

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

*(Constituted under the British Guiana
(Constitution) (Temporary Provisions,
Order in Council, 1953).*

FRIDAY, 9TH NOVEMBER, 1956.

Council met at 2 p.m.

PRESENT

The Deputy Speaker,

Mr. W. A. Macnie, C.M.G. O.B.E.—
in the Chair.

Ex-Officio Members

The Hon. the Chief Secretary,
Mr. F. D. Jakeway, C.M.G., O.B.E.

The Hon. the Attorney General,
Mr. G. M. Farnum (Ag.)

The Hon. the Financial Secretary,
Mr. F. W. Essex.

Nominated Members of Executive Council :—

The Hon. P. A. Cummings, (Member
for Labour, Health and Housing).

The Hon. W. O. R. Kendall (Mem-
ber for Communications and Works).

The Hon. G. A. C. Farnum, O.B.E.,
(Member for Local Government, Social
Welfare and Co-operative Develop-
ment).

Nominated Official:

Mr. J. I. Ramphal

Nominated Unofficials :

Mr. T. Lee

Mr. W. A. Phang

Mr. C. A. Carter

Mr. E. F. Correia

Rev. D. C. J. Bobb

Miss Gertie H. Collins

Mrs. Esther E. Dey

Dr. H. A. Fraser

Mr. R. B. Jailal

Mr. W. T. Lord, I.S.O.

*Clerk of the Legislature — Mr.
I. Crum Ewing.*

*Assistant Clerk of the Legislature
Mr. B. M. Viapree (Ag.).*

Absent:

His Honour the Speaker, Sir
Eustace Gordon Woolford, O.B.E., Q.C.
—on leave.

The Hon. Sir Frank McDavid,
C.M.G., C.B.E., (Member for Agricul-
ture, Forests, Lands and Mines).
on leave.

The Hon. R. B. Gajraj—on leave.

The Hon. R. C. Tello—on leave.

The Hon. L. A. Luckhoo, Q.C.—
on leave.

Mr. H. Rahaman.

Mr. Sugrim Singh—on leave.

The Deputy Speaker read prayers.

The Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on Thursday, the 8th of November, 1956, as printed and circulated, were taken as read and confirmed.

LEAVE TO MEMBERS.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I have to announce that leave from today's meeting has been granted to the hon. Sir Frank McDavid, the hon. Mr. Lionel Luckhoo and the hon. Mr. Sugrim Singh.

PAPERS LAID.

The Financial Secretary: I beg to lay on the table the following documents:

Statement of Supplementary Expenditure which has been incurred during 1955 and which has not been included in any previous Schedule.

Schedules of Supplementary Estimates for the months of July, August and September, 1956.

Schedules of Supplementary Estimates (Development) for the months of July, August and September, 1956.

Statement showing Supplementary Expenditure to be admitted as a charge to the Development Fund in the accounts of the year 1955 and the allocation thereof.

The Chief Secretary: On behalf of the hon. Member for Communications and Works (Mr. Kendall) I beg to lay on the table the following documents:—

Order in Council No. 74 of 1956 made under sections 16 (2) and 17 of the Post and Telegraph Ordinance (Cap. 132) and published as Notice No. 1,951 in the Gazette of 3rd November, 1956.

The Private Letter Boxes (Amendment No. 2) Regulations, 1956 (No. 22 of 1956) published as Notice No. 1,953 in the Gazette of 3rd November, 1956.

GOVERNMENT NOTICES.

SUPPLEMENTARY EXPENDITURE—1955.

The Financial Secretary: I beg to give notice of the following four

motions standing in my name on the Order Paper:—

“Be it resolved:

“That this Council approves of the Statement of Supplementary Expenditure totalling \$869,475.57 which has been incurred during the year 1955 and has not been included in any previous schedule and is to be admitted as a charge to Public funds under Colonial Regulation 223 (2) (c) and which has been laid on the table.”

“Be it resolved:

“That this Council approves of the Supplementary Estimates for the months of July, August and September, 1956, totalling \$1,069,339.02, which have been laid on the table.”

“Be it resolved:

“That this Council approves of the Supplementary Estimates (Development) for the months of July, August and September, 1956, totalling \$3,200,532.56; which have been laid on the table.”

“Be it resolved:

That this Council approves of the Statement of Supplementary Expenditure totalling \$1,858,146.00 which has been incurred during the year 1955 and has not been included in any previous schedule and is to be admitted as a charge to the Development Fund, and which has been laid on the table.”

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION (1955) BILL.

The Financial Secretary: I beg to give notice of the introduction and first reading of a Bill intituled:

“An Ordinance to allow and confirm certain additional expenditure incurred in the year ended the thirty-first day of December, 1955”.

HYDRO-ELECTRIC POWER BILL DEFERRED.

Second reading of the Bill intituled:

“An Ordinance to make provision for the grant of licences authorising the util-

isation of the waters of the Colony for the purpose of generating electrical energy, and for matters connected therewith."

The Attorney General: I have been requested by the hon. Member for Agriculture, Forests, Lands and Mines to crave leave of this Council to have the second reading of this Bill deferred.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I think I might add for the information of the Council, that in a letter to me the hon. Member for Agriculture, Forests, Lands and Mines (Sir Frank McDavid) has reminded me that that request is due to urgent official business which it is most essential to complete today. He also informed me of his intention to ask the Attorney-General to request the postponement of the second reading of the Bill—Bill No. 2 in the Order of the Day which the hon. Member has said would probably have been deferred in any event, as an important amendment is under consideration. I therefore ask that the Council grant leave for the deferment of item 2 in the Order of the Day.

Bill deferred.

GUIANIZATION OF PUBLIC SERVICE

Mr. Lee : I beg to move the following motion standing in my name on the Order Paper:

"Whereas Government has declared that recruitment to the Public Service of British Guiana rests upon the general principle that first consideration will be given to candidates of local origin who possess the requisite qualifications and experience;

And Whereas it appears necessary for this principle to be laid down as a firm policy to be accepted and followed by the local Government and the Secretary of State for the Colonies:

Be It Resolved: That this Council recommends to Government that steps be taken to adopt the policy that British Guianese should be given first preference on all occasions in the filling of vacancies

in the Public Service of British Guiana provided that candidates for vacant posts possess the requisite qualifications and experience:

And Be It Further Resolved: That a copy of this Resolution be forwarded to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, for his notification."

