

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

Thursday, 29th January, 1942.

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

PRESENT.

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary,
Mr. G. D. Owen, C.M.G.

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

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

The Hon. J. S. Dash, Director of
Agriculture.

The Hon. E. A. Luckhoo, O.B.E.,
(Eastern Berbice).

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

The Hon. E. F. McDavid, M.B.E.
Colonial Treasurer.

The Hon. F. J. Seaford, O.B.E.,
(Georgetown North).

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

The Hon. W. A. D'Andrade, O.B.E.,
Comptroller of Customs.

The Hon. N. M. Maclennan, Director
of Medical Services.

The Hon. M. B. Laing, O.B.E., Com-
missioner of Labour and Local Gov-
ernment.

The Hon. G. O. Case, Consulting
Engineer.

The Hon. B. R. Wood, Conservator
of Forests.

The Hon. F. Ogle, Director of Edu-
cation, (Acting).

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

The Hon. J. Eleazar, (Berbice River).

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

The Hon. J. I. deAguiar (Central
Demerara).

The Hon. Jung Bahadur Singh,
(Demerara-Essequibo).

The Hon. Peer Bacchus, (Western
Berbice).

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

The Hon. C. R. Jacob (North-West-
ern District).

The Hon. J. W. Jackson (Nominated
Unofficial Member).

The Hon. F. A. Mackey, (Nominated
Unofficial Member).

The Hon. T. Lee (Essequibo River).

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

MINUTES.

The minutes of the previous meeting
of the Council held on the 21st Jan-
uary, 1941, were confirmed.

ANNOUNCEMENTS.**COST OF LIVING.**

THE PRESIDENT: Before we
begin the business on the agenda, the
first being the resumption of the debate
on the resolution concerning the
Constitution on which I want to
comment but will wait until we re-open
the debate, I have one or two other
announcements to make at this stage
—the first is concerning the two
motions which stand on the agenda in
the schedules, and the second is
touching the further stage in labour
legislation which I have already
mentioned in this Council.

As regards the two motions on the agenda, those are to carry out the decisions of Government's intentions which were announced last Friday in connection with the rising cost of living. The first comment I want to make on is: that if carried through these decisions impose a considerable financial burden on the Colony. You will observe that the figure for the bonus to Government employees is \$88,000 for the year 1942, and \$200,000 is allowed to subsidize flour for a period which cannot exceed six months. If that step is successful and is maintained for the year, the burden on the Colony's finances will be little short of half a million dollars in 1942.

I regret that it should have been necessary to take action without prior consultation of this Council, even though the action was by way of announcement of intention only and not by way of committing the Legislative Council. But I am confident that the action is in accord with the general feeling of hon. Members that some action should be taken on these lines and, as I have said before on matters of this kind touching the cost of living, it would almost certainly be necessary to take action promptly in these things, for which I was prepared to take the responsibility and discuss with the Legislative Council where finance is concerned later on. I may also say that I found it necessary to make that announcement of Government's intentions on Friday, in view of the fact that the Sugar Producers announced on that day that they were increasing their bonus to workers.

There is one thing I want to make very clear, and that is that this action was not taken on the spur of the moment or with reference to any particular incident or incidents. As hon. Members have been aware from the brief announcements I have made from time to time from this Chair, I have been in telegraphic correspondence with London since about Christmas in

an endeavour to secure concurrence on some steps to be taken in relation to the rising cost of living. I only received this on Friday morning—the same day as that on which the Sugar Producers made their announcement. In my telegraphic correspondence with the Secretary of State I emphasized that (apart from the question of bonus to Government employees and others) in the use of public money, as far as possible, it should be for the general benefit of the whole community and not only of special classes.

That His Majesty's Government in England should hesitate somewhat before authorizing the subsidization of food-stuffs at public expense in a country which should be largely self-supporting, is very natural, for such a departure for a country with a financial position as insecure as ours might prove very dangerous indeed to financial security and result in further dependence on the Imperial Exchequer and further burden on the United Kingdom taxpayer. I felt myself that there was an urgent necessity for us to get forward with some action within our own resources and, if we failed to make some attempt of that kind, we would get nowhere. I felt that such action should be taken in spite of the usual objections urged on every side. In other words, I thought it desirable to get on with that action. If our initial trials do not turn out to be entirely successful they would have to be reconsidered. That action being taken we can only go forward with it with the best means that we have and with the best intentions. The extreme impossibility of finding a complete solution to this problem of the cost of living is admitted everywhere.

The present choice of the item of flour has been made because it is an article of universal consumption. As far as we can see, it represents one-sixth of the total food budget of the labouring classes and slightly over n

the country districts. Its subsidization as now proposed should pull back the increase in the cost of living by several points. As far as we can see, something like 6 per cent. of the rise.

It is also stated that the subsidy should be for a period. Government has in mind a period of six months, and the amount asked for in the motion should cover that. If the experiment is successful, that is to say, that it can really be assured that the benefit passes on to the consumer and that the financial burden is not too much, we will of course attempt to maintain it for a longer period, otherwise it will be necessary to reconsider the whole matter. Personally, I will bitterly regret if we have to go back on any step made towards stabilizing this increasing cost of living. In other words, we cannot guarantee we can go on indefinitely with a step of this kind.

In regard to the matter of the bonus to Government employees, that also has been the subject of telegraphic correspondence for several weeks in order to secure the assent of the Secretary of State, which is essential in such a matter. I have had to answer several questions proposing limited alternatives also demanding consideration of action taken in other Colonies, to secure the assent to the present increase. As now secured it grants an increase of remuneration to all employees of Government below a certain rate of pay or wages and is not limited to certain classes. The raising of the limit to the rate of \$60 per month I specially urged: that happens to be the point from which pension rates under the Pensions Ordinance are held.

As it stands, the bonus is precisely that granted this month in Trinidad, though, for special reasons emphasized to me in my correspondence, a bonus is granted to higher grades in that Colony. Further, the present proposal accords very closely indeed with those effective

or being made effective in a considerable number of other Colonies whose position is comparable to our own. It will be apparent that I cannot hold out anticipation of this Colony being able to grant bonus in excess of, or expanding further than, the proposal now made. As I have said before, I shall certainly take the view that public money, if it is to be further used in connection with the cost of living, should be used as far as possible in such a way as to benefit the whole of the community rather than particular classes in it.

I shall no doubt be told that the steps Government has taken are quite inadequate and that appreciation for any concession will turn on the expectation of something more. Anyone who thinks of the matter in that strain can have no conception of the proper responsibility for custody and expenditure of public money: or of the time and work necessary to make possible embarkation on such a policy, which might very well involve financial and other repercussions and liabilities outside the Colony, with further appeal to the British taxpayer. What I would wish further to emphasize is: that it would be utterly misleading for Government to indicate or the public to imagine that the steps now being taken with so much trouble and with some risk are merely the prelude to more and more drawing on the public funds. It will be regarded by Government as a fixed policy and as a matter of most important policy to do anything possible to meet and stabilize the cost of living, but it must be realized that we must keep that strictly within the limit of practical politics of our own resources, and within that limit it is our business to do what we can. It must also be realized that it is quite outside the realm of that to restore things in any part of the world to something approaching the conditions of the pre-war period. We cannot hope for that

as some people do. That is quite a misleading hope.

LABOUR LEGISLATION.

I would just like to pass on to what I mentioned as the other point touching legislation. First of all, the Summary Jurisdiction Bill which, I said, I would refer to the Secretary of State as a matter of policy on certain amendments suggested which made secure its passage through this Council with reasonable unanimity, the Secretary of State has replied agreeing in principle with those suggestions and I am led to think there must be models elsewhere and, perhaps, in other Colonies. I have referred it back to him on a particular point and when I get an answer I will ask the hon. Attorney-General to put the amended draft of certain clauses, which I will put before the Council in due course.

I also referred to legislation which, I think, Government is contemplating, and that is to ensure the carrying on of essential services. I mentioned two at a previous meeting. The Secretary of State has replied that both alternatives are proper and are already law in other Colonies; firstly, to avoid lock-outs and strikes in the carrying on of essential industries at least for such period as to permit of some settlement being arrived at, and the other is that we do the same as in other Colonies and have something in the way of National Service legislation to be used in the last resort to secure man-power to carry on essential services.

ESSEQUEBO COAST SCHEMES.

I have two other minor announcements to make. One is that I want to visit the Essequibo Coast in February particularly to have a look at certain schemes put up to the Comptroller for Development and Welfare. That project seems rather to be vanishing at this moment, but still I would like to carry it out. With reference to the scheme proposed for Land Settlement for peasant and small holding agriculturists in the neighbourhood of Anna Regina, the Departments concerned—

Public Health, Local Government and Public Works—have put up a practical and reasonable scheme and I have authorized an advance of \$4,500, so that we will have something going for discussion with the Comptroller on his arrival in March.

As regards our business to-day, I have an important appointment at 4 o'clock with a distinguished American visitor which I must keep, and I will therefore ask to be excused early from the Council and ask the hon. Colonial Secretary to take my place a little before 4 o'clock. Before I depart I would bring up one point touching the financing of certain schemes of public works which were in last year's programme but are not yet fully carried out and which I want to give orders to proceed with forthwith. We will now proceed with the business.

TEMPORARY WAR BONUS.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Mr. G. D. Owen) communicated the following Message from His Excellency the Governor to the Council:—

MESSAGE No. 3.

Honourable Members of the Legislative Council.

In view of the further increase in the cost of living resulting from present world conditions, the Council is invited to approve of the following revised rates of temporary war bonus being paid to Government employees in receipt of salaries or wages not exceeding \$720 per annum with effect from the 1st January, 1942:—

Employees in receipt of monthly salaries.

15 per cent on the first \$240 of salary per annum.

10 " " " next \$240 " " "

5 " " " " \$240 " " "

Employees receiving between \$720 and \$792 per annum shall be paid at the rate of \$792 per annum.

Employees other than those in receipt of monthly salaries.

15 per cent, on the first 80 cents of wages per day.

10 " " " " next 80 " " " " "

5 " " " " 80 " " " " "

2. The grant of the increased bonus is estimated to cost an additional \$88,000 in 1942.

3. The Council is further invited to approve the cancellation of Resolution No. III. of 19th December, 1939, which authorises the payment of temporary war bonus at the rate of 10 per cent.

GORDON LETHEM,
Governor.

27th January, 1942.

GOVERNMENT NOTICES.

INTRODUCTION OF BILL.

Mr. McDAVID (Colonial Treasurer) gave notice of the introduction and first reading of the following Bill:—

A Bill intituled an Ordinance to appropriate the supplies granted in the current session of the Legislative Council.

TEMPORARY WAR BONUS.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY gave notice of the following motion:—

THAT, with reference to the Governor's Message No. 3 dated 27th January, 1942, this Council approves of the following revised rates of temporary war bonus being paid to Government employees in receipt of salaries or wages not exceeding \$720 per annum with effect from the 1st of January, 1942:—

Employees in receipt of monthly salaries.
 15 per cent. on the first \$240 of salary per annum.
 10 " " " " next \$240 "
 5 " " " " \$240 " " "

Employees receiving between \$720 and \$792 per annum shall be paid at the rate of \$792 per annum.

