

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

FRIDAY, 2nd MAY, 1947.

The Council met at 2 p.m., His Excellency the Governor, Sir Charles Campbell Woolley, K.C.M.G., O.B.E., M.C., President, in the Chair.

PRESENT :

The President, His Excellency the Governor, Sir Charles Campbell Woolley, K.C.M.G., O.B.E., M.C.

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

The Hon. the Attorney-General, Mr. F. W. Holder, K.C.

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

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

The Hon. C. V. Wight, O.B.E. (Western Essequibo).

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

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

The Hon. Peer Bacchus (Western Berbice).

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

The Hon. T. Lee (Essequibo River).

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

The Hon. V. Roth (Nominated).

The Hon. T. T. Thompson (Nominated).

The Hon. W. J. Raatgever (Nominated).

The Clerk read prayers.

The minutes of the meeting of the Council held on the 1st May, 1947, as printed and circulated, were taken as read and confirmed.

ORDER OF THE DAY.

SUGAR INDUSTRY (SPECIAL FUNDS) BILL,
1947.

The Council resumed consideration in Committee of the following Bill intituled :

"An Ordinance to make provision for the establishment in respect of the sugar industry of a Price Stabilisation Fund, a Rehabilitation Fund and a Labour Welfare Fund and for purposes connected therewith."

The CHAIRMAN : When we adjourned yesterday we had reached clause 8.

The COLONIAL TREASURER (Mr. McDavid) : We were discussing clause 8, and I would like to suggest certain amendments to clause 8 (2) which have been considered, having regard to certain representations which were made during our discussion in Committee. The first amendment is merely verbal. The word "union" in the sixth line, is singular and actually the plural is intended, "unions." The Law Officers would say that the singular and the plural forms mean the same in law, but for greater clarity I move that the word "unions" be substituted for the word "union."

Secondly I move that the last words of the clause—"and two public officers" be deleted and there be substituted therefor the words "a public officer and one other person." The clause would then imply that the Governor in Council would have power to nominate a Committee to govern the Labour Welfare Fund, such Committee to be comprised of three persons nominated by the Sugar Producers' Association, two persons of the Trade Unions concerned, one public officer and one other person. That gives the Governor in Council discretion in regard to the last nominee. As one hon. Member admitted, it is obvious that the selection of the public officer will be almost necessarily confined to the Commissioner of Labour. I think that the amendment would meet with the approval of the hon. Members who suggested that the field of control in that particular community is not wide enough. I beg to move those amendments.

Mr. JACOB : Are we taking the whole clause ?

The CHAIRMAN : Yes, we are; but I am putting these particular amendments. Do you want to speak on them ?

Mr. JACOB : Yes, Sir. Yesterday before the Council adjourned I suggested in Committee that clause 8 (1) should be amended, and the amendments appear in the minutes. Then immediately before we adjourned I suggested that I had another amendment in regard to subclause (2)—practically the same words to be substi-

tuted in place of the words that are printed here, e.g., "three persons nominated by the British Guiana Sugar Producers' Association, two persons nominated by the Trade Union concerned and two public officers." I want to suggest, and I suggest now, that from the word "three" in the fourth line all the words be deleted and the following should be substituted :—

"three Unofficial Members of the Legislative Council elected by the Council, two persons nominated by the British Guiana Sugar Producers' Association, two persons nominated by the Trade Unions concerned with the welfare of labour workers in the sugar industry and two other persons."

In other words the Committee for the Labour Welfare Fund should be the same in number of people as for the Price Stabilization Fund and for the Sugar Industry Rehabilitation Fund.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL : They are the same !

The CHAIRMAN : I think, if we take clause 8 (1) and stick to that we shall not be confused. Does the hon. Member wish to suggest any amendment to subclause (1) ?

Mr. JACOB : That amendment is to subclause (1) also.

The CHAIRMAN We will confine ourselves to that then.

Mr. JACOB : I think, I have gathered from the hon. Mover of the Bill during the second reading that he thought it is not necessary for Members of this Council, who represent or ought to represent here the entire community, should be on this Committee. I think I made myself perfectly clear yesterday. My idea is that this Council being the supreme authority in this Colony, the sugar producers are represented in this Council by Elected and Nominated Members. It is so obvious to me that this Council should be represented on a committee of this kind, but, of course, Government's spokesman being the hon. the Colonial Treasurer Government does not think so. I have always thought that we were on the true road to democracy, that we were going to get real and true representation not through hand-picked people but people selected by the ballot

from time to time to represent the entire community. But my hopes are all gone. Every day before this Council commences its business I hear the prayer that we are to be just and faithful and do all we can for the people committed to our care in this Council, the law-making body of this Colony. Here we have it clearly stated that the people who actually manage and control something should be the only people with one or two Government Officers actually to spend money contributed by the entire Colony.

The COLONIAL TREASURER : I do not quite understand what money the hon. Member is referring to. This money is not contributed by the entire Colony.

Mr. JACOB : I cannot believe that the hon. the Colonial Treasurer will say this money is a grant or a gift from the Ministry of Food or the Imperial Government. It is money given as a kind of conscience money to the sugar producers. It is not a grant in aid or a loan in aid. It is the price for sugar that is considered a reasonable price for the commodity. I heard yesterday about the very generous offer from the Imperial Government, about this subsidization money, but I know it is known to every Government Officer of this Colony, particularly the principal officers, that the price at which British Guiana sugar is purchased by the Ministry of Food is far below the world price of sugar. I am not going to be fooled that this money is a gift or grant. It is the life blood of the workers on the plantations, the majority of whom do not live a normal life but a subnormal life. We hear about living a full life, but the majority of workers on the plantations, not of course the executive people, live a subnormal life. They are ill-nourished. I am not going to pursue it; it is so well known. If it is not well known, let those who want to find out more about it go and enquire. So I say, this money, the British people believe, is not the best thing to hand to the sugar producers to use right away. It is being given in such a way that it can be used to rehabilitate the industry later on. I have no objection to that. I want to see the Colony advance. I want to see the sugar industry remain, and I want to see the fruits of the labour of the people given

to them. That is not being done. We are enacting a law not to give the people the fruits of their labours but to keep them in a half-starved condition all the time. I have no doubt that this Council by a majority will approve of it, and the ordinary representatives of the entire community must have no voice in this matter at all. The two Government Officials with the sugar producers or capitalists are to say how this money is to be spent.

I used the phrase yesterday, "*it is grossly improper to do something like that.*" I do not believe I can convince Government that it is following a policy that is suicidal. That is all I can say at the moment. Probably you will have no reaction just yet, but it is going to be pretty soon, and Government has a chance to rehabilitate itself before the reaction comes along. I urge on public men, as long as they have a trust imposed on them and they do not intend to carry through that trust it will be a matter for them and their consciences. It is only just that this Government should have on its committees, dealing with matters in which large sums of money are involved, representatives of this Council representing the ordinary primary producers of sugar and the capitalists who style themselves producers. I have nothing more to say than to urge that the amendment be carried by this Council.