When I gave notice of this motion some months ago, I did not see this matter in the light that I do now and I am glad that Government has seen it fit to bring the motion forward at this stage. It is no use going into the past, as if we do, my feelings might run amock and I might say things which I might perhaps regret. But I will say this: I believe that if the events in this Colony are ever reviewed in any form or fashion, it would be seen that the feeling is that the people should be allowed to claim the distinction being sought for their country. It is something which every Guianese would like to witness, in order that the progress of the country may be seen while they are alive. Be that as it may, what prompted me in bringing forward this motion is that year after year within the last ten years we have been voting money to train our young men and women to be efficient, so as to give them the right to fill responsible positions and to show gratitude for the financial assistance given them to get training for the services they render to the country. That would show that British Guiana is progressing favourably towards the standard which is expected of every British Colony.

Government has accepted a policy of giving financial aid to Guianese officers to qualify by training for executive posts, and the time has come when some of that financial aid is bearing fruit. Because of that fact, it is necessary that the highest authority in the land should recognize

[Mr. Lee]

it and let the Secretary of State for the Colonies realise that there are Guianese who, through their own industry and the financial help of relatives, have qualified themselves to fill executive positions and to give to this Colony service as good as any other coming from abroad. I will preface my remarks by saying that while I was in England the English people were very kind to me, and I do not mean to cast any reflection on them or on the people of the West Indian Islands in my reference to people coming from abroad. What I want to say is that our men and women who have been helped by the Government, by their parents or otherwise, and who by their industry have achieved equal distinction to that of the importees into the Service, should be given first preference for promotion, provided that they have that degree of efficiency which the Service requires.

I would like to stress that our boys and girls must make themselves so efficient that they then would be able to vie with any importee in the holding of responsible posts. Within the last four years, I know, some of my friends and fellow students have attained that distinction. They have acted in various positions in various Departments of Government, and in the Departmental reports issued by Government annually nothing has been mentioned against them. Yet we find that only in a few cases have our boys been given the distinction of appointment to these important posts in the Government Service of this Colony. I feel that the records of these men and women were not clearly pointed out by the Head of our Administration in the past to the Secretary of State for the Colonies. I feel that if their records were really pointed out there would not have been so many importees in the

Service of the Colony at present. I know two of my fellow students at College who, in my opinion, have served Government faithfully, honestly and sincerely, and yet they have been put in the background. It is a sore point to those who have rendered equally efficient service as the importees to know that they have been overlooked. I would not like to go into all the things that have happened and are happening and, maybe, will continue to happen.

I sincerely hope that the highest authority in this land would adopt this motion and that the time will come when, whether these importees hold appointments under Statute Law or otherwise, this legislative body will not vote the necessary salaries for the Service when they find that our boys and girls who are efficient are being overlooked. Some of the importees in the Service of this country are my good friends, and on more than one occasion I have been told "We cannot get locally the efficiency that is required for such and such a position." I need not call the positions. I have in two instances had to bow to my friends and say "yes; it looks as if that is so." But what I want to emphasize is that the policy of Government should be to vote further sums of money for the purpose of training and making our men and women efficient in their line of work so that they could come back and serve this Colony efficiently, honestly and faithfully. If that is the policy which Government has time and again accepted, then I emphatically say to the Secretary of State "Our money is being spent in a manner in which we expect you to grant us the right to develop our Colony with our own people."

I do not say that importees should not be brought to this Colony for the Service; far from it. There are posi-

tions, I feel, which our men are not competent at the moment to occupy, but the time is coming, since we are looking forward to self-government when we would be able to say to the world "Here are men and women who can lead this country to a successful era". The Secretary of State for the Colonies should therefore recognize the principle that our boys and girls should be given preference, all things being equal including efficiency. I am emphasizing that the time has come when something definite must be done. Hon. Members know what I am talking about. Not only at the top of the Service but even low down the ladder there are cases in which there is a feeling of frustration, and that frustration is causing a lot of discontent—very grave discontent. These men and women who have been given financial assistance and have been trained, can stand up in public and would be able to denounce the Government. I do not want that to happen. I want them to stand up in public and say "We are the people who have attained the efficiency and the qualifications necessary for executive posts in the Government Service, and we are here to render you service." With those remarks, I beg to move this motion and I ask this Council to support it.

Mr. Correia: I rise to second this motion by the hon. Member, Mr. Lee, and with your permission I would like to say a few words in support of it. I always took it for granted as an understood fact that Guianese would be employed by Government wherever it is possible, all things being equal. But, sir, I am afraid that is not the case in many instances, even quite recently. I do not think there is any justification by Government to by-pass Guianese whenever there is a vacancy which a Guianese can fill. Those of us who are

Guianese sitting around this Council table should object strongly whenever the occasion presents itself, especially in Finance Committee where we have to pass the votes for the employment of people from abroad to fill posts that Guianese can fill. If we take the bull by the horns and refuse to vote the salaries of those people who are employed by this Government from abroad and are filling posts that Guianese can fill, then we who are sitting around this Council would be responsible. We as Guianese in this Council should refuse to vote their salaries, provided of course that we have Guianese with equal qualifications to fill those posts.

All loyal Guianese aim at self-government. We are all looking forward to that day when we will have self-government. We can only attain self-government when we have enough trained Guianese to fill executive positions in every Department of Government. Only then must we look forward to self-government, but if the Colonial Office and Government Advisers insist on employing people from abroad to fill positions in the Civil Service of this Colony, positions that Guianese can fill, then those in charge of the Colonial Office—the Governor and his advisers—have no other object in view than to keep British Guiana as a Crown Colony. We realize that until we can have our Departments of Government run by Guianese we can never expect self-government. The by-passing of Guianese in filling responsible positions is keeping us further and further away from our objective, and that objective is self-government. We are very grateful to Her Majesty's Government for all the grants and loans given to us for the development of British Guiana, but I would hate to accept any grants or loans wherever I feel the offer is made as an appeasement. Before I accept anything in the shape of appeasement which will keep us further away from self-government I would

[Mr. Correia]

rather see this country tighten its belt and fight its difficulties by itself and retain its "manhood."