Employees other than those in receipt of monthly salaries.
 15 per cent. on the first 80 cents of wages per day.
 10 " " " " next 80 " " " "
 5 " " " " 30 " " " "

This Council further approves of the cancellation of Resolution No. III. of 19th December, 1939.

FLOUR SUBSIDY.

Mr. WOOD (Conservator of Forests) gave notice of the following motion:—

THAT, this Council approves the expenditure from Colony funds of a sum not exceeding \$200,000 to be applied to the reduction in the price of flour to the consumer by one cent per pound, for a period.

He further gave notice that if necessary at a later stage he would move the suspension of the Standing Rules and Orders to enable the motion to be taken that day.

ORDER OF THE DAY.

RE-CONSTITUTION OF THE COUNCIL.

The Council resumed the debate on the following motion:—

Be it hereby Resolved with humble respect that this Council respectfully petitions that His Majesty may be pleased, by Order in

Council varying certain provisions in the British Guiana (Constitution) Order in Council, 1928, or by such other action as His Majesty may deem fit, to re-constitute the Legislative Council of this Colony so that it shall consist of the Governor as President and the following members, that is to say, the persons for the time being lawfully discharging the functions of the respective offices of Colonial Secretary, Attorney-General and Colonial Treasurer (to be known as *ex officio* Members), seven nominated persons not holding public office under the Crown (to be known as Nominated Members) and fourteen Members declared to have been duly elected under the provisions of the aforementioned Order in Council (to be called Elected Members);

And be it further Resolved,—That His Excellency the Governor be requested to transmit a copy of these Resolutions to His Majesty's Secretary of State for the Colonies.

THE PRESIDENT: An amendment has been proposed by the hon. Member for Essequibo River (Mr. Lee). I think the hon. Member for North-Western District (Mr. Jacob) was speaking when the adjournment was taken. If he cares to, he may resume.

Mr. JACOB: When the Council adjourned on Wednesday, the 21st of this month, I was referring to the evidence that has been given so far before the Franchise Commission. So far as I am concerned, this motion affects the general public and I am prepared to be guided by substantial public opinion, properly mobilized and received. My hon. friend, the Member for Essequibo River (Mr. Lee), made reference to what action he and I took in this matter, and I would like to refer to the population and the number of voters in the several Electoral Districts of this Colony. At the present time there are 14 Elected Members of this Council elected by 14 constituencies. It is true the Franchise Commission had been given authority to consider and advise as to the alteration of the several boundaries of the existing Electoral Districts. Unfortunately, there had been some dispute as to the correct interpretation of that term of reference, but so far while Government had given a ruling on it I do not think certain members of the Franchise Commission are satisfied that that ruling is correct

or that it meets the wishes of the vast majority of the people of this Colony. Therefore, if I give the figures of the population in the several constituencies I would, I believe, be able to show that the boundaries require immediate adjustment or alteration.

I have in my hand the Report of the Registrar General for the year 1939, giving the population under Table XI on page xxvi, the last page. The population of the Colony is there recorded as 341,237. I have been able with the assistance of certain Members of the Council and the public to fix certain boundaries so that we can get an approximate population of the several Electoral Districts. It is not quite easy, for instance, to fix the population of each of the boundaries of the Georgetown Electoral Districts as at present defined, but since the population of Georgetown is recorded separately, we can divide it by the three Elected Members for Georgetown and so arrive at the number of people each Elected Member for Georgetown represents. I have done that for the whole Colony and would like to lay the figures before the Council.

Eastern Berbice, Electoral District No. 1, appears to be definitely stated in the Registrar General's Report and the population is given as 54,779, and the voters on the 1941-42 list total 930.

New Amsterdam, Electoral District No. 2—the population, which is stated precisely, is 9,739 and the number of voters is 527.

Berbice River, Electoral District No. 3—I have been able to estimate the population as 5,299 and the number of voters is 153.

Western Berbice, Electoral District No. 4—an estimated population of 14,506 with 566 voters.

Eastern Demerara, Electoral District No. 5, is mixed up with Central

Demerara, Electoral District No. 6, in respect of population which is estimated as 72,185. Divided by two I give Eastern Demerara Electoral District a population of 36,000 and Central Demerara Electoral District 36,185, while the electors or voters total 1,120 for Eastern Demerara and 766 for Central Demerara.

Georgetown, Electoral Districts Nos. 7, 8 and 9—the total population is fixed at 68,818 and that divided by three will give between 22,000 and 23,000 to each, and as regards voters I give the figures on the official list—Electoral District No. 7—652; Electoral District No. 8—1,718; Electoral District No. 9—982.

Demerara River, Electoral District No. 10—the population is estimated as 28,136 and the number of voters given as 920.

Demerara-Essequibo, Electoral District, No. 11—an estimated population of 27,849 and 710 voters.

Essequibo River, Electoral District No. 12—an estimated population of 26,519 and 801 voters.

Western Essequibo, Electoral District No. 13—an estimated population of 25,750 and the number of voters is 500.

North Western District, Electoral District No. 14—an estimated population of 7,657 and the number of voters is 78.

The total population of the Colony is 341,237 and the total voters 10,423 or just about 3 per cent. of the population. If even, Your Excellency, there is to be an election or elections are to be held under the present system with 3 per cent. of the population being voters, I confidently maintain that such election or elections will not adequately represent the views of the inhabitants of this Colony. As this question affects all the people in this Colony, every

man, woman and child, it is thought advisable that the opinion of the public ought to be obtained in this matter and so when I refer to the evidence that has been given before the Franchise Commission so far, I invite hon. Members of this Council to consider carefully that evidence and added public opinion that had been properly and constitutionally expressed in an adequate form. I have referred to the several meetings that had been held throughout the Colony. In Eastern Berbice a public meeting was held after notices giving the agenda had been printed and circulated in that district, and resolutions were passed. I would like to emphasize that when those resolutions were passed the matter was carefully explained and every individual who attended took a part. He was asked to vote for or against and to do so by the raising of his hand. At all the meetings held all over the Colony, except in Georgetown, every person present either raised his hand for the resolutions or did not raise his hand as being against. I give this Council my solemn assurance that the meetings were properly conducted and the people were not coerced in any way to express their will. Government has been informed of all those meetings and, I believe, I have the assurance of Government that the Secretary of State for the Colonies has been informed as to the results of those meetings. I think they number 21. I claim then that this Council ought to be guided by that opinion as expressed by the people of this Colony.

The Franchise Commission has been given certain terms of reference. I have already read paragraphs 26 and 28 of the recommendations of the Royal Commission and, therefore, I would just like to refer to paragraph 28 and to state that it was specifically recommended by the Royal Commission that the Franchise Commission or Commissions of this Colony should keep in touch with similar Commissions in the several other West Indian

Colonies. When the matter was raised before the present Franchise Commission, the majority opinion was that the people of this Colony should not be guided by what is stated in the Royal Commission's Report, and it did not concern the majority here to keep in touch with the Commissions in the several other West Indian Colonies. I have always interpreted the terms of reference of the Franchise Commission very liberally. Perhaps, I may be wrong. I, however, make the point that if this Government feels it must not be guided by the recommendations of the Royal Commission, then the Franchise Commission may be allowed to give its report; if on the other hand, this Government feels that the Franchise Commission of this Colony should keep in touch with the Franchise Commissions of the several West Indian Colonies, then specific instructions should be given to that Commission to the effect. I want to make that clear because of the constitution of that Commission. It has been raised in the House of Commons on October 1, that the Franchise Commission of this Colony does not adequately represent all sections of the population. I do not want to refer to the Chairman's resignation on the ground of ill-health.

I wish to make my position quite clear, so that this Government will be very well-advised to give certain directions to the Franchise Commission or to widen its terms of reference so that the Commissioners may know what exactly to do. The Royal Commission has made it perfectly clear in its report that local committees should be appointed to consider the extension of the Franchise as regards both local and central Government, but up to the present a Commission has been appointed only to consider certain questions in regard to central government. The question was raised in regard to Local Government in the towns and villages, but the matter has been shelved. I think the Secretary of State for the Colonies has ruled that in the

absence of unanimity on the Franchise Commission, he is bound to leave that matter over. There we have it. A Commission, composed as the Franchise Commission is, can never be unanimous on any matter, and because that Commission is not unanimous in its recommendation the Secretary of State for the Colonies, I think it is on the recommendation of Government, says: "Oh, no; we will leave local and municipal government severely alone for the moment."

I have always complained that unfortunately in this Colony we begin from the wrong end. I would like to see something done in the villages and towns before we do anything in this Council. If you do not teach the people in the villages and towns to look after their own affairs, how can you expect those same people to elect other people to look after the affairs of the whole Colony? Perhaps I am so ignorant that I cannot see otherwise, but it is my conscientious opinion that the Local Authorities should first manage their own affairs and profit by their mistakes. Let the Municipalities elect their representatives and profit by their mistakes; and so in this Legislature when the people elect Members we would have gone a step farther towards self-government. I suggest that active steps be taken immediately to appoint a Commission to go into the question of Village and Municipal administration, so as to decide whether there should be wholly elected Village Councils or the present system should obtain, whether there should be wholly elected Town Councils or the present system should continue, and then take the matter a step farther.

At this point, I would like to state that during the debate on the Estimates, I gathered from Your Excellency that you are of the opinion that so far as Local Government is concerned in this Colony, we are doing fairly well. Whether that is the considered opinion

of Your Excellency and that will prevent Your Excellency from appointing Commissions or Committees to go into the question of Local Government, I do not know but I advise it. Government knows that I have submitted several letters to this Government raising several points in regard to Local Government and Municipal Government.

The Royal Commissioners have recommended in their report—paragraphs 26 and 28—the question of Federation. If even the majority of members of the Franchise Commission are against consulting Trinidad and Jamaica—those two big Island Colonies—in regard to the qualification of voters, the qualification of Members of the Legislature, and so on, why should not the Franchise Commission be asked to say something about the Federation of the West Indies and British Guiana? Why is this matter being delayed? Your Excellency has had experience in that direction, and I respectfully suggest that something be done to bring about federation, and that as early as possible. Perhaps it is thought that as nothing had been done in the past nothing should be done at the present time. While discussing this matter with several Elected Members of this Council, one or two of whom are very experienced Members, one Elected Member told me: "Why should we worry? We are better off here; we have a big Colony." That is the same reason why we should be federated with the West Indian Colonies. Here we have a large Colony of 90,000 square miles with a population of 350,000 people. What are we doing with it—Keeping it for posterity? I think that this Colony has immense possibilities, immense potentialities, and should be opened up. You have Barbados overpopulated and other West Indian Colonies too. Trinidad may not be now but certainly will be very shortly, and we have Jamaica too. Present events, everyday events, show that we should federate, we should work together. It seems to me a very retro-

grade policy, but it is the policy, I regret to say, favoured in the opinion held by certain Elected Members of this Council who are supposed to be representing the people here. They are holding on to the idea that British Guiana should keep itself isolated perpetually or at least up to the time they are on this side of Time. I urge that active steps be taken to bring about Federation.