Mr. LEE : Again I must repeat what I said when the second reading of this Bill was being put. I desire you carefully to consider whether Government cannot accept our motion. We cannot as Elected Members sit here and allow this money, that is going to be distributed, to be in the hands of people who are capitalists. What about the workers ? Are we thinking of the masses or of the few capitalists ? Sooner or later we are going to have a changed constitution of this Council, and if it is necessary that all these things have to be changed it would take some time, but if it is done now it would show the people that Government is leaning towards that view which had been expressed by the Royal Commission.

Mr. SEAFORD : There seems to be some misunderstanding about this question. Some hon. Members do not seem to realize

that this is part of the amount paid for sugar bought by the Imperial Government. It is the sum of money, £24.5s., which is paid to the producers of this Colony for sugar. The hon. Member says it is far below the world price. If it is far below the world price, surely it is money paid to the producers, surely it is for them to say what they are going to do with it. If it is the Rehabilitation Fund, does anybody in this Council know what is required ? Is there anyone in this Council who is capable to express an opinion on what is necessary or unnecessary ? It is entirely a question for the producers to decide. This money is paid when the sugar is exported. It is handed over to the Comptroller of Customs, and the Colonial Treasurer is the custodian. All that Government is there to do is to see that the money is duly spent for rehabilitation. The invoice is shown also the money expended and the machinery obtained, and a request is made for that money for rehabilitation. What else can anyone do on that Committee but to see that the money is duly spent ? It is entirely a matter for the producers to handle. Anyone else will not understand what the position is.

Mr. JACOB : My hon. Friend studiously leaves out the Price Stabilization Fund. That is going to be used later on, when the price of sugar goes down, for paying the workers, I hope, because from the \$9.60 which the sugar producers are getting now a certain percentage is to go to the workers in wages. How will that be given to the workers later on when the price of sugar drops and the rates of wages are lowered ? It is quite clear, but no reasoning whatever prevails when certain people are bent on doing things in their own way. There is the other aspect of it. We are hoping in this Colony for co-operative buying, marketing and producing, and I gave the hint yesterday that the sugar industry should be run on a co-operative basis. It would be exceedingly interesting to know what the other sugar companies would want for their properties, whether they would want the price at the value noted on their balance sheets on which depreciation has been written off, or whether they would want today's market value or plus rehabilitation later on. Those

are things we have to go into, and I say without the slightest hesitation that Government is totally incapable and incompetent to go into those matters. So Government, probably to bolster up its inefficiency, will support those people who will advise Government what to do in the interest of the few. There is no one in Government, and I make no exception, who is able to follow these balance sheets and say how this rehabilitation money is to be spent, how the price stabilization money is to be spent later on. The planters have the monopoly now, not only here but outside the Colony. I am saying that the time has come when those who have some knowledge should advise as to how this money should be spent and distributed later on.

Mr. SEAFORD : The hon. Member referred to me as purposely avoiding the Price Stabilization Fund. I have no desire to do that. Naturally, what is it to stabilize ? It is to maintain the price. If we can get the same price, there is no reason why the condition of the Colony should change at all. The hon. Member assumed that the price to the labourer would drop. Where he got that from I do not know. He cited yesterday two balance sheets, but I noticed he carefully avoided to mention what the actual losses were for the year as shown in those balance sheets. He did not mention that no dividends were paid for some years. He also dealt with the question of the poor labourer, and amongst other things he said the estates did not care for them. He even went so far as to say the Government confiscated land between Kitty and —

Mr. JACOB : I rise to a point of correction ! I did not say "confiscate".

Mr. SEAFORD : If the hon. Member does not know, and he ought to know, he can quite easily find out. Those very lands, he talked about that Government should take, have been offered free to Government for rural housing. I mention "free". Therefore I take it that is in the interest of the labouring population. Unfortunately Government has not been able to avail itself of the offer, but in the meantime the sugar estates themselves are laying out the lots, building roads, putting in artesian well water supply, and in one, Enmore Estates I think, there are over 100

houses built. In those cases the estates have been advancing money to the people to help them to build the houses. If that is not done in the interest of the people, I do not know what is. The hon. Member sees only one side of every subject that deals with sugar.

Mr. EDUN : As I understand this amendment moved by the hon. Member for North Western District (Mr. Jacob), I notice he has a very distorted idea of what are the rights of the people and the rights of a representative, etc. I have read somewhere this expression, "*Some people not having witnessed the phenomenon of their own birth and not being responsible for it may go so far as to deny the fact that they were born*". I think he ought to consider that very carefully. Now, Sir, as I understand this matter, an agreement was reached between the Colonial Office, the Sugar Companies and even the Trade Unions as to the allocation of funds when those funds are given by the Ministry of Food. It is the usual process in arithmetic to divide the funds in three and so make the division equal, but I see the tendency on the part of certain Members is just to have a set plan for figures—multiply, subtract, divide and add and then come to a conclusion. This arrangement is deeper than that. It aims at stabilization of the industry in order that it might be kept alive in the days when it will be faced with competition from a source with which it can never hope to compete.

I am no friend of the sugar industry; I am a friend of my own people, and nobody can deny that. I have done more for them on the sugar estates than all the other leaders combined. Let them put that in their pipes and smoke it. When I returned to the Colony from abroad I was faced with the proposition from my executive council to study what they had done and to decide whether they had done rightly in accepting \$2.40 per ton for labour welfare, and the other figures for price stabilization and rehabilitation. I considered that the arrangement was not a permanent one but more or less a transition affair, and I forthwith agreed that my executive had made a very good bargain, because I was only thinking of a levy of 2/- per ton, which would have brought the Labour Welfare Fund to

about \$60,000 a year. As the fund will now accumulate \$384,000 I would have been dubbed a fool if I did not accept the arrangement. The Trade Union accepted it in the best spirit, and I commended their action on that score. If the hon. Member thinks that he can mislead the world into thinking that this is not an equitable arrangement, and that the Trade Union should have demanded \$4.40 per ton, he will certainly have a very formidable task to satisfy a very scrutinizing electorate very soon. Nor will he succeed in misleading Members of this Council. This much I can tell him : that if at any time he desires to have a fray with me I am prepared to meet steel with steel at election time.

The CHAIRMAN : I do not think this Council is the place for it. (Laughter).

Mr. JACOB : I rise to a point of order. I do not know whether the hon. Nominated Member is speaking on the amendment before the Committee.

Mr. EDUN : I am speaking on the amendment and on the constitution of the Committee. As a matter of fact I have an amendment myself, and I am astounded to see this retraction by the Colonial Treasurer. I do not agree with the amendment which has been submitted. This is considered the sugar companies' business. The sums allocated will be used for two particular purposes, and if the hon. Member had suggested that of the two public officers one should be a Member of this Council I would have been tempted to agree with him. I go further and suggest that it would be wrong for an outsider to come into the Committee under clause 8 (2). The sugar companies have put their cards on the table, and as soon as they were promised more money the Trade Union asked for a proportion. I do not think we should go further than that. Of course it is approaching election time, and anybody can see this bit of clap-trap to fool the electorate. My friend must understand that he will have to satisfy a very scrutinizing electorate.

