \$100 in order to say what I want to say. I understood the Colonial Treasurer to say that it is exceedingly difficult to obtain the necessary staff to carry on the clerical work of Government. I remember this matter coming up in Finance Committee some time ago, and the suggestion was made that if it was impossible to obtain employees within the Service to make up for officers who had resigned or had been seconded elsewhere, Government ought to advertise specifically for the kind of people it wanted. I am sure there is sufficient talent in the Colony, sufficient men with clerical and accounting experience who would be able to assist Government in its predicament.

The present situation is due principally to the system of recruitment of civil servants. For some considerable time a certain set of people have been clamouring that there is far too much favouritism and nepotism in the employment of civil servants, and that the time had come when something ought to be done to have the selection carried out on a wider basis. I think Your Excellency was one who agreed that the selection would be on a wider basis. While something has been done sufficient has not been done to make the community as a whole feel that the youth of the Colony have equal opportunities to enter the Civil Service. I do not know if that is going to be disputed. The fact remains that the Appointments and Promotions Board is not composed of persons who have the confidence of the entire community. I am sorry to say it but it has been told to Government over and

over again. During the last 15 years Government has been told about this method, and now Government finds itself in the position of not having suitable people, and some of the competent people are finding it more profitable to leave the Service and go elsewhere, due to various causes known to the officers of the Government, and particularly to the Treasurer. If he says he does not know then I am going to ask that he look into the matter carefully and listen to everyone who makes complaint and not a particular few, discard some things and have his own way.

Certain things are done as regards employing people that are wholly unbusinesslike and not in the interest of the Government. We have in the Public Works Department an accountant who has absolutely no knowledge of cost accounting, who is an absolute misfit, and who no doubt is unable to go into matters, resulting in what we have seen in the Supreme Court. The whole system of accounting in the Public Works Department is rotten to the core. For years and years Government said it would do something about it. The position is worse today than it was a few years ago, in spite of all that has been and is being done. I do not know what the Advisory Committee is doing. The Chairman will probably say something about it, and I will have something to say on the Public Works Department in general. Not only in the Public Works but in the Service as a whole competent people are disqualified and incompetents selected. There is far too much favouritism and nepotism, resulting in the plain fact now that Government cannot find competent people.

Mr. C. V. WIGHT: The question of the staffing of the Public Works Department seems to have been brought into the debate. The position is that we have appreciated for some time that perhaps there should be officers of higher grade placed in certain positions. In fact the Advisory Committee

has made representations to Government on several occasions in this matter. We have now under consideration, or will have under consideration a letter from the Colonial Secretary which has just been received by me as Chairman, and forwarded by me to the Secretary for consideration by the Advisory Committee, explaining the position. It will no doubt receive early attention.

With regard to the hon. Member's remark that he does not know what the Committee is doing, I will just allow that to slide. The hon. Member does not seem to know what any Committee is doing, but I can assure this Council that the Committee is working and has done a considerable amount of work. It has held regular fortnightly meetings and it is proposed at some time to submit to Government a report on some of the activities of the Department.

With regard to the accounting of the Department I do not think we have any reason to believe that there is anything wrong with the system. The position, as far as we have found, is that the accounting as such is in order. We have under consideration, however, the question whether payments should be made by the Department or through the Treasury. That, of course, is a matter for consideration and decision which has not yet been arrived at.

As regards the point raised by the hon. Member for Central Demerara (Mr. de Aguiar) in relation to the secondment of officers, I agree with him. I think it is time that officers who hold substantive posts return to those posts at the earliest possible moment. There are at the moment too many acting appointments in the Service, and I do not think that makes for efficiency.

Regarding the remarks made about the Appointments and Promotions Board, I thought the hon. Member for New Amsterdam (Mr. Woolford) would have said something. He has

repeatedly made reference to the Board in this Council. When I joined the Council I think it was one of the first speeches I heard him make. I do not know whether he has given it up in disgust but I think there is need for action in that matter. There is no doubt that in the past the criticism of the Board has been justified.

With regard to the Public Works Department I can assure the hon. Member that any remarks he cares to make will be perfectly welcome, and I hope when the proper time arrives I will be able to answer those criticisms. I hope they will be constructive criticisms. Reference to the recent case which has had considerable publicity in the Supreme Court will not help the situation, because there is no system of accounting to my knowledge (I do not know whether the Colonial Treasurer will agree with me) which is fool-proof or is sealed against theft.

Mr. EDUN: The Chairman of the Advisory Committee has just spoken and invited constructive criticism. So far as the clerical branch of the Public Works Department is concerned, I am of the opinion that there is practically no system of allocation of stores and checking of those stores in the various districts. I think that was more or less responsible for the recent occurrences.

The CHAIRMAN: Will you not prefer to deal with that when we come to that head? We are really just having a general discussion. Are there any further general questions touching the establishment?

Mr. JACOB: The only comment I wish to make is that under the head "Governor" we have discussed Public Works and various other things which, to my mind, ought not to have been discussed at all.

The CHAIRMAN: We have dared to do so. I have an amendment that

\$100 be deducted from this vote. Is that amendment pressed? I take it that item 1 (b) should stand as printed.

Item agreed to.

Mr. WOOLFORD: I have been asked to bring to the notice of Government the fact that there have been several appointments of married ladies (I cannot say within what period) to temporary positions in the Service. It requires very strong grounds to justify such appointments when, as soon as a single woman in the Service becomes married, she has to vacate her position. I am speaking of the General Clerical Service and not the specialized Service. Does it not offend against the principle that on first appointment to the Civil Service candidates must be of a certain age? In all these cases these married ladies are bound to be above the entrance age. Am I to understand the Colonial Treasurer when he said that there was some difficulty in filling those posts, to suggest that there were not available single women in the Colony who have made application for entry into the Service and had received letters of acknowledgement stating that their applications would be considered? There has been re-employment of several married ladies recently, and I should like some explanation about that, because there are numbers of single women in great need, who have not fathers, brothers and others to support, them, and to my knowledge they are really competent girls. I would like the position not only explained but defended.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: I do not know whether I heard the hon. Member clearly, but I take it that his complaint was against the re-employment of married ladies in the Government Service.

Mr. WOOLFORD: Not exactly that — the re-engagement where you

led the Council to suppose that it has been found necessary because there are not competent single girls to be so engaged.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: I understand now quite clearly. As far as I know there have been cases of re-employment of one or two experienced married women, more or less immediately after they had left the Service, in particular posts in which efficiency is demanded. This re-employment is, of course, on a temporary basis. One case comes to mind immediately. A very competent stenographer was required at the Secretariat. I do not know what experience the hon. Member has, but I can say that it is extremely difficult to find a suitable person to fill a new appointment as a competent first-class typist or stenographer, and in a few cases married ladies have been re-employed in those special posts on a very temporary basis. I cannot think for a moment that they are in the way of qualified candidates who are seeking permanent employment in the Service. There is not the slightest chance of those married women getting permanent employment. Some of them are employed in war-time organizations where, of course, there is need for competent people at a moment's notice, and where there is no time to train them. In the normal Departments, of course, it is not allowed to re-employ married women. Before entry into the public service a girl is given an opportunity to be employed on probation and to be trained.

Mr. WOOLFORD: I am afraid that reply does not satisfy my curiosity. It has been suggested by the Colonial Treasurer that there was some reason for re-engaging a married woman because she had no hope or expectancy of permanent employment, but there is the case of a single woman who hoped by being temporarily employed to prove her fitness for permanent employment. I hesitate to

speak again but I am satisfied from my own observation that there is substantial cause for complaint.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I think I should explain that if Government suddenly requires clerical assistance it is of no advantage to take on as a stenographer or typist somebody actually new to Government practice and procedure in dealing with files. Sometimes the only practical thing to do is to go outside the Service and take on temporarily or otherwise skilled assistance. The hon. Member for North-Western District (Mr. Jacob) has suggested that Government should go outside the Service. In a few cases we went outside and engaged somebody who had left the Service. Those people are not added to the pensionable staff. If there is sudden pressure in an office you cannot expect your own clerks to train newcomers. The only way to meet that extreme pressure is to get somebody who can come in and work at once. You have no time to train anybody. Cases of re-employment of married women are very rare. One of the cases quoted happens to be in my own office where that has had to be done.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: I would like to add to what I have said. The Post Office Savings Bank is at the moment engaged in its annual stock-taking, when accounts are closed and interest is calculated. I understand that the ladies who work in that Department now work from 8 a.m. until 8 p.m. with an hour's break. I spoke to the Postmaster about that and suggested to him that he is doing his Department no good by insisting on those long overtime hours. He said he did not see a solution. It is true that he got approval for the temporary employment of new hands, but they were quite inexperienced and could not do the work, and there was no time to train them. He put up the proposal that there were a few women who had recently left the Service,

having got married, and who were trained and experienced. Would Government support him in re-employing them temporarily for a month or two to assist in that enormous job? I told him to put his proposal up and if he could find three or four of them I would personally support him. I mention that as an illustration of what sometimes happens. These re-engagements are temporary and are only made in an emergency.

Mr. DIAS: This matter is one which engaged the attention of this Council many years ago, and I am sorry to say that the promise made by Government when Regulations were introduced has not been carried out at all. Regulations are observed in one way and broken in another. What is the good of saying that a woman who gets married must leave the Service because Government does not want married women in the Service, and bringing her back for a month or two after she is married? I have known married women to be in the Service for years. The Colonial Treasurer was wrong when he made the statement that they were only re-employed for a month or two. I think he is very much mistaken. I have not seen the lady lately but I can put my hand on a lady who has been re-employed for a length of time. I have known them to come back after marriage and remain in the employ of Government for years. The Colonial Treasurer, who has to sign the cheques for salaries, must know to whom I am referring. There is more than one married woman in that position. I do not think there is any one of them who has been re-employed for only two months. My point is that if when a woman has to leave the Service when she gets married, why should she come back after marriage?

To say that Government cannot find competent girls to come in and do the work is certainly taking advantage of the situation and giving a very bad name to the young women of the

Colony. I know many of them who are as competent as any others. After all what does a typist do except type what is before her? This thing has been going on. I can quite understand that if a person retired on marriage and became a widow and is to all purposes a single woman again Government taking her on again. Having reverted to her original state she may be employed, but Government should not bring back married women some of whose husbands are in the Government Service, the husband in one Department and the wife in another. That should not be allowed to continue. It is very undesirable. I have heard many such complaints from single girls for years but I said nothing about them. But when the position is to be defended in such a weak way in justification of it, we must rise to defend the other girls who are slandered in the statement that they have not the ability to do the work. Such statements only cause dissatisfaction amongst the people because the facts are not correct. Government has lost many competent girls because the Banks took them away and gave them increased salaries. They came into the Service just like the other girls with the same scholastic qualifications. Government can defend its position as much as it likes, but do not do so by making mis-statements.

Mr. J. A. LUCKHOO: I do not think the case presented by the hon. Member for New Amsterdam has been answered by the hon. the Colonial Treasurer. I think if the policy of Government is to compel the retirement of young ladies who get married, there is no justification for re-employing them even temporarily after marriage. What startles me is this. We are going to spend nearly \$1,000,000 on Education, and the schools are turning out girls holding high certificates who had attended special classes for Short-hand and Typing and even Commercial Book-keeping. I think opportunities ought to be given to those girls to find places even temporarily in the

Service only to prove their worth. I think the re-employment of married ladies, even temporarily, is really blocking the way to those young ladies who have their future before them. I do not think the hon. the Colonial Treasurer has answered the case put by the hon. Member for New Amsterdam.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: I think I am placed in a very awkward position. The hon. the Colonial Secretary can support me by recalling to this Council that on more than one occasion as Chairman of the Appointments Board I have been opposed to appointments such as the hon. Nominated Member, Mr. Luckhoo, complained about. I have tried very hard to carry out the policy of employing young candidates in temporary appointments, but that is always subject to pressure in Departments who have special jobs requiring trained women, someone already trained in the Department. Let me repeat that I entirely agree with what the hon. Member has just stated. I think that is the policy of Government.

