

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

Friday, 3rd May, 1946.

The Council met at 2 p.m. the Hon. Mr. E. G. Woolford, O.B.E., K.C., Deputy President, in the Chair.

PRESENT :

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

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

The Hon. the Attorney-General (Acting), Mr. F. W. Holder.

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

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

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

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

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

The Hon. Peer Bacchus (Western Berbice).

The Hon. T. Lee (Essequibo River).

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

The Hon. V. Roth (Nominated).

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

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

The Clerk read prayers.

The minutes of the meeting of the Council held on the 2nd May, 1946, as printed and circulated, were taken as read and confirmed.

ANNOUNCEMENTS.

GENERAL ELECTIONS ARRANGEMENTS.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: Mr. Deputy President, I would like to take this opportunity to inform the Council of the steps taken in regard to the General Elections. It is considered desirable that this Legislative Council should be informed of the steps which have already been taken in connection with the General Elections under the Legislative Council (Elections) Ordinance 1945 and Regulations made thereunder.

Mr. J. H. S. McCowan has been appointed Elections Officer. His duties will be to superintend all arrangements subject to the approval of the Governor in respect to the General Elections.

The Elections Officer has studied the Ordinance and the Regulations, and machinery has been set in motion as regards—

- (a) the appointment of Registering, Revising and Returning Officers under the Ordinance;
- (b) the printing of Forms of Claims for the registration of voters.

Proofs of these forms are ready and have been checked. The form of claim is now ready for printing.

- (c) A form of receipt by the Registering Officer of claims received has been prepared and is ready for printing.
- (d) An estimate of the required number of forms of claims based on the Census Returns is between 80,000 to 90,000 and a corresponding number of receipt forms will be prepared.

Registering Officers will be appointed by the 15th May, 1946. It is proposed to appoint the District Commissioners, who have been appointed as such officers since 1938 and who have offices already established in each Electoral District. Revising officers, who under Section 8 (1) of the Ordinance must be a Barrister or Solicitor, will commence to hold Revising Courts any time after the 31st August, 1946.

It is proposed that the Returning Officers for the Elections shall also be the Magistrates with offices in the District and they will have power to appoint presiding officers for each polling station.

It is proposed to introduce legislation to allow members of His Majesty's Forces who have been serving overseas to register their claims as if they resided in the District during the qualifying period, if they are otherwise qualified.

It is proposed to conduct a publicity campaign through the B.P.I. by means of communiques in the press and radio talks, and to instruct the public as to the registration of claims. Every possible means will be utilised in order to ensure the maximum amount of publicity.

With regard to the Electoral Districts a Committee under the chairmanship of the Deputy President was appointed by His Excellency the Governor to consider the Electoral Districts as at present defined and to advise

- (a) in respect of any alteration of their boundaries.
- (b) with regard to any change in the redistribution of the number of seats for electoral districts.

The Committee have held *four* meetings. At the last meeting on the 10th April it was suggested that the submission of a report should be postponed until certain census information was available. It is hoped that a report on the question will be submitted shortly. I only wish to add that Government is taking every possible step

to see that the Elections are held as early as possible. The question of Polling Stations will be dealt with later.

GOVERNMENT NOTICE

LEAVE PASSAGES

The COLONIAL SECRETARY gave notice of the following motion:—

That this Council approves of the adoption of the Report of the Leave Passages Committee—

UNOFFICIAL NOTICE

EXTENSION OF GOVERNOR'S TERM

Mr. EDUN gave notice of the following motion:—

WHEREAS it is within the knowledge of this Honourable Legislative Council of British Guiana that His Excellency the Governor Sir Gordon Lethem, will soon be taking his departure from the Colony aforesaid;

AND WHEREAS the general community are loud in their sincere expressions of deep appreciation of the sterling value of the services which, as Governor and Commander-in-Chief in and over the Colony aforesaid, His Excellency has very unflinchingly rendered its people in multiple ways:

AND WHEREAS it is felt that desirable plans for the steady growth and proper developmental promotion, progress and security of the aforesaid Colony could only be best achieved by retention of Sir Gordon's practical and influential services to that end, for another such term:

BE IT RESOLVED that this Honourable Legislative Council be pleased to put on record its similar expression of public appreciation and, having proper regard to what is set out in Colonial Regulation 3A, Chapter 11, anent the appointment of Governors to Colonial Possessions, this Honourable Legislative Council be also pleased to request of His Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for the Colonies that Sir Gordon be permitted to continue another such term in the said and such capacity.

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy and/or the text of this Resolution be transmitted with the least possible delay to His Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for the Colonies for his early and favourable attention.

ORDER OF THE DAY.

SEAWORTHINESS OF S.S. "BASRA"

Mr. ROTH asked, and the COLONIAL SECRETARY replied to the following questions:—

Q1:— Is Government aware that a prominent section of the public is apprehensive of travelling on the steamer "Basra"?

A— No complaint as to the seaworthiness of the s.s. "Basra" has been received by the Transport and Harbours Department.

Q2:— Is Government satisfied that the said steamer is seaworthy?

A— See answer to question 5 below.

Q3:— Has the said steamer been surveyed by Lloyds?

A— No.

Q4:— If so, when, and what was the report thereon?

A— See answer to question 3 above.

Q5:— If the answer to 3 is in the negative, will Government, in the interests of public safety, take steps to see that the said steamer is so surveyed?

A— Surveys are only carried out by Lloyds' Surveyors on those ships listed in Lloyds' Register of Shipping. None of our ships are so registered.

However, in view of the terms of the enquiry a survey has been carried out by the Government Surveyor of Ships who has rendered a report indicating repairs, which when complete, he considers will enable this vessel to continue in passenger and cargo service.

TAX (AMENDMENT) (NO. 2) BILL

A Bill intituled "An Ordinance to amend the Tax Ordinance with respect to the annual duty payable by a person or company, or the agent of a person or company, carrying on accident insurance business."

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: Mr. Deputy President, the object of this Bill, as hon. Members will see from the "Objects and Reasons" appended to the Bill, is—

"To empower the Governor in Council to grant exemption from the payment of the duties payable under subsections (2) and (3) of the Tax Ordinance, 1939, by accident insurance companies, where the issue of policies insuring passengers carried by aircraft against personal injury is the only form of business done. It has been represented to Government that insurance coverage to intending passengers at very economical rates are obtainable from agents of companies which issue only such limited accident policies in the Colony. The payment of the duties (\$1,000 and \$250 annually respectively) under the abovementioned subsections would make impossible the offer of such coverage to intending passengers. As it is considered beneficial to the public that personal accident insurance at low rates should be available in the case of travel by air, Government proposes to seek "an amendment of the law with respect to the duties payable by insurers."

The relative section of the Tax Ordinance, 1939, subsection (3) reads as follows:—

"(3) Every person or company who acts as the agent of a person or company carrying on any fire and accident insurance business or any fire or accident insurance business in the Colony shall take out an annual licence and shall pay a duty of two hundred and fifty dollars."