The COLONIAL TREASURER : We have been treated to a certain amount of eloquence and a certain amount of electioneering, but I hope the Council will not be confused. The matter is very simple indeed. The Ministry of Food agreed to

give the sugar producers of the Colony an increase in price, but imposed the condition that a part of that increase shall be used in two ways, firstly for the creation of a Price Stabilization Fund, and secondly, to restore their factory equipment. They could have left it just there, but in order to make quite sure that this increased price, which of course comes from the public funds of the United Kingdom, is properly spent, they have asked the Governments of the West Indian Colonies concerned to make quite certain that the intention is carried out, and to do so by taking that portion of the price away in the form of a statutory levy to be put under the control of a public Department, and doling it out to the sugar industry when quite satisfied with the conditions under which the money will be spent. If the price falls but the cost of production remains, a condition will have arisen which would justify disbursements from the Price Stabilization Fund. I take it that the Committee would decide that an addition to the export price of so much per ton be made for that year, and every estate would get that addition to the price of its sugar exported for that year. The Committee, therefore, would merely examine the proposals of the estates, see that they really do improve the estates, that the money is going to be properly spent, and authorize the expenditure.

Those are matters which could very well have been left to the estates themselves, but to make assurance doubly sure H.M. Government has recommended that this action should be taken. The Committee should consist of representatives of the sugar producers plus two competent observers, because they should report to Government that H.M. Government's intention is being properly carried out. That is all there is to it.

I submit to the Council that it is not necessary that Members of the Legislative Council should be directly interested. Of course the Council, indeed the whole Colony, is interested in the sugar industry, but this is a matter which concerns the estates. Therefore I submit that the Council would be well advised to leave this particular Committee as embodied in the Bill.

The Committee divided on Mr. Jacob's amendment and voted

For—Messrs. Jacob and Lee—2.

Against—Messrs. Raatgever, Thompson, Roth, Peer Bacchus, Gonsalves, Critchlow, C. V. Wight, Seaford, the Colonial Treasurer, the Attorney-General and the Colonial Secretary—11.

Did not vote—Mr. Edun—1.

Amendment lost.

Clause 8 (1) was then put to the vote and agreed to.

Clause 8 (2) —

Mr. EDUN : I move that the word "two" be substituted for the word "three" in the fourth line of sub-clause (2). I have before me the amendment of the Colonial Treasurer, and I must express my disappointment with that officer's action. I had expected him to take advantage of the report of the Royal Commission and satisfy himself with regard to the arguments adduced by me yesterday. I wish to refresh his memory, and as the officer of this Government responsible for this matter to the British Government, and as the trustee of the Labour Welfare Fund, I shall read to him par. 68 Chapter X of the Report of the Royal Commission. It states :

".....All these Committees should be composed of representatives of employers and work people nominated by organizations of employers and trade unions respectively. Where there are no trade unions in existence, or they are insufficiently representative, the responsibility for nominating suitable persons to represent the workers on Committees should fall on the Government. They should also nominate to every Committee suitable representatives of the general community. If, at a later date, the principle of a levy on output to provide for the social needs of workers in a particular industry should be extended to other forms of industry in the West Indies, one Central Committee, suitably subdivided, could be established in each Colony".

Those are emphatic terms which the Royal Commission laid down, and follow the pattern of what obtains in Great Britain in the case of the Miners' Welfare Fund. This amendment is definitely a contravention of that principle, so ably evolved by the Royal Commission, and I

think it should be withdrawn forthwith. My amendment that three members of the Committee shculd be trade unionists concerned with the sugar industry is one of equity and character, and I do not think anybody would be able to challenge that. What harm would be done if the trade unions had three representatives, the sugar producers three, and two Government officers ? I would be quite disposed to accept a Committee constituted in that way.

Conditions on the sugar estates call for strenuous work so far as social welfare is concerned. Men will be needed on that Committee to advise from the trade union angle, because it is their concern. The money will be spent exclusively on the labourers. Why then should the sugar producers have greater representation than the trade unions ? Why should Government have equality of representation with the trade unions ? That I cannot understand. I would suggest to Your Excellency that you visit one of the sugar estates. You will see a rumshop adjacent to the pay office on practically every estate. For several years we have pleaded with the sugar companies to keep rumshops away from their pay offices. That great Englishman, the late Rev. C. F. Andrews, also pleaded with the sugar companies, and some of them complied with his request, but eventually the rumshops crept back again.

Yesterday I spoke about capital works. I do not like the term, but certainly there will be expenditure on capital works. If the trade unions do not get sufficient representation on this Committee on which I pin my hopes, I fear the consequences would be very bleak, and there would be a resurgence of malcontents on the sugar estates. There will be capital expenditure on such things as electric lighting, roads, pure water supply pipe lines, and communal baths. There are not many baths on sugar estates where women are expected to bathe in the open at trenches.

A peculiar type of education is needed on the sugar estates, but I do not think there is anyone in the Colony capable of dealing with the problem of adult education. I ask in all fairness that the hon. the Colonial Treasurer withdraw his amendment. I have always hoped for some kind of reorientation, a new policy, a change of

heart between capitalists and workers here, and unless we have some understanding between them all the talk about co-operation will be idle words. The Trade Unions and representatives of the Government should be given the right to administer this fund.

Mr. JACOB : I do not know if the Council has my amendment to sub-clause (2). I will therefore repeat it. My amendment is that the personnel of the Committee should consist of "three Unofficial Members of the Legislative Council elected by the Council, two persons nominated by the British Guiana Sugar Producers' Association, and two persons nominated by the Trade Unions concerned with the welfare of labour workers in the sugar industry." The effect of my amendment is that this Council should have three representatives on the Committee. The arguments I have used in respect of sub-clause (1) apply to this sub-clause. I do not know whether this Welfare Fund is to be similar to that suggested by the Royal Commission. My friend, the hon. Nominated Member, says that that is so. If Government agrees that this Welfare Committee is to be similar to the Miners' Welfare Committee referred to by the Royal Commission, then it would be very advisable to ascertain the principles of the Miners' Welfare Committee in order that they may be established here. I am not so mindful of that aspect of it at the moment, but what I am mindful of is, here you will have Trade Unions interested in this matter having representatives, and the Government approves of the principle that that should be so.

I was looking at the Department of Labour's Report for 1944 and found that the Trade Unions who are really working on the sugar estates are only two in number—the B.G. Workers' League with a membership of 956 and the Man-Power Citizens' Association with a membership of 4,200—with a total membership of 5,156 persons. It cannot be admitted that those people are all engaged in the sugar industry. I think, if we are to take the circumstances as they are now, a large number of the members of the Man-Power Citizens' Association are connected with the bauxite industry and therefore the number on the sugar estates is exceedingly small. But let us say that

those Unions who are going to assist in the control and distribution and expenditure of the fund represent about 5,000 members at the most—the actual number is 5,156—the number of people employed on the estates is at least 20,000. Then those Unions only represent one-fourth or 25 per cent. of those workers. My contention is that Members of this Council in the interest of the welfare of the general workers should have some voice in this matter. But, of course, I think I am pleading in vain. The Government is not going to agree to that principle as regards the Price Stabilization Fund and the Rehabilitation Fund. Nevertheless, it is my duty to bring these things forward and have them recorded, so that representation may be made upon them later on.