Mr. EDUN: May I just point out that in this matter the Deputy President (Mr. Woolford) has spoken and also the hon. the Third and the Fourth Nominated Members, Messrs. F. Dias and J. A. Luckhoo respectively. The first two Members were Members of the Executive Council some years ago and the Hon. J. A. Luckhoo is now a Member of the Executive Council. If you look, sir, at their way of thinking you would consider them to be Conservative Members of this Council, but when they speak in such a way on a measure that portends to destroy a principle then something is radically wrong. I would not have spoken at all except to bring to the attention of this Council the reason why these three Members have spoken so strongly. I can remember, sir, when Government guaranteed that no Pensioners will be re-employed. Last year it was stated here. But when we begin to re-employ pensioners and

when commercial firms begin to employ Government Servants who have been retired out of the Service, then I think we are reaching a stage of bankruptcy of intellect. I do not think Government is serious in this matter when it says that Pensioners should not be re-employed, and I congratulate the three hon. Members who have spoken and so strongly, because this matter has agitated the minds of the people throughout the whole Colony. Why should Civil Servants who are pensioners be re-employed when you have qualified youths just from school ready to take up probationary appointments in this Government? I think it is time enough that something be done, and when those three hon. Members of experience have spoken so strongly this Government ought to sit up and say that from now on it will cut out this practice of re-employing ex-employees.

The CHAIRMAN: I appreciate what hon. Members have said. I think myself there is too much of it, but I do not think we should debate it at length as there are many ways of dealing with that. Having however allowed the discussion I do not want to stop it.

Mr. AUSTIN: These are not normal times we are going through. I think Government has acted wisely in re-employing those experienced ladies on special occasions. From Water Street point of view I can talk, and I do say they have to employ married ladies who had been previously employed, and they cannot do without them at the present time. I know very well that the younger generation are coming on very nicely indeed. They show up well and take a keen interest in the junior branch of the work, but for the moment they cannot do the senior and more responsible work which those, who were married and had left the office for a short time before their return, did so efficiently.

Mr. JACOB: May I just make one point. The hon. the Colonial Treasurer had gone to the pains of stating that pressure is brought to bear on him by the various Departments asking for experienced people. I think there are rules governing the employment of people, and whatever pressure is brought for re-employment the Board should tell the people to keep quiet. I think it is well known among Members that a previous Colonial Secretary told a certain Head of a Department "You must employ So-and-So or you will not get anyone." There are far too many bosses and dictators in this place. I maintain that rules must be carried out as long as they are made, otherwise have no rules or regulations at all and let the people do as they like.

Question "That Head I.—Governor—item (b) Clerical Establishment, stand as presented to Council," put and agreed to.

General Clerical Establishment as detailed in Appendix K of the draft estimates agreed to.

Head I—Governor—agreed to subject to the Colonial Treasurer making such amendments as are in accord with the recently enacted Civil List (Amendment) Ordinance No. 35 of 1944.

LEGISLATURE.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: I would like to ask Council to permit an amendment of the salary scale of the Official Reporters of this Council as shown on the Estimates.—\$1,200 by \$96 to \$1,680. What has been recommended is that these Officers be paid on the same salary scale as Class I Clerks. That is to say the maximum is extended by \$120 to \$1,920. It means there is no change in the figures except in the maximum of the scale as printed in the Estimates.

I would also draw Council's attention to item (d) which is new and is for the re-insertion of the old item of

\$240 as an allowance to the Officer who is performing the duties of Clerk of the Councils. The re-insertion of that allowance will allow of more elasticity in the selection of an Officer for the performance of this particular duty. Sometimes an Officer rather low down in the salary scale is assigned this duty and it is convenient that a special allowance should be granted to the Officer for this very important duty.

Mr. JACOB: I notice in going through the Estimates that this one head has a decrease rather than an increase, and I do not know that Government will be able to say why there has been a change in the Clerk of the Councils and why the estimated salary is now \$1,200 as against \$1,780 in the 1944 Estimate. I know the reason, but I would like to hear it from Government. I ask what is the reason for the change. Just to get it on the records I desire to state that the Debates of this Council have not been printed since December, 1941, and while it may be convenient for Government and certain Officers of this Government and certain Members of this Council to get all the information they want, I find it exceedingly difficult to get information and correct information too. I think that this Colony can pay and ought to pay so that proper records of this Council can be kept, unless it is thought that the records of this Council have no value. I certainly would like to see when I talk on any item or support any item what had been stated previously, but I have no means of doing so now. To-day's decision puts me in a worse position. I think something ought to be done and that very quickly so as to let me alone at least have more confidence in this Council.

I notice that the amount for Registration and Election expenses remains at the stereotype figure of \$3000. Are we going to have Elections? Are we going to have registration of

voters? Are we thinking ahead? Are we planning at all? I certainly think Government is not planning at all. Your Excellency has been to England and has returned and told us that there is going to be a change in the electoral system here and there. Yet no provision is being made at all to meet that change. Are we going to have Elections next year? I think it is time that some of us get out of this Council or remain to do some solid work for the people.

The CHAIRMAN: Would you like to move in a figure?

Mr. JACOB: I cannot, sir.

The CHAIRMAN: Yes, you can. I will permit you.

Mr. JACOB: I am a stickler for parliamentary procedure. I decline the invitation with thanks. It is Government's duty and if Government neglects to do it I am here to point it out. This Government has no use for the masses of the country. It simply wants to have an electorate it can control, and most Members of this Council can control the electorate.

The CHAIRMAN: What rubbish you speak!

Mr. JACOB: It may sound to you as rubbish but I speak with intimate knowledge of the country and knowledge which is nearly a half century old. I do not know that I can be accused of speaking rubbish when I am nearly 50 years old and have taken as much interest as any other Member in the affairs of this Council and the Colony. I must say I have been insulted here most grossly over and over again in this Council and outside this Council, and I do resent it with all the strength at my command.

Mr. EDUN: At this point I rise to protest against the undignified language used by the President. I do so in protection of the dignity of the Council. When Your Excellency says a

Member is speaking rubbish, I consider that to be reducing the status of this Council to a mere political platform. I protest against it and I wish that protest to be recorded. I am not a friend of the hon. Member who has just sat down, but I am a friend of this country and a citizen of it and I happen to be a Member of this Legislature. So long as I am here I shall consider it my duty to call to book whoever endeavours to belittle this Council by using unparliamentary language.

Speaking on the items here, I must congratulate Government on the fact that it has rectified an anomaly so far as the Official Reporters are concerned. These Officers are working under strenuous conditions. They have to report all the official meetings of this Council and elsewhere, and I am of the opinion that another Reporter should be appointed in order that the work be done more satisfactorily. Since last year I made the attempt to suggest to Government that another Reporter be appointed, but nothing has been done because it does not suit the Government to have the records of this Council printed.

Mr. FERREIRA: To a point of correction! We were told last year that the reporting has been all done and it is only a question of the printing.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. the Colonial Secretary can give the exact details. I saw them the other day.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I am putting up for consideration that Finance Committee may be asked to vote a further sum to print the Debates at another Press along with the Argosy and thereby expedite the printing. Actually it is the accumulation that is worrying us. We have recently had some long Bills and urgent reports that have taken up much of the time of the Printers. We have gone into the question of expense and will be going to the Finance Committee to ask for extra funds for the purpose of expediting the

printing of the outstanding debates. It is not the fault of the Reporters. They are up to date with their reports. It is purely a matter of printing.

Mr. EDUN: Just a week ago I received a copy of the Report of the Empire Parliamentary Association on the Parliamentary Debates, the Debates in the Dominions and the Debates in the United States of America Congress. We are paying \$480 as subscription to that Association. Are we just to be understood as a small entity without any status at all? The outside world will judge this Council by its records. The newspapers do not have a true record of the proceedings here, and since 1941 the records are not printed. That is not good enough and no explanation will satisfy me that this Government is doing its best to see that the records are printed. I want to be clearly understood. I do not want it to be thought that because I speak I want to see my name and what I speak published. I am sufficiently well known throughout certain countries and I do not care for that publicity, but I want this Council to lift itself. For that reason I think that another Reporter should be appointed, and I am prepared to move it, if Your Excellency would permit me to do so. But no matter what we do here, we have not yet the right to initiate a financial measure. I want it to be understood that when these Debates are printed—and I hope they will be printed very soon—they will prove to the Electorate and to anybody who desires to see what manner of service is being given the people of this country by Members in the Legislative Council. I will not go further than that. I think every other Member has been receiving the Reports of the Empire Parliamentary Association. In view of the fact that we have received through the Association a second volume of the American Congressional Records, I think we too should endeavour to hind these Reports of the Council and send them to other Parliaments and let them be an indication of what intellectual progress this country is making gradually.

The CHAIRMAN: We certainly have that in mind, the question of more adequate reporting, I know.

Mr. de AGUIAR: I have risen merely to seek some information here. That is in respect of the restoration of Duty Allowance to the Clerk of the Councils. I thought the principle was settled that the Clerk of the Councils would be a Senior Officer of the Government. I recall distinctly that when the question of Duty Allowance first came up, the then Clerk of the Councils was an Officer either in the Second or Third Grade of the Service and it was felt that the importance of the post warranted a more senior Officer. It was subsequently agreed that by reason of that particular Officer's ability for the work that his position be improved. He was made a Class I Officer and automatically the question of a Duty Allowance to him was abolished. I think the position today is much the same. The present Clerk of the Councils is a Class I Officer—

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I ought to correct the hon. Member. It is proposed to promote the Officer next year. At present he is only a Class II Officer.

Mr. de AGUIAR: I am speaking of the 1945 Estimates in which he is classified as a Class I Officer. I think I am in order to refer to him in this debate as a Class I Officer. I see a reappearance of this item "Duty Allowance to the Officer performing the duties of Clerk to the Council", and while I do not want it to appear that I grudge the duty allowance to this or any officer I have a dislike to Duty Allowances, and the sooner we get rid of them the better. The point I wish to make and very strongly too is this: It may be that this Officer is about to receive promotion to the Class I. Is it intended that the Duty Allowance should continue after he is in receipt of his increment? Put another way, is it intended that after a Class I Officer reaches the maximum of his scale that

he will also be entitled to receive this Duty Allowance? This matter has a very far reaching principle involved, because I recall how the whole thing came about. I have given a brief history of it, and there is one point I should state. It is this: The intention, I understood then, was to change these Officers around. That was why the question of Duty Allowance came up. I do not say that the principle of changing the Officers around is good or bad. Maybe you do not get the work done half as well. If the principle is established that the Clerk of the Councils is to be a Class I Officer, then there should be no question at all of any Duty Allowance being paid to the post. There should be at no time in this Council an Officer below the status of Class I. If that is going to be the policy, then it seems the necessity does not exist for any Duty Allowance to be paid to the person performing the duties of Clerk of the Councils. I would like to have a reply on that point, because it seems to me to involve a very important principle.

The second point I wish to make is in connection with the point raised by the hon. Member for North-Western District. If I understood the hon. Member correctly, he would like to see a larger sum on the Estimates for Registration and Election expenses. I agree with him. It is well known that some time (in 1945 I hope) there will be a General Election, but the sum of \$300 appearing on this estimate is totally inadequate. I do not wish to refer to the figure I saw in the Press. I saw in the Press the other day that it cost a neighbouring Colony something like \$320,000, and I am reluctant to suggest a figure. The fact remains that \$300 is totally inadequate, and in order to show that some effort is being made in that direction we might insert a sum of \$5,000.

The CHAIRMAN: I was going to suggest \$24,000.

Mr. de AGUIAR: It is more likely to be that. I agree that we should put something in.

Mr. EDUN: I think that an item of that sort should be put on supplementary estimate next year.

The CHAIRMAN: That, of course, is obviously the intention, but I agree that we might have foreseen this and put in a substantial figure here. If Members would prefer that—

Mr. JACOB: I press that it be put in now. I want to know what will be this Colony's expenditure next year, and how taxation is to be levied. I want to know what we have to face. This whole book here is a mass of rubbish. Excuse me using that word.

The CHAIRMAN: So long as you do not use it with malicious intent.

Mr. JACOB: It is a mass of figures which do not convey anything to me. They may convey something to the financial officers. I say that the Colony is heading towards bankruptcy. Government has had the report of the Franchise Commission which sat for over three years, and has delayed this matter too long.