Perhaps, it may not be out of place to say what certain representatives of the people of Trinidad, Barbados and British Guiana did in 1938. I was fortunate to attend a conference in Trinidad when a Federal Constitution was actually drafted. Two Members of the Trinidad Legislature, one Member of the Barbados House of Assembly and myself drafted it and, I believe, it was submitted to the Royal Commission when it visited Trinidad in 1939. I am not too sure, but it was drafted in 1938 with the object of being transmitted to the Imperial Government. If it is the wish of the Imperial Government—and I think it is but there are certain interests, certain elements in this Colony and probably other West Indian Colonies who would prefer to remain isolated—it would not be the best thing to pursue the matter further. But the majority of people in this Colony and, I think, in Trinidad and Barbados want Federation, and so active steps should be taken to bring about Federation.

This motion before the Council refers to the retention of three Officials, the increase of the Nominated Unofficial Members from five to seven and to the retention of the Elected Members at fourteen. It may not be out of place to refer to the Order in Council constituting this Legislature and to make reference to section 25 giving the qualification of voters. I do not propose to read it, but to ask hon. Members to consider that section very carefully in Chapter 2 of the Laws of this Colony. Whatever are the results of the Franchise Commission, whatever

recommendations are made, as I have said before, I feel confident that a far greater percentage of the people of this Colony will be placed on the List of Voters, and so the election of Members of this Council will be far more representative of the inhabitants. As regards the number of Nominated Members, the hon. Member for Essequibo River has referred to and read resolutions which had been passed in several constituencies in this Colony. It is the considered opinion of the vast majority of the people in this Colony that up to the present the Nominated section in this Council does not adequately represent the interests that should be represented by the Nominated element in this Legislature, and so there is grave dissatisfaction in respect of the Nominated element in this Council. I think public anxiety is relieved to a great extent by Lord Moyne's despatch of 22nd May, 1941, in regard to the Unofficial Members of the Executive Council and the Legislative Council who have already served one or more terms in that capacity. While this question was very clearly put before the vast majority of the people in this Colony, and while every point was debated, it is not necessary at this stage to make reference to it at length as the matter has been already satisfactorily stated by the Secretary of State for the Colonies. Public feeling will be met when the next Legislature is composed and the Nominated section represents a larger majority of the people of this Colony. I, therefore, do not propose to say much on the question of the Nominated section of the Council.

As regards the Official section, I think it is a step in the right direction. I look forward to the day, which should not be more than seven years hence, when the three Officials who are to remain will be removed also. In the same way the other seven Officials are to sit at their desks and do their work, these three Officials

should be at their desks doing administrative work. I am confident that during my lifetime that is going to happen in these Colonies, and I am not too sure if it does not happen within the next seven years. I was glad when Your Excellency reminded me that you wanted to do something practical. That is exactly what I stand for; I want to look at something practical. I want to say that nothing practical has been done here up to the present. I use the words advisedly. The more I look, the more I see chaos everywhere. I am definitely satisfied that if the Official section were to sit at their desks and do their work and not dominate here and there and mislead the Governor, this Colony would be far better off. We have had far too much misleading in the past, and the time must come when it must stop.

I will have to refer to one or two Boards that are in existence at the present time, and Boards that have administrative functions. If I refer to the Transport and Harbours Board, that is controlled by the hon. Colonial Secretary who is the Chairman of it. What do we find?

THE PRESIDENT: That is not quite relevant to the debate!

Mr. JACOB: I am subjected to your ruling, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: If you desire to speak on it I do not think you should continue long.

Mr. JACOB: I just want to make slight reference to three or four Boards, the Chairmen of which are to remain as Members of this Council. I am going to attempt to show that most of those Boards have been a menace to the progress of the Colony up to the present time. This is an opportunity for this Council to express its opinion on the Constitution. This is an opportunity for me, as one of the representatives of the people, to express my

opinion on the continuation of this present system of Government. The Transport and Harbours Board is in a state of chaos; the Department is bankrupt and has been so for a long time. Are we going to allow it to continue? So far as I am concerned, I will not be a party to it. In my constituency there is a fortnightly service run by that Department, and I have stated here and in other places that the accommodation for second-class passengers on that service is not good enough for good bred cattle. That Department is run by a Board of which the hon. Colonial Secretary is Chairman and certain Elected Members of this Council are members. My idea of a Board is that responsibility should be placed somewhere. I would like to see the Elected Members made responsible for running these Boards, so that responsibility can be placed somewhere and the public can say whether that member is a fit and proper person to remain a Member of the Council. So far as the present Transport and Harbours Board is concerned, I would remove the Chairman immediately. (Laughter) Hon. Members may laugh. If a proper conception is taken of conditions then you would see with me. If we prefer to go on as we are doing, then I am not going to say anything more about it; but so far as I am concerned I would certainly like to see the Chairman removed and an Elected Member put in his place. Put the Vice-Chairman (Mr. Woolford) as Chairman and let him continue to make a mess of things, and then let him go to New Amsterdam and see whether they will re-elect him. I have the opinion of New Amsterdam, but I do not want to be personal in speaking on this motion at all.

I come to the Local Government Board. The hon. Colonial Secretary, who is to be a fixture in the Council, is Chairman of that Board also and he will probably remain as Chairman of that Board. As far as I am concerned, I would like him to be removed

immediately. It may be the best thing for him. Why keep him taking on responsibilities which he cannot carry out? Why should he be so burdened? Put an Elected Member as Chairman, the hon. Member for Central Central Demerara (Mr. de Aguiar) for instance, and let him continue to make the mess he has made of it. (Laughter). Then we will see whether the electorate will re-elect him as a Member of this Council. Then we will have progress in this Colony. The Local Government Board has been and is a menace to the progress of the Colony. I say here that we have as Chairman of that Board one who is in direct contact with the Secretary of State for the Colonies and receives despatches and who continues to do certain things on the Board that are entirely against public welfare. I have only recently referred to two matters in connection with the Local Government Board in which direct action was taken by the Board. I have written to the Board and to Government in connection with those matters. If these things are to be taken lightly and appreciated and the Board is to continue in the use of the big stick, then, so far as I am concerned, I would not be a party to it. I will now refer to the Rice Marketing Board of which the hon. Colonial Treasurer is Chairman.

THE PRESIDENT: No reference to the Rice Marketing Board please. The hon. Member has been speaking eighteen minutes on matters irrelevant to the motion. I am very interested to hear his views, but there are other Members who wish to speak. I think he should keep to the Legislative Council.

Mr. JACOB: I respectfully submit, and with confidence, that since it is my function here to-day to debate the question as to the retention of certain Officials in this Council to do administrative work, it is my special privilege to refer to this matter; but I will agree it is not my privilege to refer unneces-

sarily long to it. Subject to your ruling, sir, I will refrain from saying another word about the Rice Marketing Board. It is, however, my duty, my privilege, my right to refer to this matter! Your Excellency. I maintain that on all Boards there should be no Government Official as Chairman, and I strongly urge that in the future, the immediate future, steps be taken to put Elected Members, persons elected by the people, as Chairmen. I go further and say these Boards must not be composed of a majority of members who have been nominated by the Government, as they have no responsibility. Nominated Members of this Council have no responsibility to the people of the Colony. The people can say and do nothing in regard to their nomination. That principle should be very well established and should be as forcibly stated as possible. While the Nominated element is representative of certain interests it does not represent a large percentage of people. We had that clearly demonstrated here during the last few weeks and, therefore, I submit that the constitution of these Boards, which is within the function of this Council and my right and privilege to refer to it here, must be gone into. All Boards should have a majority of Elected Members on them with an Elected Member as Chairman.

THE PRESIDENT: I must ask the hon. Member to keep to the matter before us, and that is the constitution of the Legislative Council.

Mr. JACOB: I now come to the Executive Council. While there is no direct reference to the Executive Council in this motion, Your Excellency has given the assurance or pledge that discussion will be allowed as to the composition of the Executive Council

THE PRESIDENT: That is so.

Mr. JACOB: There had been some misunderstanding in this matter during the secret session—that is how it is

called—that was held in this Colony when Sir Wilfrid Jackson asked the Unofficial Members to meet him in connection with the Constitution. Public opinion was that certain Elected Members or the majority of them agreed to a change of the Constitution without consulting the people of the Colony. I do not plead guilty to that charge at all. So far as I am concerned, I laid the foundation then. I reserved the right of referring to these matters later on, and it is the unanimous wish of the people in my constituency and in the other constituencies I have visited that the composition of the Executive Council, the Council that controls this Government, should be largely made up of Elected Members. To the vast majority of people it is useless to have this Legislature merely talking and not taking an active part in the administration of the Colony. While Your Excellency must be given certain reserve powers, I think it would be far wiser if Your Excellency is supported by Members representing the majority of the people in the Colony. As may happen certain things may be done not in the interest of the public but in the interest of certain minorities, and Your Excellency has the right with your reserve power to do what you think is in the interest of the large majority of the people in the Colony and to take drastic action to stop anything being done which is not in the interest of the vast majority. As it is, this Council has no saying in the matter. The composition of the Executive Council is to be left to Your Excellency or the Officer Administering the Government and to the Secretary of State for the Colonies.

At all those public meetings which were held when the question was put up, the opinion of the public was that a majority of the Elected Members should be on the Executive Council, Members who are responsible to the public, Members who will have to face the public every four or five years to be re-elected to the Legislature

which entitles them to hold their seats on the Executive Council. But if certain Members of the Executive Council have absolutely no regard for public opinion and if that state of affairs is to continue, then I am afraid we would remain in the same position as we are. While it has not been admitted that as the result of the unsatisfactory state of affairs in British Guiana and the West Indian Colonies the Royal Commission came to these parts and made certain recommendations with the view of improvement, I am looking forward for something practical to be done. Therefore, I say the Executive Council should be composed of a majority of Members of the Legislative Council, Elected Members should be given the opportunity of saying who should be nominated to the Executive Council, and the Members of the Executive Council should confer at all times with the Members of the Legislative Council. At the present time, there is no such connection. The Members of the Executive Council have the right to represent the people in the manner they do because the people have no right to question them about those things.

Since Your Excellency has been here, the public and this Council have been informed as to what Government proposes to do, but before Your Excellency's arrival no such thing was told us here. Members of the Legislative Council have been asked certain things by members of the public who knew about them before hon. Members. A Bill or a resolution is to be brought forward in the Legislature and we know nothing about it in advance. There should be direct contact between the Legislative Council and the Executive Council, and it is necessary to make this point very clear here so that some notice can be taken of them. Personally, I have no contact with the Government, absolutely none. I come here and express my views, and I write letters to Government. That is the end of my functions as an Elected

Member. Such a state of affairs is entirely unsatisfactory and should not be allowed to continue. You should have a majority of the Members of the Legislative Council on the Executive Council. It may be advisable for the hon. Member for Essequibo River to press his amendments.