Then will follow the proviso which appears in clause 2 of the Bill now before the Council:

"Provided that where a person or company in his or its own right, or as the agent of another person or company, carries on in the Colony any accident insurance business consisting solely of

insuring against death or personal injury passengers while being carried by aircraft from or to the Colony, the Governor in Council may if he considers that the premium rates for such insurance offered to the public are reasonably low in all the circumstances, grant that person or company exemption from the payment of the duties payable under subsections (2) and (3) of this section."

Subsection (2) of section 15 of the Ordinance reads:

"(2) Every person or company carrying on any fire and accident insurance business in the Colony shall take out an annual licence and shall pay a duty of one thousand dollars."

The Bill does not deal with the case of any specific company, but generally with the question of exception in all probable cases and seeks to give the Governor in Council power to grant exemption from the tax whenever the Governor in Council thinks fit. I do not think there is very much more to add in connection with the objects of the Bill, and I beg to move that this Bill be read a second time.

The COLONIAL TREASURER seconded.

Mr. ROTH: I notice that this privilege only applies to insurance in respect of passengers travelling to and from the Colony by aircraft. Why not include those travelling in the Colony? You can be killed also within the limits of the Colony while travelling by aircraft. I ask Government to see its way to include "within the Colony."

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: I will ask the hon. Mover why travelling in the Colony is excluded. Perhaps, the companies concerned are not prepared to take the risk.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: The position is, the B.G. Airways Co. made representation in connection with this matter and this Bill follows along the line of the representation made. They pointed out that they were in a position to offer insurance to passengers trav-

elling on commercial routes. Any policy issued by the B.G. Airways is limited to its lines and advantage of those lines is taken in all the Islands in which the Company presently operate. No requirement for the holding of licences for the issue of such a policy exists anywhere. Therefore the Company pointed out:

"We do not find ourselves being able to offer the travelling public the advantage of these low rates owing to the fact that they have to be uniform. Before we would be permitted to offer such insurance to the public it is necessary to be in possession of licences costing \$250."

In view of the lowness of the rates involved being not adequately overcome by the premiums likely to be earned and of their request, there is no possibility for such a policy. I see the point the hon. Member is making. I do not know if the hon. the Colonial Treasurer can say anything about it.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: The original application or proposal came from the source which the hon. the Attorney-General stated, on behalf of the B.W.I. Airways who are primarily concerned with travelling outside the Colony. The criticism of the hon. Member is quite correct. Since the B.G. Airways are actually the agents of the B.W.I. Airways, it is conceivable that in the near future they themselves will get a coverage policy in London also and wish to take advantage of the opportunity of offering passengers in the Colony air coverage. I suggest to the hon. the Attorney-General that he may accept an amendment in the sense suggested by the hon. Nominated Member, Mr. Roth, so as to make it cover insurance within the Colony as well as outside the Colony.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

COUNCIL IN COMMITTEE

The Council resolved itself into Committee to consider the Bill clause by clause,

Clause 2—*Addition of proviso exempting from duty.*

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: Mr. Deputy President, the hon. Member has raised the point as to the insurance cover for passengers travelling by air in the Colony. The hon. the Colonial Treasurer will be able to clear this point because we do not know how far this will affect any amendments which have been arrived at between the B.G. Airways and lives or the B.W.I. Airways and lives.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: The position at the present is this: There is in existence a general policy taken by the Crown Agents. Under that policy Public Officers are able to insure themselves with the Treasury against accident from flights, and the insurance can be in respect of flights on B.G. Airways or any plane on a recognized air route. That is only applicable to Public Officers. It may be that the B.G. Airways like the B.W.I. Airways may care to take out a general policy and when issuing a ticket to a passenger insure him. That is the normal position now. You buy an airplane ticket and for a small payment you buy an insurance coupon to cover yourself. That the B.W.I. Airways can do now. The B.G. Airways may wish to do the same thing. It is quite simple. All the Company have to do is to apply the rate, give certain particulars, give certain approximate premiums or undertake to pay the premiums paid by each passenger.

The CHAIRMAN: When the opportunity does arise they will take out the licence.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: In view of the explanation I move the following amendments to the proviso:

(a) the deletion of the comma after the word "injury" in the fourth line; and

(b) the insertion of the words "within the Colony or" between the words "aircraft" and "fresh" in the fifth line.

Question put, and agreed to.

Clause passed as amended.

The Council resumed.

On the motion of the ATTORNEY-GENERAL seconded by Mr. CRITCHLOW the Bill was read a third time and passed.

ADDITIONAL PROVISION FOR DECEMBER, 1945

The COLONIAL TREASURER: I beg to move:—

That this Council approves of the Schedule of Additional Provision for December, 1945, which has been laid on the table.

It is a very small schedule of only two items. In respect of these excesses His Excellency the Governor issued his warrant approving of them. I hardly think it is necessary to go into Committee for their consideration. We can deal with them in Council. The first item is in relation to the statutory refunds of revenue—Income Tax, \$240,000. The amount has to be paid. The second item is in relation to Colonial Development and Welfare Schemes commenced last year and authorized by the Governor. I trust it is not necessary to go into Committee on this particular schedule, and I ask that the motion be put at once.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY seconded.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Does the Council agree to that? There are only two items. As there is no objection I will put the motion.

Motion put, and agreed to.

ADDITIONAL PROVISION FOR APRIL, 1946

The COLONIAL TREASURER: I beg to move that the Council resolve itself into Committee to consider the

items of the Schedule of Additional Provision for April, 1946.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY seconded.

Council in Committee.

CUSTOMS.

Item n—Boats' Crews—1 Engineer (\$480 x \$30 — \$600), *8 Guards—Class II*—(\$480 x \$30 — \$600), *7 Guards — Class III* = (\$360 x \$24 — \$480)—\$1,200.

Mr. de AGUIAR: I would like to enquire whether these posts are regarded as supernumerary, in view of the special circumstances of the particular vote. This vote provides for addition to certain services in view of circumstances existing at the present moment. I would like to be told whether these posts are regarded as supernumerary, and be abolished as soon as the existing circumstances disappear.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I cannot give any guarantee that the posts will be abolished.

Mr. de AGUIAR: I will not oppose the item but I am a little disappointed that I cannot get something in the nature of an undertaking. I will keep my eyes upon it on the next occasion.

MEDICAL

Item (22a)—Personal allowance to Dr. Glavina, \$1,440.

Mr. LEE: I would like to know whether this allowance was given to the previous Medical Superintendent. I understand from my friend on my left that there was no post of Superintendent of the Georgetown Hospital. I was always under the impression that there was such a post. If there was no such post why are we creating one now by giving a personal allowance? I thought the post was created some time ago.