Mr. de AGUIAR: To a point of order. Is the hon. Member taking precedence now? I do not think I had finished my remarks.

Mr. JACOB: I am sorry.

Mr. de AGUIAR: I was going to say that I think the figure is likely to be anything between \$20,000 and \$25,000. It is a large sum and we should put in some figure. Although the hon. Member was not in order he will excuse me if I use some of his words. It is a sum sufficiently large for the Council to take cognizance of, so that we will know what the final figures will be. If Your Excellency would permit me I would suggest that the figure be carried out at \$24,000.

Mr. JACKSON : I am strongly of the opinion that it should first be ascertained what the figure will be approximately, and I do not think it would be wise to put in the figure of \$24,000 just on the suggestion of a Member. Why not \$100,000 or \$500,000? The proper policy to adopt would be to put an item on supplementary estimate when it is ascertained what the amount is likely to be. I do not like this haphazard way of moving in sums of money without any background at all. It would be very much better to wait and find out what the amount is likely to be.

Mr. J. A. LUCKHOO: I agree with the remarks of the last speaker. It would be too arbitrary to put in the figure of \$24,000 without ascertaining what the expenditure will be. I would suggest that the insertion of an item be deferred until we find out exactly what the amount is likely to be.

Like the hon. Member on my right (Mr. de Aguiar) I agree that these duty allowances should disappear altogether from the estimates. Whilst I agree that the Clerk of the Councils should be a Class I clerk I think Government would be justified, on promotion of a Class II clerk to Class I, to give the officer two increments on his commencing salary, and I would suggest that that might be done in this case.

Mr. JACOB: With regard to the question of duty allowances I find in the Draft Estimates that in addition to their substantive salaries several officers receive various sums of money from Government funds and from other sources. Certain officers in certain posts are no doubt at an advantage whilst other officers are at a disadvantage, and I think that may be one reason why certain officers do not want to be transferred to other Departments. I do not think that statement will be disputed. What I would like to see is that every officer should receive the salary of his post, and should be

sent from one Department to another, wherever he is required to do a particular job.

I do not like to see what appears in Appendix D on pages 34 to 41 — Statement of Emoluments received by Officers in addition to the salaries voted in the Estimates. It would be interesting to know how much is paid annually from Government funds, and how much from other sources, to Government officers. The amounts vary from year to year. For instance, on page 41 I see that one officer received \$720, and on page 40 another officer received \$465, in both cases from Government funds. On page 39, I see that two officers received \$480 each, and on page 37 another officer received \$416. I think I have mentioned sufficient figures to show that these amounts vary. I was a member of the Committee which dealt with the salaries of professional and technical officers, and I think the Committee recommended most strongly that officers should be paid a certain salary and no more.

The CHAIRMAN : There are certain responsible posts, the holders of which may be on leave for a period, and other officers are appointed to fill their places. In such cases the acting officers are paid from public funds. That particularly applies in the case of the Governor, but the question of these allowances is new to me. However, it has been done, and I am not quarrelling with what has been done by Government.

Mr. JACOB: I think the majority of the members of the Committee I referred to were of the opinion—and I think it was supported by the Director of Medical Services and the Deputy Colonial Treasurer—that officers should be given a certain salary and the whole system should be changed. In the case of the Clerk of the Councils the amount voted should be his salary, and if for some reason the Clerk is absent and another officer acts for him Government might give him an honorarium if he

acts for a long period. I do not think it is right that the Clerk of the Councils should receive a special allowance. I support the principle and hope that Government will do what it can to remedy this unsatisfactory state of affairs.

The CHAIRMAN: I think it is rather a big proposition. I have experience of Colonies where duty allowances were abolished, but it meant a substantial increase in pensionable emoluments. I think the question has to be considered in a comprehensive way. We should just deal with this particular instance on its merits. It will be seen that the salary of the Clerk of the Councils was \$1,780 this year, and the amount for next year is \$1,200. If there is another way out of it the Treasurer will tell me.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: The debate has gone very far and wide but it is a very simple matter. The hon. Member for Central Demerara (Mr. de Aguiar) gave the correct history. The Clerk of the Councils was formerly a Class II clerk, and the Council approved of a duty allowance at that time. Subsequently the Council approved of the post being changed to that of a Class I clerk. Today we have two grades with very long salary scales. Class II starts at \$40 per month and goes up to \$100, and Class I starts at \$100 and goes up to \$160 over a long period of years. What has happened is that the officer who formerly performed these duties is no longer in the public service, and another clerk has been appointed who happens to be at the maximum salary of Class II. That salary seems a very poor one for the importance of the work and the labour involved. Government therefore approached the Finance Committee and obtained approval this year of the duty allowance being re-inserted in the estimates for next year in order to give that officer adequate remuneration for his duties.

It will be observed in these estimates that it is proposed to create a

new Class I post for the officer. As it happens that the minimum salary of Class I is still \$100 per month it was thought desirable to re-insert or maintain the duty allowance so as to bring the officer's remuneration up to something adequate. The only other way of doing it is to specifically advance the salary of the officer by giving him two or three additional increments, but that also has its objections. It is much easier and explainable to the rank and file that a duty allowance should be given for the particular post, it being a particularly important post, than that the officer be given two or three increments on his salary.

Mr. de AGUIAR: I do not think the Council will accept that way out of the difficulty. If the principle is accepted that the post is a Class I post by reason of its importance, and if as explained by the Treasurer it is only possible to promote this officer to Class I next year, then I agree with my friend on my left (Mr. J. A. Luckhoo) that the position can be met by giving the officer two increments. In my view that would be doing more justice to the officer than by giving him a duty allowance. I still have not got an answer to my question as to what will be the position.

The CHAIRMAN: A simple way would be to make the item \$1,680 instead of \$1,200.

Mr. deAGUIAR: It has been done so many times before. The Council has been told over and over again that in order to fit an officer into a particular post it was found desirable to give him one or two — I think I have heard of three — increments on transfer to the particular post. I cannot see any reason why it cannot be done in this case. Personally I do not think it is fair to the officer to give him an allowance. The work is important and we are all agreed that a salary of \$1,200 is inadequate. It is proposed to give him an allowance of \$240 per annum. It is true that in the first year he may not get as much as \$240, because I think

two increments would be only \$192, but his promotion would be accelerated, and he would reach the maximum salary earlier than he would if he were given an allowance.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I do not think Members are fully aware of the difficulty. There are two good clerks who do this job well. One is the present holder and the other is on leave and due to return this year. When the present holder of the post is promoted both will be Class I clerks. Members know the work involved in the post of Clerk of the Executive and Legislative Councils. There are times of pressure when the clerk who has to perform the dual duties has to work long hours of overtime, and he is pressed to a degree that he cannot do either satisfactorily. He has to prepare minutes of Executive Council meetings, and at night he has to send to the printers the minutes of sittings of the Legislative Council.

We have two excellent clerks and my idea was that we appoint one to do Executive Council and a schedule of work in the Secretariat, and the other to do the work of Clerk to the Legislative Council. They would be interchangeable, so that if one was ill or on leave they would split the allowance. That is really why I would ask the Council to give me an opportunity to try that scheme out by leaving the allowance in. They would divide the allowance and each of them would do additional routine work in the Secretariat. I think the Council would be satisfied with that arrangement. Members would probably get their notification of the Order of the Day earlier than if one clerk did the work of both Councils. If the allowance were removed it would be more difficult, if not impossible, for me to arrange it. If the allowance were allowed to remain it would be comparatively simple.

Mr. LUCKHOO: If there are two competent clerks to perform the

duties outlined by the Colonial Secretary I think they should be well paid. Give them two increments each so that there would be no jealousy. After all, to divide \$20 per month between two competent clerks performing such duties would be too petty. The sooner they are paid proper salaries the better.

The CHAIRMAN: What I would like to ask is why is this shown separately? It used to be included under "Clerical Establishment."

Mr. de AGUIAR: This is a separate Department and there is only one Clerk of the Council, except on occasions when he is assisted by another clerk. With all due respect to both the Colonial Secretary and the Colonial Treasurer I say that they have not dealt with the principle involved at all. I have purposely avoided any reference to the financial aspect of the matter. Is the post of sufficient importance to need the services of a Class I officer? If it is more important, by all means let us make the post what it is worth. If two clerks are required, and of whatever class they may be, let us have them, but do not let us have a duty allowance, because I know the position is going to be this: that you may have a Class I officer performing the duties of a Clerk of the Council drawing the maximum salary of his class, and he would be entitled to the allowance. I do not think that is the intention. If that is the idea then I must oppose it. If we agree that the post is of sufficient importance to require a Class I clerk let there be a Class I clerk and no duty allowance. If because of a new appointment some injustice may be done to the particular officer, give him one or two increments. I do not think the duty allowance is solving the problem. I am afraid that if we are bound to have a senior Class I clerk he will also draw this allowance which I say he is not entitled to.

The CHAIRMAN: This separation is leading to difficulty.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: It is under the Clerical Establishment. What we have done is to add \$1,200 to this particular head, because it happens to be the salary of the clerk performing the duties of Clerk of the Councils.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I do not know why Members dislike allowances. It seems to be more than reasonable. You give an officer an allowance for a particular duty which he performs, and directly he ceases to perform that duty he drops that allowance. I do not follow the argument of the hon. Member for Central Demerara (Mr. de Aguiar) that if the officer performing these duties is promoted to Class I he should not draw this allowance. I take it that so long as he is performing the duties of Clerk of the Councils he should get a duty allowance.

The CHAIRMAN: If you give him two increments and he is transferred to some other post he continues to draw those two increments. That is the difficulty in giving him increments.

Mr. de AGUIAR: All that will be done is to accelerate his promotion.

The CHAIRMAN: We have discussed quite a lot. As far as I can see it has been accepted in Finance Committee.

Mr. de AGUIAR: But at that time I did not want the Treasurer or the Colonial Secretary to raise a point which perhaps does not enter into it. At that time the particular officer was a Class II officer. I supported it then because he was a Class II officer. The idea now is to promote him to Class I.

The CHAIRMAN: We will defer this particular head for further consideration in Executive Council. The hon. the Sixth Nominated Member need have no fear whatsoever of any kind of discourtesy or interference by the Chair if he keeps his language parliamentary and shows an understanding of the rules

of debate. Members should remember that while they have a perfect right to criticize they are not entitled to accuse Government and Government officers of improper motives. If they do they must expect that at some time Government may answer back. After all Government has a very small number in this Council. We hear those accusations made very freely, and the majority of Members sit back in passive acquiescence. Sometimes we are trying to get the business of the Council done, and Government is entitled to make comments.

Mr. JACOB: May I make some reference to the question of the registration of voters?

The CHAIRMAN: We are passing on to the head "Agriculture". I am holding over Head II for special consideration of the point raised.

AGRICULTURE.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: Under this head the most important items which will come up for consideration of this Council are the increased salaries of the Senior Professional Officers. Substantial increases have been introduced on the basis of the recommendations of the Committee's Report as accepted by the Executive Council. It has been done in that way as a very convenient way of getting the Council's approval item by item of these recommendations. I take it the Council would wish in the case of all the items that they be considered separately.

Mr. de AGUIAR: I may mention that with respect to Item 1 (14), when the estimate was considered in Advisory Committee it was found that the figure of \$15,599 was not strictly correct as the result of certain transfers. When we reach that item I am going to suggest that it be carried out at \$16,363.

The CHAIRMAN: For the sake of getting on with the proceedings I propose to take the first page.

Mr. JACOB: The practice here has been to speak on the Head in general and then take the items individually. What I want to refer to is this: Under this Head I notice in Appendix H, page 48 of the Draft Estimates, that the expenditure in 1934 was \$113,811, which was comparatively small, and for 1945 it would be \$333,515 — roughly three times what it was in 1934. I have no objection to that, but I want results and I am afraid I see no results. In the hon. the Colonial Treasurer's Budget Statement he referred to Legislative Council Paper No. 20 of 1944 under the Head "Expenditure, 1945" on page 3 and went on to say:

"The increases recommended in the salaries of senior professional, technical and administrative officers have also been included in the departmental estimates for the consideration of Council as a convenient method of arriving at final decisions on the proposals contained in this report which it will be recalled, were tentatively examined at a meeting of Finance Committee in September last."