So far as I am concerned, the present motion as worded does not meet the wishes of the vast majority of the people of the Colony. I want to emphasize this. The wishes of the people ought to be expressed here and, if not, Government should have some means of knowing what the wishes of the people are. In so far as Georgetown is concerned, while I have not obtained public opinion there in the manner I got it in the other parts of the Colony, we are guided, and hope to be guided to a large extent, by the opinion expressed by the Trade Unions that are functioning in Georgetown. The opinions expressed by the Trade Unions from time to time agree substantially with the resolutions which have been passed throughout the Colony. I close my speech on the motion by saying that the whole Colony is in agreement that the Constitution of the Colony should be changed but not in the manner as suggested at the moment. It is desired that after a period of seven years there should be a different Constitution—one that will give us responsible or self-government. Between now and 1948, there should be an *interim* Constitution somewhat acceptable to the large majority of the people as a trial, and after 1948 there should be Universal Adult Suffrage and the whole Legislature be composed of not less than twenty-four Members.

Dr. SINGH: I have already committed myself in favour of the principle of the motion, but there is one important point in regard to this motion I would like to make. It does not state whether this proposal of a reconstitution of the Council is of a temporary nature.

THE PRESIDENT: I think I should answer that question at once and state that that is clearly the intention. I shall ask the hon. Colonial Secretary, in replying, to make that quite clear.

Dr. SINGH: That is the reason why I got up. I will support the motion. Relative to the constitution of the Executive Council, at the present moment the Executive Council is made up of Members taken from the Legislative Council. With the proposed new constitution of the Legislative Council it will be without the majority of Official Members. These Official Members are Heads of Departments and while they keep to their offices Government can always consult them on matters of importance. I appeal to Government to carry on the old order and select Members of the Executive Council from the Legislative Council. I appeal to Government to have a little more confidence in the Elected Members of the Legislative Council.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I rise to support the motion and for reasons which are obvious. I adhere to the saying "Stand up, speak up, and shut up," because I am not able to go all around the show. There has been in this Council a sort of unwritten rule that Elected Members should not adversely criticize each other, as each is there with the best intentions. Because my view does not coincide with that of the others does not give me the right to say anything about dereliction of duty or anything else. For that reason I am sorry that the two hon. Members have done so. I support this motion because the motion suggests once for all the cessation of government by an Official majority. Whenever people rise to a state of political consciousness this Official majority is always viewed with great repugnance. Ten or twelve Government Officials sit around this table only to say "Aye" or "No," according to direction. That kind of Government

is repugnant, and now that the opportunity seems to have come to remove it whatever happens Government must govern. If you take away that power what would you leave? What is the government we are after to-day? In order that Government should be able to govern constructively what do you suggest? I have not the slightest reason to doubt that the Members of this Council will say "Let Government have the power of certification. Give the Governor the power to veto when there is nothing of major importance to the good government of the people. Let him say 'I think this matter is of sufficient moment for the entire community or Colony.' Why throw the responsibility, on ten or twelve other men? Let the Governor take the responsibility and not throw it on the other men as at present. Therefore, I say remove all the Officials and get an Unofficial majority.

THE PRESIDENT: I would just like to state to the hon. Member that I have frequently heard him mention the term "Official majority." There is no Official majority in this Council as constituted; there is an Unofficial majority. There are 10 Official and 19 Unofficial Members including five Nominated Members.

Mr. ELEAZAR: Everybody is aware of that and that the Nominated Unofficial Members are placed in this Council to give Government support.

THE PRESIDENT: I must point out that Nominated Unofficial Members are perfectly free to vote which way they like, and they do so. That is my personal experience in this Council. It is a loose term constitutionally used that Government has an Official majority. I must take objection to it because it is not a fact.

Mr. ELEAZAR: Your Excellency is aware, as I am, that they usually give Government support. I knew of one Nominated Unofficial Member,

the late Mr. James Smith, who sat here and when he voted against Government the Chairman called him and asked why he voted in that way.

THE PRESIDENT: I assure the hon. Member I will not do so. I have also heard the hon. Member say I can use the Official *bloc* to carry a motion through the Council. I will not do that.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I leave that point alone and confine myself to saying that the ten Official Members of this Council are here only to say "Aye" or "No," by direction.

THE PRESIDENT: That is a right point; I agree.

Mr. ELEAZAR: Now that I have heard that, I support the motion with all my heart. Remove the Officials and let the Nominated and Elected Members have the majority and give Government the power of veto to use when it is warranted to do so. I do not subscribe to the views of the two hon. Members when they seek to impress this Council that the several communities of this Colony are not represented by Government. It is not correct. They are both Juniors and do not seem to understand the Constitution. When this 1928 Constitution came into vogue, the then Governor, the late Sir Edward Denham, immediately called the Executive Council and nominated the late Hon. E. F. Fredericks thereon clearly as the representative of his community. The hon. Member for Eastern Berbice (Mr. Luckhoo) was also put on the Executive Council as representing the community to which he belongs. Mr. R. V. Evan Wong, who was subsequently displaced in this Council was put on the Executive Council to represent his community. Everyone was represented on the Government. It seems to me that the hon. Members are trying to make out that the entire community should be represented on the Executive Council. The hon.

Member for North-Western District (Mr. Jacob) is always delighted to cite Ceylon. With your permission I would like him to understand what is happening in Ceylon. "In Ceylon—

THE PRESIDENT: May I ask the hon. Member what he is quoting?

Mr. ELEAZAR: I am reading, sir, from what is called "The Colonial Empire," by Sir Anton Bertram.

Mr. JACOB: To a point of order! The hon. Member for Berbice River, I think, was referring to the hon. Member for Essequibo River and me, when he said that we always mention Ceylon. That word was never mentioned by us during this debate.

THE PRESIDENT: Nevertheless, the hon. Member has mentioned Ceylon in this Council. I think that book is not possibly up to date. Sir Anton Bertram's book on the Colonial Empire is old, unless there is a new edition.

Mr. ELEAZAR: This was written in 1924 and in it he made a quotation from the Ceylon Constitution Commission Report.

THE PRESIDENT: That will be relevant. Please proceed.

Mr. ELEAZAR: Under the Ceylon Constitution there is communal representation along with manhood or Universal Adult Suffrage. You have 34 Electoral Districts, 11 of which are simply communal. I want just to give the exact wording so as not to give a chance for hon. Members to quibble.

"In these eleven there are Urban Europeans, forming one community; Rural Europeans, another community; Mohammedans, another community; Indian Immigrants, another community; Indians not Immigrants, another community; Burghers, another community."

How are you going to divide British Guiana into all these when the Electoral Roll is upset with manhood suffrage? I appeal to my hon. friend

to show how it is possible. Every member of the community has been represented in the Government up to now. The hon. Member for Essequibo River displaced as representative of his community Mr. Evan Wong, a man with abundant ability.

Mr. LEE: To a point of correction! It was Mr. Crum Ewing who succeeded Mr. Evan Wong, in this Council.

Mr. ELEAZAR: The hon. Member succeeded Mr. Evan Wong here; it did not matter who had defeated him. I am only saying that to show that every community had been represented in the past and are still being represented here and, therefore, the insistence for manhood suffrage has other motives. The motive is that one community will have an overwhelming majority over the others.

Mr. JACOB: To a point of correction! No mention was made of communal representation at all. I cannot understand the hon. Member referring to that.

Mr. ELEAZAR: The motive for universal suffrage is not that they want anybody left out in representation but that one community which has an overwhelming majority but not yet political consciousness should preponderate. While they are race conscious they are yet to be political conscious. To press for representation of these people by giving them manhood suffrage is certainly not for the benefit of the country. Your Excellency hinted at one stage that we may certainly make reference to something of a long range Constitution that will serve the country long in the future. I agree with the hon. Member that Federation of the West Indies with Self-government should be the outlook because, although we have not very much to gain at the outset, we will obtain benefit in the long run. For one thing the cost of administration will be divided among

all the West Indian Colonies including British Guiana, and that will lead to retrenchment in that cost. Then we have never had a super abundance of population in this Colony. Our population is very small for the size of the Colony, and if there is Federation it would be some inducement for places like Barbados and other West Indian Islands which are over-peopled to send their surplus here. We have vast areas of land still undeveloped, and that is a possibility to get those areas developed. I certainly support a constitution which will undoubtedly make for an ultimate West Indies Federation with Self-government.

I would like to say that with the removal of the Officials from this Council somebody would like to place some Nominated Members on the Executive Council who would not be Members of the Legislative Council. That will be taking us back to the days of the past. We do not want that to return at all. The Wilson-Snell Commission that recommended the change of the 1891 Constitution, repudiated that idea. They said they could not understand why the Members of the Executive Council were not taken from the Legislative Council. That principle is universal now in all Colonies. Every Commission beginning with Major Wood's (now Viscount Halifax), and even the Ceylon Commission said that it was not the proper form of government to have persons on the Executive Council who are not in the Legislative Council. I do not think that the removal from the Legislative Council as well as the Executive Council of the Government Officials should be met by the appointment of other Nominated Members who would not be part of the Legislative Council. All the Members of the Government, legislative as well as executive, should be chosen from the Legislative Council with the Governor in the Chair so long as we have only one Chamber. If we are going to have another Chamber, like in Barba-

dos then it is another matter. Give the Governor means to govern effectively. If the Governor and the Unofficials differ on any point, the Governor would forward his views to the Secretary of State for the Colonies and those in the opposition would do likewise and the Secretary of State would decide whether the Governor is right or the Unofficial Members are right.

This question of government by committees is one of a far-reaching nature. The hon. Member for North-Western District has always been advocating it but, sir, we have a few of these Committees and I will not like to see, and I cannot visualize in the immediate future, the day when all Government business will be carried on by Committees. There are one or two Committees to which the hon. Member has referred. If he had only got on them he would have discovered that he is talking about something he knows nothing about. It is so easy to remain outside and criticize other people and challenge their sincerity, but when those persons are placed in the same position they find something different. I certainly would like to hear some suggestion as to what is to happen; whether we are merely to sanction the removal from the Council of these Officials and Government nominate two more Unofficials with the five already in the Council. The motion is not asking how this instrument which will be taken out of the hands of Government is to be used. What are we going to give in return for it? I am suggesting now the Governor's veto. Another Member is suggesting something else. Is it necessary that an amendment be moved asking that should we acquiesce in the removal of these Official Members, who would be elected in their places? It has been hinted, I do not know if Your Excellency approves, that these Official Members can be brought in to advise Government in the Executive Council. Are you removing them

from the Legislative Council and bringing them in to advise Government in the Executive Council? If that is the case we should be informed so that we would be able to express our views on that point.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: If it would save time, I might deal with the hon. Member's question at once. This resolution is placed before Council to enable Unofficial Members to express their views on the proposed new Constitution. If hon. Members are in favour of the motion as worded it will be put and, if it is carried, seven Government Officials will be removed from the Legislative Council after the necessary legislation has been enacted, and two more Nominated Unofficial Members will be appointed to the Council.