I am advised it should be obvious to put two Government Officers on the Committee, as stated in this Bill. I have no objection to putting those two Officers and, therefore, my amendment will read "and two public officers" after the words "sugar industry". That is making the membership nine, e.g., three Unofficial Members of the Legislative Council elected by the Legislative Council, two persons nominated by the B.G. Sugar Producers, two persons nominated by the Trade Unions concerned with the welfare of the workers in the sugar industry and two public officers. The composition of this Committee would then be nine. I have no objection to two public officers being included on this Committee, but I do want to stress this point: It is absolutely necessary in a matter of this kind concerning the welfare of workers in the sugar industry, the majority of whom are not represented by these two Trade Unions, that those people should have public representation.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY : I would like to ask the hon. Member what is the point in his motion. I think he said the Sugar Industry Welfare Fund should be controlled and administered by a Committee appointed by the Governor in Council. I may be quite wrong, but it seems to be inconsistent to have a committee appointed by the Governor in Council, if the amendment goes through, and to say there shall be three Members elected by the

Legislative Council. I do not see how the Governor in Council can appoint a committee if the Legislative Council is going to elect three members of that committee. It is perfectly consistent to have the Legislative Council elect three members of a committee. I think the hon. Member would have to amend the first part of it. Am I not right Mr. Attorney-General?

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: Yes!

Mr. JACOB: The Bill, as originally printed, states:

"The Sugar Industry Labour Welfare Fund shall be controlled and administered by a Committee to be appointed by the Governor in Council, and the members of the Committee shall be three persons nominated by the British Guiana Sugar Producers' Association, two persons nominated by the trade union concerned with the welfare of labour workers in the sugar industry, and two public officers".

The Legislative Council will employ the same method as the Sugar Producers' Association and the Trade Unions. The Council will elect three of its Members and their names submitted to the Governor in Council for appointment.

The CHAIRMAN: The word is "nominate"!

Mr. JACOB: I look upon "nomination" and "election" as being different though ultimately they are the same. The Council will nominate and elect them and their names go forward to the Governor in Council, but election is the method employed. There may be differences of opinion as to who should be finally selected, and the idea of selecting the men is that the Council will sit as a Committee and nominations moved and seconded will be made from which the required three will be elected. That is what I mean, and I see nothing inconsistent in having three persons elected from the Members of this Council to represent the Council on this Committee. The Governor in Council will take the nominations and elections and with them appoint the Committee as a whole.

Mr. EDUN: To a point of information for the benefit of the hon. Member for North Western District! The financial membership of the Man Power Citizens' Association stood at 5,000 at the end of De-

cember last year, and we have had an addition of more than 1,000 from the Bauxite Company. That means the membership of the Association is about 6,000. The B.G. Workers' League has a membership of 600 on the sugar estates, and there is another Trade Union which is known as the Guyana United Trade Union. I would like to know how many members that Trade Union has, and if it is not extinct yet.

The CHAIRMAN: As regards representation on Welfare Boards such as this, might I enlighten the Council on what is done in England? I know there is representation of both employers and employees but no representation of the House of Commons which would be on a par with what is now suggested. But I do think there is something in the views put forward that the employees on the estates may have a little stronger representation. I suggest we make their representation equal to that of the sugar producers since this is agreeable to the Council. That is to say, to increase the Trade Unions' representation from two as it stands in the Bill at present to three.

Mr. GONSALVES: To a point of explanation! I do not quite see how it is going to affect the position. If the amendment is carried as suggested one party would have three votes and the other three votes.

The CHAIRMAN: There will still be two public officers on the Committee. What I am suggesting is that it would be acceptable to Government if the clause is amended to read "three members of the Sugar Producers' Association, three members of the Trade Unions and two public officers". That is the point. Normally we have an odd number on a Committee, but I do not think there are any rules and regulations to that effect. We can probably give the Chairman a casting vote if necessary, but that will be a matter for the Committee when it is formed, if it meets with the consent of the Council.

Mr. PEER BACCHUS: I am supporting the amendment moved by the hon. Member for North-Western District. I am doing so on this ground: The Welfare Fund, as you have just said, is for the welfare of the workers on the sugar estates. If one is to use the argument employed by

the hon. the Colonial Treasurer and the hon. Member for Georgetown North that the Rehabilitation Fund is solely for use in the rehabilitation of the sugar industry and no one is more qualified than the sugar interests to say what rehabilitation should be made to a plantation—and with that I quite agree—similarly the same argument can be used in this Welfare Fund, except that this fund will be spent on the property of the sugar interests and therefore they should also have a say in it. Therefore, I am not objecting to the sugar interests having representation on this Committee, but there should be equal representation given to all concerned.

On the question of equal representation, we have just had it from a leading member of a Trade Union, the hon. Nominated Member, Mr. Edun, that the membership of the Man-Power Citizens' Association stood at 5,000 last December, and we have had it from the hon. Member on my left (Mr. Jacob) that the workers employed on the sugar estates total about 20,000. Surely, then, those 15,000 workers who are not connected to any Trade Union should be represented, and this Council, I say without fear of contradiction, represents not only those 15,000 workers who are not in any Trade Union but also the 5,000 that are members of the Trade Union. I think that this Council has every right to make representation that Members of this Council should have a say on that Committee which will be controlling that Fund. In fixing the price of sugar, consideration was given to the earmarking of a certain sum for welfare purposes. Therefore that sum which is allocated to the Welfare Fund is nothing short of public funds, whether it be the contribution of the taxpayer of this Colony or the contribution of the British taxpayer, and this being the organization which has control over all public funds, I think, this Government will be denying a privilege of this Council in refusing Members of this Council the right to have a say on this fund which is going to be spent on public services for the benefit of the sugar estate workers in the Colony. For those reasons I am supporting the amendment of the hon. Member for North Western District.

Mr. EDUN : I fear I will have to rise again. I have never heard such an outmoded argument in my life. Supposing I take the same yardstick and examine the credentials of the hon. Member who has just taken his seat. In those days when he was elected to this Council he represented a voters' list of about 800 and he was elected by a majority of 401. It is not that he is just representing 401 people. I heard an argument years ago here by a late Colonial Secretary who died some months ago, Sir Cecil Clementi. He said the Government was the representative of the entire population. If we use that same yardstick, that same argument, it would be found that the Elected Members represent just a few hundred voters existing some years ago. Apart from that, let us examine the North-Western District. That district had about 300 voters and the hon. Member is representing 300 people or half of that number. So you see that argument can be just stretched out *ad infinitum*. We have to take the experience gained by the British people. Your Excellency rightly told this Council very explicitly that it is not so in Great Britain. It is a question which involves the consideration of two parties, and here we are butting in. Government suggests three representatives of the sugar producers, three representatives of the Trade Unions and two public officers. Let us try it out. Everybody accepts the idea that this Legislature is a moribund one and only the Nominated Members can rightly claim to be representatives of the people.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY : I would like to inform hon. Members of Council that the guidance from the Colonial Office is that this Committee should be composed of employers, employees and Government. That is the advice given to this Government by the Secretary of State for the Colonies. There was no reference or any suggestion whatever that politics should enter into it.