There are various increases under this Head. Almost every officer is getting an increase. As shown on page 3 of the Estimates the total of the salaries on the Fixed Establishment is to be increased by \$21,867. That is, the amount for 1944 is \$72,643 and in 1945 it is to be \$94,510, a total increase of \$21,867. In Finance Committee I remember distinctly that the matter was not gone into at all. Several Members raised strong objections to the majority of the increases here and the result was that the Finance Committee was adjourned, and so far as I am aware no other meeting has been held for this matter to be discussed. In order to put forward Government's proposals, which did not find favour with the Finance Committee except by a few Members, the increases are put in the Estimates and placed before this Council now to be voted. I am going to vote against the entire Head. I cannot agree with this Department's expenditure being increased by three times what it was ten years ago and with

further increases being given especially to certain Officers who deserve no increase at all. I may be talking nonsense and talking on something I do not know anything about. I do not claim to know what I am talking about, but I claim to take a keen interest in the Department and to know something of the agricultural activities of this Colony and that Government is absolutely not planning for anything except the Sugar Industry. What is being planned for the Rice Industry, the Coffee Industry, the Coconut Industry, Live Stock, etc.? This Government has absolutely no plans except the vague nebulous statements made here from time to time. I have before me a statement which appears in the Department of Agriculture Sugar Bulletin No. 12 on labour investigations. I think those investigations were carried out by Mr. Williams, Sugar Agronomist. On page 64, the result of those labour investigations is given in Table XI.—

"Labour Force required to grow and manufacture 200,000 tons of sugar."

The Colony's production of sugar ten years ago was roughly 100,000 tons or a little over that, and today it is 200,000 tons and will be 250,000 tons in another two years. I certainly object to the Officers of this Government and certain people doing nothing for the other industries, the peasant industries. What has been done for the production of rice? I see a Rice Officer has been appointed, but I want to see that while sugar production is going up the farmers are producing a large quantity of that sugar as is done in Trinidad, and not only a certain group planting, growing and manufacturing sugar and getting all the profits from production to milling. Other people should be given an opportunity to do the same. My hon. friend on my right (Mr. Jackson) says "Who prevents the other people?" Of course they are prevented. They have no means, no money; they cannot lay out estates; they cannot drain them, they cannot build roads. All these things have been done by those people by general taxa-

tion. I am asking that this Government begin to plan. I was hoping to hear something about it today or a few days ago, but I see there is absolutely no plan made as to what will be the production of rice, of coffee and of coconuts and what will be the number of live-stock to be produced for local use and export. There is absolutely none. I have before me the Rice Marketing Board's Report. I am going to quote from that report. Several members of that Board are Members of this Council. What have they done during the last twelve years? When the Board took over the industry the actual exports were roughly 29,000 tons, and the five years' average was about 25,000 tons before the Board took over the industry. The Board's average for ten years with good prices and all the facilities available—

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I must interrupt the hon. Member. He has absolutely no support for the statement that the average export of rice was 29,000 tons. That was the maximum figure reached. I am sure his statement is incorrect.

Mr. JACOB: I said the average over five years was 29,000 tons before the Board took over. My hon. friend knows those figures are correct, and I am going to give them. The Board took over the industry in 1933. In 1931 the export figure was 22,480 tons, in 1931—23,632 tons, in 1932 — 28,541 tons, in 1933—29,120 tons. Take those four sets of figures and divide their addition by four, you will get an average of over 25,000 tons; and so we have the last five years, the best years the Board has had, with an average under 20,000 tons. In fact the Board's Report to the 30th September, 1943 showed the equivalent in gross tons of 18,313; the Report to 30th September, 1942 showed 18,863 tons and the Report to the 31st March, 1942,—there is none here but it was lower than that. My hon. Friend can get up and dispute that fact too. I am saying that in the same

way this Department in its bulletin is planning for the sugar industry, so it must plan for the rice industry. Until and unless it plans to increase the production of rice, to increase the production of coffee and of live stock, I shall vote against the entire Department's vote. The people of this Colony have no voice whatever, and from what I have heard today there is no plan at all to give the electorate the chance of voting as to who should come to this Council and speak on their behalf. Let us have dictatorship, the Secretary of State for the Colonies as the Principal Dictator, Sir Frank Stockdale as Deputy Dictator, His Excellency the Governor as Dictator in the Colony, to look after everything. Why have this Council at all? As a Member of this Council in the execution of my constitutional right I shall protest on every occasion when dictatorship begins to rule here and dictatorship methods are adopted.

I want the people of this Colony to say they want 210,000 or 250,000 tons of sugar produced and they also want rice and other products. I want this Government to truthfully tell the Secretary of State for the Colonies we cannot afford to give the West Indian Islands 60,000 or 80,000 tons of rice? Why we have not given Barbados, Trinidad, the Windward Islands, Jamaica all the rice they wanted during the last five years? We had ample opportunity to do so but we declined to do it. Government supported by the Rice Marketing Board definitely declined to supply the West Indies with rice which was wanted. I have abundant evidence to show that 10,000 acres of rice can be planted, if the people are given the opportunity to do so and if the land is made available. I have petitions signed by thousands of people but this Government will not give them land. Government is advised, supported by the Executive Council and others, not to make lands available but sugar lands are there. If this Government was to take a proper census it would see that on the sugar estates the production of rice has decreased considerably. Why

is that so? It is true that they are producing a few million pounds of plantains, etc., but most of it is allowed to rot in the Government Produce Depot and most of it is thrown overboard. But the world is told we have reached all kinds of figures. Why fool the people that we can produce cassava, a crop that gets bad within a week, and the same with eddoes? Why not produce a finished article that can be exported? The Secretary of State has given specific instructions to this Colony to produce all the rice it can for the West Indies. What plans has Government made to do that? What plans have been made is to curtail production, but certainly not to increase production and improve conditions. No plans are being made now, but you are increasing the Department's vote three times what it was. Ten years ago the average export of rice was around 15,000 tons. Why this Colony cannot export 550,000 tons of rice? This Government does not want it. I say so emphatically, though it may be said that I talk nonsense.

As I said the other day, this is my country, the country of my adoption, but I am beginning to feel that this Colony is not worthy to receive those of us who made it what it is. My father and forefather made it what it is, and it is time we shake its dust off our feet and go back to our country as we cannot possess the land and we are an energetic people. I see the hon. the Fourth Nominated Member (Mr. J. A. Luckhoo) is smiling. He is one of those who went to India to persuade the people to send Indians here. He knows the rebuff he had. They were sympathetic provided the people were agreeable to come. I say the Colony is unfit for the Indians who are here. Five miles from here you have the Settlement of Hague where the people cannot get water, have no road and do not even get land to plant sufficient rice, to graze sufficient cattle and to plant sufficient provisions. Yet this Government has a Land Settlement Officer sitting down and smoking a pipe and doing

nothing. I feel aggravated at Government's proposal and I cannot sit here and approve of estimates of this kind for the Agriculture Department. I am going to vote against it.

Mr. AUSTIN: I would like to make reference to some of the remarks made by the hon. Member who has just sat down. The production of sugar only dropped the last couple of years to 135,000 tons. Ten years before then it was well over 150,000 tons. I do not know where the hon. Member got 200,000 tons from.—

Mr. JACOB: May I rise to a point of correction? I have the actual export figures from 1930. I wish my hon. Friend will say too when he quotes figures. If he wants me to quote for his enlightenment I would surely do so.

Mr. AUSTIN: As regards the production of rice on the sugar estates, and on lands controlled by the sugar estates and leased to East Indian farmers and others, the area is a little over what it had been in the last four years. We have taken away no lands except in some cases where those taken away had been replaced by others. Furthermore the lands given out have been increased in spite of the fact that the estates have participated in the Grow More Food Campaign. It is therefore not correct to say that the estates have reduced their acreage in rice. As regards farmers' canes and canefarming, the sugar people have tried that over and over again with what results? As soon as the cane is ready for marketing they allow it to rot. What happened at Anna Regina? I think the hon. Member has some small interest in or knowledge of that place. The same thing happened there. What happened at Hampton Court? I think the hon. Member had interest there. When the British Government was good enough to give the estates large sums of money to establish better housing on the estates, what did the Hampton Court people do with theirs? That money disappeared. The

hon. Member forgets that, when it suits him. He has not changed his views though East Indians were interested in Hampton Court. He has no interest now in sugar.

Mr. JACOB: That is definitely incorrect. I happened to have been the Secretary and Town Agent of Hampton Court Limited for a period of eighteen years, and that plantation was purchased from Sir Alfred Sherlock, Mr. Robert Strang and a few other people by non-Indians. Except for myself I do not think there was an East Indian shareholder in that Company, and my interest was only \$1,000 in a capital of \$150,000. The records are in the Registry and can be verified to justify what I say. I think the hon. Member for Georgetown Central (Mr. Percy C. Wight) can verify what I say.

Mr. AUSTIN: The hon. Member for Georgetown Central can say something about it. When one has lost interest in that in which at one time one earned part of one's interest, one naturally gets hot-tempered and dogmatic. It is many years now that the hon. Member has been speaking against sugar. He sometimes mentions here that he does not like to see sugar harmed, but when he goes into the country he tells another story, and we know that. I suggest to him to be faithful to the pledge he has made here and to try and bring the country up. Do not try to injure one industry because you suffer from not being interested in that industry now.

Mr. EDUN: I think this matter has taken a very different turn. I had thought that in accordance with proper and correct procedure Members of this Council would have taken the opportunity to examine the Budget Statement read by the hon. the Colonial Treasurer and to examine and criticize Your Excellency's Speech. That would have been the correct procedure altogether, but I see now there is a change to just resolving ourselves into

Committee and examining the items of the Estimates in detail. I do not know when the opportunity will come for that, because I intend to examine very critically the hon. the Colonial Treasurer's Budget Statement and also Your Excellency's policy concerning this Colony. I was going to examine the sugar situation along with that of other industries. I would have gone into comparisons. Your Excellency has said that sugar is the backbone of British Guiana; it is a very large industry on which Government's finances are being principally carried on.

The CHAIRMAN: I do not think you will find that phrase. What I said was, I think, the standard of services which this Government has to maintain will largely depend on the maintenance and exportation of sugar.

Mr. EDUN: Maybe I read it differently. In your speech, on the 30th May, 1944, Your Excellency said definitely:

'But—and this we must hold in mind—to get over the present labour difficulties of the sugar industry something far more than mere numbering of heads and keeping a fluid labour supply available on estates is required. A report of 1933 by the then Commissioner of Lands and the Deputy Director of Agriculture commented as follows:—

'We are.....convinced that unless there is a gradual change of policy in the sugar industry.....the changing sociological conditions and other factors will result in serious shortage of labour and restriction of output.

Other industries are likely increasingly to attract labour away from the sugar estates.....revival of other industries before the problem.....is solved may find the sugar industry of this Colony unprepared to meet the situation and to retain.....the services of the hired labour on which they now depend entirely for their existence.'

That was written over eleven years ago. It is prophetic. That difficulty foreseen has materialised and we must renew the effort again....."

What does it mean, "renewing the effort"? Does it mean the Director of Agriculture will co-operate with the Sugar Producers Association to grow and manufacture sugar at the expense of the labourers on the sugar estates, or is it that this Government, in conjunction with the Colonial Office, is prepared to carry out a rational policy of protection of sugar in order to meet the finances of this Government? It has realized that other industries catering for labour are competing with sugar. Now that the production ought to be 180,000 tons it is only 140,000 tons, and it means that if conditions continue like this for another two years, the Capitalist Members of the Colonial Office would lose money and their estates. If the workers do not work to produce sugar, I think the whole economic structure of this country would go by the board. Then I shall ask the question: how do you expect to produce more sugar? Is it by the deplorable conditions still existing on the sugar estates? If that is the idea I say it will be a sorry day, because the workers are not prepared to work under those galling conditions any longer. They are not prepared to produce one more ounce of sugar unless improved conditions and a change of heart are envisaged.

I have been noticing the trend of this Government's policy, but if Your Excellency thinks that I should withhold my criticisms until the general policy is being examined I will pass on, but I want an opportunity to examine the whole policy of Government as indicated by Colonel Oliver Stanley who, after all, is interested in sugar. I have here a cutting from the *Labour Advocate* of November 26, which states:—

UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR
COLONIES.