The CHAIRMAN: Dr. Glavina is the Medical Superintendent. It is a new post.

Mr. LEE: If Dr. Glavina still holds the post why is he being given a personal allowance of £100? The explanatory note says:

“To provide for payment of a personal allowance at the rate of \$480 p.a. with effect from 1/1/44 to the Medical Superintendent, Georgetown Hospital, on account of the responsibility attached to the post.”

Were the conditions attached to the post not debated in this Council and known to members of the medical profession? I consider this another way of increasing expenditure. If Government knew that the post was worth a higher salary the Council should have been told so at the time, and not asked now to provide a personal allowance to the officer.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I will ease the hon. Member's mind by telling him that it is not a question of the post at all. If we altered the salary of the post we would have to review all the salaries of the Medical Department. There were peculiar circumstances attached to the filling of the post. Dr. Glavina was in a post in New Amsterdam which he did not want to leave, but we badly wanted his services in Georgetown, and the D.M.S. persuaded him to accept the post on the definite promise that his transfer to Georgetown would entail an increase of salary and increased prospects of promotion. On that promise he accepted the post. Circumstances changed, however, and two months after he accepted the transfer to Georgetown the post of Surgeon, New Amsterdam Hospital, which he previously held, was improved in the general review of salaries, and he was then placed in the position of having left his post in New Amsterdam, the salary of which was raised to that of the post to which he came to Georgetown under protest. Moreover, the post in Georgetown involves greater responsibility, is more exacting, and a much more difficult job.

Dr. Glavina has given many years of very good service in British Guiana. There are occasions when an officer has reached a period when he can no longer hope for a transfer on promotion. Having given good service, he is regarded by the Secretary of State as peculiarly suitable for consideration for the grant of a personal allowance. It is the practice of Colonial Governments, well supported by the Secretary of State for the Colonies, and in this particular case I can show the hon. Member the despatch from the Secretary of State on the subject. The Secretary of State has approved, subject to the concurrence of this Council, of the grant of a personal allowance to Dr. Glavina, and he would not have so approved if the case had not well merited it. It is a peculiar case. It is not a question of the post being worth it. If we alter the salary of the post it would mean a complete review of all the salaries of the Medical staff, and hon. Members would not want to sit here and do that again. We must do justice to the officer, and in the circumstances I do ask hon. Members to meet Government in that. They should have confidence in the Governor and the Secretary of State, that they would not recommend a personal allowance if it were not deserving. I do not know whether the Colonial Treasurer would like to add some facts which I have not mentioned, but from my own recollection those are the reasons why this personal allowance is recommended to the Council.

Mr. LEE: Was the officer promised an allowance of £100 on the old salary of the post, or on the new salary?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I should explain that when the post was offered to the Surgeon in New Amsterdam the post in Georgetown carried a higher salary—£1,000 a year. Dr. Glavina was drawing less salary in New Amsterdam, so that it was in effect promotion when he accepted the post in Georgetown. Two months later the salary of the post he left was increased

to £1,000 a year also, so that his promotion was null and void, and as he preferred to be in New Amsterdam he naturally felt it was rather hard on him.

Mr. LEE: What I am trying to find out is whether the salary of the Medical Superintendent in Georgetown was £1,000 a year, and subsequently the salary of the post in New Amsterdam was raised to the same figure; When Dr. Glavina was offered the post in Georgetown at £1,000, there was then no question of giving him a personal allowance.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: No.

Mr. LEE: It is since the salary of the New Amsterdam post was raised to £1,000 that Government considered that he is entitled to another £100.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: The point is that we gave a definite guarantee that if he took the post in Georgetown it would be promotion for him, and it was promotion at the time he accepted it, because the salary was £1,000 and the salary of the New Amsterdam post was less. He has come to a post which he does not particularly want, leaving one which he particularly enjoys to find, two months after, that if he had not accepted the transfer at the personal request of the D.M.S. he would have been just as well off where he was.

Mr. AUSTIN: One is sorry to see that this pernicious system still obtains whereby a medical officer can tell Government that he is not going to leave his post for another.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: He did not say that. Dr. Glavina would never say a thing like that. He is a very fine officer who would go where he is told, but he pointed out that he did not want to go but was induced to go in good faith, because he thought he was getting promotion. There was no question of refusal.

Mr. AUSTIN: What I was trying to explain is that it has arisen in this Colony over and over again that doctors would not take orders from Government. A doctor says "I am placed at Port Mourant and I am staying there," and he cannot be removed. An undertaking was given in this Council that that sort of thing would not continue any longer, but, apparently, there is a doctor who has asked for increased emoluments because he had an easy post in a certain district and does not want to work hard in another district. Dr. Glavina's arrival in Georgetown has made the Hospital no happier for the people who go there. Complaints are frequently heard, and one would like to give an additional sum to an officer who merits it. I venture to think that instead of being improved, conditions at the Georgetown Hospital have become worse. In the circumstances, although it has been recommended by His Excellency and the Secretary of State, I think it is asking too much of this Council to consider an item of this sort before some real improvement is noticeable in the conditions at the Georgetown Hospital.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I would like to say in reply to the hon. member that Dr. Glavina is only human. He has done an enormous amount of work in improving the administration of the Hospital, but a lot more has to be done. I do not accept the suggestion that since his arrival conditions have got worse. I am about to suggest the appointment of a Committee to see what improvements can be made. Dr. Glavina is at present on leave, but the Director of Medical Services informs me that he has done immeasurably good work in keeping the Hospital going. I entirely refute the suggestion that conditions have become worse. I cannot speak too highly of this officer. I have had personal experience of his work.

As regards medical officers' refusal to move, the hon. Member knows far

more than I do, but I can promise him that as private practice is abolished that difficulty will also be removed. Medical officers who are entitled to private practice may still say "I do not want to go," and Government may still have difficulty in forcing them to go, but as they retire or take on new conditions which do not include private practice, that question will not arise, and the position will be greatly improved. It is not a strange thing in this Colony; I have met it in another Colony. Where a district provides a doctor with good private practice he naturally clings to it like a leech. I hope the Council will accept my assurance. We are trying to remove this very objectionable feature in the posting of medical officers, but we cannot do every thing in a day.

Mr. EDUN: I would like to take the assurance of the Colonial Secretary as regards the efficiency of the Medical Service.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I say that in the case of this particular officer.

Mr. EDUN: I am not at all happy about the Service. Instead of efficiency I see deterioration. I am reminded in this case of the perpetual anomalies which come before this Council for adjustment on every supplementary estimate. This is one of them, and as a creole I remember the proverb "One one brick build dam."

The CHAIRMAN: I think the actual expression is "One one dutty build dam."

Mr. EDUN: In the case of Dr. Ho we did some bungling of affairs. I am not happy about our finances. I have always felt that we should wait until the Economic Adviser discloses what is our financial position before we begin to give money away like this. In this case I do not think this allowance is merited, because I know that other doctors would be asking for similar treatment.