MR. JACOB : I am glad for the hon. the Colonial Secretary's statement. I intend when the debate is through to ask that a copy of the debate be sent to the Colonial Office and to ask for a ruling on the said statement. I was under the impression that we would get a Representative Government, but from what I have heard

from the hon. the Colonial Secretary we will not.

Mr. LEE : In applying the principles of the English method of Government in England, I would ask you to consider it in this aspect : In the English method you have a real democratic form of government, but here in this Colony you do not have that, because in this Council you have Nominated Members who, according to the hon. Nominated Member, Mr. Edun, represent the people. Can you say that Elected Members of this Council appointed on these committees will not better represent the people than the nominees of the sugar producers, than the nominees of the Trade Unions ? Are you going to say their form of representation is not a democratic form of representation and better than that of nominated members ? We are asking this Council today to give the people representation on this Welfare Committee, whereby they can at any time accuse those who are on the Committee of not doing what is right towards them. As statistics show and as certain hon. Members have pointed out, the Trade Unions do not represent all the workers. Can we say to you, Sir, and to Government that the two officers of Government on the Committee will be directed by you or the Governor in Council in regard to whatever they do ? Will they go among the people in order to know what is required ? I am sincerely hoping that the day would come when we would have adult suffrage, as then there would be no question as to the number of voters, and we would see better representation in a democratic form on committees. This matter affects the welfare of the workers, and the amendment by the hon. Member for North Western District will give representation to all parties.

Mr. THOMPSON : I am loathe to say anything on this matter, but as we have been labouring a point I am just wondering where we are. We started on one road and we have found ourselves entirely out of the line. So much has been said about one's position. Of course we do not expect anything else. I am guided by my conscience in the way I cast my vote. I am not here to sling mud at anyone. I am here to give honest representation. As regards the welfare of the worker I can

vouch that the estates look after it, educationally and otherwise. We cannot expect in a day to get all we want. If we take the schools, there is not a better one than the one at Pln. Blairmont. If a few men like to go behind the ranges on an estate and carry on card games, that is not a matter for this Council, as it cannot be said that all the people on the estates gather behind the ranges to play games. We are here to give the best we can. There is no cause to be wasting time in discussion. I think three members nominated by the Trade Unions, three members nominated by the sugar producers and two Public Officers will be quite enough for that Committee. I am supporting strongly that composition. Those Members of this Council who are connected with the Trade Unions can get themselves nominated by those Unions.

Mr. LEE : I would like to correct the hon. Member who has just taken his seat. as he has had no knowledge of the working of Trade Unions. The Trade Unions tried to bring in as soon as possible the policy of democracy, and if that policy is understood by the people there the argument comes in about nomination by the Trade Unions. My friend does not know anything about the Trade Unions' policy. He does not interest himself in it, and he must not say anything here about it.

Mr. THOMPSON : There is no misconception nor anything misleading in what I have said. If the Members of this Council are members of the Trade Unions they can manoeuvre themselves into being nominated.

Mr. JACOB : That is the kind of thing we get here—self-interest.

Mr. ROTH : I beg to move that the question be now put.

Mr. Jacob's amendment put, and negatived.

Mr. Edun's amendment put and agreed to.

Clause 8 as amended passed.

Clauses 9 and 10 as printed were then put, and passed.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL : I ask the permission of the Council to recommit clause 4 (2) in view of the comments made

yesterday in relation to the amendment which was inserted on the motion of the Colonial Treasurer. It will be recollected that considerable discussion took place in respect of the income of the funds which will be in the hands of the Colonial Treasurer, and it was thought desirable that a sub-clause should be inserted to remove any doubt that the income of those funds specified in clause 2 of the Bill should be subject to income tax. In the light of the comments made, I am suggesting an amendment which would clarify the position and put it beyond any possibility of misunderstanding. I therefore move that sub-clause (2) be recommitted and the following substituted therefor:

- (2) The Colonial Treasurer, in his capacity as trustee of the special funds specified in section two of this Ordinance, shall be exempt from the payment of income tax under the Income Tax Ordinance.

Sub-clause (2) recommitted.

Mr. JACOB : This amendment will mean that while the Colonial Treasurer is trustee, no income tax would be payable, but immediately these funds are transferred to the sugar companies concerned they would be subject to income tax. I understood from the Colonial Treasurer yesterday that he was doubtful whether the companies which benefited by these funds would be subject to income tax in consequence.

The COLONIAL TREASURER : There was nothing doubtful at all about what I said yesterday. I never expressed the slightest doubt about anything I said.

Mr. JACOB : I understood the Treasurer to say yesterday that when these funds are handed over to the companies concerned they would be subject to income tax if their incomes for that year were liable to tax. I take the amendment to mean that so long as the funds are in the hands of the Treasurer in his capacity as trustee, no income tax would be paid, but when they are transferred to the sugar companies they may be liable to income tax. If that is so then it is settling one point.

The COLONIAL TREASURER : It is not settling any point. That was mentioned quite definitely yesterday.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL : There is no change in the substance of the clause. All that has been done for the purpose of clarification is that the clause has been redrafted in order to remove any possibility of doubt in the mind of anybody in regard to the funds when they are in the hands of the Colonial Treasurer in his capacity as trustee.

Mr. JACOB : I am saying that it may not be regarded as income for that particular year, because it was not earned as income. There would then be a long-drawn-out argument, with the result that one side may give way, and if Government gave way the taxpayers would be the losers.

Mr. GONSALVES : I cannot follow the hon. Member's argument sometimes. I thought he would have been glad for this amendment which provides that only when the Colonial Treasurer is trustee of the funds no income tax will be payable. He has always been anxious that Government should collect all the income tax it possibly can, yet he is arguing about the amendment. He is really very amusing sometimes.

Mr. JACOB : I was not here yesterday.

Mr. GONSALVES : I read the minutes of the Council all the time.

The CHAIRMAN : The amendment moved yesterday provided that the income of these special funds shall not be subject to income tax, and the Treasurer made it clear that when the income passes from him it would be liable to tax, but it might be argued on the wording of that amendment, that income tax could never be charged. In short it left room for doubt, whereas this new sub-clause leaves no room for doubt. I think that is the point.

Mr. JACOB : The Treasurer said there was no doubt when he spoke yesterday. I say, therefore, that there is no necessity for this amendment.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY : The Colonial Treasurer said he had no doubt about what he said.

Amendment agreed to.

The Council resumed.

The COLONIAL TREASURER : With the consent of the Council I move that the Bill be now read a third time and passed.