"Colonel Oliver Stanley's father, Lord Derby, is one of the biggest landowners in Lancashire. He owns most of Liverpool and Merseyside. The Duke of Devonshire, Under Secretary of State for Colonies owns 1,999,998 one pound shares out of

2,000,000 shares in the Chatsworth Land Estate Company. His son, the Marquess of Hartington, who married the daughter of Joseph Kennedy, former U.S. Ambassador in London, owned 19,988 one pound shares out of 20,000 shares in the Hartington Land Estate Company."

Now the Duke of Devonshire—

Mr. FERREIRA: To a point of order—where is this heading to? I see nothing in the estimate with regard to Colonel Oliver Stanley or the Duke of Devonshire.

Mr. JACKSON: Who is responsible for that statement—the *Labour Advocate*? I understand that it appears in the *Labour Advocate*—at least so the hon. Member says.

The CHAIRMAN: Members are taking exception to your irrelevance. Please try to be as relevant as possible.

Mr. EDUN: I expect that. After all who are those Members on my right and left—Members who live off the substance of the workers and do not care a hang about them. I excuse them for their way and thought of life. I know that some people feel bored when I take up the question of those who own shares in the sugar estates of this country. That is where my observations with respect to the Department of Agriculture come in, but I prefer to reserve my comments for a future occasion if Your Excellency will give me an assurance that I will have an opportunity to examine the Treasurer's Budget Statement. I am going to examine the method indicated in that speech and also in Your Excellency's speech, and I am going to show some inconsistencies in the recent policy of the Government. If I am given that assurance I will not continue to argue against the Department of Agriculture at the moment because, so far as I see, no matter what anybody does in this Colony we will not be able to produce an ounce of sugar unless the East Indian sugar workers work. They

are prepared to work on certain humanitarian conditions, and to produce 250,000 tons of sugar if those conditions are made available to them. Look at the housing conditions on the sugar estates, at the wages the workers receive, and at the low morality on the sugar estates.

If we are to continue to carry on this Government by expecting to derive revenue from sugar and rum—\$1,700,000 from rum, and poisoning every working man in this country—if that is the kind of sugar economy we are to have then all talk about Christianity and humanity will go by the board.

The hon. Member who has just spoken said that we should endeavour to work in harmony in the interest of British Guiana. I agree with that and I have taken action to prove that in a practical way. As this item is concerned with agriculture, and as sugar is a process of agriculture, I have the right to say how the sugar workers are prepared to co-operate in order to produce more sugar. The Colonial Treasurer has stressed in his Budget Statement, and Your Excellency, in a recent announcement in Council emphasized the urgent need for production and still more production, both for domestic consumption and for export, and that that must be our guiding principle and policy in the coming year. With that I agree—production and more production—but if the production of sugar is 40,000 tons less than it should be then it appears to me that something is definitely wrong. It has been held in many quarters that the sugar workers do not care to work more than 3½ day per week, and that that is the reason for less production. That reason has been fully exploited by H.M. Secretary of State for the Colonies.

To obtain more production the obvious policy should be to have a line of demarcation. It should be decided how many workers should be available to the sugar industry, the rice industry, and

the bauxite industry. If it is expected that by magic we will get more production, I think it will be just wishing for the moon. I am not satisfied that every opportunity is taken by the sugar producers to secure fertilizers. On one hand they say that they were unable to plant because of the lack of fertilizers, and on the other hand they say that the sugar workers will not work more than 3½ days a week. Which is right? If the sugar producers desire more production they must tell the workers that if they worked 4½ days per week they would be given an opportunity to plant subsidiary crops for themselves, such as padi growing and kitchen gardening. The sugar companies and the Department of Agriculture have shown no tendency to assist the sugar workers to get more land.

The Grow More Food Campaign has produced excellent results but there is no proof that the policy advocated in order to ensure co-operation and harmony between the two essential units of the sugar industry will be maintained. On every sugar estate the policy had at with Labour I say the time will be to order the sugar workers to come when everyone will say "Gone is scrap their kitchen gardens. Their padi my investment," because there is no lands were taken away and their farm lands were reduced. If that is the way the sugar companies intend to co-operate with a sugar company director who is able to put a penny into a flood fallowed field and produce a dollar note.

I have been asked by a very competent authority in this Colony "Well, what have you got in your mind?" As the leader of the sugar workers I have in my mind to produce 200,000 tons of sugar, provided the sugar companies endeavour to co-operate 100 per cent. with us, otherwise I want to warn them that it will be their funeral if they do not produce one more pound of sugar next year. It would then be the funeral of this Government how to, meet its

difficulties, because I see that we are budgeting for a deficit of two million dollars. Where would Government get funds to pay the salaries of its officials? Not from Downing Street, because they have not got money in these days. Government is aware that the production of bauxite has been restricted, and sugar is following by degrees. I do not wish to say much about rice because I have my own views on that subject. Sooner or later we will have to take the control of that industry away from the Rice Marketing Board and introduce a co-operative system. The day the war ends I will tell every padi grower "Look here, you are not prepared to co-operate with a Board that has robbed you of your bonus and dividends." Those are things I am prepared to question at the right time.

What plan does the Department of Agriculture intend to adopt in order to accelerate production? As a member of the Legislative Council Food Production Committee I know that we have done exceedingly well in producing a lot of carbohydrates, but we want some proteins, and I think we are planning to grow more. I wish to compliment the Committee, especially the Chairman on his foresight so far as that is concerned. I have recently read in a report of the Barbados House of Assembly that the Government of that island is considering a five-year plan of reconstruction and so forth. Your Excellency has not given us any indication of what you intend to do for five years. The Colonial Treasurer has given us a mass of figures which I am going to tear to pieces. (laughter). I want to show how inconsistent he is, but we have not yet reached his Department. We have increased the personnel of the Department of Agriculture but I doubt whether anybody would tell me that Government officers are over-worked. After all they work only 7 hours per day in the Civil Service. I work pretty nearly 15 hours per day, and I do just as much and in some cases more work than many of them.

The question is production; how can we achieve more production? Perhaps Your Excellency is aware that there is hope of an agreement being arrived at between the sugar companies, represented by the Sugar Producers Association, and the Man-Power Citizens' Association representing the sugar workers. If at all there is a change of heart and not merely a change of policy there is no reason why there should not be an agreement. There is no difficulty in producing 200,000 tons of sugar so long as fertilizers are available, and Government should endeavour to get priority for them. The agreement has not yet been signed; maybe it will be signed very soon. We have a friend of the sugar industry in the person of Mr. Naylor who is on a visit to the Colony. Your Excellency has laid much stress on sugar and on comprehensive drainage schemes. We expect to borrow 20 million dollars for those schemes and for the construction of a road to the interior. All those things have gone with the wind because it does not suit certain people at the Colonial Office and their colleagues who own shares in our sugar companies. If I happen to be in London again I will tell them they must not expect to produce more sugar in British Guiana unless they were prepared to treat on terms of equality those who sweat from head to foot to produce the cane. They must be given better wages, better housing conditions, improved sanitation on the estates, and better hospitals. That is how I expect production to be accelerated — by rational methods.

I would put this proposition to the sugar companies: I would say "If you want a change of policy let us have a change of policy. Why don't you give every working family on a sugar estate three or five acres of the land you intend to work on the plantation system? Why not have a co-operative system? Why not do like Fiji where the companies only manufacture the sugar while the workers grow the cane?"

That is a change of policy which ought to be examined. Has the Department of Agriculture ever dreamt of such a suggestion? No. The Officer Administering the Government during Your Excellency's absence told the Secretary of State in a despatch that rice should be produced on plantation lines at Mahaicony-Abary. If increased production of sugar is expected on plantation lines I say that you will not get it. Your Excellency may apply the Defence Regulations and put whoever speaks against it in jail, but unless the sugar investors, who get their profits year after year, show a change of heart and abandon the plantation system for the co-operative system, there will be no increased production of sugar.

It is the regular hobby of the non-Member for North Western District (Mr. Jacob) to lash out at the Department of Agriculture. Maybe he is right, because if we look at the expenditure in comparison with the production we must ask what has the Department produced in the last 10 years? We have not a peanut industry although a former Governor is supposed to have carried out a successful experiment which has gone by the board. Some people consider it good administrative policy to take an ounce of butter and spread it on an acre of bread. I want to see a pound of butter spread on a pound of bread. (Mr. de Aguiar: What a waste). I want to see an abundance of production. I want to see a mass of figures relating to the production of sugar, rice and cotton. Cotton was produced in this country many years ago. Can't the Department of Agriculture think of experimenting with cotton? If we cultivated cotton here we would be able to manufacture our own cloth, but that is not the policy of the Government.

The hon. Member for North Western District said that the Legislative Council Food Production Committee was wasting the produce. That is

not so. He must realize that if Government guarantees a minimum price for any product, whether Government loses or makes a profit is of no concern. Its principal concern should be to honour its obligations. I am content to see that the farmers are getting good prices for their produce. The hon. Member must consider how much money (over four million dollars) we are spending in subsidizing flour, as compared with \$50,000 paid to the farmers of our own country. Even if we have to subsidize certain items of food of nutritional value Government should reduce the subsidization of flour.

I am not going to attack any member of the staff of the Department of Agriculture in his personal capacity. That is not my way of doing things, but I want to say that the real test of the usefulness of the Department is production. That is what the Colonial Treasurer has stressed in his Budget Statement, and Your Excellency has called for over and over again—more and more production. Maybe the Director of Agriculture will say that he is not responsible for production but simply to carry out the policy of the Government. What is the policy of Government? Is it to produce sugar at the expense of rice? I think the policy of Government should be to produce both simultaneously and under parallel conditions. It is no use giving us figures without making comparisons of production in the various items.

AGRICULTURAL SUPERINTENDENTS.

Mr. FERREIRA: There is one thing I would like to make mention of relative to item (8)—“Agricultural Superintendents”. It is just a matter of policy. We unfortunately lost one whom I consider a very energetic officer in Barbados and a new officer has been appointed to the post. I have nothing against the Officer's work. He is young, capable and energetic, but I do

think it is wrong and something new to Government and also unfair to the Officer that he should be put in an outlying and important district such as Berbice is. The Agricultural Department is not the only Department wherein such has happened. I think the policy of Government should be that newly appointed officers be kept near the Head Office where they will be in a position to take up the strings of government and to be schooled in Government procedure. Possibly this is a temporary appointment or a "stop-gap". I would like to have an explanation from the Chairman of the Advisory Committee on that score.

Mr. deAGUIAR: I am glad the hon. Member has raised that point. This debate after travelling a very long and weary road has been more or less of a general character dealing to my mind chiefly with the agricultural policy of the Department rather than with the Estimates of expenditure which are before this Council. Hon. Members are entitled to express their views on the agricultural policy of Government and, speaking for myself, I am very grateful for some of the views expressed. There was a general observation made by one hon. Member in particular—I refer to the hon. Member for North-Western District (Mr. Jacob) — that the expenditure of the Department has risen over the past ten years to a very large sum. The hon. Member quoted the figures and, therefore, there is no need for me to deal with them at all. What the hon. Member said is true. The expenditure on the Department has risen and to a very high figure within the last ten years, but it is regrettable that when criticism of that kind is being levelled that the Member making the criticism does not refer to the other side of the picture. It must be clear that if the expenditure on the Department has risen that the services rendered by the Department have also risen, and it

is regrettable that observation was not made when the hon. Member to whom I refer made the criticism. The same Member went on to say that the Department has no plans except possibly for the sugar industry, and in the same breath he asked what are the plans for the rice industry, the life stock industry, the coffee industry, etc. Those questions not only surprised me but, I am sure, they surprised quite a number of Members of this Council, all of whom take as keen an interest in the affairs of this Government as the hon. Member does and, what is more, will come as a surprise to those people who are particularly concerned with the progress that has been made or the plans that have been made. He has given us a set of figures or rather he has repeated the same set of figures. The piece of paper from which he quoted the figures was rather old, and it goes to show that it is the same piece of paper the hon. Member undoubtedly used on previous occasions. Therefore, I do not think there is any useful purpose in referring to it.