I think I have said enough and I have put my meaning quite clear to the Council. I expect that the hon. the Chief Secretary will be speaking on behalf of the Government on this motion and I hope he will give us an undertaking that in future wherever it is possible Guianese will be employed in positions in preference to people from abroad.

Mr. Jailal: I rise to support the motion. It is something we should not lose sight of. Present practice I feel seems to move generally in this direction and although we cannot fully implement this policy at the present time it is evident that we are narrowing the gap. I differ somewhat from the other speakers in terms of what one would expect out of the services. From the time I began to take serious interest in public affairs I have held the belief that our services are inseparably bound up with the West Indies; therefore any reference to West Indians as complete foreigners does not seem to be truly representative of present-day thought. In regard to recruitment for the Public Service I still regard the West Indian people as forming part of the pool from which Guiana should be able to draw and I feel that the West Indies in turn should be able to draw from among Guianese. In our generation we have seen the presence of West Indians of ability among us; we have had the advantage of having had very noble, famous and hard-working people from the West Indies in our services. As an ardent federationist I feel we should never quibble with the West Indies — we should regard West Indians as one with us.

I would like to have it recorded that in the Guianization of our Civil Service we should not do so to the exclusion of West Indians. However, when it comes to filling posts with persons from Africa and other parts of the Empire I would fully support the hon. mover and seconder of this motion. Before the Government can realize this policy we must be fully equipped, and it behoves the parents of our time to see to it that they set about so to educate their children that there will be no excuse whatsoever on the part of any one to say "we do not have the type of person locally to fill the vacancy that exists".

Everything being equal, our people should have first choice. However, in the case of the Judiciary I feel that while our Judges are doing and will always do an excellent job yet, because of the nature of justice, for myself, I would prefer to see an interchange of our judges from time to time. The old Biblical teaching remains infallible: "a prophet hath no honour in his own country".

In our own times we have seen jobs go abegging while we are told that we do not have the men with the necessary experience to fill them. This does not go down very well. It is the ambition of people everywhere to reach the top flight of the ladder and that ambition should not be denied Guianese. The people are not satisfied. We feel that wherever we have the men with the necessary experience, qualified enough for a job, they should be given the first opportunity.

The hon. Member, Mr. Corrcia, made a reference for which I am very grateful, to the help given by the Mother Country. I would make the point that British Guiana has done well in the past and will do well in the future by being able to get this help. But if in obtaining this help we are

committing ourselves to return back to the land from which it originally came a major portion of that help in terms of payment of salaries, then I begin to wonder how much of a help it really is. It may seem a little ungrateful, but if we are to grow strong and self-sufficient, then we must be able to retain much of the money that is allocated to this country so that it may be circulated here. One might argue that in terms of direct or indirect taxation a great portion of the money paid to imported help finds its way back into the general coffers of this country.

I whole-heartedly support this motion, and I would like to see a firm policy set up and future Governments follow such policy, ensuring Guianese people of the opportunities I feel they deserve. Every man has the right to opportunities.

Mr. Phang: I find myself in agreement with the mover of this motion, Mr. Lee. I know that there has been a considerable amount of frustration in the past among parents who sent their sons away to be qualified in some profession or other and found later that on their return they could not find employment. I do remember the case of a British Guianese who went away to study and passed with high honours at Oxford University, qualifying as a civil engineer. We feel such a man would be needed in this country, but what happened? He was knocked around from pillar to post and in the end the Public Works Department offered him employment at the princely salary of \$40 per month. Such things should not go on, and I feel Mr. Lee was right in bringing forward this motion.

If I remember correctly, Sir Charles Woolley sent a Message to the Legislative Council in which he said that in the filling of posts in the Public Service preference should be given to Guianese with qualifications and expe-

rience. I do not know why this was not followed but he expected it to be followed. As Mr. Correia has said in Finance Committee, we get people from outside. We are told that we want good men and we are asked to increase their salary, which we have done. But what we get most of the time is square pegs in round holes—rank imposters. I support the motion.

Miss Collins: I would like to support the motion so ably moved by the hon. Member, Mr. Lee and express regret that the Government has done so much to warrant the bringing forward of a motion of this kind. Some time in 1949 this question was raised when a debate took place in the Legislative Council on a motion moved by Mr. John Carter, referring mainly to the Police Force. It is on record. I would like Government to do something about the dissatisfaction that exists in different Government departments. We should try to help Guianese with educational qualifications. Unless we are prepared to do that, then they will go outside to seek their opportunities. In many cases there are qualified people in a Department who are overlooked and it is the Head of that Department who is to be blamed. Some of them are practising non-co-operation.

I have no objection to an interchange of Guianese in Judicial positions, but they must not be pushed around. I should like to congratulate Government for tabling a motion such as this, since it is one with which civil servants on the whole are satisfied. At this time Government should make every effort to send Guianese with the necessary educational qualifications to the United Kingdom and elsewhere in order to prepare them for higher posts in their country. I feel that heads of Departments should also co-operate with Government in these efforts. Some of them are practising non-co-operation,

[Miss Collins]

but I think they should do their part towards making the proposal a success.

Mr. Ramphal: On previous occasions when I was invited to debate this subject I displayed some degree of reluctance because the charge might have been levelled at me that I was seeking legislative occasions to support my claim for promotion. I am in no such position now, however, and I would like to support the motion very sincerely. I have been the coiner of the phrase "Guianisation", and in supporting the motion I feel that Government is merely going to endorse what is already an accepted policy. How far Government is going to carry out that policy is a matter for the Chief Secretary to say. I also wish to say that I have had the assurance in this Council and of the head of the Administration on more than one occasion that this policy, as enunciated in the motion, is the accepted policy of this Government and also of Her Majesty's Government. I wish to add that Government should expedite its efforts in this matter because industry outside is doing everything possible to prepare its people to occupy the highest positions. Government cannot be behind industry in this matter.