Mr. JACOB : I am objecting to the third reading. I propose to make representations to the Colonial Secretary. I am not familiar with the Standing Rules, but I think that the third reading cannot be taken until those representations have been made.

The PRESIDENT : I think it is an understood thing that, having passed the second reading, the third reading is more or less a formality, for the purpose of safeguarding against any mistakes in the Bill. I will therefore put the motion for the third reading.

Mr. JACOB : It has been ruled that the third reading of a Bill cannot be proceeded with on the same day if a Member objects.

Mr. LEE : Have the Standing Rules been suspended ?

Mr. C. V. WIGHT : I think the hon. Member for North Western District (Mr. Jacob) is mistaken. He probably refers to a statement made by Your Excellency's predecessor that he would not ask the Council to proceed to the third reading of a Bill if a Member objected, but the Standing Rules are very clear. They provide that, with the consent of the majority of the Council, the Standing Rules may be suspended and a motion put for the third reading to be taken.

The PRESIDENT : Rule 51 provides that any of the Standing Rules and Orders may be suspended with the consent of the Council. The motion is put without debate.

Mr. JACOB : I emphatically disagree with the interpretation of the hon. Member for Western Essequibo (Mr. C. V. Wight) that the Standing Rules and Orders can be suspended by a majority vote. My interpretation of the Rules is that if one Member objects to the suspension the Standing Rules and Orders cannot be suspended. If that were not so it would mean that a majority of the Council could do anything it likes. As long as there is a single objection the Rules cannot be suspended.

The PRESIDENT : I must be guided by the wording of the Standing Rules and

Orders. "Consent" can hardly be interpreted to mean unanimous consent.

Mr. JACOB : That is exactly what I am saying—that "consent" means unanimous consent.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY : I think I can clarify the matter. It is the practice in some Legislatures that when controversial matters come up and one Member objects to the suspension of the Standing Rules and Orders that objection is sustained. I know it occurred in the Bahamas. It is for the Attorney-General to advise on the point, but I cannot see that a practice adopted by one individual President is necessarily binding on any other President. I believe that Sir Gordon Lethem did say that if any Member objected to the third reading of a Bill immediately after the second reading he would not proceed, but I am sure that if the majority of the Council desired a third reading after the second reading it would be within the Rules for the Council to vote on it. If Your Excellency put the motion to the vote you will have a majority. I think that is the most democratic and sensible way of conducting business when Members disagree.

Mr. LEE : I only brought the matter to Your Excellency's notice because I understood that that was the procedure or the custom adopted by your predecessor. If Your Excellency does not find it practicable to follow that procedure then we will have to abide by what you decide as President of the Council.

The PRESIDENT : I quite understand that. I do not wish to act contrary to the ruling of my predecessor for one moment. Any Member is entitled to vote against the third reading.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY : On reconsideration of what I have just said I now remember very clearly that Your Excellency's predecessor did not adopt that procedure, but it was I who did so while I was acting, because I knew that it had been adopted in the Bahamas. On representations by the hon. Member for North Western District (Mr. Jacob) I agreed that if any Member objected to the third reading of a Bill immediately after the second reading it would not be proceeded with.

It was my own personal undertaking. I made a mistake when I said it was the procedure adopted by your predecessor.

The PRESIDENT : My experience in four different Legislatures in which I have served is that the Standing Rules and Orders can be suspended by the vote of the majority of the Council.

Mr. LEE : I accept your statement that the third reading is a formal matter, but a Member should be allowed an opportunity to make representations before that formal reading.

Mr. C. V. WIGHT : Rule 13 provides that among the motions that may be made without notice is a motion for the suspension of the Standing Rules and Orders. That in itself supports the argument that such a motion can be carried by a majority.

The PRESIDENT : I put the motion to the Council that the Bill be read a third time and passed.

Motion agreed to.

Mr. LEE : I desire that our objection be recorded in the minutes.

The PRESIDENT : Yes, that will be done.

SUGAR EXPORT DUTY BILL, 1947.

The COLONIAL TREASURER : I move that the second of the two Bills be now read a second time :

A Bill intituled "An Ordinance to impose a temporary export duty on sugar manufactured in and exported from the Colony."

I think that what I said yesterday covers this particular Bill which is intended to impose a special duty of \$1.20 per ton for 1947 on sugar manufactured in and exported from the Colony, the proceeds of which will be allocated towards meeting the cost of subsidization for the year 1947.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY seconded.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

The Council resolved itself into Committee and considered the Bill clause by clause without discussion.

The Council resumed.

The COLONIAL TREASURER : I again ask the consent of the Council that this Bill be now read a third time and passed. If that consent is given I beg to move that the Bill be read a third time.

Mr. JACOB : As a matter of principle I have to object to this again, because it would be inconsistent to allow this Bill to go through without objection while we objected to the other Bill going through.

The PRESIDENT : I think the Colonial Treasurer had better move the suspension of the Standing Rules and Orders to enable him to move the third reading.

The COLONIAL TREASURER : I move formally that the Standing Rules and Orders be suspended to enable me to move the third reading of the Bill.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY seconded.

Question put, and agreed to.

Standing Rules and Orders suspended.

The COLONIAL TREASURER : I move that the Bill be read a third time and passed.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY seconded.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a third time and passed.

Mr. JACOB : I ask that our objection be recorded in the minutes.

SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES — MARCH,
1947.

The COLONIAL TREASURER : I beg to move :

"That, this Council approves of the Supplementary Estimates for the quarter ending 31st March, 1947, (embodimenting Schedules of Additional Provision approved by the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council during the quarter)."

This Supplementary Estimate embodies a total excess expenditure of \$125,697 approved by the Finance Committee, and of that total revotes of unexpended balances of votes of previous years amount to \$50,786. The Schedule also includes items under Colonial Development and Welfare Schemes totalling \$32,887, so that by far the larger proportion of these items

are carry forwards from previous years, or Welfare items, the amounts of which are of course recoverable. There are a few extraordinary items of which the most notable is a provision of \$11,000 for the Medical Department to enable the Leprosy Hospital to continue its good work with the new drug called Promin.

There are one or two other large items, one for the improvement of drainage at Dartmouth, Essequibo. Your Excellency may have seen that particular spot on your recent visit. The sum of \$4,440 is also included for the maintenance of the Home for Delinquent Girls at Belfield until the end of the year, and \$4,590 for continuing the work of installing the Hydro-Electric Gauging Stations in the interior.