To return to the general remarks made in regard to the increasing expenditure, I have referred to the expansion of the services. What is more, the increase is in the emoluments paid to various officers of the Department during the past few years. I do not know if those Members who made the criticism took the trouble themselves to find out what the increase in the salaries represent. I have not got the figures before me, but I do know the increase in the emoluments certainly represent a very substantial sum over the figures of ten years ago. But then, there is the expansion of the services I have referred to and, as must be realized, when services are expanded new services are introduced. You have, as it were, to create a department within a department in order to carry out these services satisfactorily. Passing reference was made to canefarming. The hon. Member himself referred to the fact that a Cane Farming Officer

was appointed. I hope he will realize the matter does not end there, because the appointment of that officer means that a certain amount of money will have to be spent. If we are fortunate enough to obtain it from the Imperial Government, all is well and good; if we do not, then it means we have to carry that expenditure ourselves. I mention that just to show as a simple illustration even in the case of one very small expansion of the service in the introduction of a Cane Farming Officer what the financial implications are. One of the estimates will involve an expenditure of something between \$60,000 and \$70,000. If it is practical to carry out that work, I hope the hon. Member would not again rise from his seat and complain that the estimates of the Department have risen for any reason at all.

Mr. JACOB: May I enquire if in the carrying out of the works the expenditure would be charged under this Head? I think the hon. Member is familiar with the Rules.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: It is quite possible for the services operated by Departments to appear under the departmental heads. For instance, the hon. Member talks about increases over ten years, in this year's estimates there are two large items amounting to \$70,000 which were not there last year.

Mr. de AGUIAR: I was going to refer to that. The hon. Member merely contents himself with glancing at the summarised expenditure which appears in one of the appendices without examining all the details which will give him all the information he requires. That is by the way. I only mention that because it seems to me that the hon. Member can never avoid in his criticism of this Department constant reference that the Department is spending too much money. The point that surprises me more is his reference to future plans. He puts the question "What are the plans that have been

made in order to increase rice production in this Colony in accordance with the instructions received from the Secretary of State?" I am at a loss to know the reason why that question was put, because I would have thought the hon. Member was familiar with the whole project. But, sir, perhaps he is not. I know he attends the meetings of this Council very often and takes a very keen interest in all papers circulated among Members, but possibly on this occasion he was not in his seat when Your Excellency referred to the action taken on those instructions. As a matter of fact the instruction in the first instance was really in respect of something as a contribution to the War effort, but the action that was taken, I venture to suggest, by the Government of this Colony went much farther than that. Of course I do not know whether the hon. Member thinks that you can produce a grain of padi overnight, or whether he thinks you can prepare the land to plant padi overnight, or whether he thinks you can produce, mill and market rice all in one operation overnight. I have heard him in this Council over and over again bemoaning the fact that nothing can be done in this Colony through bad drainage and poor irrigation. Government had taken the only action possible in order to expand the rice cultivation in the Colony, and that was to prepare the land. A scheme was prepared, and the hon. Member knows that. If he does not then he ought to know, as it was clearly set out in black and white in the form of a despatch to the Secretary of State and announced in this Council by the Chairman of the Rice Marketing Board who is also Colonial Treasurer. So I am at a loss to understand his logic. I am at a loss to understand the reason for his question.

If the hon. Member had stated that the action taken was either not in accordance with the instruction received or insufficient then, perhaps, he might be furnished with a different answer. We are all in agreement on that score. I am not making this state-

ment in the capacity of Chairman of the Advisory Committee, but as a Member of this Council and as a citizen and a colonist. We all agree that we must produce more, and we also agree that we must export more of the products we produce. It is only by doing those things we can hope to strengthen our economic structure. There may be disagreement as to the method of production, as to how it is done, but I do not think there can be any question at all as to the wisdom of increasing our production both for domestic and export trade. But there is one thing, whilst I am not in agreement with that question, we must not lose sight of. We cannot produce what is not natural to this country. I do not know whether the hon. Member or those who have spoken in that strain is or are capable of making bricks without straw, but I say this: It is well known that sugar, rice and coconuts and those articles we produce now are all natural products of the country and when we re-introduce things which had been tried out before and had been failures, such as tobacco, cotton, etc., we are only beating the wind. We must begin to be more practical. That is the view this Government has been taking. Why should we quarrel if an attempt is made to increase the quantity of sugar that is being produced in the Colony at the present time? Why should there be any quarrel if an attempt is made to increase the rice production of the Colony? Both are good crops; both have domestic and export value, and it seems we can hardly go wrong if an attempt is made to increase the quantity of those two products in this Colony. Do not let us have an argument about producing more sugar as against rice or more rice as against sugar. Such argument will take us nowhere. What we want is to produce not 200,000 tons of sugar but 2,000,000 tons and to produce 1,000,000 tons of rice. Let us work along those lines. The lands are there, and I hope that those hon. Members who would like to see an increase in

the acreage under cultivation would set themselves the task of encouraging people to take advantage of those lands that are available. Quite recently the Crabwood Scheme was fostered and there is an abundance of land there. I have not heard—and I think my information is quite good—that all those lands or a great portion of them has been taken up, and yet hon. Members come here and talk about the rice industry is not being expanded. Here is a great opportunity for that to be done.

The schemes are just completed and it may well be that full advantage will be taken of the lands at the proper time, but I submit it is not decent, it is not nice, it is distasteful for hon. Members to charge Government for not attempting to do anything to assist the rice industry or to attempt to suggest that all Government's interests are centered more on the side of the sugar industry and against the rice industry. I fail to understand how any Member of this Council can arrive at such a conclusion. Some hon. Members may think that the Rice Marketing Board does nothing, but I suggest that is only the decision of the hon. Member who made that observation. One hon. Member, I think it is the Sixth Nominated Member, said we ought to take away the rice industry from the Rice Marketing Board, but he did not say who desired that. I would like to put this challenge to him. When he made that statement, was he saving that the people who are particularly concerned would want such a step to be taken? If he says that is so, then from my seat I would like to tell him that the information at my disposal is entirely different from that view. I know there are other Members of this Council who have the same information. It is not the people concerned who would like to see the Rice Marketing Board done away with. They are particularly anxious to see the Board continue to function and if possible expanded in order to assist the indus-

try. What I would like to see is the agitator who would like to see the Rice Marketing Board abandoned, the parasite in this community who would like to see the Rice Marketing Board abandoned. What the Rice Marketing Board does is this: The man who produces padi has a minimum price for his padi. When the padi is milled into rice, the man is assured of a guaranteed price for his rice. I have not heard any Member of this Council make the statement that the price paid for rice is not economical and, therefore, I must assume that in the opinion of Members the price paid is economical and very profitable to the producer. Therefore there is no need for me to make reference to that, otherwise it would be my duty to provide them with figures to show that the present price of rice is profitable to the producer. I have it on definite authority from more than a thousand persons interested in the production of rice that the price of rice is profitable and they would like to see the Board carry on in the same way it is doing. No one wants to introduce an industry which will cheapen prices. We want to see labour get a reasonable pay. It is no use our attempting to introduce any industry which will probably tend to reduce the rate of pay of our labouring community.

I have already referred very briefly, it is true, to the schemes that are in view and those completed which will increase the lands available for rice cultivation. I do not think it is necessary to go into details about that at any length, except to say what I have said before that I hope those Members who raised the question will be energetic in trying to see that all the lands made available are taken up. In so far as the point made by the hon. Member for Berbice River (Mr. Ferreira) about the recent promotion of an Officer of the Department is concerned, I think he will agree with me that on the first premises he ought to be the last person to suggest that

an Officer should be kept back from promotion elsewhere. The point he raised was that when a new officer is appointed that officer should be kept as near as possible to headquarters, so that he could familiarize himself with the Department's policy generally before going to the out-district. It does not matter how well one wants to carry out things, at times it is extremely difficult. The position today is that as the result of the number of officers engaged in this Department—I refer to the particular posts of Agricultural Superintendents; there are five on the list, one is seconded for special duty and the remaining four are more or less new officers—they must go into the districts. I know the officer the hon. Member has in mind when referring to Berbice. The position is this: A vacancy was there and this particular person who had the qualification was appointed. If he was not stationed in Berbice, then that area would have had to be served by an officer of a lower status, an Agricultural Instructor, and the hon. Member would immediately say "Why send an Instructor when the area is of sufficient importance to have a Superintendent?" I can assure the hon. Member that the policy is to keep new officers as near as possible to headquarters, but in this particular case it could not be avoided. I trust these remarks I have made are sufficient to answer the criticism that has been made by the hon. Member who spoke. I think it would be convenient if we take the Estimates page by page.

Mr. EDUN : In respect of item (18)—Rice Officer—the hon. Member who is Chairman of the Advisory Committee pointedly said, when I referred to it, what do I mean by that. I want to ask Government and the Rice Marketing Board whether they would consider it a policy, a fair policy, in the recent appointment of the Accountant to that Board in the person of one Mr. Gonsalves, a Portuguese gentleman.

The CHAIRMAN : That is not quite relevant to this head!

Mr. EDUN: I want to point out to this Committee that it has been repeatedly mentioned here that this industry is peculiarly controlled.

Mr. de AGUIAR: To a point of correction—the Rice Officer happens to be a Chinese.

Mr. EDUN: Let us face the facts and not blink at them. I am sure there was a competent Indian accountant who made application for that job. Why wasn't it given to an Indian? Is it because of pique or favouritism? Why is it that that Indian gentleman did not get the job instead of one who does not know anything about rice—whether it is a green blade or a brown blade? That is the kind of thing that makes one's heart burn. What will the padi growers say? They will say: "I have been producing padi all these years. I have a son and I want him to become a member of the Rice Marketing Board. No, you want to keep him there in the mud and water all the time, ploughing and reaping. When it comes to the managerial side you want someone outside of his race." This sort of thing is creating a grave impression on the minds of the rice producers—

The CHAIRMAN: I think you should hear what the reasons for the appointment are.

Mr. EDUN: I have heard all the reasons. They are very flimsy and meagre—no reasons at all.

The CHAIRMAN: I think I will ask the Treasurer or the Chairman of the Committee to explain the position.

Mr. de AGUIAR: I think the Chairman of the Board is the fittest person to reply to the hon. Member's remarks. I thought the hon. Member was referring to the Rice Officer, and that is why I said he was a Chinese.

The CHAIRMAN: I have given the hon. Member latitude to bring this point out though, strictly speaking, it

was quite irrelevant. As he has raised it I must ask the Chairman of the Committee to reply.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: The hon. Nominated Member has referred to the recent appointment made by the Board after advertising for candidates for the post of Chief Accountant to the Rice Marketing Board. In that advertisement it was specifically stated that the Board required a man of the greatest possible experience of the supervision of accounts generally and also, and in particular, of cost accounting methods and their modern application. The Board ran that advertisement for a week and had about 50 or 60 applicants. The person who has been selected is a man who is eminently qualified in his profession. He holds a certificate of one of the Institutes of Accounting. He has had experience in Trinidad of cost accounting in one of the oil companies, and also worked for the Government of the United Kingdom on cost accounting in connection with large construction schemes in Trinidad. He is a native of British Guiana and happened to be in the Colony at the time. The Board considered all the applications, and I may say at once that race did not enter into the matter at all. We were looking for the best man for the job, and that man struck the members of the Board as being absolutely the most suitable for the work that had to be done.

Apart from the ordinary accounting and management of the Board's operations, that work is largely concerned with the new work that has been taken on in the Mahaicony-Abary area, and also the mechanization scheme and the problems arising out of them. Cost accounting in that particular sphere is absolutely important. We have to get down to minute costs, and unless an accountant has had experience of that kind of work he is going to fail. The man we have appointed will have to plan and initiate a scheme of cost accounting, put it into operation, and teach the

employees under him. We have been fortunate to get him because of his experience. That kind of work is very rare. It is difficult to get experienced men, and the Board feels it is fortunate in getting the particular person who has been appointed. I am perfectly sure that no member of the Board took race into consideration. We were not looking for an Indian, a Chinese, or anybody, but for the best man. I have always paid tribute to the Indians, but I would never agree that in making appointments we must first of all decide on an Indian before anyone else. We must look for the best man. The only way the industry can prosper is by getting the best executive.