Having said that, I wish to say that I do not think the motion goes far enough. I wish the hon. Mover of the motion would give me permission to add a further resolve clause whereby the Council recommends that Government should expedite its policy of training local persons by providing more scholarships. I know that this Government is doing a great deal to provide more scholarships. The hon. the Chief Secretary has circulated to members of this Council a long list of scholarships for boys and girls for the next few years, but I wish that that policy could be magnified ten times. If, as

a civil servant, I was asked to make a sacrifice and to give up some of my rights in order to provide more scholarships in the interest of this Colony, I would say "cut my leave in half in order to provide more scholarships for deserving officers". If that is a contribution I can make, I would be perfectly prepared to make that sacrifice. I am asking the hon. Mover of the motion for permission to include the amendment I have suggested.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Is the hon. Member (Mr. Ramphal) moving an amendment?

Mr. Ramphal: I would move that the motion be amended by the addition of a further resolve clause urging that Government should expedite the training of local officers for higher posts by awarding more scholarships.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Has the hon. Member prepared the amendment in a form which could be handed to the Clerk?

Mr. Ramphal: In an illegible form, sir, but I am sure that with the help of the Clerk we will be able to decipher it.

The Chief Secretary: May I ask that the amendment be read out.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: As I understand it, the proposal by the hon. Member is to put a colon after the word "approval" (in the last paragraph) and to add certain words thereafter. Does the hon. Member (Mr. Ramphal) wish to move the amendment in that manner?

Mr. Ramphal: If it is necessary I shall move it by adding the following words to the first resolution:

"and that in pursuance of this policy this Council recommends that this Government expedites its policy of training of local officers by providing more scholarships".

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Does any hon. Member wish to support that amendment?

Mrs. Dey: I wish to support it, sir.

Mr. Lord: With the hon. Mover's permission I wish to suggest that instead of the words "expedites its policy of training" the amendment should read "accelerates its programme of training".

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The hon. Member (Mr. Ramphal) had "expedite" and he deleted it.

Mr. Cummings: I should think that the hon. Member (Mr. Ramphal) is concerned with the implementation of the policy, and I suggest that the amendment should urge Government to accelerate the implementation of that policy.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I am saying that the hon. Member (Mr. Ramphal) is suggesting that the policy be expedited, and we can get a record of that. What I am trying to get is the wording of Mr. Lee's motion.

Mr. Cummings: I was trying to assist. I hope I am not misunderstood.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I do not think the hon. Member (Mr. Ramphal) has got the correct wording, and the suggestion he has made might be improved by him.

Mr. Ramphal: With your permission, sir, if I am given a few minutes I will draft the amendment.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I am sure the Council will give a few moments to the hon. Member (Mr. Ramphal). Does any hon. Member wish to speak to the motion while the mover and the seconder of the amendment are putting their heads together?

Mr. Ramphal: I am very grateful to you, sir, and to the other Members, and particularly to the hon. Mover of the motion who has suggested the wording that would be acceptable to him. The words of the amendment, following the first resolve clause, are:

"and that in pursuance of this policy this Government accelerates the implementation of its training programme by providing additional scholarships".

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Do I understand that the hon. Mover (Mr. Lee) accepts the amendment?

Mr. Lee: Yes. I do. I think, however, that the word "immediately" should be inserted after the word "scholarships".

Mr. Ramphal: I think that the insertion of the word "immediately" is unnecessary, except we want to make it abundantly clear. It is not the creation of a charge; that will come from Government itself.

The Chief Secretary: I am perfectly happy to accept the words "that this Council recommends that in pursuance of this policy Government accelerates the programme by the provision of additional scholarships".

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The hon. Member, I think, would agree to the deletion of the word "immediately".

Mr. Lee: Yes.

The Chief Secretary: It does not come with any surprise to the Council that the Government can accept the motion and support it. Indeed, as the hon. Member, Mr. Ramphal, has already said, the motion is really no more than a formal enunciation of principles that have been enunciated before and accepted as a policy of the Government for some time — certainly before my time. As far back as Feb-

[The Chief Secretary]

ruary of last year I had a Press Conference when I made a statement about filling vacancies in the Public Service and, with your permission, I would like to repeat that statement. I quote from it because I would like it to be on the records of this Council, and I think it can stand repetition today. This is what I said then:

"Recruitment to the Public Service of British Guiana rests upon the general principle that first consideration will be given to candidates of local origin who possess the requisite qualification and experience. When no suitable local candidate is forthcoming, consideration is given to the possibility of filling the posts from the other British Caribbean territories. Only when the vacancy cannot be suitably filled from the Caribbean area is an appointment made from outside. Promotion within the British Guiana Civil Service is governed by the criteria of qualification, experience and merit."

That is really in other words saying what the motion says, but I must add one or two points of interpretation. The first one is that this phrase "requisite qualification and experience" must be broadly interpreted. It cannot be applied solely to academic and professional qualifications. Things such as personality, record and character must be taken into account, and when appointments are being made to senior posts the possession of proved administrative ability must also be taken into account. If by "requisite qualification and experience" one means that, as I hope one does and, as I understand from the hon. Mover, Mr. Lee, that is what he means, then we all understand each other.

I am sure that hon. Members of Council would agree that particularly in respect of what one may call "key posts", the Governor or the Secretary of State for the Colonies, as the case may be, must get the best man for the job. It is not necessarily good enough to

select somebody who gets by with the bare minimum qualification but is not as good as someone else available who can do the job much better. I do not think anything like a "closed shop" in which this service should be entirely a Guianese Service would be in its best interest of the country or in the best interest of the officers. Some interchange of officers with other territories is, of course, a good thing in both ways. It gives this country the benefit of the experience of officers of other territories gained elsewhere and it also gives our own Guianese officers the opportunity of broadening their experience and not only giving the benefit of their Guianese training and experience to other territories but, perhaps, coming back at a later day in a more senior post, much better fitted for a senior appointment here. If you are going to have that movement to and fro, there must be nothing like a Government Service for Guianese and no one else.

I must make one other point which I think ought to be made, and that is, when a promotion is to be made from within the Service the best man in the Service must get the job. It would not be right if a non-Guianese officer already in the service, who happens to be senior or more efficient, or better qualified for promotion, is to be passed over by a Guianese officer simply because he is not a Guianese. I do not think any Member of this Council would say that this Resolution is to be interpreted like that. Now and for some time to come the Service will need overseas officers. We just have not got a sufficient number of qualified Guianese in certain professional grades, particularly engineers, agricultural officers, forestry officers, geologists. We just have not got them to fill posts available and, therefore, we must rely to some extent on overseas officers to do the job. If we are going to have overseas officers here, we must give them a

square deal. No overseas officer is going to come here and make a career in the British Guiana Service, if he is going to be crowded out for promotion by what he would regard as unfair competition. All things being equal, Guianese will get the jobs. If there are two candidates for a job in the Service --one a Guianese and the other a non-Guianese--the better man ought to get the job. That is the way I look at this Resolution, and that is the way, I hope, hon. Members would look at it.