Mr. ELEAZAR: Will Government be satisfied with that?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: For the time being Government will be satisfied.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I support this motion because it will remove the farce of having them here only to say "Yes" or "No," at somebody's dictation. The two hon. Members (Messrs. Jacob and Lee) claim they are the only two persons representing the people in this Legislature. That can be left to take care of itself, but when persons say they wrote a letter to tell me they have passed resolutions and invite me to pass a ready-made resolution in my constituency to say we do not want the Chairman of the Franchise Commission, I look upon it as insolence overriding itself. What is my constituency in the Berbice River to do with who is Chairman of the Franchise Commission? Those are the things I cannot stand for. More than that; I asked members of my constituency whether they had invited those two hon. Members, and I was told they were never invited in one place and in

another place a certain man belonging to a certain following invited them but the meeting was never held. Is it fair to go through the country with ready-made resolutions and get half a dozen people to sanction them and then to come here and say that the whole Colony of British Guiana wants this or that? The hon. Members went there and had a meeting, but they had not the temerity to read the resolution that they did not want the Chairman of the Franchise Commission which they came here and moved. They did not read it because the people had no knowledge of what they were talking about; it was no concern of theirs. What right have they to go and alter resolutions and come here and say they were passed? Some hon. Members are charged with not doing their duty while other hon. Members carry out their duty in that fashion. I cannot sit here and allow a scheme of that kind to pass. I could never have gone to the meetings and the hon. Members knew that as I was lying ill on my back at the time, but they went there and passed those bogus resolutions in my constituency and said I was invited. I was invited, but it was known that I was on my bed and could not attend. They certainly would have been expected to have come in to me and discussed the matter with me, if they were serious and if they intended to come here and make out that I had failed in my duty to my constituency. They would have gone there and said that they had consulted me and I agreed to that, but they passed my home quietly and had the resolutions passed by a half dozen people, and then they have come here and said the whole Colony approved of them.

Mr. JACOB: Perhaps I may intervene to say that the Police have a record of the attendance at all those meetings. The hon. Member can enquire of the Police if there were only half a dozen people at the meetings.

Mr. ELEAZAR : I enquired of the Police and they said the hon. Members cut a very sorry figure in that district. (Laughter). I would like to say that I certainly hail the day when this country is given a greater share in the administration of its own affairs, to shape its own destiny. I regard this motion as the precursor of that day. I can easily see the day when we will get, if not Responsible Government by means of Federation with the West Indian Colonies, Representative Government if not Self-government. Until that day comes, we should be pleased to observe, because this motion comes from Government, that Government has realized the political consciousness of this community wants something better than having these Government Officials here to say "Aye" or "No," as told to do. It is indefensible ; if it were not, I would like to say this : A number of people hold it is easy to depreciate the position once you cannot hide your knowledge of facts in some community and the people require more to be governed than to be represented. I suppose that is the idea that gave rise to this large number of Officials on the Executive Council and the Legislative Council. When a people's political consciousness arises to the extent of ours they see that was a mistake. Only three years after we had this Constitution this Council moved a motion asking the Secretary of State for the Colonies to give us a little more hand—I cannot find an appropriate word—in managing our own affairs. There were some Members here who said the time was not ripe and we did not give the Constitution a full trial, as three years were not sufficient. We have realized the fallacy of that. This 1928 Constitution has been a hopeless failure. It was indefensible then, and it is now. No one can say otherwise. Because the country had fallen on evil days with the world in general, due to economic conditions, the blame was put on the people by the Wilson-Snell Commission. The Members of the Council—there are

only two or three here who were there then—protested that it was not a constitutional question but purely economical. The then Secretary of State for the Colonies said the Constitution was changed so as to give Government an opportunity to govern, to see if it would not take us out of the rut. To prove that it was economical, this Colony has been sinking deeper and deeper into the mire and the slough of despondency until to-day it has been realized from the last Commission that this change should be brought about.

I am, therefore, very thankful that I am alive to see this change. I was the mover of the motion in 1931 and I have not lost faith in what I had then said. Everything I said then, can be repeated to-day. I know those Members whose only defence then was that the time was not ripe for the change, and I hope they will go away to-day convinced that they were wrong because the longer the Constitution lasted the worse conditions became up to the present time. Therefore, Your Excellency, I have very great pleasure, indeed, in supporting the motion as it stands.

Mr. GONSALVES : I rise just to say a few words. Before I speak on the motion proper I would like to preface my remarks by saying that in discussing a motion of this kind in this Council, those of us who have been Members of the Council for a few years, miss to-day one person who had been for many years a Member of this Council and who is now not with us any more. He had been a strong advocate of this question of the Constitution, and I am sure we would have had a very forceful and fiery speech from him had he been here. I refer to the late A. R. F. Webber, who was the Member representing Western Berbice Electoral District. He was one of the strongest advocates on this question of the Constitution and took a very keen interest in it. Had he

been alive, he would not have had the isolated and pre-arranged meetings that we have heard of from Members of this Council. As regards the quality and defects and other things in connection with those meetings, I have had sufficient indication from the hon. Member for Berbice River (Mr. Eleazar). I learnt from him very plainly that the resolutions were designed, prepared and passed with a specific purpose and, so far as the Berbice River District was concerned, they were rejected because of the proposals contained therein. I say nothing further in regard to those meetings.

As regards the resolutions not being put up in Georgetown because the opinions expressed by the Trade Unions are a guide as to the wishes of the voters, I respectfully submit that it is not quite correct to say that the opinions of the Trade Unions are a guide as to the views of the voters of Georgetown. There is even a difference of opinion between the Trade Unionists who gave evidence before the Franchise Commission and the hon. Member in the views he has expressed. The reasons for not holding the meetings in Georgetown are not quite as the hon. Member has indicated.

There are other matters the hon. Members have dealt with to which I may refer, but I do not wish to take up the time of the Council. I shall make a brief comment on the reference made to the constitution of Boards and representation thereon. I have said more than once that there are times when Boards are constituted with no Elected Members of this Council on them, and at another time when you have Boards with Elected Members on them you are told "You should not have So-and-So on those particular Boards." Perhaps it is due to a selfish feeling. Hon. Members, when speaking, preface their remarks by saying "I do not mean to be personal." I regard that as a mere figure of speech. By saying that you do not mean to be personal and then in-

dulge in personalities only makes it difficult for one to understand what you intend.

So far as the Constitution itself is concerned and the discussions we have had, we had one meeting (referred to as the secret meeting) with Your Excellency's predecessor, Sir Wilfrid Jackson. The discussions at that meeting were frank and open and a decision was arrived at on the question of the Constitution. There was a difference of opinion as to whether there should be any Official Members at all in the Council. As far as I am concerned, I would like to see at least two Officials on the Council. It seems all the more important these days that some Official of Government who represents Labour should be on the Council, and also that the Minister of Health, the Director of Medical Services, should be on the Council. The matter of Public Health in this Colony is very important and it is desirable that there should be some representative on the Council, whether it is the Director of Medical Services or some other person with a knowledge of Public Health. I want to suggest that the Director of Medical Services of the Colony should be the Official on the Council to represent Government's views on all matters of public health. Labour and Public health cannot be properly represented by the Colonial Secretary, the Attorney-General or the Colonial Treasurer. It is a matter of very great importance and, I think, whilst it has been suggested that there should be only two additional Nominated Members, perhaps at least one of them should represent Labour on the Government side and be able to answer criticisms from the Unofficial section of the Council in regard to the administration of the Labour section of the community.

It has been advocated that the three Elected Members being Members of the Executive Council no longer represent the people. I cannot follow that argu-

ment. If you are going to clamour for the desirability of having Elected Members on the Executive Council, you must have in mind that those Members are Elected Members. You are not supposed to send them there to become Government Members. If that is not so, then they still remain Unofficial Members of this Council.

My view, so far as the Constitution is concerned, is that if it is necessary to have any addition to the three Government Officials mentioned, the other two Officials I have also mentioned may, perhaps, be made part of the Council. As regards the other Official Members, I think, they may now be relieved of their seats in the Council. The retention of the Nominated Official Members, I have indicated, is to my mind reasonable. I agree that there are certain interests that ought to be represented in this Council, and if two Unofficial Members are nominated to serve that purpose I would agree to that.

There is one other point I would like to refer to, and that is about the Governor being present in this Council. My personal view is, while it is good to have the Governor as President of the Council, there should be some provision whereby he could be relieved on occasions of the responsibility of presiding over the meetings of the Council. There should be only special reasons, very limited, for him to vacate the Chair and be absent from the sittings of the Council. I do not know whether it is possible to provide for a Vice-Chairman, but I think there should be some provision by which it is compulsory for the Governor to be present when matters of policy and things of that sort are involved. Under the old Constitution in the old Combined Court the Senior Elected Member used to preside as Chairman over the Committee of Ways and Means; nowadays, the Governor presides over every meeting of the Legislature. Reference to the Hansard and the hon. Colonial Treasurer will be able to satisfy Your

Excellency as to what was the procedure in the old days. This matter of the Constitution is one which, I think, has reached the stage when there should be something done with the view of remedying the whole matter.

My personal view is that if this change is made now it would give us an opportunity of seeing how the Council as reconstituted would be able to carry on the work of Government. I do not think it is proposed or intended, if this motion is passed, that there should be a General Election or a new Council constituted. As I understand it, the Council will continue, but the Nominated Official Members will be relieved of their seats. A Franchise Commission is now sitting, but from the rate of progress which is being made I can see quite a long time ahead before we get its report, and a still longer time before its recommendations are considered and given effect to. In the interval between now and then we will have some opportunity of seeing how Government will carry on its work under the change of Constitution.

The hon. Member for North-Western District (Mr. Jacob) remarked that the Secretary of State should find out what the people want. I do not know whether he was speaking generally or only in reference to the question of the Constitution. If he referred to the Constitution alone he has overlooked the fact that by a coincidence—I would not say by design—the present Secretary of State for the Colonies, Lord Moyne, was Chairman of the West India Royal Commission which visited this Colony and therefore must have found out from the people themselves what more or less they wanted as a change of Constitution. But if the hon. Member's remarks were intended to refer to questions generally, then they might be accepted as being sound.

With those few observations I am prepared to support the motion. I have to be away from the Council for some time in order to attend a meeting of the Town Council. If I am able to return I may be able to hear Government's views with regard to the suggestions which have been made.

Mr. LUCKHOO : Before the hon. Member leaves I would like to say that I endorse his suggestion with respect to the addition of one or two more Official Members to the new Legislative Council. I particularly subscribe to his views regarding the inclusion of the Director of Medical Services who, in view of the position he occupies in the community, should be given a place in the Legislative Council. There can be no doubt as to the preponderating importance of an improved standard of public health in any plans for the economic rehabilitation of this Colony, therefore it is very necessary that the Council should have the expert guidance of the Director of Medical Services.

Under the proposed new Constitution the Official Members who are to retire from the Council will be available for the purpose of answering questions with respect to their Departments. For instance, the Director of Education and the Conservator of Forests will be available as non-voting Members for the purpose of giving the Council their views with respect to their Departments. So that while those officials will be retiring in the ordinary course, their services will still be available to the Council, but if there should be an addition to the proposed number of Official Members I would certainly support the addition of the Director of Medical Services.