Mr. LEE: I cannot agree to the principle adopted by Government of promising an officer an allowance and asking this Council to ratify it. I desire to record my protest against such a procedure. I am not challenging the integrity or the service rendered by this officer, but if he had superintended the Hospital in a proper manner I would not have had the complaints I have had from my constituency. A girl of 16 was sent by the Medical Officer of the district to the Georgetown Hospital suffering with swollen tonsils, and recommended for an operation. The Surgeon at the Public Hospital, after examining the patient, said it was a case for the Nose, Ear and Throat Specialist. There was no such Specialist at the Hospital at the time, and I cannot imagine that the Surgeon was not capable to perform the operation. I think the patient remained in hospital for about three weeks but nothing was done for her. In the face of that can it be said that the efficiency of the Hospital is being maintained by the Medical Superintendent?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: The question of operations has nothing to do with the Medical Superintendent, and I must ask the hon. Member to keep to the point, whether we should grant Dr. Glavina this personal allowance. The question of an operation on a child's tonsils has nothing whatever to do with it. It is not within his province in any respect. The Medical Superintendent is responsible for the discipline of the doctors, the organization of the Wards, and the whole conduct of the Hospital, but cannot instruct the Surgeon to perform an operation.

Mr. LEE: There is still the feeling that patients go to the Hospital and cannot get proper treatment, and that colonists pay for the upkeep of the Hospital. The number of out-patients cannot be treated by one medical officer in the course of a day, yet we are told that the Hospital is being run in an efficient manner.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: How can we possibly lay the blame for that on Dr. Glavina? I will take the blame. (laughter). It has nothing to do with Dr. Glavina.

Mr. LEE: This allowance of £100 should not have been promised by Government because the institution is not being properly run. It may not be the fault of the Superintendent but Government's fault, and it should be brought to Government's notice. That is what I am trying to do.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: It has been an interesting discussion. I know a good deal about hospitals. I have spent 12 months in a hospital and have had 14 operations, and I know what I am talking about. I know a good deal about medical administration too. The hon. Member is quite right in saying that people go to the Hospital and are turned away. I have just put up a proposal to the Governor for decentralization. In my opinion the Hospital administration should not be confined to Georgetown. Cases should be treated in the country districts under the cottage hospital system, and now that we have our ambulance service very greatly strengthened we should be able, I hope, eventually to select far more carefully cases brought to the Georgetown Hospital. I hope that the hon. Member will be satisfied before I leave this Colony. I will do my best.

Mr. PEER BACCHUS: I do not think I can support this item. I have a recollection that an undertaking was given by Government that all personal allowances would be abolished. In fact that decision was made on the occasion of the revision of salaries. On the facts narrated by the hon. the Colonial Secretary it is clear that Dr. Glavina took a chance. He was transferred on promotion, and whether two months or two years after the salary of the post he left

was increased to that of his new post, the fact remains that at the time of his transfer it was promotion. In fact he has suffered no loss because he is getting the same salary he would eventually have got had he remained in New Amsterdam.

Mr. AUSTIN: In regard to the remarks by the hon. the Colonial Secretary about Government officers staying in their posts, I would like to mention that His Excellency's predecessors have indicated very clearly in this Council that a Government officer is at the disposal of the Government and can be transferred to any post. That policy is not being carried out. The older Members of the Council know that Government Medical Officers enjoying private practice have been removed from their districts only to act as Surgeon General. Other than that nothing could move them from their districts because they secured handsome sums by way of private practice. I do not think it should go on record that it is difficult to remove a Government Medical Officer when he receives private practice in a district.

Mr. PERCY C. WIGHT: Will this £100 be personal to Dr. Glavina or will it go to any other medical officer filling the post in future?

The CHAIRMAN: The salary of the post remains at £1,000 a year.

Mr. WIGHT: I observe that Dr. Glavina is to be given back pay for three years. I happen to know the officer and I am perfectly satisfied that he is worth this allowance. I am also satisfied that Government will not get medical men to come to this Colony for £1,000 a year. Hon. Members had better make up their minds to give the officer this personal allowance.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. Mr. Austin is always quite consistent about these medical men, especially those in

the country districts, clinging to their posts and refusing to be transferred to other districts. I do not think that can be said to be so in the case of Dr. Glavina.

Mr. AUSTIN: I did not intend that.

The CHAIRMAN: It is not the case of a man who was offered promotion and was not inclined to accept it. Owing to his desire to serve Government this Officer accepted the post. If he had done like the other Medical Officers he would have remained in Berbice and so earned the £100.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: The hon. Member for Western Berbice said there was some undertaking on the part of the Government not to grant personal allowances in future. I cannot remember any such undertaking. There was a general intention to abandon the various kinds of allowances in so far as they appear on the Estimates—duty and station allowances of all kinds which go to make up the emoluments of Public Officers—or to whittle them down to a uniform basis, but at the same time no undertaking was given. It has happened over and over again that some Officers of long standing in a post with the same salary for many years is well worthy of more remuneration, but the Council does not wish to increase the salary of the post and he is rewarded by giving him a personal allowance. That is something you cannot rule void altogether forever more.

Question put, and agreed to.

Item passed.

MISCELLANEOUS

Item. — Assistance to ex-Servicemen \$10,000.

Mr. EDUN: On this question of re-settlement of Returned Soldiers, I just want to warn Government about

this idea of re-settlement. The experience of the past was a bitter one indeed. I remember well the Re-Settlement Scheme at Pln. Friendship on the East Bank, Demerara, for ex-soldiers after the first World War. The land is still there, but the majority of the ex-soldiers have gone to their fathers and there is no scheme. The Re-Settlement Committee ought to take great care when they set about to help these men. In my own work I have been able to contact the ex-soldiers between the two wars, and everyone of those men with whom I made contact was a disappointed man. I have met one or two of the present returned soldiers again, and there are bitter complaints going around about discrimination in the Re-Settlement Scheme. I want to warn Government to take great care to treat everyone in the best humanly possible way it can. It is no good our asking these men to go abroad to give service to the Nation, and when they return after a few years they become disgruntled and disappointed. For that reason I would be very generous to them. I would vote more money than \$10,000, but I do hope that whatever scheme should be made on their behalf it would be a practical thing which would give them the assistance needed.

POOR.

Item—*Grant to Dharma Sala*, \$250.

Mr. EDUN: Government should give a larger sum. I think the time has come when Government will have to take over the Dharam Sala.