One gets the impression reading some of our newspapers that this territory is being inundated with a wave of overseas officers, but nothing really can be further from the truth. There has been in recent years a very considerable expansion of posts in the Service, particularly in fields where at the moment we have not got a sufficient number of qualified Guianese. I have mentioned some of those posts already—engineers, geologists, agricultural officers, forestry officers. There may be others, but those are the ones that occur to me. It is necessary, therefore, to recruit very largely in those grades from outside British Guiana. Nevertheless in spite of that, the percentage of non-Guianese holding posts in the Service with a salary of \$4,560: a year or over has dropped and not risen in the last year or so. The figure in 1955 was 26.4 and the figure earlier this year was 24.1. I hope hon. Members have looked at the "Scholarship and Training" Paper that was laid on the table of this Council last week, because I would like them to agree with me that it does represent really a very great effort on the part of this Government to train Guianese for senior posts in the Service. I do feel that, perhaps, we have not in the past given as much publicity to what we are trying to do as we ought. I know that in my absence Mr. Porcher met a deputation from a staff association and gave them some of the material which is now in this Paper, and

they were quite surprised and astonished. They never knew so much had been done to train people in the Service.

I endorse entirely the amendment to the Resolution which the hon. Member, Mr. Ramphal, has put up. We should find it difficult, perhaps, to accelerate it more than we are accelerating it already. If I may point out one or two figures to show that; in 1952 and 1953 we spent on training \$65,000 odd and \$79,000 odd respectively. In 1954 the figure jumped to \$171,000 and at the beginning of 1955 there were 36 Guianese undergoing training abroad at public expense with the view of qualifying for higher posts. Of that number only three started training prior to 1952. In other words, to all intents and purposes this programme has not been going for more than five years, and results are just beginning to come off the production line. The first batch of trained graduates is coming back into the Service, and must be at the bottom of the ladder for some time before we see the effect of it in the higher reaches of the Service. Inevitably it must come.

During 1955 we sent another eleven officers overseas to do their training, and so far in 1956 we have awarded 13 scholarships. We would have liked to award more but sufficient candidates were not up to the standard for us to do so. This year we have provided a sum of \$226,000 for training. You can see how the graph has risen both in numbers and expenditure. I must be careful here not to infringe on the field of the hon. the Financial Secretary by anticipating what the figure will be in the Estimates for next year. I know what I would like, but he has to produce a balanced budget. I am quite sure he knows the feeling of this country which has been repeated so often this afternoon—that this is the form in which we want to spend as much as we can,

[The Chief Secretary]

provided we have the money to spend—and would try to find the money for this purpose almost than any other purpose.

Having said that, I would also mention there is one other limiting factor to the extent to which we can train young Guianese for senior posts, and that is the availability of suitably educated candidates. That unfortunately is a limitation. In paragraph 8 of this Paper it is stated:

"In several cases scholarships offered have lapsed because suitable candidates with adequate basic qualifications have not been forthcoming; for instance, two scholarships offered this year for training in Mechanical Engineering lapsed for that reason . . ."

I hope that position will arise less and less as the output of Sixth Form students from our secondary schools increase. I will say that it is our policy now that if we offer two engineering scholarships and there are three good men for geologist training, in respect of which we have only offered two scholarships, we could switch the scholarships. What we are doing is creaming off the best material offered for scholarships. I think we are very fully extended, and have our foot hard down on the accelerator but if you say we must get a little more mileage to the gallon or per hour we will try to do so.

I am grateful to the hon. Mover of this motion for the opportunity he has afforded me to speak on this subject. I am also grateful to him for his restraint and, indeed, to all hon. Members for their restraint and propriety in refraining from personality. I think it reflects great credit on all, especially when there is great temptation in a motion of this kind, not to comment on individuals which can do no good but much harm. I think everyone has been exemplary, and I must be exemplary

myself. I have tried and failed to identify the two cases the hon. Mover, Mr. Lee, mentioned that have caused him some concern. If he would mention them in private to me, as I would like to know what they are, I might be able to give him some information which would make him less concerned. That also applies to any hon. Member who has an individual case in which he thinks we have offended against the principles which have been laid down. When I say "we", I mean the Governor or the Secretary of State. I do wish hon. Members would mention these cases to me. I will be very careful to do everything I can, without breaking confidence, to put the facts as far as I know them which may or may not satisfy them.

The whole of this matter of appointment and promotion in the Public Service is a matter of confidence from top to bottom. If confidence is not there, suspicion takes its place and the Service suffers. The public and the Service must have confidence that the Governor and the Secretary of State will use with propriety the discretionary power given them, and in return the Governor and the Secretary of State must show that they are using their powers in a proper manner. But sometimes an appointment or a promotion is made, and it is not possible to say just why it has been done. Probably there is very good reason, but you cannot say it because you may be damaging an officer and breaking confidence in saying so. On those occasions the public and the Service must have confidence in the person making the decision and feel that he has made it to the best of his ability, and that he has made the right decision.

I yield to none in my anxiety to increase the tempo at which Guianese will be able to assume increasing responsibility and share in the administration of their country. Anyone who has

worked with me closely on things like the preparation of scholarship schemes will know how close this is to me. I regard it not only as one of the most important but one of the most satisfying jobs I have to do—to try and prepare scholarship schemes, to try and get the maximum benefit out of the training scheme. I am grateful for this opportunity provided by the motion to place Government's policy on the records of this Council and to express my own enthusiastic intention to carry out that policy.

Mr. Lee: I am very grateful to the hon. the Chief Secretary for the assurance he has given. I am begging Government to increase opportunities for young people with ability by asking them out in the schools, in a confidential way through the principals, even before they approach Government for a scholarship. I know that there are vacancies in Departments like the Forestry, Audit and Agriculture and there will be opportunities for training. There are in the schools students who are doing well, but their parents do not have the means to send them away for higher education. These parents often have other children whose education has to be looked after as well. I feel Government can approach schools like Queen's College and St. Stanislaus College and Bishops' High School pointing out that it needs boys and girls for scholarships, and ask for recommendations. I do not want Government to wait for applications. Five years from now we will be needing these people to carry forward our development programmes. One of the purposes of my motion is to arrest the attention of the Government at once, towards its responsibility to Guianese.