With respect to the composition of the Council I think the proposed change is an advanced measure, and that we should welcome the change which has been offered to us. It is not a permanent arrangement and we should

work with Government in a spirit of harmony and good-will in order to promote the interests of the people of the Colony. It is no use criticizing the Departments and suggesting that the Colonial Secretary or the Colonial Treasurer should be withdrawn from the Council. It does not add to the prestige of the Council when discussing a matter of such vital importance. I think the Official Members have been of considerable assistance to this Council in debating very controversial matters. I have also heard Nominated Members standing up to Elected Members on certain points with great ability, and on many occasions they have made points which met with the utmost approval of the other Members of the Council. We cannot underrate the services they have given to this Council. At times they have risen to the occasion and contributed to the debates of the Council in very masterly fashion.

With regard to the selection of Members of the Executive Council, I suppose that will be a matter for Your Excellency. It has been suggested from certain quarters that it might be possible for persons who are not Members of the Legislative Council to be drafted in, so as to afford Your Excellency a wider choice among the people you consider best suited to advise Government on important subjects. That is a matter on which the Council should express an opinion, but I should certainly like to see more Elected Members of this Council on the Executive Council. I would suggest another Elected Member and another Nominated Member on the Executive Council. After all, I do not think the Nominated Members should be despised. It has been suggested by one Member that they are useless. That is a very extravagant statement and a very unkind remark to make about Members who have given their services to this Council and to the Colony. With those few remarks I support the motion as it stands in the hope that it will be carried into effect for a probationary period.

Mr. PEER BACCHUS: I do not intend to oppose the motion, but I propose to move a small amendment, especially in view of the observation made by Your Excellency a moment ago. In the fifth line of the motion after the word "Colony" I suggest the insertion of the words "as an interim measure" so as to make it clear that it is the intention of this motion to carry out the undertaking given by Sir Wilfrid Jackson to Members of this Council at the private conference. If that is made clear, as I think it is Government's intention, judging from what Your Excellency has said, then I take it that it will necessitate an extension of the terms of reference of the Franchise Commission. I do not think that the Commission has any power to enquire into the Constitution of this Council. If it is intended that this change should be an interim measure, then we may ask "an interim measure" to what? If the Franchise Commission has no power to enquire into the constitution of the Legislative Council is it Government's intention to appoint another Commission to do so? I take it that that would be duplicating the work of such Commissions, and I would ask that serious consideration be given to the suggestion that the terms of reference of the Franchise Commission should be extended to include an enquiry into the constitution of this Council.

I take it that every Member will admit that one cannot, from his seat here, formulate a Constitution. It is therefore reasonable argument that all those questions which have arisen during this debate and may arise later on, as to whether the Constitution should make provision for a Committee system, or should not allow the Governor reserve power, would be considered by such a Commission whose report would be placed before the Council. I do not think it can be doubted that the Colony is capable enough to undertake a more responsible form of Government.

Bearing that in mind, I think Government should give serious consideration to the suggestion that the terms of reference of the Franchise Commission should be extended to include an enquiry into the constitution of this Council. It is not my intention to go into the details of the observations made by the previous speakers. I feel confident that the suggestion that the terms of reference of the Franchise Commission should be extended will receive the favourable consideration of the Government. I will therefore move the amendment I have suggested, and ask that the suggestions I have made receive the serious consideration of Government.

Mr. WOOLFORD: Sir, I am a survivor of every Constitution that this Colony has ever known. As a young man I witnessed an election contest in the City of Georgetown in which the voting for candidates was done openly and without any attempt at disguise. Those were the days of 1888, 1889 and 1890 which preceded the hectic days of the Constitution of 1891. I took part in the agitation for the reform of the Constitution as it existed prior to 1891, and there are members of this community alive who also took part in it. Mr. Thorne is one of them; he had recently come to the Colony from Barbados and was very largely instrumental in leading the public movement for the reform of the existing Constitution. A Reform Association performed the task under circumstances which in those days were very difficult, and for which this community ought to be very grateful.

For the benefit of young enthusiasts like the hon. Member for North-Western District (Mr. Jacob) and the hon. Member for Essequibo River (Mr. Lee) I will give some idea of the system under which public representation in this very Chamber was both sought and achieved. It would not have been possible for men like both of those Members or myself to

have secured election in those days. It would not have been possible for us, if we offered ourselves for election, to secure adherents. I recall the day quite well when a prominent planter was defeated, after the system of election by ballot had been introduced. He was defeated, as he said, by a man whose ancestors had been slaves of his ancestors, and he said he hoped never to see such a day again. He was a very prominent individual who became a Member of the then Court of Policy, and I heard him in this very Chamber live to regret the remarks he had made.

If the two hon. Members I refer to had had some of my experiences I doubt very much whether they would have been able to overcome them. If I give them one illustration of what a lack of organization or a lack of cohesion amongst Elected Members means, and how it is almost impossible to secure it, it might have some effect on what they suggest should be the best way of securing self-government. I was a member of a Political Association, the Chairman of which was an Elected Member of the Combined Court. I was asked by that Association to contest a seat for Georgetown. On going into the Town Hall to attend a meeting of one of the candidates whom I was opposing, I was surprised to find that the Chairman of the Political Association to which I belonged was presiding at my opponent's meeting. That is the sort of thing that prevails to-day. If Members who take the view and believe that by adopting an attitude of that kind and by decrying the efforts made by other Elected Members they are going to achieve anything like success I think they will find that they are greatly mistaken. I have no doubt that if those hon. Members I have referred to who are young, live to see the Constitution which seems to be foreshadowed, they will find that many of the remarks they are making to-day will not lead to the betterment of the Colony.

This motion is for the reconstitution of the Legislative Council. The present Legislative Council is the result of the decision of Mr. Amery who was then Secretary of State for the Colonies. He had to make one of two decisions—should he remodel the relative powers and composition of the Court of Policy and Combined Court in the two Chambers which existed in those days, or should he create a new body? Prior to that there had been a visit by Messrs. Wilson and Snell to this Colony, and following upon their report a Commission was appointed and the whole constitutional position of the Colony was reviewed. I wonder how many Members of this Council have read the report of that Commission? I wonder if they have read it and re-read it? If they will allow me to say so, my view is that Mr. Amery conceived that for this Colony a Legislative Council composed as it is now, virtually Crown Colony Government, might be adopted as an experiment.

I am of the opinion that Mr. Amery was very largely influenced in taking that view by the very great personal influence that I think Sir Cecil Rodwell exercised over him. After all they were fellow civil servants in South Africa, and if the hon. Member for North-Western District (Mr. Jacob) cares to read Mr. Amery's book he will see the very intimate relationship between them. Mr. Amery is a very able man and has been consistently so. Widely read and travelled, he is a man of high honour and sympathy, and is in charge of Indian affairs at the present time. I think I am correct in saying that he is an Anglo-Indian; he was born in Ceylon. His decision was entitled to be received with respect.

Why I am pleading for a trial of this Constitution is because, as I see it, the Government is being asked to surrender some of its present privileges. We are having restored to us something of the effective power over the control of finance that we had from 1891 to 1928,

and I believe that if the composition of this Council can be so controlled as to merit the confidence of this community and the confidence and respect of the Imperial Government, we may expect in the future an enlargement of those powers. But it does matter what the composition of the new Legislative Council is going to be.

Speaking now as a very old Member of the Court of Policy and as a comparatively old man, I say that if some of the industry which is being wasted by certain hon. Members in questioning this and criticizing that, could be applied towards an examination of the Laws of the Colony, they would find that many of the powers of the Court of Policy and Combined Court have been taken away. They would find that there was vested in the Executive Council legislative, administrative and financial powers which the Legislature should never have yielded.

The mistake in this Colony has been that from time to time, owing to the effective control over legislation in the Court of Policy, where Government was in the majority, it was impossible to resist legislation which was taking away from the people of this Colony the power which they had, and to which they were rightly entitled. The only thing the Combined Court could do in those days—and I can conceive the same thing could happen to-day—was that when a Government measure was proposed which did not meet with their approval, they were able to veto it by striking out a vote here and there and by using the privilege which they then had, to discuss each item on the Estimate. It was irritating to the Government from time to time that money votes for certain public works could not be carried; but I do not think at that time the Elective section did their duty to the people of the Colony by not resisting from time to time the transfer of many powers which they formerly had by those legislative enactments.

It is no use appealing to public opinion; it is no use going to your constituents and saying that all those resolutions are commendable things and coming into the Council and flaunting them here. It is no use doing that in any constituency because, if my friends would be so advised, I have stated here and I repeat it now, that there is no such thing as public opinion in this Colony. Of course, when I say that I mean informed public opinion; some concrete thing which each and every one of us can say we can be guided by. I have been criticized in a published letter by Mr. Thorne, but let me say here that the decision of the United States House of Representatives repealing the Neutrality Act has not been accepted as an expression of public opinion. So that when hon. Members go to their constituents and a handful of people assist them or applaud them for passing resolutions, and they come here and say "This is public opinion," and ask the Government of the Colony to be guided by it, my answer is "Look at the comments which have been made in the United States papers about the action of an important body like the House of Representatives on a very important question, and although there was an actual decision of that body repealing the Neutrality Act, it is not conceded that it gave expression to public opinion."

I believe that all these references as to what the Franchise Commission should or should not do, or what their terms of reference should be, ought to be kept out of this debate. They are wholly irrelevant. Here we have an opportunity to sanction by our common agreement the restoration of the power to control Government action, Government expenditure, and Government decisions. Let us concentrate on that and endeavour by concerted effort to impose our views on Government if they are worthy of being imposed, and to endeavour by some form of association to impress upon the

Government the advisability of anything that we are agreed upon.

The hon. Member says he hopes to see the day when the Council will be wholly elected. I wonder when that day will ever appear. I wonder if in the very difficult task that will be assigned to you, sir, of selecting even the two additional Nominated Members your judgement, as gauged by public opinion that those hon. Members think about, will be allowed to be correct. I wonder if it is going to be allowed, when those names are announced, that you have selected the two best possible representatives as allowed by this mysterious public opinion that we hear so much about? I know that some of the present Nominated Members would rather not be here. They were forced to become Nominated Members. That has happened in the past. If that position is distasteful to a person he should not accept it. I have heard the hon. Member for Berbice River (Mr. Eleazar) mention that a certain Nominated Member was remonstrated with by a certain Governor for voting against the Government. I have never been able to understand why that gentleman was ever selected; it was a great shock to him.

Instances like that make me feel that mistakes are made in the selection of Nominated Members. I had discussed this matter prior to the change of Constitution in 1928, with no less a person than Sir George Grindle of the Colonial Office, and pointed out to him that if we were to have a Nominated Unofficial section of the Council, the wide range of selection that existed in other Colonies did not exist in this Colony. How many men can we honestly say exist in this community who take an interest in public affairs? I do not think there are a dozen. I, as an individual, am always being asked by some prominent member of the community: "What are you fellows doing in the Legislature? You are no good." I reply: "Why don't you become a

Member?" The answer to that is: "No, I am not prepared to do that. I am not prepared to leave my business to become a Member of the Legislature." But a planter is selected, because he is an excellent planter, to become an excellent legislator. Of course, it is a mistake. One hon. gentleman sat here who did not even know when there was voting going on. He was appointed here because he occupied a position of some personal influence in the community in which he lived. That is not the basis on which selection should be made, and I am of the opinion, until I am convinced to the contrary, that nominations should be made from a panel of individuals who have been previously selected by the organizations they represent.