Mr. deAGUIAR: My question is in a different form. I would like to know when Government began to give grants to this institution. I speak subject to correction. I think we started with \$750 some years ago and then it went to \$1,250. Now it is proposed to add another \$250. I have not gone into the merits or demerits of the matter; but what strikes me as peculiar is the

piecemeal way in which this Council is being approached in granting contributions to this institution. The increase may be meritorious but, I think, before we make a grant of this kind this Council ought to be told a little more about the work which is being carried on there. I believe some sort of society runs this institution. My main objection is that I do not like the way in which this particular item keeps coming up every once in a while, and what is worse it comes up in the intervals after it had come up at the annual session. I think votes of this kind should come up when the Council is considering the Annual Estimates as we will then have the whole picture, and if questions are asked we may be able to obtain the answers we seek. I do not think it is fair to approach the hon. the Colonial Treasurer at this stage and ask him some of the questions that occur to me. I do not think matters of this kind should come up in Supplementary Estimates. I am going to suggest that, perhaps, the item may be deferred until we meet in Annual Session, so that we can see the whole picture and obtain proper explanation.

I believe this institution is doing very good work. I think this society is running one of these institutions in New Amsterdam, Berbice. I have a recollection that when that was started this Council was approached, and it was stated then that on account of the work done in Berbice we should increase the grant. I do not like this infiltration. I do not like this gradual approach to this thing year after year. At this time we ought to have an item like this at the consideration of the Annual Estimates. For example, we give contributions to other organisations then. I am not in a position at this stage to know how the whole picture appears. I am going to suggest that this item be deleted and brought back on the Annual Estimates.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: I agree that items of this nature should come up on the Annual Estimates, but we all do appear to have a short memory on this question. Only two years ago I moved in this Council a Bill, which is now Ordinance No. 12 of 1943, called the Hindu Religious Society Incorporation Bill, 1943, and explained then that this Dharma Sala is run by that Society and is assisted by Government. Claims were put forward for more assistance and I advised that before it became a regular feature proper steps be taken to vest the property of that institution under a proper Trust Law of the Colony. That has been done and it was done as a sort of condition under which this Council would vote money for the support of the institution. The property is vested in Trustees and, what is more, the grants are made to the institution on the condition of the submission of properly audited statements periodically and of inspection by public officers. I am surprised myself to hear any criticism of what is going on there. I have taken the trouble to visit that institution more than once and I am perfectly satisfied that it is doing good work and that the Founder and Manager of it at the present time is rendering very valuable services to the community. I feel sure it is a sort of overflow for the Government Alms House. Were it not in existence the cost of our Poor Relief work would be very much higher than it is.

I entirely realize that what the hon. Member calls infiltration might result in a further increase every other year or so, but we have to remember this: I recall the time when the hon. Member adopted a similar attitude towards another institution of this Colony. I refer to the Bishops' High School for Girls. There were violent criticisms when it was run by private enterprise, and the result was it had to be taken over by Government and run at a cost

five times the grant given. I would never like to think this institution would be taken over by Government. This religious body makes it a prominent feature of its work and hopes faithfully to continue it on the same lines as now—voluntary service to the poor. I cannot see my way to agree with the hon. Member that \$1,500 is too much to pay for the kind of work that is being done at the Dharam Sala.

Mr. EDUN: Perhaps the hon. Member for Central Demerara has actually read my mind. This is the wrong way to get money for charity. It can be abused. Anybody can go to the Governor or the Colonial Secretary, or the Colonial Treasurer and ask for \$250 and it will be brought up in a supplementary estimate. It is a very wrong procedure. I remember when His Excellency the Governor from that very seat told the public of this Colony that they ought to support from their pockets the Tuberculosis Society, a society that is doing great humanitarian service to the people of this Colony. I am not an unbeliever in the impoverishment of our people by the provision of Alms Houses and Charity Homes scattered everywhere in this Colony. I want to see cottage industries here, there and everywhere and to see money being spent in that direction making the people self-respecting instead of giving charity. I am opposed to this kind of thing coming to the Council in this indirect manner. I remember well when the Hindu Society Bill was passed; I gave it my support. The Society is now on a proper footing, and, I understand, its accounts are being audited and published. All those things are good in themselves. So also is the Tuberculosis Society; if it is deserving of assistance by all means give it.

I think the people of this Colony should be more charitable and put their hands deep in their pockets and support this Society. I think the Pundit, who is

hard working, can easily collect \$250 for that work. I would support it in the Annual Estimates at the end of the year, but at this stage the procedure is wrong in principle. I will not agree with the hon. the Colonial Treasurer, though people may say I am against the Dharam Sala speaking like this. It does not matter one whit to me. If you look at the Budget you would see that the amount for Old Age Pensions is creeping up by leaps and bounds. Every week I write out applications in the interest of poor people seeking Poor Law relief. Where will it all end? I am a charitable person myself, and I give charity. If the Pundit comes to me and I can afford it he would certainly get a contribution, but this is something involving more than \$250. I know one or two things of this country. I do not want to say them, as I do not want to hurt the susceptibilities of people all the time. As a Member of this Council I want to protect the finances of the Colony, and for that reason let us take out the item and give the Society more at the Annual Session.

Mr. CRITCHLOW: I want to support the hon. the Colonial Treasurer. I believe the circumstances of this case are unfortunate. If the workers are earning a certain amount and subsidization is removed they would have to apply to their employers for an increase of wages. The Pundit has every right to appeal for some more money to help the poor people. I heartily support the item. I believe the application was for a larger sum, but after consideration this amount was decided on. I hope Members would withdraw their opposition. It is to assist the unfortunate poor people. We know it is necessary because the cost of living is much higher than formerly. I heartily support the item.

Mr. THOMPSON: I heartily support this item. I think the Pundit has been doing good work. What I contend about is the piecemeal fashion in which this matter is being done. What is to prevent the Pundit coming back in the next three months and asking for an

increase? We should make sure that this Society produces a proper statement, and let us have a definite sum before us at the proper time. Coming up now and again for these small amounts, it does not make pleasant reading. The Pundit does not only depend on this grant; he goes around the country himself and solicits assistance. As the hon. the Colonial Treasurer has said, the Dharam Sala is a means of keeping many persons in ease and comfort who do not find themselves in the Alms House. So I am out to support this item, but I do hope we will not have it coming up now and again.

The CHAIRMAN: I have no doubt that the Pundit expects that the application will be scrutinized. The hon. the Colonial Treasurer has said it is unusual and he does not himself agree with it. There must be, however, some great necessity for it. I do not know the activities of the Society. I do not know whether the hon. Member for Berbice River understands it. I think part of the Pundit's difficulties has been the cost of the erection of a mansion in Berbice near to the Canje Creek. Very few East Indians are there and the place is almost empty. He must have spent a considerable sum of money on it. I hope Berbice will not reach that position when that building will be filled. I hope it will remain empty.