As near as Trinidad, recently, a certain Government Officer was appointed from the Colonial Office. The local Legislature did not feel that the Gov-

ernment or the Secretary of State should over-ride a certain local officer in his chances for appointment to the same post. They protested and did not vote the salary for the officer appointed. The local officer was appointed subsequently and he has been proved so successful that he has gained higher honours in his line of work.

When it comes to the West Indies, referred to by Mr. Jailal (he is a Federationist and I am a Guianese) (*laughter*) with respect to an interchange, I cannot fully accept the idea. No one can say that the late Mr. J. A. Luckhoo, K.C. who was elevated to the Judiciary, did not give us the service that was expected of him. I think we can be sure that there are certain of our boys who can come up to that standard. I notice that, indeed, recently Government recognised one of our boys. There is no doubt about his knowledge and experience. I am not saying we should not interchange as suggested by Mr. Jailal. Will the West Indians take us onto their bosoms? If that will be their policy, it may be worthwhile. Guianese have been very liberal in their thoughts towards West Indians, and I certainly hope that West Indians will change their attitude towards Guianese.

I accept the amendment put forward by the hon. Member, Mr. Ramphal; he has experience of the Service, and he knows that on many occasions this Council has had to make a row before appointments were made. I do not expect that that should occur again. We have men that are efficient, though perhaps it is not within the knowledge of the Chief Secretary, because those men do not push themselves up. They are hard-working civil servants and they carry out orders. Some are friends of mine, others I know by sight. They should be written about so that the Chief Secretary can see that the efficiency of the Civil Servants is there, and I want the Heads of Departments

[Mr. Lee]

to know that the Chief Secretary and the Administration are looking forward to the recommendation early of these men, so that those who are efficient should gain high honours.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Hon. Members, before I put the motion with the amendment that has been moved and seconded and accepted by the mover, I would like to say, for the first time in three and a half months, "I support the motion." I support it as a Guianese without any reference to Federation, of which my views are on record. I think I would certainly have voted for it if I were in my place on the floor. I am glad that the Government, through the Chief Secretary, has accepted the motion. In fact, as the Chief Secretary said, it is in keeping with the policy of the Government.

I would like to support what the hon. Member, Mr. Jailal, said in respect of the West Indies—I am not going to venture his remarks on the Judiciary.

I think I am the oldest, but for three, Member of this Council, and I can say that we Guianese have a good deal to be proud of. While some of our men may not get to occupy high posts in this country, we have provided men for top posts in other countries. Indeed, a man started his career in the Service here in what was known years ago as the Commissary Department, and he rose to become one of the most famous Governors of African colonial territories. He is no longer alive and I am not naming him, but some of us will know who I mean.

More recently this country has provided many who have held the post of Chief Justice; at the present moment there are Guianese who are Chief Justices of other Colonial territories. We also have the distinction of providing

one who was at school with Mr. Lee and who has been made the first Speaker of the Legislative Council of Trinidad under the 1956 Constitution. We have provided Colonial administrators, medical practitioners and members of the teaching profession who are serving well outside. While in my time it has happened, often with wisdom, that some of the top posts here have never been held by Guianese yet we have provided from humble walks of life in this country and from the many races which go to make up Guianese, people who have distinguished themselves abroad in service at high levels.

Question put, and agreed to.

Motion, as amended, carried.

TRIBUTE TO MR. W. A. MACNIE

Mr. Lee: Before you rise, sir: I understand that this is your last day in the Chair, and as a senior Member of this Council I would like to tell you personally, as well as for all of us, that we appreciate the service you have given in this Council as Deputy Speaker. I can only say that you, as a Guianese, have been an adornment to the Chair and our Legislative Council, and your record is one which I sincerely hope would be followed by future generations.

We have a tradition of being law-abiding in our relationship with the Chair and I think this has been kept up during your time in office.

Sir, you are going to enter a sphere of activity which will call for all your qualities as a true Guianese. Yours will be one of the toughest jobs in the economic development programme, and I wish you all success. I am sure you are conversant with all the difficulties to be overcome and the progress made, and I sincerely hope that in time when

you come to seek this Council's assistance we will be able to back you and lend you all the help necessary for the success of the job.

I wish again, Sir, that you will enjoy all the health that God can give you in order to carry out successfully the work you will have to do.

Mr. Cummings: The hon. Member (Mr. Lee) has had a very brilliant day because of his foresight and he has now, because of his seniority, afforded himself the opportunity of saying many of the things that I had hoped to say in this Council, but I am determined, even at the expense of being repetitious, to take this opportunity of telling you, sir, how happy I felt when we heard in London—I was there at the time—that you had been appointed by His Excellency the Governor to be Deputy Speaker and to carry on during the absence of Sir Eustace Woolford. I join in congratulating you on your appointment as Director of Land Settlement in B.G. and wish to express my appreciation at the dignity and the dispatch with which you have presided over our meetings during your regime as Deputy Speaker.

I, sir, look back with very pleasant memories at my long association with you. I remember the days when you were a District Commissioner, and I a District Administration Officer in your District. Your enthusiasm and personality were then an inspiration to your Staff. I know that there has been some degree of criticism of your appointment because of the post in which you are now serving with the Sugar Producers' Association. I wish to say, however, that it is my considered opinion that if there is a Guianese who can efficiently perform the duties of Director of Land Settlement I think you are the person. I am gratified that you will be given an opportunity to use your wide knowledge of local affairs in the Civil Service. I

am sure that you are leaving this Council with the admiration, respect and good wishes of everyone around this table.