The CHAIRMAN: I cannot allow this discussion to go on longer. It is not relevant to this particular page of the estimate. I have allowed it to be raised and answered. If Members wish to pursue it they must do so by asking questions, or by resolution.

Mr. JACOB: I do not intend to speak on that at all. I am moving a reduction by \$1 of the item with respect to the Rice Officer in order to make a few points in reply to the hon. Member for Central Demerara (Mr. de Aguiar). As Chairman of the Advisory Committee the hon. Member said he would ask Members to see that all available lands are taken up. He referred to the Crabwood Creek scheme and said that a few hundred acres there were not taken up for rice farming. I have not got the full details of that scheme. I promised that I should endeavour to find out, but I want to assure the hon. Member that rice lands properly laid out in places where there are amenities such as schools would be very quickly taken up. I can assure the hon. Member that if he laid out 10 acres of land on the East Coast, East Bank, and West Coast of Demerara they would be all taken up and very quickly, but if Government selects lands alongside creeks where there are no schools and

no proper means of communication or transportation, and they are not taken up it is all Government's fault. That is my complaint against this Department—that it does not plan properly, and that its expenditure is almost wasted.

I was told that we cannot produce things which are not natural to this country. I said that we must increase production of sugar to a reasonable level—not below 100,000 tons but over 200,000 tons—but the idea seems to be to keep the production of rice to 25,000 or 20,000 tons. Why shouldn't both expand in the same proportion? That is what I am asking for. He says glibly that if we produce one million tons of sugar he would agree to the production of a million tons of rice. That is exactly what I want. If we want to double the production of sugar, as we have done for export, we should also double the production of rice. That is what Government has not done and does not intend to do. The hon. the Sixth Nominated Member (Mr. Edun) has given some reasons and, I think, excellent reasons. It is within my personal knowledge that our bosses in Downing Street are interested in the sugar industry and they want it to expand and to keep the other industry down. I know that as a matter of fact, and I challenge anyone to dispute it.

The hon. the Second Nominated Member (Mr. Austin) began by giving figures, and I asked him to give the correct figures. I passed a note to the Chairman of the Advisory Committee giving the exact production of sugar. Fifteen years ago it was less than 100,000 tons. Last year it was 132,000 tons with 34,000 tons thrown away. We want to produce food for the West Indies but this Government deliberately approved, supported by the Imperial Government, of the sugar producers throwing away 34,000 tons of sugar, and I believe that about 25,000 tons of sugar is being stored. That is what we are complaining about. There are lands available in Demerara within easy reach of the

population, and also in Berbice and Essequibo, which could be planted, but the officers of the Department of Agriculture will not allow those lands to be planted for reasons best known to the Department and its advisers. I make that specific charge against the Government and I challenge anyone to dispute it. Government has its information and so have I. I have no need to beg a favour. This Government has deliberately, with the support of the Rice Marketing Board, kept down the rice industry. I am going to say the same about cattle and other industries when the proper items come up.

Mr. de AGUIAR: I do not think it should go on record that Government is doing what it can to keep the rice industry down. I have merely risen to correct the hon. Member's statement. I have known him for several years, and some of his shortcomings I am always ready and willing to overlook, but I am asking him to be very careful and not to judge other people by looking into his own mirror. The position is that Government, and the Rice Marketing Board for certain, are always very anxious to know what crop figures are likely to be, because if we have a larger crop we can make proper arrangements to export a larger quantity. If the hon. Member had made any reference at all to the Autumn rice crop this year he—

Mr. JACOB: I know that some of it is rotten, due to mismanagement—gross incompetence.

Mr. de AGUIAR: If the hon. Member had referred to the Autumn crop of this year he would have had to say that it is going to be bigger than it was last year. It did not suit his argument and therefore he did not refer to it at all. If he had gone on to say that he would have had to continue and to say that the quantity we are going to export will be greater than it was last year.

Mr. JACOB: I have the figures right here. The exports for this year may be 22,000 tons at the most, but I am maintaining the average. Lack of shipping facilities prevented export last December and that rice has to be exported this year. You must take the averages. My friend is very clever when it comes to figures. He refuses to use the figures I have given him, but my figures speak for themselves.

Mr. de AGUIAR: I accept the compliment that I am clever at figures, but I do not know exactly what the hon. Member means. Whatever he means I accept it. The fact remains that the crop this year is going to be greater than that of last year. I am dealing in terms of crop production.

Mr. JACOB: Will you give the figures?

Mr. de AGUIAR: When the time comes I will give the figures. If the hon. Member would accept an estimate I would give him the estimate of exports for next year. I am familiar with both figures. That is why he studiously avoided referring to them. It would not have suited his accusation that Government was sitting down doing nothing.

Mr. PEER BACCHUS: I did not intend to take any part in this debate but I think the last observation made by the hon. Member for North Western District implied that the money being spent on rice expansion schemes is being spent in areas that are not suitable. I would like to emphatically dispute that suggestion. The hon. Member referred to Crabwood creek, which is an area that is most suitable for rice cultivation, and has been taken up by the people residing on the sugar estates who desire to have their own holdings, and have taken up those lands voluntarily. They have cultivated those lands for years and Government, seeing how keen they were to increase their rice production, gave them this

assistance last year by making the area suitable for rice cultivation. Of course the hon. Member for Central Demerara (Mr. de Aguiar) has expressed his disappointment that lands which have been empoldered in that area have not been planted for the last year, but that does not mean that the lands will not be taken up and put under cultivation. They were under cultivation before, but for one reason or another a certain portion of the area has not been fully cultivated.

In the case of the Mahaicony area, on which large sums of money have been spent, can the hon. Member for North Western District dispute that it is a most suitable area for rice cultivation? People living on the coastlands treked to the Mahaicony district to apply for grants which were given to them, but as far as drainage was concerned they could make no provision. Government therefore stepped in as it considered it a suitable area for extensive cultivation of rice. I would suggest to the hon. Member, as I did on the last occasion, that he should visit the area before he makes any comment about it again.

Mr. JACOB: My friend has not been listening, I presume. I merely referred to the Crabwood creek area, and I went on to say that if suitable areas were prepared they would be taken up.

The CHAIRMAN: Let us get on with the question before the Council, which is a motion to reduce item 13 by \$1.

Item put, and agreed to.

Item 3— *Library and Publications*, \$1,650.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: After consideration of the draft estimates by the Advisory Committee it was urged that this item should be increased by \$800. I think the object is to resume

publication of the *Agricultural Journal*. I therefore move that the item be carried out at \$2,450.

Item as amended put, and agreed to.

Item 6— *Government Gardens and Grounds*, \$4,800.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: As a result of an agreement between the Department of Agriculture and the Carnegie Trade School the Department of Agriculture has undertaken to maintain the grounds of that school which are in a deplorable condition, on consideration of this vote being increased by \$300. I therefore move that the item be carried out at \$5,100.

Item as amended put, and agreed to.

Item 18— *Experimental Farm Settlements and Demonstration plots*, \$5,000.

Mr. FERREIRA: The explanatory note says:

“Continuation of demonstration work initiated from funds provided by Legislative Council Food Production Committee under Colonial Emergency Measures vote.”

I do not like the word “continuation.” As regards the Berbice river there has been no experimental work at all in respect of farming, and one wonders why most of those lands are under forest, or on the other hand, why the Berbice savannahs are without cattle? I think the time has come when some effort should be made to carry out experimental work in farming in that district so as to put those lands under proper cultivation and grow crops mechanically. At present the holder of a plot of land is just able to clear an area around his house and plant in that area one year, because due to the poor quality of the soil that plot cannot be planted a second year. It costs him anything up to \$24 per

acre to clear the land, and no effort has been made to see whether the use of artificial manures could put one piece of land into use for several years.

At Ebini there is a Government Experimental Station, and it has been demonstrated that savannahs which were apparently no good for stock can be turned into excellent pastures. I have seen beautiful citrus fruit grown on what was considered useless savannahs. The Berbice river lands are high; there is no question of sea defence or drainage; I think it would be a good proposition to go into the technical aspect to see whether those lands could be cultivated with suitable crops. I am asking that this item be increased by a sum which could be utilized for experimental work, which I think would be of inestimable value not only to the Berbice river lands but to similar lands throughout the Colony.

Mr. de AGUIAR: What the hon. Member has said is quite true. The fertility of the land in the Berbice river district is poor, like many others. The hon. Member asked a question and answered it himself. He made reference to the Ebini experiment, but in view of the fact that the lands generally are so poor, that experiment was undertaken in order to ascertain what should be done. The position at the moment is that those experiments are being carried out. I am informed that artificial manure is being used along with ordinary manures, and it is hoped that the knowledge gained by the experiments will be passed on to other districts in due course. The hon. Member is quite correct in raising the matter, but it is not a point which has been lost sight of.

Item put, and agreed to.

Item 10—*Stock Farm, Georgetown*, \$10,000.

Mr. PERCY C. WIGHT: What is this sum for, sir?

The CHAIRMAN: I will ask the Chairman of the Committee to answer that.

Mr. WIGHT: I think Government spent more than \$10,000 this year, which must have come out of a free grant. There are no livestock at the Farm, only about five or six animals, but there is an elaborate pen about 100 feet wide to accommodate about 100 head of cattle.

Mr. de AGUIAR: The answer to the hon. Member's question is very simple. He has forgotten a very important thing, and that is that this figure of \$10,000 is merely this Colony's contribution to the work being done there. The bulk of the money was originally provided from the Colonial Development and Welfare Fund, and this is the annual contribution by the Colony to the Stock Farm.

As regards his remark about the number of cattle on the Farm, the real purpose is to improve the breed and distribute a better type of cattle throughout the Colony. I do not think the hon. Member is aware that it is giving very valuable service. I have seen it elsewhere. It may not be in as large numbers as the hon. Member would like, but sometimes you cannot do everything overnight. At the 31st December, 1943, there were 59 head of cattle on the Stock Farm in Georgetown. I have not the latest figures.

Mr. WIGHT: I am not satisfied with the explanation.

The CHAIRMAN: You and I will have to go around.

Mr. JACOB: It is now after 4 o'clock and I have given ungrudgingly four hours' service. I would like to look after some of my own work and I am asking that the head be deferred because we cannot complete it this afternoon. I want to ask about the Cane Farming Officer and about the

three visits paid to the North Western District. I therefore move that the Council be adjourned.

The CHAIRMAN: It might be worth while to finish the head. What does the Chairman of the Committee say?

Mr. de AGUIAR: I am entirely in the hands of the Council. I can see no reason really for an adjournment. We are merely half-way through. If the hon. Member has any particular point on which he wishes information I should be very pleased to let him have it. The Director is here.

Mr. JACOB: Haven't we got rules for the governance of this Council? Our rules require that we adjourn at 4 o'clock.

The CHAIRMAN: With the consent of Members there is no difficulty about going on. You can move an adjournment.

Mr. JACOB: I have moved an adjournment. I formally move that the Committee adjourn.

The CHAIRMAN: You will have to move that we resume in Council.

Mr. JACOB: I move that the Council resume.

Motion put, and lost.

Mr. JACOB: I would like to enquire what are the duties of the Cane Farming Officer; what is he going to do, where is he going to work, how the cane farmers are going to understand what is being done for them, and what I am mostly concerned with, what will be the increased production of sugar by the cane farmers? I hope the Chairman of the Advisory Committee or the Director will be able to answer those questions.

Mr. de AGUIAR: The hon. Member asked what is the officer going to

do, and what will be the increased acreage under production by cane farmers? The answer to the first question is that at the present moment the plan is that the officer will concentrate his efforts in the Eastern Demerara district. The hon. Member is aware that at present the position is very bad, and that it is probably not the fault of the cane farmers themselves. It is just one of those unfortunate circumstances that arise now and again. Drainage conditions have become bad and, of course, the yield from the land has been very poor. Proposals have been put up for the adoption of flood fallowing and so on. Of course I know there is a divergence of opinion on that score. There are some people who think that merely by using fertilizers the land would become fertile, but as far as I am aware it seems to me that the best decision—and I believe that is the action that is going to be taken—is to have flood fallowing. That is a matter of detail.