Those are the important items in the Schedule. There is one item for \$7,000 for the Tourist Bureau, which was the subject of a certain amount of controversy in Finance Committee. Although it was approved by a substantial majority one hon. Member—I think it was the Member for Essequibo River (Mr. Lee)—asked that Government should take no action on it until this Supplementary Estimate came before this Council. No action has been taken. Special warrants have been issued in respect of all the items on the Schedule except for that particular item. There has been a development since the excess vote was passed by the Finance Committee. I believe that the arrangements which were current in the West Indies for the Tourist Bureau's representative have fallen through. That is to say that the Governments of Trinidad and Barbados have given notice of termination on their part of the joint arrangement. Consequently, I think it would be correct for me to say that this Government will not authorize payment of this particular amount, which was intended to carry on the services of that representative until the Committee of the Tourist Bureau have reported as to their programme and their intention for the remainder of this year. However, Sir, the item was deferred in the first instance because of the representation by the hon. Member for Essequibo River. If he desires to comment on it he is at liberty to do so. These items were passed and approved

by the Finance Committee, and were subject to very thorough investigation during the course of the discussion. I think I would be right in asking the Council, subject to what I have said about a particular item—Tourist Bureau—to adopt the Supplementary Estimate in acceptance of this motion.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY seconded.

TOURIST BUREAU

Mr. LEE : I would like to make some comments on the Tourist Bureau if I may be permitted, Sir. Government at the Budget Session in December last introduced in this Council a certain amount for this Bureau. Speaking subject to correction, I think this Council approved of an expenditure of \$3,000. Certain Members of this Council had moved an amendment to that sum, but it was defeated, showing on the votes being taken that Government was satisfied with the amount which was introduced in the Council. Therefore, I cannot now agree to a supplementary estimate of \$7,000 when Government knows what was said at that time. I would like that a vote be taken on this item so that I can record my vote against it.

Mr. ROTH : With regard to the point raised by the hon. Member who has just taken his seat, it is very interesting because anyone lacking knowledge of the actual facts can be led astray by his remarks. Last year the sum voted was \$10,000 for the working of the Tourist Bureau. There was a tri-party agreement between Trinidad, Barbados and British Guiana to retain representation in New York, each sharing in general the cost of running the Bureau and advertisement which came up to \$10,000. When the matter came before this Council on the Estimates for this year, I am in a position to state that through a mistake in the Colonial Secretary's Office the amount was put down as \$3,000, the Clerk being under the impression that \$10,000 was only for the previous year and not a permanent amount. Incidentally we had asked originally not for \$10,000 but for something in the vicinity of \$50,000 to \$60,000. While the matter was being argued it was felt that we were not in a position to carry out the tri-party agreement. We made that clear. We could not

come to any definite decision until we knew how much money Government was going to allow. It is only fair to say that within these few months we have withdrawn from the tri-party agreement, as we have discovered it is not in the best interest of the Colony. It is the usual old story of British Guiana being given last place, but as a body we tried to do our best to push the Tourist Bureau. We are satisfied that to be of any use the Bureau wants \$80,000. Trinidad is spending \$80,000 for the next three years on advertising its tourist business.

I am not exposing any secret when I say publicly that the Committee was so disheartened at the attitude of Government and this Council that the majority of members were ready to throw up their hands, but decided to wait until we find out the attitude of the new administration towards tourism. The majority of the Committee believe that the development of the tourist industry will mean a very great deal to the Colony, not only in respect of the actual number of tourists, but the advertising of the Colony and its possibilities. We admit that our principal attraction is not in the shop window and it presents some difficulty to get at. If this Council is not prepared to vote the necessary money for the Tourist Bureau to do its job—to attract tourists and advertise the Colony—it is better that nothing be voted at all, as we will only be throwing money away. This Colony voted \$10,000 while Trinidad is spending eight times that with less attraction than we have in this Colony. I ask Members to think over that.

Mr. SEAFORD : I understood we had a tri-party agreement with Barbados and Trinidad and as a result an agency was opened in the U.S.A. Without giving any notice suddenly this Council withdraws. I feel that the Agent is entitled to expect our support for another year at least. I think it is entirely wrong that we should withdraw from our obligation. I think it is our duty to honour that obligation, pay that money to our representative there until we have given due notice of termination. In the past Government had stood for upholding its obligation, and I do think we should do it in this case. It is entirely wrong in our refusing to vote any money here.

Mr. LEE : I would like to make the position perfectly clear. Government knew of its obligation and Government brought forward a sum which we accepted. Government is now bringing forward a supplementary measure for a thing which it had not accepted in principle in the general budget.

Mr. EDUN : I would like to make certain observations in so far as the tourist business is concerned. I can remember well indeed being handed three booklets entitled "Fifty facts about British Guiana" which had been issued by the Bureau of Publicity and Information. Those booklets were so much appreciated by the people abroad that, if I had 100 booklets with me, the people would have bought them up. That goes to prove that we need a lot of advertisement abroad about this Colony. There is total ignorance about this vast area in which we are living. I think the money would be well spent and it should be well considered too. We should see how much we can afford to spend in order to put up a good Tourist Bureau. I know, Sir, that this Colony has been very much maligned by people abroad, and we have to secure a good name for tourists to come here, and a little money spent in that direction will be money well spent.

Mr. RAATGEVER : I should like to associate myself with the remarks made by the hon. Nominated Member, Mr. Roth, regarding this matter. As the hon. Member for Essequibo River (Mr. Lee) said, this matter was discussed in the Legislative Council when I explained the position fully, but, I think, it was due to an error on the part of Government that the amount was carried out at \$3,000 instead of at \$10,000 as allowed the Tourist Bureau in 1946. The position is, we have since had to discontinue the joint office in New York at the 31st December, 1946. Trinidad has since discontinued and Barbados has also discontinued. So the office is closed. We will have to make new arrangements. We are under no obligation to the previous owner of the office of joint representation of Trinidad, Barbados and this Colony, because the arrangement was that the office be carried on for six months in the first instance and then continued for another six months.

The position is that Members of this Council apparently felt that a tourist industry is not necessary in this Colony, because we have not the attractions that other Colonies have. I differ from that view, as it is well known that tourists play a very important part in the economic set-up of any country. In most countries of the world the tourist industry is and has been the major industry offering employment to many people, bringing in much needed currency and overseas revenue to the country. No one country has a monopoly of a thing to attract tourists, but this Colony has everything in having one of the world's wonders—the magnificent Kaieteur Falls. It is our duty to make access to those Falls easy and cheap, so as to attract people to come here. By doing that, I am sure, it will prove a more valuable asset than the largest gold mine.

I loathe to mention that the Trinidad Government is giving \$80,000 annually to the tourist industry, and Jamaica is giving \$144,000 annually. In this Colony during the war years there was a token grant of \$3,000 which was increased at the request of the Tourist Committee in 1946 to \$10,000. At the end of 1946 the amount was reduced to \$3,000 and the majority of the Tourist Committee, as the hon. Nominated Member (Mr. Roth) said, decided to resign, but at a meeting they finally decided to await Your Excellency's arrival to see what your attitude would be as regards Tourism. We have not had a chance to discuss this matter with you. We are giving you an opportunity to see something of the country first. If we are to carry out the development of this Colony and advertise this Colony as it should be done, it would at least take \$80,000 annually. It is no use doing it with a small amount of money. We not only have to advertise abroad the Colony's attractions but its potentialities; we must send samples of our woods and various things to be placed in Tourist Offices in Canada, U.S.A. and England. I am asking that the grant be increased to the amount asked for by the Tourist Committee, \$80,000.