Mr. de AGUIAR: I would like to say that I still feel the point made by the hon. Nominated Member and myself has not been thoroughly answered, and I am sorry I will probably have to press for the opinion of the Council as to whether this item should be carried or not. I do know that very good work is being done by the Society, but applications of this kind should come before the Council at the proper time so that certain questions could be asked and the answers given. The hon. Nominated Member, Mr. Edun,—I would like to remind him—just now referred to accounts being published. I know they are not published. That rather makes it a little more difficult to speak on this

question. If the hon. Member thought they were being published, I would like to remove that from his mind. They are not actually published. We do know the Pundit is doing good work but the nature and the extent of the work, I do not think, are within the knowledge of the average persons around and about. If you visit the institution you would see what goes on, but I do not think that is enough for us to continue increasing this vote. This vote is being increased too regularly. That is my complaint. Applications are coming in and Government takes a sympathetic view of them. If I understand the hon. the Colonial Treasurer correctly, it seems to me that the Government's view is that it is cheap at the price of \$1,500. Well, sir, I certainly cannot accept that view at all. I think the position should be more carefully examined. I am going to urge that it should come up again at the proper time.

Mr. PEER BACCHUS: Sir, I myself would like to have a little more information about this matter. We have just entered the fifth month of the year, and it would appear that the grant of \$1,250 has been already exhausted and this Society wants another \$250 to balance its budget to when—the end of May or June or to the end of the year? If that is so, I think it is very early in the year to anticipate a deficit.

The CHAIRMAN: There must be some reason for it. I suggest to hon. Members to pass the item.

Mr. EDUN: I suggest that it be deferred.

The CHAIRMAN: If the hon. Member makes a motion that it be deleted I would put the question. As it stands now, Government does not propose to allow it to be deferred. The hon. Member can make a motion for its deletion.

Mr. de AGUIAR: I regret you are forcing me to do something I do not like. In view of the remarks made I must move formally that the item be deleted.

Question put, and the Committee divided, the voting being as follows:—

For: Messrs. Edun, Peer Bacchus and de Aguiar—3.

Against: Messrs Thompson, Ferreira, Roth, Percy C. Wight, Austin, Critchlow, the Colonial Treasurer, the Attorney-General and the Colonial Secretary—9.

Motion negatived.

The CHAIRMAN: The item will therefore remain on the Estimate.

POST OFFICE—TELECOMMUNICATIONS & ELECTRICAL INSPECTORS' BRANCH.

Item I (3)—3 *Inspectors* (\$2,040 x \$120—\$2,400), \$600.

Mr. de AGUIAR: I observe from the explanatory note that this increase is to provide for two posts of Inspectors on the scale \$2,040 x \$120—2,400 vice 2 Assistant Electrical Inspectors on the scale \$1,440 x \$120—\$2,040, with effect from January, 1946, in order to improve the salaries of the Telecommunications Engineering staff. Am I to understand that the posts of two Assistant Electrical Inspectors will be abolished and those of two Inspectors created? I have risen merely to point out to Government that I do not think such an arrangement will remedy the situation which we know exists. I think that in this country we pay very little attention to electrical inspections, and although there has not been very clear evidence we know that dangers do exist. I am wondering whether Government will not consider the appointment of some Assistant Inspectors in order to facilitate the work to be done. There is a lot of work to be done and there is a great deal of danger. I would like to see the service improved and some of the dangers removed.

It has come to my notice that there is no delivery of letters at Ogle front, and I think it is a matter which should be looked into.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: The hon. Member is quite right as regards electrical inspections which Government has in mind. The position is that a senior officer, Major Manly, had been seconded to the local defence Forces. Now that he has returned to his post I think the work will be increased. There has been serious danger of fire in Georgetown and New Amsterdam, and efforts will be made to see what can be done to improve the whole service.

Item agreed to.

PRISONS.

Item I (a.a.)—*Deputy Superintendent of prison* (\$2,400 x \$120—\$3,120), \$600.

Mr. EDUN: Am I to understand that there is a prevalence of crime; that there are more prisoners than usual, and that on that account the post of Deputy Superintendent of Prisons is necessary? Can we not do without it?

The COLONIAL TREASURER: This is merely a change of title. As hon. Members know, the post was filled by a supernumerary up to quite recently, and a new appointment was made. Mr. St. Aubyn, who has been transferred back from British Honduras, has filled the post. I think it was to facilitate his transfer that it was decided to put before the Council a proposal that the salary of the post be increased and the officer given the proper status of Deputy Superintendent.

Item agreed to.

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT.

Item I (21a)—*Field Auditor* (\$1,920 x \$120—\$2,400), \$1,020.

Mr. EDUN: I regret that the Chairman of the Advisory Committee is not here. I would have liked him to answer certain things which were

brought to his attention recently in connection with the Public Works Department. If I understood that this Field Auditor would travel around the districts and scrutinize the accounts, books, and works in progress I would not hesitate to vote for this item, but I am not satisfied that the Public Works Department is functioning properly at the moment.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: May I interrupt to assure the hon. Member that that is what is intended, and that is what the title of the post implies. The officer is an internal officer, but for extraordinary purposes he will travel throughout the countryside to check and verify works in progress, the pay-sheets and the various factors that lead to difficulty and trouble in a large Department. It is the sort of thing the Department should have had done long ago. We cannot depend entirely on the Audit Department. We need a man in the Department with knowledge of what is going on at headquarters, to go into the field and examine for the Department. I feel sure that the results will be useful.

Mr. EDUN: I will accept that, but I have spent some time in watching the shifting of the senior officers in the districts. There is a sort of clique among certain senior officers, and in creating a post of this kind an officer should be appointed from outside the Department.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I would like to assure the hon. Member that the officer who is likely to fill this post will be appointed from outside.

Mr. EDUN: I accept that.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: I may explain further that the decision to approach the Council was made some time ago, but Government would not come forward with a supplementary estimate until we were perfectly sure that a suit-

able officer could be found and from outside the Department. The officer selected will be one drawn from the Audit Department.

Mr. EDUN: I accept that and I will vote for it.

Mr. PERCY C. WIGHT: I can assure the last speaker that this appointment is absolutely necessary. It will be found that a test check is the only sure preventive against fraud. We have been at this matter for a considerable time; and we are very glad indeed to see this item on this estimate. I think the appointment will serve a very useful purpose.

Mr. THOMPSON: I agree that it will serve a useful purpose, and I think it has been long overdue. I do not think it is fair to let it go out that senior officers of the Department are in league with thugs. I cannot think for a moment that a senior officer would be mixed up with acts which are unsavoury, and I do not think such a suggestion should go unchallenged.

Mr. EDUN: I do not want to raise a controversy, but in view of the facts at my disposal I will not withdraw my statement at all.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: I do not accept the implications on the senior officers at all. I appreciate that in making an appointment of this sort it is desirable that we should take our man from outside, not because there is any inefficiency or inadequacy on the part of the staff of the Public Works Department, but because auditors are always selected from outside a Department. It is a general rule and no reflection on the Department.