Rev. Mr. Bobb: I sir, wish to join my colleagues in offering congratulations to you on the appointment which requires you to leave this Council Chamber shortly. I wish to say how deeply appreciative all of us have been of the manner in which you carried out your duties—with the customary dignity and decorum that has been associated with this Chamber—and it has given pleasure to us, Guianese and non-Guianese alike. Your appointment is one that has caused a great deal of comment, because the post you have been appointed to fill is one in which there is a great deal of public interest. Land Settlement is everybody's business and it is regarded by those who are able to see far ahead as well as by those who are not, as being very important for the development of the country. I feel very much encouraged in knowing that you will be in that Department. My hope is that you are going to be favoured with the assistance, financial and otherwise, necessary to make a success of your job. We will like you to know, sir, speaking for myself and those associated with me here, that you will leave this Council with our very warm appreciation and best wishes for a very successful regime.

Mr. Correia: I, sir, cannot allow this opportunity to pass without adding my quota to what has been said. I have known you, sir, since you were a very young Police Officer stationed in the interior of this Colony and we met under very strange circumstances there. There were then hardly any laws in operation in those parts, and you were one of the first Officers who went there to administer the law. I can never forget the pleasant manner and the tact you displayed among the people—the same kind of tact that you have shown in this

[Mr. Correia]

Council—both as a floor member and as occupant of the Chair—when we have had to get through some difficult debates.

I have no hesitation in saying that we are losing one of the main pillars of this Council—and I am speaking for my colleagues on this side of the floor. We will miss you very much, sir. You were always ready to give us your best advice and it seems that you were never able to lose your temper and say the wrong thing. I know that on many occasions when we sat near to each other around this table, you were always ready to help us in the best possible way.

I repeat that we will miss you from your usual seat in this Council but what will be a loss to this Council will not be a loss to the country. Although we will miss you here, we are happy to know that it is a Guianese who will fill this position and that you will do so successfully. I can claim to know you very well, sir, and you can count on those of us whom you have left in this Council the fullest support possible to make your job a success. It is a job that will affect the country as a whole — the people and our increasing population —and I wish you all success in it.

Mrs. Dey: It does seem that I shall have to become the local Sylvia Pankhurst and, as a matter of fact, I am a believer and follower of Sylvia Pankhurst, or I would never have been in this Council this afternoon. Seven days ago I wrote on a slip of paper: "Is not this Mr. Macnie's last day in the Chair?" and the reply was yes, or rather, it ought to have been. Be that as it may, I will not be left out, and so I beg to be associated with the remarks made by my colleagues around this table, because I would like to place on record all that I said last Friday—what I personally think of the dignified manner in which

Your Honour conducted sessions of this Council while in that Chair. It was not astonishing to me, because I became acquainted with you in the Village Councils since you were serving as a District Commissioner, and I can never forget the most gracious manner in which you informed me on that particular occasion of your regret that you could not partake of the luncheon which I, as hostess, had prepared.

I have often thought that there are three C's which might well be attached to Your Honour's name, and they indicate—"Cool", "Calm" and "Collective". There have been moments in this Council when we feel on this side of the table that something might happen and when we all whispered among ourselves, and I am sure none of us would ever forget how you got over them and held your dignity—cool, calm and collective. I hope, sir, that you will take with you that same charming manner in your new sphere of life and that the good God will provide more flowers for the garlands you have already had placed around your neck.

Mr. Jailal: Perhaps, sir, at a moment like this I should say that words fail me because, like certain other Members, I could not believe that this would have come true. Long before I became a Member of this Council—it was in my boyhood days really—I had very close contact with you, and our association dates back to the time when my father worked under you. But, sir, I like to remember those early days, from the very first occasion, when we met occasionally. At that time you were in a very responsible position although quite a young man, and was once Chairman of a Committee in which I was interested.

Since those days I knew that when it came to the question of "Chairmanship" you were quite capable and that you were able to keep a meeting in order

and get through with the business in hand. For that reason, when I heard of your appointment as Deputy Speaker (succeeding the late Mr. Raatgever) of this Council, I knew that we were getting someone who would be able to carry on successfully. The fact that you have done so with dignity and with credit to yourself is undoubted. But, I think there are other things we want to remember you for — things not based merely on a passing acquaintance. We want to say a word of thanks to you for services, past and present.

You have been in this Council for a long time and have served your country well. You are leaving this Council, we are sure, with some regret and those of us who are "floor" Members particularly, have lost a champion against what some of us feel to be the opposition. I myself belong to that party — the "floor" Members—and as a very young legislator I have always listened to your speeches here and have sometimes changed my opinion completely because of what you have had to say. On many occasions we sat together I felt that if you voiced an opinion here it was with greater experience than I had, and what pleased me most was the fact that I could have relied at any time on what I felt was a fair and honest opinion from you.

We in this Council will miss you, sir, and we feel gratified because you are going to do a job which this country needs to have done and must follow up. My friend on my left (Mr. W. T. Lord) has deserted this post after we had seen him filling three different roles — first as Commissioner of Lands and Mines, next in the Housing Department and then as Land Settlement Officer. I should think he deserves his retirement although we feel that in some way he has deserted us to a degree. But, having learnt, sir, that you are willing to undertake the deserted post, we feel sure that in the course of time the foundation that has

been left by the deserter will give you something worthy to build on.

I am sure that Mr. Lord's work will bear fruit during your régime. At times like this one can only ask one's fellow legislator to do all he can to preserve what he finds existing. As the hon. Member, Mr. Correia has already assured you, you can take my personal assurance that whatever I can do in this Council and outside this Council to help you in your undertaking, you can always reckon on it. What more can one wish another than that you will be crowned with success in your new undertaking. I am sure that the post that you are relinquishing can ill afford the loss of your services and that it is a very magnanimous act on the part of the Sugar Producers to release you for a public job that needs your services more. I feel very glad that you, as a Guianese, have accepted the post even though you leave us in this Council somewhat the poorer.

Mr. Ramphal; I rise for two reasons. One is to join the other hon. Members in expressing our regret that you will be leaving us not only in your temporary occupation of the Chair but also in your position as a legislator. You have served with distinction in many walks of life. You have served with distinction in the Civil Service in which you rose to a position next to the highest rank. You have served with equal distinction in Industry, and once again you are about to return to the Civil Service. I feel sure that you will serve on your return there with equal distinction, bringing to bear all the accumulated experience of your many years of service. I need hardly add anything more than to say that we shall miss you very much around this table, and I am sure that Government around this table is the loser by your disappearance from the membership of this Council. Having said that I know how you feel about this matter and I will not proceed in that strain.