For instance, I will take the sugar industry. Let me speak candidly without being offensive. There can be no doubt that there are at least two Nominated Members of this Council who represent the same interests. They are representatives of the sugar industry. I do not know whether you have heard it, sir, because you are new to the Colony, but it is constantly being represented that one or other of those Nominated Members should not have been appointed. To that extent they have prevented an opportunity of another selection being made. How many representatives of commercial interests do we see here? What representative of the Chamber of Commerce sits around this table? The hon. Member of Central Demerara (Mr. de Aguiar) cannot claim that position; he is an Elected Member. If we look at the constitution of the Chamber of Commerce can we say that it is representative of the commercial industries? The whole Colony is in that position. We are not efficiently organized.

Whether it is the selection of someone to represent Labour or other important interests Your Excellency will find the greatest difficulty in replacing those Nominated Members

who at least have had many years of experience in public affairs. I have never agreed with this dual representation of interests in this Council. It has allowed people to say that the Governor has been influenced by those important interests. When I assent to a Government motion it is said that I have been got at by Government, or that my vote has been influenced by some *quid pro quo*. If the nomination *per se*, was not made in the first instance by Government it should be easy for an organization like the planting body to select a panel from among its members and submit it to Government, thereby limiting the range of selection.

It should be possible for Labour to do the same thing, but I wonder whether those hon. Members who represent Labour, or say they do to some extent, and are pleading for the administration of Government Departments by Committees, would either of them like to be Minister of Labour in this Council? Those hon. Members say that every Government Department should be under the control of an Elected Member. How is that to be accomplished? Do they believe that there is a sufficient number of men in this community who could fill, for instance, the Department controlled by the Colonial Treasurer? Do they think it is an easy job? Does the hon. Member for North Western District (Mr. Jacob), who is, I think, a book-keeper, imagine for a moment that without a course of training he could fill with credit and ability the position that Mr. McDavid fills? Does the hon. Member for Essequibo River (Mr. Lee) imagine that he can fill the position of Attorney-General? How are those positions to be run; where is the personnel? I doubt very much whether the hon. Member could draft a Bill without even the preamble being criticized (laughter). Yet he goes to other Members' constituencies and criticizes men who have, by long training

and experience, acquired some knowledge of public affairs.

I have been a Member here for years. The hon. Member has asked more questions during his short career in this Council than the accumulated number asked by Members since I have sat here. In total number the hon. Member's questions have out-numbered the accumulated questions asked by all Members in this Council since 1891 (laughter). He has told me himself that his object in doing so was to gain information, and I have replied to him from time to time and told him that the information he asked for in his questions could be found in the Blue Books and other records, documents which he would not take the trouble to read. Members like the hon. Member accuse Members like myself of keeping information from them. Do they want confidential information supplied to them of Government decisions? I have given the hon. Member advice from time to time for which he has expressed his gratitude, but he shows it by going to my constituency and holding public meetings to which he did invite me, but which, of course, I did not attend. Whatever weight those gentlemen may attach to these decisions of those meetings, the fact remains that not a single member of my constituency has ever reproved me for not being present. I have a letter which perhaps those hon. Members would like to read. They would be surprised at the views expressed by my constituents at their conduct in holding those meetings.

It has always been urged that recalcitrant Members like myself do not represent the people of the Colony. Who are the people of this Colony? The hon. Members believe that they alone are representatives of the people in this Colony. Let me give them an instance of what I mean. I am constantly being told by prominent members of the Labour Union: "Yes, it is true you represent

your constituents and those on the electoral rolls, but you do not represent the workers, the producers in the field." I am not, and have never been, in receipt of one penny's worth of emolument from, nor have I ever been retained by a Water street firm. I do not own a single share in a company, sugar or otherwise. I have no direct interest in sugar, rice, potatoes, cassava, plantains or anything else, but I make my living from those workers in the field whom those Members tell you, sir, I do not represent. Why don't I represent them? If those Members could only know the position I take up in the Executive Council from time to time they would not have made the remarks they did. I am interested, as much interested, and more interested than they are in the welfare of some of those people.

The whole aim and object of this propaganda is to ensure that those people who have not the income qualification shall be represented. It is my hope and belief that those people will one day be convinced that at the present moment they receive adequate representation of their views and grievances, and it is a mistake to deceive them into the belief that universal adult suffrage is going to accomplish what they desire. I asked Mr. Edun in this room: "If those people are without representation, how was the Man-Power Association able to organize strikes and to control the workers?" Of course, effective representation can be accomplished in a good many ways, but it is a mistake to sow the seed of disruption in this community and try to make everybody in the community believe that because you are 21 you are going to be given the right to vote.

The hon. Member says that those representations were made before the Franchise Commission. I have not heard them. What I have heard is that many views were expressed that there should be universal adult suffrage,

but with the qualification that there should be a literacy test. The hon. Member has not said that. Any one listening to him would believe, and those who read the newspapers would believe, that there is a general desire on the part of all those witnesses that there should be universal adult suffrage. I should like to see universal adult suffrage with the qualification to which the hon. Member has not alluded; that those who are given the vote are sufficiently qualified to understand what it is. That has not been mentioned by the hon. Member, and it renders me impatient.

I would like to make one or two suggestions. Your Excellency has stated that, so far as you are concerned, a Nominated Member is free to vote as he likes. I feel bound to say that I hope you will, during your tenure of office, take that view, but it has not always been the view of some of your predecessors. Article 12 of the Order in Council states:—

12. If any Nominated Member of the Council, when duly summoned to attend, absents himself without sufficient cause, and persists in such absence after being thereof admonished by the Governor, the Governor is to suspend such Member until His Majesty's pleasure therein be known, giving immediate notice thereof to His Majesty through a Secretary of State.

That refers to the Official Nominated Members. Article 14 states:—

14. If any Nominated Unofficial Member of the Council shall, without the leave of the Governor, previously obtained, be absent from the sittings of the Council for three months, or shall make any declaration or acknowledgement of allegiance to any foreign State or Power, or shall become a citizen or subject of any foreign State or Power, or shall be adjudicated a bankrupt, or shall be sentenced in any part of His Majesty's dominions to death or penal servitude, or to imprisonment with hard labour for a term exceeding twelve months, or shall accept any office of emolument under the Crown or under the Government of the Colony, his seat in the Council shall thereupon become vacant.

Let us be perfectly candid about this. We all know that if the Governor proposes to introduce a measure it is natural for him to enquire of Nom-

inated Members whether Government can rely upon their support. That sometimes happens in the case of Elected Members. It is the aim of the recommendations of the Royal Commission, and of the present democratic Government in the United Kingdom, that a Nominated Member should be allowed to exercise his vote freely. That being understood, I hope that those members of the community who ought to join the Council will refrain from pleading that they are under an obligation to the Government to assist in the passing of any measure. Those important interests ought to be represented here. After all, none of us would like to see them excluded, and they are unable to secure representation through the ordinary avenue of the electoral polls.

I have no doubt whatever that if this Council is to be comprised of men whose opinions are going to be respected, we cannot afford to exclude men who can only become Members of the Council by being nominated by the Governor. We cannot afford to take up a position whereby some members of this community could not be returned by any electorate and would be entirely excluded from this Council by a voting system and their advice lost to the Council. There have been numbers of men, who have been excellent Members, whose advice and guidance this Colony should benefit by, and if they are to be excluded from this Council which, after all, is a more important body than the Executive Council, I think this idea of universal adult suffrage had better be abandoned altogether. That is what at bottom is the aim and object of those amendments. I do not know if the hon. Member is going to move them. The aim and object of those amendments is to make the position of an Elected Member attractive by paying him \$100 a month.

Mr. LEE : To a point of correction ! I have moved the amendments.

Mr. WOOLFORD : Whether the amendments have been moved or not notice of them has been given, and as I conceive it, the object of the hon. Member is to make the position of a Member of the Legislature an attractive one. Any offer of remuneration will appeal to a large number of people in this Colony, but it will exclude men of the responsible class. They are not going to offer themselves because they know it would be a hopelessly impossible feat for them to be returned. Nor are they men who, if they were Members of this Council, would ever wish or aspire to be Heads of Government Departments. We have not a sufficient number of competent men in this Colony to be Heads of Government Departments, and when those hon. Members tell you "We do not mean to be personal ; we are not speaking to you as Governor" —I have heard them say that to every Governor for the past 30 years. Those disclaimers are no good whatever. Those disclaimers are meant to impress the President who sits in that Chair. Those Members are speaking to the Governor ; they mean it, and it is no use disclaiming their intention.

I, for one, am a democrat—I claim to be a democrat—and I am willing to see a change in the composition of this Council, but I am not willing to see certain members of this community excluded from this Chamber altogether. I cannot see that there is any advantage to be gained by hoping that when the new Council has been constituted there will develop a movement in this Chamber by resolutions and all kinds of propaganda demanding universal adult suffrage even before the time contemplated. From the time the Council is constituted until it is prorogued Members are going to be plagued with representations for universal adult suffrage. They are going to be plagued with representations that the Nominated Unofficial element are the creatures of Government. Therefore, in order that there

should be some improvement in the prestige of this Council now that the Official Members are being withdrawn, I hope it will be found possible to remove the stigma attached to Nominated Members by making it perfectly clear that a Nominated Member is under no obligation whatever to Government to serve Government in any way except as a result of his untrammelled vote. I think nominations should be made by some form of organization and not merely left to the Governor alone.

As to the composition of the Executive Council, I agree that the best possible advice and talent should be at the disposal of the Governor. I have been a Member of the Executive Council, for some years and it is generally supposed that I and other Elected Members of the Council are unduly influenced by Government from time to time. Because we are not in a position to disclose exactly what view we take up in Executive Council, and so smudge our oath, it is assumed that every Bill, every decision announced by Government meets with our approval. Of course, that is a mistake. I am free to say this: it has never yet been suggested to me or to my friend on my left (Mr. Seaford) or, I believe, to the hon. Member for Eastern Berbice, (Mr. Luckoo) that unless I vote with Government in this Council there was some danger of my being replaced by another. I wish to make that perfectly clear. I have never been asked by any Governor or Colonial Secretary unduly to give support to any measure. I also wish this clearly understood: that on numerous occasions Government policy in certain directions has been opposed by the Elective section of the present Executive Council, and Government has thought it fit to agree with that opposition and the measure was withdrawn. In other words many a measure has been dropped by Government or varied on the advice of some of the Elected Members and the Nominated Unofficial Members of the Executive Council. I

am glad to be able to say that, because of the experience I have had within the last two weeks. I did not delve into the Labour Bill, but just looking at it I suggested that the Advisory Committee should be given wider powers. I think Your Excellency accepted my suggestion and that Committee has been appointed.

On leaving this Council, and subsequently in Water Street, I heard uncomplimentary remarks being made not only about me but about the Executive Council. I have never yet been spoken to in that way. I flatter myself that I am respected in this community, but within the last two weeks I have been told things that I have never heard before. Doesn't it show that their minds are being poisoned? It is not going to make any difference to me or to my loyalty to them, although misrepresentation is being carried to the extent that men like myself are told that they are opponents of Labour, and that there is some sinister design on their part in taking up a certain attitude in this Council. Why aren't those people told that every consideration has been given by this Government to their interests; that a Committee has been appointed in their interest? If it had been drummed into their heads, as it should have been, that they should resume work and abide the findings of the Committee which would be made retrospective, I believe they would have resumed work. Their attitude has been poisoned by making them believe things they do not understand. That is what is called Labour representation.