Mr. THOMPSON: The whole trouble has been due to the limited number of officers. The districts are too large for one officer to supervise. If there were smaller districts or more officers many of the difficulties would be eliminated. I would not for a moment think that deliberate acts are committed by the officers.

Item agreed to.

POST OFFICE—EXTRAORDINARY.

Item 9.—*Replacement of equipment etc. destroyed by the fire, \$17,000.*

Mr. EDUN: I think I am entitled to ask the Colonial Secretary to tell this Council what has been done about the Stafford report on the fire. I think I followed that inquiry somewhat closely and there were some implications in the report which I thought Government would have brought before the Council for discussion. Like other reports, I suppose this report has been shelved and no attention will be given to it. I do not propose to say anything at the moment about the implications.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: It is perfectly true that the word "fire" appears under this particular head, but it is under Public Works Extraordinary. I can say that the report was published, but I do suggest that this is not the time and place to discuss it.

The CHAIRMAN: Any discussion of the Stafford report would not be relevant.

Mr. EDUN: I agree, but I took the opportunity to inquire what is being done.

Item agreed to.

PUBLIC WORKS—DRAINAGE, IRRIGATION AND SEA DEFENCES — EXTRAORDINARY.

Item 2E. — *Replacement and Improvement Works in "distressed" drainage areas, \$25,100.*

Mr. EDUN: There was a recent report by the Consulting Engineer, Mr. Case, on the drainage system on the West Coast, from Vreed-en-Hoop to Windsor Forest. It is an excellent report, of which I think Government is fully aware, and something ought to be

done about it now. I do not see any work being done there, and I would like to know what is happening about it.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I will make a note about it.

The Council resumed.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: I now formally move that the motion for the approval of the Schedule be adopted.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY seconded.

Motion carried.

SCHEDULE OF WORKS FROM LOAN FUNDS.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: seconded.

That this Council approves of the Schedule of Services and works to be met from funds raised under Loan Ordinance No. 5 of 1945, which has been laid on the table on 2nd May, 1946.

This is almost a formal motion. The Loan Ordinance of 1945 provides a schedule of loan works, and the items are put before Council to be approved by resolution. This, I may say, is the first batch. If Members have the schedule before them I may briefly run through them. The first item is one of \$5,000, to defray expenses of loan issue. The second item is a statutory provision of \$698,850 for the redemption of outstanding 4% bonds. The third item is one of \$600,000 which is a tentative estimate in connection with the Georgetown Replanning Scheme. The Mayor and I put our heads together and came to the conclusion that possibly the whole of that replanning scheme might cost \$600,000. That seemed to us to be the outside figure. Hon. Members will remember that in the Town Planning Ordinance it has been laid down that the Government shall bear \$200,000 of the expenditure.

Therefore it will be observed in the note that \$400,000 of the amount will be recoverable from the Georgetown Town Council.

The fourth item is \$263,702 in connection with the Georgetown Pure Water Supply Scheme, as provided for by resolution of this Council. It is, of course, a part of the cost of that scheme which is to be borne from local funds. The balance is represented by a grant of \$50,000 under the Colonial Development and Welfare Act. The fifth item is one of \$93,800 in connection with the purchase and reconditioning of the Vergenoegen estates already approved by resolution of the Council.

The sixth item — Wortmanville Housing Scheme, \$80,000—has not yet been passed by this Council, but hon. Members have been made completely aware of the whole position by His Excellency the Governor, and have been told of the progress of the scheme from time to time. The work is actually going on, and I believe the premises are nearing completion. A draft Bill has been prepared and will be put before the Council setting out the conditions under which the schemes will be managed by a Committee.

The seventh item—Purchase of Bookers Cooperage premises, \$180,000—has only just been approved by the Council. The last item—Purchase of equipment for Road Reconstruction, \$350,000—is in respect of some equipment for the road projects which are in contemplation, and has actually been indented for. This is the formal means of charging all these items to our loan account. I formally move the motion.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: seconded.

Mr. PERCY C. WIGHT: As the hon. the Attorney-General will probably be the Chairman of the Com-

missioners who will carry out the town planning scheme, I would like him to go around and see how mosquitoes are being bred on that portion of the burnt area from which the tank has been removed.

The CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much for the warning.

Schedule put and agreed to.

TRAVELLING EXPENSES FOR MEMBERS OF COUNCIL.

The next item on the Order Paper was the following motion by Mr. CRITCHLOW:—

Be it resolved that this Council is of the opinion that the reasonable travelling and subsistence expenses of Members of the Council resident outside Georgetown, incurred by them in attending meetings of the Council, or any Committee appointed by the Council or the Government, or any Statutory Board or other Body should be met from public funds;

And be it further resolved that this Council recommends to Government that the necessary funds for this purpose be provided on the estimates.

Mr. CRITCHLOW: I ask permission to amend the motion by the deletion of the words "resident outside Georgetown."

Mr. ROTH seconded.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: I think the hon. Member should have indicated his reasons for the deletion of these words from the motion. I am not making a speech about it now, except to say that if those words are deleted the effect might be that any Member who wishes to travel from the Post Office to this Council could hire a car and charge the expenses to public funds. I do not suppose that is what he intends.

Mr. CRITCHLOW: What I think is that several of us who live in Georgetown may have to travel out-

side of the City on public business and I feel that such expenses should be met from public funds.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: The amendment proposed would not meet that point of view. The mere deletion of those words would not have the effect the hon. Member intends.

Mr. ROTH: The object of the deletion of those words is that the motion should apply to all Members of the Council and not only those resident outside of Georgetown. Not all of the Members of this Council own motor cars. At least two or three use bicycles, and in wet weather some of us who live some distance away have to hire motor cars. Why should we be out-of-pocket? The matter was discussed by a small Committee of which I was a member. I made that point but it was turned down by the majority. I am glad to see that it has been brought up by the hon. mover. Why should there be any distinction made between those Members living in Georgetown and those living outside? After all it is reasonable expenses. Surely it could be left to the commonsense of the Member concerned and the certifying officer. I do not think that question need be raised.

Mr. EDUN: I am supporting the motion although I would have preferred a more comprehensive motion dealing with the amount of subsistence allowance to be given to Members of the Legislature. Quite recently Members of Parliament have increased their allowances, and it cannot be said that this Colony is so poor that it cannot afford reasonable travelling and subsistence allowances to Members of the Legislature who are giving public service practically every day of the week, not only in Council but on various Boards and Committees. I am a Member of the Land Settlement Committee of Vergenoegen and I would certainly like to visit that Settlement periodi-

cally. The travelling facilities previously afforded Members of the Council by the Transport and Harbours Department have now been withdrawn, and it will mean that every time I travel on the train on public business I will have to pay a fare. That is not good enough. I pay and I intend to pay for travelling on the trains. It is not a matter of quibbling, but little Antigua is paying its Legislators a flat rate of £10 per month, and we are in a better position than Antigua.

