

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

Thursday, 21st March, 1946.

The Council met at 2 p.m., His Excellency the Governor, Sir Gordon James Lethem, K.C.M.G., President, in the Chair.

PRESENT.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The Hon. Peer Bacchus, (Western Berbice).

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

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

The Hon. A. G. King (Demerara River).

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

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 28th February, 1946, as printed and circulated, were confirmed.

ANNOUNCEMENTS.

EBINI LIVESTOCK STATION.

The COLONIAL TREASURER (Mr. McDavid) communicated the following Message:—

MESSAGE No. 17.

Honourable Members of the Legislative Council,

In Sir Wilfrid Jackson's Message No. 23 of the 21st of August, 1940, to Honourable Members a scheme was outlined for the establishment of an experimental livestock station at Ebiní Downs, Berbice River. The objects of the scheme were, over a period of five years, to carry out research work for the savannah ranches near the coast, to examine the possibility of stocking the intermediate savannahs along the Berbice River with cattle, and to make a general study of pasturage and feeding problems which are among the chief difficulties to be solved in connection with the Colony's livestock industry. The scheme was considered and approved, and a sum of \$14,000 (capital \$10,000 and recurrent charges \$4,000) for the first year and \$4,000 for four consecutive years thereafter, making a total of \$30,000, was passed as a charge against the Development Trust Fund.

2. In 1944, an additional emergency grant of \$6,000 from the Trust Fund was sanctioned to cover the cost of nutrition measures which were necessary to check abnormal mortality among the stock on the station. My Message No. 1 of the 27th of April, 1944, refers.

3. The total authorised appropriation from the Development Trust Fund is now exhausted. The results so far obtained from the scheme have proved of great value, and both the Comptroller for Development and Welfare in the West Indies and Professor Miller, who recently carried out a survey of animal husbandry in the British Caribbean area, strongly recommend the continuation of the work at the Station for a further period of three years. I should like personally strongly to support this recommendation in the light of a recent inspection when I was accompanied by the District Commissioner and the Legislative Council Member for the Berbice River, Captain Ferreira. Dr. Fraser, the Veterinary Surgeon, made a most interesting exposition to us of the value of the mineral salts experiment which may be on the way to solving the problem on such savannahs as this.

4. The additional financial provision required is \$35,000, comprising capital expenditure of \$5,000 and recurrent expenditure of \$10,000 a year for three years. The Advisory Committee for the

Development Trust Fund has recommended a grant of this additional sum from the Trust Fund, subject to the retention for the benefit of the scheme and not by general revenue of all future receipts from the operation of the Station with a view to the possible continuation of the scheme for a further period of two years which would make five years in all. The Executive Council has accepted this recommendation, which has the full support of the Secretary of State for the Colonies, and I now invite Honourable Members to record their formal approval.

GORDON LETHEM,
Governor.

9th March, 1946.

PAPERS LAID.

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

Report of the Trustees of the Berbice Lutheran Fund for the year 1945.

Georgetown Chamber of Commerce Report and Statement of Accounts for the year, 1945.

The Health (Yellow Fever Control) (Amendment) Regulations, 1946.

The COLONIAL TREASURER laid on the table the following document:—

Schedule of additional provision for January to March, 1946.

GOVERNMENT NOTICES.**INTRODUCTION OF BILLS.**

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Mr. Holder, acting), gave notice of the introduction and first reading of the following Bill:—

A Bill intituled "An Ordinance further to amend the Summary Jurisdiction (Offences) Ordinance by increasing the imprisonment which may be awarded for larceny of bicycles and similar offences in relation thereto; by prohibiting kite flying in Georgetown and New Amsterdam; by providing for the imposition of penalties on persons smoking on wharves in contravention of a notice forbidding such smoking; by prohibiting

roller-skating on public ways in Georgetown and New Amsterdam and on public roads; by providing for the imposition of penalties for the release of animals lawfully seized to be impounded as strays and for the unlawful rescue or release of such animals when impounded: and by making further provision for the control of Brcthels."

The COLONIAL TREASURER gave notice of the introduction and first reading of the following Bill:—

A Bill intituled "An Ordinance to provide for the establishment of the British Guiana Rice Producers' Association and for purposes connected therewith."

EBINI LIVESTOCK STATION.