[Mr. Ramphal]

I wish to proceed on the second point on which I have risen to speak. I think two hon. Members have said there was much comment about your appointment. The hon. Member, Mr. Jailal, said it was a magnanimous act on the part of the Sugar Producers in allowing you to retire from the service of that industry. I endorse very fully that expression which has fallen from him. I feel that if I were in the position of the Sugar Producers I would have allowed you to retire with the greatest reluctance and hesitancy. You have served the Sugar Producers, and in a very large way in serving the Sugar Producers you have served the people of this country.

I have been in very close contact with you in your substantive post, by the very nature of which it had to be so. I therefore saw you at your best and, perhaps if it can be, at your worst. Throughout all my association with you I have found that you have been actuated by one fact and one fact only. That is, what would bring the greatest good to this country of ours. Whether you are in the service of the Sugar Producers or in the Civil Service I feel sure that spirit that has always motivated you will sustain you and bring success to your work. I therefore feel like the hon. Member, Mr. Jailal, that the Sugar Producers have done an act of great generosity to the people of this country in allowing you to return to the Civil Service.

I think you, too, by accepting a position in the Civil Service, have done an equally magnanimous act. I know that financially it means an abatement of your income, and I know that at this particular time of your life there are commitments that press heavily; such an abatement must be a matter of some concern. Therefore it is still more generous on your part to accept the chal-

lenge to come out and serve in a capacity where we require a man of some standing and calibre. I feel sure that if my countrymen know how well you have served this country whether as an officer of the Sugar Producers or as a legislator, no such comment could ever have fallen from anyone's lips. I wish to assure this Council, and if that were necessary, and, to assure my countrymen that your selection has been one of the finest to a public office within knowledgeable times. I wish to join with the other hon. Members in wishing that the new job to which you go will be crowned with success, equal success to those from which you have retired in the past.

Dr. Fraser: I must take this opportunity to join with my colleagues in this Legislature in their laudable remarks to you. It is with deep regret to us that you are leaving this Council. I have had the honour to serve under you as the Chairman of many Boards and it was a pleasure. When you made a decision you did so after very careful thought. As the hon. Member, Mr. Ramphal, has very well said, it is a most magnanimous gesture on your part in resigning from this Legislature to take on a very heavy duty. May I wish you every success.

Mr. Phang: The ground has been very well covered by hon. Members who have spoken before me, and it only remains for me to wish you every success in your new job. I want to assure you that this Council deeply regrets losing you, and I am one who will miss you.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Hon. Members, I am sure you will forgive me if I make only an attempt to reply to all what you have said. You will also forgive me if for once you do not hear me as well as you ought to. I may say I have been personally very much moved by all you have said about me. I will

always look back on the time, the years, I have had the privilege in serving in this Council with very happy memories. I will also always look back on the past nearly three and a half months during which I have had the honour to preside over your meetings, unfortunately through tragic circumstances—the loss of a dear friend. I will always look back upon that period with happiness and pleasure and pride—proud of myself and of the way in which all of you, Members of Government and my friends, the Members of the opposition, have co-operated and given me every possible assistance.

I was very deeply touched by some of the remarks made. You will forgive me if I recall a few, particularly those made by the hon. Member, Mr. Cummings, with reference to his earlier days when we were in the same Service and I had the pleasure of having him in my office. To his remarks and those of others of you I have been deeply touched by your reference to your confidence that I will be able to do something in the new job which I am undertaking. Let me say in that connection that I am well aware of the sound foundation which has been laid by Mr. Lord who I am so glad to welcome back to this Council. Let me say also that it was a matter of great gratification to me personally when I learnt that His Excellency had been pleased to appoint Mr. Lord a Nominated Unofficial Member of this Council. I am sure Mr. Lord would forgive me saying that when I have any difficulty I hope to go to him as a Member of this Council and get assistance.

Reference has been made to some comments or criticisms in regards to my selection for this appointment. When all is said and done, publicly I still say this to those who made the criticism, amongst whom I have personal friends, that in public life, whether it be in the Public Service or otherwise, one has to

adjust oneself to criticism, even when such criticisms are personal and hurt. But I feel sure that even those who made the criticism did so because they had to, but I am reinforced by the knowledge from what has been said here today that you, my friends here, together with others who are not here have confidence in me. In undertaking this job, the interest of my present or recent past connections would in no way be affected. My present employers will be my employers for another fortnight. As the hon. Member, Mr. Ramphal has said, is serving them I endeavoured to serve the people of this country, and in my new job it will be my endeavour to serve the people of this country without fear, favour, or prejudice.

I thank Mr. Correia for what he has said. We have known one another for a very long time. He relieved the depth of feeling by introducing a bit of humour. I guess hon. Members know I was one of those going to meet Mr. Lord; and the point about Mr. Correia being ignorant of law and order—I can assure you there was nothing in that. We were good friends then as now.

I am sure I can rely on the help of all hon. Members of this Council whenever I can reasonably look for it. Again, I thank you all for all you have said; forgive me for not referring to all of it. Thank you for all the assistance and co-operation you have given me here; my thanks also go to the Clerk and Staff of the Legislature, including the Official Reporters; and to the Press for the co-operation I have received from the time I have had the honour to occupy the Chair.

I look forward to my new job, and to being allowed to do it without coming here too often. I look forward to doing it without being a Member of the Legislature—I do not mean an Official Member; my friend, Mr. Ramphal

[Mr. Deputy Speaker]

knows what I mean. I remember I was one of those in the bad old days in 1939; I sat here and did my arduous correspondence, paying no attention to what was going on. I hope that when the time comes for me to answer your questions in Finance Committee you will give me a patient hearing and you would not be strong in your opposition when I ask for your help.

From the bottom of my heart I thank you all sincerely. I wish you all success, confident that the dignity and quality of the public service given in this Chamber will be maintained.

The Chief Secretary: I was called away, and so did not have the oppor-

tunity of hearing all that was said by other Members, but I now wish to add my congratulations to you, sir, on your conduct of the proceedings of this Council as Deputy Speaker, and on your invaluable contributions to the deliberations of this Council from the floor. I can only say I am certain that what is the loss of this Council is the Administration's gain.

I now move the adjournment of this Council to a date to be notified by the Speaker

Agreed to.

Council adjourned *sine die*.