I would agree this is not an opportune time to move a comprehensive motion of the kind that I have suggested. Perhaps after the General Elections the new Legislature would endeavour to compensate the Members who are doing public service for the love of it. I say so without hesitation. I see the hon. Nominated Member, Mr. Austin, every day in this Council Chamber spending his valuable time in trying to assist us with his experience and knowledge, like myself. I have met Members on various Committees who have told me "I have just been to another Committee meeting." They have had no time to do their own work; it is not fair to them. If this was a country wherein we had leisurely people who can take up politics as a hobby and spend their money in doing so, it would be a different matter. We have men who are imbued with the ideal of giving service without gain or reward, and not because they are so imbued we should take advantage of their good nature and ask them to do impossible things. In my own case it is wrong to ask me to go to Vergenoegen to see that things are done there in a proper manner, and I am to pay the travelling expenses involved in doing so.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: When were the passes withdrawn?

Mr. EDUN: The end of March! That, I feel, should engage the attention of this Government. It should not be made difficult for us to serve. With these few remarks I support the motion.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: It alarms and amazes me to find that Members are not recovering their travelling expenses. Under the present procedure such travelling expenses are payable from public funds. I think the hon. Members for Berbice have collected allowances for the use of their own cars, and similarly other Members can collect reimbursement of fares paid in travelling on Government's transport system. The free passes have been withdrawn, but the rule still stands that a Member of this Council can be reimbursed all his travelling expenses made in attending meetings of this Council and of Boards. If hon. Members have omitted through lack of initiative to recover such expenses, I suggest that they should do so. What is wrong is that there is not some system by which Members can have a book of passes and on surrendering a pass with the signature of the Member he is given a travelling ticket in exchange. The Transport and Harbours Department will then be in a position to render an account to Government for payment of the money involved. A system like that was in force some years ago. Members can recover their travelling expenses.

Mr. EDUN: I agree with the hon. the Colonial Treasurer, but in my case I have been a Member for three years and I have never charged Government for any of the services I have rendered. It is true, it is very convenient for me to attend the meetings of the Legislative Council. I am thinking of the outside arrangements. Those passes were very convenient to Members of Council, and it should be told to the Transport and Harbours Department that it is a very convenient arrangement.

Mr. FERREIRA: I am supporting the motion. It was not my intention to speak on it, but in view of the remarks made on travelling I have decided to add my quota. I would like to make myself perfectly clear. When I joined this Council, it was my intention and desire to give service voluntarily. That is still my intention. I do not want, and I do not hope, to be paid for anything I do, but I do object having to pay to serve. That was never my intention. For travelling to Council meetings you will recover the expenses, but possibly there is some hesitation in the mind of the Clerk concerned. But why should Members only recover the expenses when they travel to Council meetings? When the free passes were issued to Members they travelled throughout the Services. If you represent a constituency you have a right to visit it. I visit my constituency and it costs me \$7.00 for steamer fares. That is most unreasonable. I am visiting my constituency for the purpose of seeing prevailing conditions. If I am taking an interest in the welfare of British Guiana, why should I not be permitted to travel free on the West Coast Railway or by steamer to the North West District? I do not think it is reasonable at all to expect me to pay for looking after the affairs of the country. I would like that point clarified this afternoon. I feel we should be permitted to go about the country as in the past. I do not see why Members should put their hands in their pockets and finance Government's work. It is easy to issue booklets with passes to Members which they will use and the Transport and Harbours Department collect the money from Government. Why ask Members to be inconvenienced in paying their travelling expenses and then to recover the amount from Government?

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: I think the Motion as amended will have the sympathy of Government. It is a privilege Members had for many years. Especially in the case of the hon. Nominated Member, he is entitled to think when he was appointed that the privi-

leges enjoyed by his predecessor would not be limited or suddenly withdrawn. But there are some difficulties in the matter. This motion is only a recommendation. Some regulations will have to be framed to give effect to it. I think the action of the Government was due to the findings of a Committee. I do not think it was unanimous. I have no doubt that Government will look into this matter. In the meanwhile Members have heard that they are entitled to travelling expenses and can apply for re-embursement.

Mr. PEER BACCHUS: I think I should speak on this motion so as to clarify what has been termed a privilege withdrawn. Heretofore under the old system a Member residing outside of Georgetown was entitled to his travelling and subsistence expenses when attending Legislative Council meeting. He was not, however, entitled to travelling and subsistence expenses when attending the meetings of Boards or Committees. The privilege Members enjoyed in the first instance was travelling expenses and subsistence allowance for Legislative Council meetings. I think under the present system travelling has been paid for any meetings at all, whether they were of the Legislative Council, Boards or Committees. That is the system prevailing today. That is all I wish to say so as to make the position quite clear.

Mr. THOMPSON: As this matter concerns me I am not going to say anything on it, but I just want to know whether as from the time that Committee sat this matter will be retrospective. I have had the unhappy experience of being heavily penalised, if nobody else, in this direction. As the hon. Member for Berbice River has mentioned, one should not pay to serve though one may love to serve. I have been doing it for years, but it should not carry with it a penalty. It is not possible for us who come from Berbice to get back home immediately after a meeting. We have to remain in Georgetown overnight and in some cases we have to come to George-

town the day previous to a meeting, if we have to attend the meeting in the morning hours. We have to meet a subsistence bill. I desire to know whether this motion will be effective from the time that Committee sat or from the time the motion is carried.

Question put, and agreed to.

Motion adopted.

LICENSED PREMISES OPENING HOURS.

The next item on the Order Paper was the following motion by Mr. CRITCHLOW.

“That with reference to Legislative Council Sessional Paper No. 2 of 1946, this Council is prepared to consider the recommendation contained therein.”

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Mr. Critchlow, before you move your motion I may say it is very vague in its form, and I do not think Members quite understand what it refers to. You are referring to Sessional Paper No. 2 of 1946, and I know what you mean, but I suggest that you indicate that what you are referring to is the report of the Committee appointed to consider the desirability of shortening the hours during which licensed premises may be open.

Mr. CRITCHLOW: I am asking that consideration of the motion be deferred to the next meeting.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: When next we meet you will amplify it by adding some words indicating to what the Sessional Paper does refer.

Mr. CRITCHLOW: Yes, sir.

LEAVE PASSAGES FOR GOVERNMENT OFFICERS.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I would ask permission to defer moving the adoption of the Report of the Leave Passages Committee (Legislative Council Sessional Paper No. 4 of 1946) to the next meeting of the Council when Members would have had some warning. Members did not possibly expect we would have got to this item on the agenda today. As the hon. the Colonial Treasurer has pointed out to me, it is not really on the agenda. I therefore propose to put it on the agenda for the next meeting of the Council and have it taken then.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: There being no further business this afternoon, the Council stands adjourn until Wednesday next at 2 p.m.