I hope, sir, you are going to be very careful, and that you will be very carefully advised in the selection of those who represent Labour. It is believed that Labour will be represented by some member or two members of this community. I hope that that selection will give you no undue anxiety, but I am sorry to think that you will have to make that selection. I wish it could have been possible for the Unions

themselves to have submitted the names of two or four men from which Government might make a selection. If these Trade Unions are what they claim to be—effective organizations—I should like to see an example of anything like common agreement in the selection of the men they would like to represent them. Will the Trade Unions submit the names of the men they would like to represent them in this Chamber, and have that done with the same precision as the hon. Member exercised in submitting their resolutions to the constituencies? When that is done I should commence to believe in the ability of the Trade Unions to organize and be represented by those selected to represent them. At the moment they are likely to give a great deal of trouble. I still hope that recommendations for representation will come from the Unions themselves.

I hope that whatever the constitution of the Legislature may be it will command the respect of the people in this Colony which at the present moment this Council does not wholly do. It is all very well to say and to believe it does, but there are a number of people who may be useful units in this Council but who refrain from joining this Assembly because they are tired of the repetition of representations which are made under each item of the Estimates. I cannot understand how Members can have the energy to repeat themselves in the way they do. There are Members in this Council whose remarks I can write down in advance. I could anticipate almost every word they are going to utter, yet they are appealing to this Council to listen to them with respect. It is very difficult for me to do so.

THE PRESIDENT: I would like to point out that on the point of absence from the Council without leave, Nominated and Elected Members stand on precisely the same footing. Although

the wording is slightly different Articles 14 and 23 have the same effect.

Mr. DIAS: I have no desire to lengthen this debate, but I do wish to make this statement with regard to the suggestion on the part of some people that Members of the Executive Council are directed by Government to vote in a particular way. I wish to say that is absolutely incorrect. Since I have been on the Executive Council no Governor of this Colony has ever suggested to me that I should vote for Government or against Government.

Mr. SEAFORD: I should like to endorse what the hon. Nominated Member has just said. Before I became an Elected Member of this Council I was a Nominated Member, and on the day I was appointed a Nominated Member I received a letter from Government assuring me that I could vote as I wished on any matter that came up, and that I was under no obligation whatever to vote with Government at any time. The only thing I was asked was to let Government know beforehand if I intended to vote against Government.

Your Excellency has given Members a good deal of licence and a good deal of latitude in debating the motion before the Council, and I propose to take advantage of that. I wish to look a little further ahead of the actual wording of the motion which deals with the removal of a certain number of Officials and the addition of extra Nominated Members. I wish to look beyond that. I say that because I see already there is a motion tabled for the payment of Members. We know that there is a Commission enquiring into the question of widening the franchise; we also know that there is a good deal of talk about adult suffrage. I therefore feel that it would be better if we could look a little ahead and perhaps take warning of what lies ahead of us. It is time we did; it is time we

considered the interests of the Colony and of the people of the Colony. When I say that we should take warning, I refer not only to Members of this Council; I would make the same remark to Government and to the people of the Colony—take warning lest we take a step now, or in the near future, which we may all regret, and which might come back to us like a boomerang.

The hon. Member on my right (Mr. Woolford) mentioned about Trade Unions. There are in this Colony leaders of the people, but there are so-called leaders of the people who are not leaders at all. They have not the slightest interest in the people of the Colony. They are self-seekers out for self-aggrandizement, and nothing short of political agitators. I say to the people of the Colony: "Beware of those people; they will lead you where you do not want to go. Keep your eyes in front of you, watch your step and take advice from those who are willing to give you, the advice of your good leaders." There are others who are unable to put their houses in order yet they would put everybody else's house in order for them. There is no one in this Colony or within the Empire who would wish to retard the wheels of progress, but let us choose the right method of progress. There is no one in the Empire who would ask for anything other than democratic rule, and with your permission, sir, I will read a few lines of an extract from a speech delivered by Mr. Jinnah, President of the Moslem League, in Madras, in April last year. He said this:—

"Democracy means majority rule. Majority rule in a single nation, in a single society, is understandable. Representative Government in a single nation, harmonious and homogeneous, is understandable. Can such a system ever work or succeed when you have two different nations, more than two different nations in this Sub-Continent?"

I commend those words to the people of this Colony who will no doubt see the significance of them. If we in this Colony wish to progress, if we want to develop the Colony—and I am sure

we do, and I am sure also that there is no Colony in this part of the world which offers greater scope for development—the first thing we have to offer is security. We will never have security unless we have a stable Government. Whether it is government by the people or otherwise it must be a stable Government. We must have a Government that will have the confidence and trust of the outside world, and I would ask the people of this Colony to be very careful in the step they are taking, if they have the interest of the Colony at heart. We are all agreed that there must be political advancement; no one disputes that and we all welcome it, but that political advancement must not retard advancement in other directions. When I say that I refer to two things especially which, in my opinion, are of great importance. I refer to economic and social advancement. To my mind they are essential. With your permission, sir, I should like to quote a passage from a speech by Lord Hailey, who is perhaps the greatest authority on Colonial Government. He has made a study of it and has, I believe, been appointed Chairman of a Committee to look after the development of the interests of the Colonies in the post-war period. In his speech in the House of Lords during the debate on Colonial Policy Lord Hailey said:—

"You cannot build up political liberties on dwarfed bodies and stunted intelligencies."

By that I think he meant that economic advancement should come before political advancement. I think it was the same gentleman (I was going to use the word "expert" but it is a word which is not liked in this Council) who said that economic advancement should be made a precursor of political advancement. During the same debate Lord Noel-Buxton said:—

"Social improvement presupposes an adequate economic standard, and by common admission we have not yet achieved a standard which really ought to precede the social service period."

Those are statements by very eminent and very respected gentlemen who

have the interest of the Empire at heart, and I think it would be well if we studied them. I say without fear of contradiction that I have the interest of this Colony at heart as much as anybody else, and more than the majority. Perhaps I have more stake here than a good many, but that interest is sincere and is also in the people of the Colony. That is why I would say to them: "Beware, look where you are going, seek good advice and don't be misled." I think I can do no better in closing my remarks than by quoting again the words of Lord Hailey when he said:—

"We may well hope the time will not come when the people of the Colonies and the people, more particularly of those backward Colonies, will say to us: 'We asked for bread and you offered us a vote.'"

Mr. C. V. WIGHT: I do not propose to debate this motion at any length because, like certain hon. Members, I was under the impression that these proposals had been accepted by the Elected Members, or those who were present at the meeting with Your Excellency's predecessor. At any rate, I was one of those present and I was one who agreed to the proposed change. I therefore will not retract but will support what I agreed to then. I am not supporting the motion in its entirety because I think it will bring about a Constitution destined to be the reward of those who have laboured in this Council in the interest of the Colony. I do not think for one moment that it will be the ultimate Constitution that this Colony deserves or will receive at the hands of the United Kingdom Government. I am inclined to take a plunge into fully responsible Government, to take that plunge at once if need be, provided the water is not shallow.

I think the motion before the Council will give us in this Colony some idea, some foresight into what we are to expect and how far we are to progress along the road which we shall eventually under a different Constitution

which I visualize. I am yet to be convinced or satisfied with the words which Your Excellency spoke to this Council when you were being inaugurated as Administrator to guide the destinies of this Colony. Those words I shall read with your permission. Your Excellency said:—

"Will elected Members of Council pay first heed only to demands and grievances, or are they able, while retaining the trust of their electors, to lead and act an influence from their superior knowledge?"

I am to be convinced that the plunge which I desire to take will place me in waters where I shall swim with electors as envisaged by those words of Your Excellency. Therefore, I will support this motion until so convinced.

It is not often that I find myself in agreement with the hon. Member for North Western District (Mr. Jacob) who thinks that anyone who differs from him has no right to sit in this Council, but he has made two points on which I find myself entirely in agreement with him in principle, though not in his method of approach or his method of attack. I refer to his references to the Executive Council. The first time I had an opportunity of expressing my views on that subject I said that a change was desirable, not because the Members of that body were not conscientious, not honest or above reproach. There are several reasons why a change is desired. I may be wrong in the view I held and continue to hold, but Your Excellency's successor will arrive here possibly with views; perhaps different, perhaps more progressive, at any rate sympathetically inclined towards the welfare of the community. Anyone who occupies the post of His Majesty's representative should get and would get advice from those in the Colony, but that advice should not be one continuous stream. I am not suggesting for one moment that a Member does not change his views, but once he has gone along a certain path and continued along that path

for years, he perhaps feels that he has done all he honestly can for his country and may not think of adjusting himself to the policy of the new incumbent of the office.

Your Excellency has brought breadth of vision and statesmanship to this Colony, and I suggest that it would be difficult for you to get advice along those lines from those who have been for years treading a certain path. That is the broad policy; not a question of personalities or the honesty of the individuals on the Executive Council. I do not subscribe to those views at all.

It was also suggested by the hon. Member, and I agree with him, that the Members of the Legislative Council were, until recently, placed in an invidious position because there were matters before the Council of which other persons had known hours, days, and even weeks before they came before the Council. That is changed to-day, and I hope it has entirely changed. I do not think Members can say that we are not apprised of matters to be placed before the Council at the present moment.

That is as far as I am in common agreement with the hon. Member. He has repeatedly in this Council thrown it into the face of other hon. Members, including myself, that we are not fully representative of the people of this Colony. The suggestion is that there are only two Members who are either capable or willing to represent the people. I had an opportunity to address a few questions to the Secretary of the Labour Union who gave evidence before the Franchise Commission, and I asked him whether he thought there were any Members of the

present Council who represented, as he called it, the interest of the people, Labour or otherwise. I was told there were four or five Members, and I asked to be supplied with their names. We have that from the Secretary of the Labour Union for whom my friends speak.

I do not intend to make this Council a cockpit for personalities, as there are other platforms on which I can deal with the question whether I represent the people or not, but I can assure the hon. Member that I still have in my possession letters of appreciation. I can also assure him that perhaps some of his correspondents are not loyal citizens of the British Empire, but are only exercising the voice given them by the democracy of the British Empire which is the only place in which they can voice certain sentiments. Perhaps I have not fallen into line with those persons; perhaps I have refused to tread the same path desired by a certain fortunate minority, and therefore my friend gets an invitation to my constituency to discuss what is a proper Constitution for this Colony.

THE PRESIDENT: I should like to be excused from attendance at this stage, and I propose that I should either ask the Colonial Secretary to take my place or that the Council be adjourned until to-morrow at 12 o'clock.

Mr. WIGHT: May I suggest that we adjourn until to-morrow?

THE PRESIDENT: Is that the general feeling of the Council? I therefore adjourn the debate until 12 o'clock to-morrow when the hon. Member will continue his speech.