The purpose of this officer is really to go around the cane farming districts and, either by direct demonstrations or by lectures or talks with the people, let them know exactly what they should do in order to get the best returns for the work they do on the land, and I think it will be agreed that that is a step in the right direction. My own view is that this step should have been taken long ago. I suppose in those days when everything was going well the need was not so apparent. It is so bad now that it becomes necessary that something like this should be done by the Government. In addition, one of the duties of the officer will be to act as a sort of *liaison* between the cane farmers and the factory. It will be of general assistance to have an officer like this to assist the farmers to do their work.

As regards the other question I am afraid I am not a prophet. The hon. Member asked how many more tons of sugar will be produced as a

result of this appointment? The only answer I can give him is: time will tell. It is not possible for anybody to say what the efforts of the cane farmers themselves will be. They are the people who will have to make the first effort. If they put their best foot forward I have no doubt that the industry will not only be placed on a stronger footing—

Mr. JACOB: That is not satisfactory from this point of view. I know that the Sugar Agronomist is computing the labour force to manufacture 200,000 tons of sugar. If this officer is to do any real practical work he would say: "We have 1,000 acres under farmers' cane and we are only producing 1,000 tons of sugar by flood fallowing. By the adoption of scientific methods we will be able to produce so many tons of sugar." I certainly would like to see the cane farmers producing 500,000 tons of sugar. Will the Chairman say what quantity was produced last year, and what quantity is expected to be produced next year?

The CHAIRMAN: I think he has answered your questions very fully, and what you have said will be taken into account by the Committee. That is the purpose of the appointment of the officer.

Mr. de AGUIAR: When the hon. Member asks how many more tons of sugar will be produced it is impossible to say unless he can guarantee the individual effort of the cane farmer.

Item 8 — *Experiment Stations*, \$19,000.

Mr. JACOB: I looked up last year's Estimates and saw that the vote for the North West District was \$2,100. This year's Estimates show an increase of \$1,000—50 per cent. increase. I take it, there is going to be greater improvement there and further that there is going to be increased wages paid to the people at the Experiment Station. I

have had representation made to me that the wages paid in my constituency are far too low and should be increased. I recall that Your Excellency recommended that something ought to be done to improve conditions in the North West District, and I thought some action would have been taken. I think this is a convenient time to ask, what additional experiment is going to be made to improve agriculture there and what is going to be done to improve the District generally. I think it will be admitted that the District is in need of improvement. The very successful farmers of the past decided to leave the District as the result of agriculture there being unprofitable. It is very regrettable for the big farmers there to leave the District and, I think, it ought to be known to the Department that there is a good deal of dissatisfaction, so to speak, and the farmers are grumbling.

Mr. de AGUIAR: I am not aware of the dissatisfaction referred to by the hon. Member. That is a stock phrase of his when he wants to make a point. So far as the point raised in regard to wages, the rate of wages paid in the North West District by the Agricultural Department is the same as in all Government Departments. If the hon. Member is attacking the rate of pay there, I presume he would do so on the general issue and not single out the Agricultural Department and say they are paying a lower rate. I do not admit it is. I say it is the uniform rate of wages paid by Government Departments. As regards the increase, it is quite correct that there is an expansion of the work there. The Department is now developing a small Live Stock industry there and has got the people interested in that. The whole of this money, or nearly all of it, will be spent on wages. None of it is intended for anything else.

Item 18—*Experimental Farm Settlements and Demonstration Plots* \$5,000.

Mr. EDUN: I see this expenditure will come under the Colonial Emergency Measures vote. Yesterday this very matter came before the Legislative Council Food Production Committee, and we asked for a report on it. I do not know whether we will be voting for it here and then in the Legislative Council Food Production Committee.

The CHAIRMAN: I venture to say, no. I will, however, ask the Chairman of the Advisory Committee or the Director.

Mr. de AGUIAR: The foot-note reads:

"Continuation of demonstration work initiated from funds provided by Legislative Council Food Production Committee under Colonial Emergency Measures vote."

That is the position. This is work that has been started. These demonstration plots and farm settlements are all over the place—on the West Bank Demerara, in Berbice, in Essequibo. This is for the continuation of the work. I would like to say that I have seen some of the plots myself. I refer particularly to those in Essequibo. They are certainly doing very good work. Although there is quite a substantial increase in this particular item, it was very carefully considered by the Advisory Committee and they agreed that it is money that will be well spent. I think that Members of Council should make an effort to go and see them.

The CHAIRMAN: It seems to have been thoroughly gone through by the Advisory Committee.

Item 19—*Breeding Centre and Agistment Area at La Belle Alliance, \$9,079.*

Mr. JACOB: I see there is a decrease of that vote and the explanation is that the amount is considered sufficient. There is a shortage of beef, a shortage of cattle, a shortage of live-

stock. I was hoping that we would continue to spend money on this very useful project and so increase the number of cattle and improve the breed of cattle particularly in Essequibo. Now I see it is considered sufficient to vote a smaller amount at this time and in these circumstances.

The CHAIRMAN: Last year only \$3,521 was actually spent. Item 25—"District Stud Units"—is one side of livestock improvement. The point is, I suppose, for some reason they do not spend as much as that original vote at La Belle Alliance.

Mr. JACOB: The hon. Member for Georgetown Central (Mr. Percy C. Wight) stated that in Georgetown there are very few animals. The general complaint is, the people do not get sufficient assistance by way of appropriate freight and so there is a definite shortage of cattle throughout the Colony, and this Government cannot do too much to improve cattle breeding and to increase the number everywhere. I merely rise to point out that Government ought to do more than it is doing to improve the breed of cattle. Long ago we used to export cattle, today we are importing. Had it not been for Brazil and Venezuela I do not know what would have happened here. Here is a country, we are told by experts it is a grand country, that can grow cane and rice very abundantly, but cannot grow grass and cannot produce good enough feed for our cattle. There is something wrong. The time is overdue when something more ought to be done in this matter. We have to import milk. Some wonderful experiments have been made lately, we have been told by Dr. Platt. It is well, since we have seen Dr. Platt, that we should do without milk from other parts. I see the Canadian Trade Commissioner is here listening to the debate. This Colony has to depend unfortunately through Government policy on Canada—

The CHAIRMAN: I am sure the Committee would welcome or support any request for money under this Head. I do not think we should press the point.

Mr. JACOB: We will continue then to import this highly nutritive article of food in the form of powdered milk. I think it is a fallacy to carry out an expert advice of that kind—to neglect to do the right thing in growing the right kind of cattle and so have fresh milk here rather than the imported stuff. I had a conversation with Dr. Platt and he told me Mr. Hanchell said "Wherever you go you find a bunch of bones." Why cannot the Department do something? Why cannot Government do something to have proper breeding areas and proper agistment areas for cattle—it is quite appropriate for me to speak on this subject for quite a long time.—throughout the Colony on the East Coast and the West Coast Demerara, in Essequibo, in Berbice? I know the Essequibo Coast very well. I know La Belle Alliance. I would have been delighted to hear the hon. Director clear that up. I think not only in Essequibo, not only in my constituency where I am glad to hear that something is being done to help the breeding of cattle there, but throughout the Colony steps ought to be taken to get the lands put in order, properly drained. Here is where I think the sugar estates should assist. It is well known that they have large areas of grazing land.

The CHAIRMAN: We are on the Agistment area at La Belle Alliance!

Mr. JACOB: I am going to confine myself to Essequibo.

The CHAIRMAN: La Belle Alliance!

Item passed.

Item 24—*Boat Services—N.W.D., Pomeroon and Berbice Rivers, \$4,500.*

Mr. FERREIRA: I welcome this item. The marginal note says:

"Provision has been made for the upkeep and maintenance, etc., of a boat for an officer to be stationed in the Berbice River District."

I have looked through the Estimates and have not seen any money voted for a house for this officer. I would like to know, if an officer is to be stationed in the Berbice River District whether he has not to live in some building? I am yet to see the vote for the erection of a building for him to live in.

The CHAIRMAN: That will come under Public Works.

Mr. FERREIRA: I would ask that the officer when stationed in the District must not be placed within a mile outside New Amsterdam but where we know is the river district proper, about sixty miles away from New Amsterdam. The Berbice River District starts just outside New Amsterdam, and for 24 miles from the coastland you have one type of soil and further up a different type of soil. We want in the Berbice River District someone who will look after this matter.

The CHAIRMAN: The Advisory Committee will bear that in mind.

Mr. JACOB: I notice that the Boat Service in the North West District is to be increased. I wonder if Your Excellency will be good enough to say something about the improvement of the District generally so as to have it on record. Your Excellency will remember that I asked for it under a previous Head and got no answer. I think that district has been neglected. I take it no answer is to be given.

The CHAIRMAN: The Service is going to be increased, and so you ought to be thankful.

Item 26—*Soiling Units, \$5,000.*

Mr. FERREIRA: I think something more should be done as regards the Berbice coastlands. Members have been told that in Berbice the time was when instead of getting a glass of water at a farmhouse a visitor got a glass of milk. But that condition has changed. There is no Control and the price of milk is one penny above the Georgetown price. I think steps should be taken to have the milk production on the coastlands increased.

The CHAIRMAN: The Advisory Committee will take a note of that.

Item 30—*Marketing Schemes, \$45,000.*

Mr. FERREIRA: I would like to hear Government's policy as regards these depots. They are being run at a loss. What is our position as regards the things that can be produced at a cheaper cost in Barbados, such as sweet potatoes. Are we going to make people pay high prices or import from Barbados? What is Government's policy as regards coffee?

Mr. JACOB: I think I can answer that. Government has absolutely no policy.

Mr. deAGUIAR: This is a subject with which I am so familiar that I am afraid I may delay the Council much longer than the hon. Member would wish. Speaking briefly on these marketing schemes, hon. Members are aware there is a depot in Georgetown, also one in New Amsterdam. I think I should first of all pay Berbicians the personal tribute of saying that the one in New Amsterdam is working very well indeed. It is doing very good service and Government knows that very well. Government's policy about these depots briefly is to assist the farmers. I would like to emphasize that. Whilst on the one hand it is assuring distribution to the consumer the primary function is

to assist the farmer. At the present moment, hon. Members are aware, there is a depot guarantee backed by Government whereby the prices of certain products are guaranteed the farmer for a period of one year. The position is that wherever those articles are produced, all that has to be done is to send them to the nearest depot and in the case of the articles produced more or less on the coastlands certain transport facilities are provided. I do not know whether the hon. Member wishes to enquire into the working of the depots.

Mr. FERREIRA: If we are to pay 3 cents per lb. to the farmer for potatoes and we can import from Barbados at 1½ cents per lb., what is Government's policy—to help the farmer or to help the poor working man to get the potatoes from Barbados at a cheaper price?

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member is pre-supposing that you can import potatoes from Barbados!

Mr. deAGUIAR: Probably the hon. Member is unaware of the fact that at the moment the importation of potatoes from Barbados is forbidden. I do not think the hon. Member would disagree that the primary object is to see the prices paid to the farmer are remunerative. In arriving at a remunerative figure a number of factors have to be taken into consideration. First of all, there is the rate of wages to be considered, the cost of land rent, the general cost of living. All of these have to be of primary consideration in arriving at the prices to be paid to farmers. It is true that potatoes are produced in Barbados at a lower price than that fixed in this Colony, but conditions are entirely different. As a matter of fact it will be futile to try and make any comparison at all. The method of producing potatoes in Barbados is not that employed here. Apart from the question of cost, what is more is that the sweet

potatoes produced here are subject to a number of difficulties in production—soil fertility, attack of insects. To go back to my first point I am sure the hon. Member would agree that the primary object is to fix a remunerative price to the farmer.

Item 31—Essequibo Estates, \$25,454

The COLONIAL TREASURER: I am asked to move that this amount be increased to \$41,100 owing to labour and cost of materials. These amendments are printed at the back of the supplementary memorandum.

Mr. EDUN: I see the Council proposes to resume at 2 o'clock tomorrow

afternoon and there will be an evening session. I live in the country and would like the Government to place at my disposal a launch to take me across the river. I do not want a little launch but a big one.

The CHAIRMAN: We will be very glad to see the hon. Member. We will arrange it somehow.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: The total of the vote of the head as amended, is \$329,955.

The Council resumed and adjourned until 2 p.m. the next day.