Mr. EDUN : To a point of information for the hon. Member ! I remember being told in Jamaica that the commercial

people there have also largely implemented the Tourist Vote.

The PRESIDENT : When I was in Jamaica what we did was to impose a Tourist Tax on every tourist who came to the Island. I think it was ten shillings (10/-) after three days' stay. We raised their funds in that way. It was strongly resented by passengers and the shipping companies did not like it after it came into force and disliked taking it from the passengers because they found it most irritating. There is no doubt that in Jamaica, Tourism is indeed an industry. As far as I recall, when I was there a sum between £2,000,000 and £3,000,000 was brought into that Colony and spent every year. Of course it has amenities to build up this traffic. I am certainly not able to express any opinion on the subject here as far as this Colony is concerned, but I am very interested in the question, and I hope to have an opportunity to discuss it with those hon. Members who are interested. It is a very big question. I hope I will be able to find the opportunity to discuss the matter with Members.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY : In reply to the hon. Nominated Member, Mr. Raatgever, who said it was the fault of Government, I desire to say it was actually a misunderstanding. This Council shared with Government the responsibility for the decision because my recollection is, the draft estimates carried an amount of \$3,000 and there, I think, Government was to be blamed as the amount should have been \$10,000. But when the draft estimates were being discussed I was in the Chair, and the matter was put to the vote as to whether that sum should be increased from \$3,000 to \$10,000 and the Members of Council voted against it. I do not think Government can share that responsibility. I think if there is any mistake made Government and the Council must share the responsibility equally.

Mr. THOMPSON : I do not say that Government made a mistake. During the consideration of the Estimates Members got together and decided definitely that a majority decision on any item must stand. We all accepted the amount of \$3,000 on the Estimates, and when the matter came

up in Council it was sought to change the amount to \$10,000. I then said as a matter of principle that I was not going against the decision we had made and the item must go at the amount we accepted in Committee. I do not know that we can blame the Government for it. If we decide as a body to stand by certain things and we do so, I see nothing wrong in it. I said we had nothing to offer, but I was misunderstood. I hold the same views now. I would not mind if we had proper conveyance to the interior for tourists to get there. We have not even the hotel accommodation, and the spending of this \$10,000 is just like dropping it in the ocean. Until we can face the question clearly and squarely I will not support it. I want that to be understood. A few moments ago we were discussing the question of advertisement. I am prepared to meet the Tourist Committee and give my opinion as to what I think along that line, so that they may see if we cannot do something better than that. It is for that reason I did not support the amount of \$10,000, and I am not prepared to support it if it is brought up again.

**GOVERNMENT MEDICAL OFFICERS'
IMPASSE.**

Mr. GONSALVES : Am I to understand that the motion means the estimates are being taken as a whole ? If that is so, I would like to say that under the Head "Medical Department" I would like to know whether a statement can be made as to the position now as regards the recent impasse with the Doctors at the Hospital. I saw in the Press certain statements made as to some decision having been arrived at, but since we cannot accept what appears in the Press as authentic and only what has been issued by the B.P.I., I would like some statement from the hon. the Colonial Secretary as to what is the position.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY : Dr. Markness, Medical Adviser to the Comptroller for Development and Welfare in the West Indies, has made recommendations, and those recommendations have been sent to the Doctors concerned and have been accepted by Government in full.

MAGISTRATES.

Mr. C. V. WIGHT : I do not think the hon. the Colonial Treasurer in his opening speech when moving the motion mentioned

another decision arrived at in Council in relation to the question of the Magistrates. The hon. the Colonial Treasurer had intimated to a Finance Committee that the matter will receive attention. I had thought, perhaps, he would have put in or asked leave to put in some item on these estimates and have it passed. I do not know how far that position has gone. I do not want any misunderstanding at our next Finance Committee meeting.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY : I would like to reply to the last speaker. As Your Excellency is aware, I put that question up quite recently and the hon. the Colonial Treasurer will be authorized to provide for the amount in the next additional schedule that goes before the Finance Committee.

CLERK OF COUNCIL.

Mr. LEE : May I ask whether some question had not been asked in respect of the Clerk of this Council and we were given some undertaking that consideration will be given to that ?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY : I made a statement on that point from the Chair and the matter is definitely settled. The recommendation of the Legislative Council was not adopted by Government, and full explanation was given to the Council.

Mr. JACOB : I take it that this Supplementary Estimate is being put as a whole and will not be considered page by page. I have nothing to say in regard to this Estimate but I do not want this procedure to be taken as a precedent, that estimates passed by Finance Committee will just be accepted and formally passed by this Council. I reserve the right to go into Committee and consider them in detail from time to time.

The PRESIDENT : They are as much estimates as the annual budget, and certainly we should go into Committee if there are any controversial points Members want to raise. There was such a general agreement in Finance Committee in this case, that there appears to be no need to go into Committee. I quite appreciate the hon. Member's point.

Mr. JACOB : I am glad for your pronouncement on this matter, as the idea was that once something has been carried in Finance Committee it is just put here for formal approval. That should not be so. This is the Council to approve before anything can be really done.

Mr. ROTH : The hon. Member neglected to inform you, Sir, that he personally refused to attend the meetings of the Finance Committee. If we are going to have a whole debate here again after a matter has been discussed and decided in Finance Committee, I for one will not attend the meetings of the Finance Committee again. The hon. Member for North Western District will not attend the meetings of the Finance Committee but wants every detail to be gone through in this Council. If that is to be the case, then we can dispense with the Finance Committee entirely.

Mr. JACOB : I agree that the Finance Committee be dispensed with and everything brought here.

The PRESIDENT : That is out of the question. I do think the institution of a Finance Committee a very valuable one. I have had the experience of it in many other places. If this Council is to be business-like, I think a Finance Committee is the best way always, on the understanding that the matters have to come up before the Council for ratification in the ordinary way. As an institution, I may say, it has my entire support. It would have no support at all if it did not save time.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY : May I appeal to the hon. Member ? Just recently we introduced the Finance Committee's Rules and Regulations. Not

because one hon. Member does not want to attend we should dispense with the Committee. I do plead with the rest of the Council not to throw it overboard just because one hon. Member wants to throw a spanner into the machinery. It is working very well and, I hope, it will continue to so work.

Mr. JACOB : It is not working very well !

The PRESIDENT : I do not think it is a question before the Council. I think the hon. Member is entitled to ask a question. The question of the Finance Committee is not before this Council.

Mr. GONSALVES : I know the Committee has worked very well. At one meeting of the Finance Committee when dealing with Public Works the hon. Member for North Western District was in the Chair and the estimates were carried without much discussion, which was very unusual.

Motion put, and unanimously adopted.

GAMBLING PREVENTION (AMENDMENT) BILL, 1947.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL : I ask leave for reasons given yesterday to defer consideration of the following Bill intituled —

"An Ordinance further to amend the Gambling Prevention Ordinance, Chapter 95, with respect to distributions thereunder to charitable organizations; and for purposes connected with the matter aforesaid".

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill deferred.

The Council adjourned *sine die*.