The COLONIAL TREASURER gave notice of the following motions:—

- (i) That, with reference to Governor's Message No. 17 of the 9th of March, 1946, this Council approves of a free grant of \$35,000 from the Development Trust Fund for the purpose of financing the operation of the livestock experiment station at Ebini Downs, Berbice River, for a further period of three years.

1946 Supplementary Estimate—1st. Qr.

- (ii) That, this Council approves of the Schedule of Additional Provision for January to March, 1946, which has been laid on the table.

NOTICE OF QUESTIONS.

SUBSIDIZATION.

Mr. JACOB gave notice of the following questions:—

1. How many articles of food and other commodities were subsidized since subsidization began to the end of 1945, with the amount spent on each article, each year separately?
2. How many articles are being subsidized in 1946, with the amount estimated to be spent on each article?

W.J. CONFERENCE

3. What amount has been paid to the Members of the delegation to Barbados and St. Thomas, each member separately by way of—

- (a) Aeroplane fares,
- (b) Motor car hire,
- (c) Subsistence allowance, with rate per day
- (d) Other expenses.

GOVERNOR'S TRAVELLING EXPENSES.

4. What amount has been paid to Sir Gordon Lethem, K.C.M.G., on his trips to London and Barbados, each trip separately by way of—

- (a) Aeroplane fares,
- (b) Railway fares,
- (c) Motor car hire,
- (d) Subsistence allowance, with rate per day,
- (e) Other expenses.

5. What amount has been paid to Sir Gordon Lethem, K.C.M.G., on his travels within the Colony from 1941 to date, each year separately by way of—

- (a) Aeroplane fares to the B.G. Airways Ltd.
- (b) Motor car hire,
- (c) Subsistence allowance, with rate per day,
- (d) Other expenses.

ORDER OF THE DAY

LEAVE PASSAGES REGULATIONS.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: 1 beg to move the following motion:—

That, with reference to the Governor's Message No. 16 dated 22nd January, 1946, this Council approves of the introduction of Leave Passages Regulations as indicated in the Message and undertakes to provide the necessary funds to give effect thereto.

Your Message, sir, is very clear and the Regulations are quite simple, so I propose, in moving this motion, to deal principally with the objections which have been raised to it since it was tabled.

The Message explains that the question of the grant of leave passages has been under consideration by Government from time to time during the past ten years, and the question has been

under continual consideration by you, sir, the Colonial Treasurer and myself, ever since I was appointed to the Colony. It was discussed in Executive Council on April 18, 1944. A sub-committee of Executive Council was appointed to go into it on September 3, 1944, and on September 2, 1945, it was decided, with the advice of the Executive Council, that now that the war had ended an early decision was necessary and the preparation of these Regulations which follow those in force in other Colonies was put in hand.

The objections to the proposals seem to be crystallised under the following heads:

- (a) Racial discrimination;
- (b) that the proposals do not go far enough;
- (c) on the basis of what is good for one is good for all, it is unfair to assist only those with high salaries; and
- (d) the proposals should be withdrawn because they can only be implemented at the lowest income groups

As regards racial discrimination, it will be obvious to all Members that there is no foundation whatever for this allegation. The proposal is to improve the conditions obtaining to certain posts. Any holder of that post whether he be recruited from abroad or born here of any race whatever, will be eligible for the grant of leave passages, and Members will see from paragraph 9 of your Message, sir, that only 59 of the officers concerned are normally domiciled outside the Caribbean area. The total number of 198 quoted in that paragraph will be substantially increased by reason of certain amendments, which it is proposed to move and which I will now explain.

Members have received copies of the memorandum submitted by the Civil Service Association to which Government has given careful consideration, and in order to extend the benefit to more officers without, it is hoped,

increasing the cost, the following amendments are now tabled, copies of which have been circulated to Members:

Regulation 2 is substituted by a regulation providing for the wife of an officer to receive one half instead of the full cost of a return passage, and the term "officer" has been extended to include any officer who has been in receipt of a salary of not less than \$1,920 per annum for a period of not less than four years.

This will mean that the concession will then be available to a number of fairly senior posts, particularly in the professional and technical groups as well as to Senior Clerks and to those Class I clerks with long service.

Regulation 7 has been substituted by a regulation which will enable Government to direct that any officer below the rank of Senior officer shall travel second class if such accommodation is available.

It is anticipated that the reduction of the concession for wives and the proposal to send other than Senior officers second class, when possible, will cover the cost of the increase in the number of officers who will become eligible, and the total should remain about the same. It should not be overlooked that officers, who have homes in British Guiana, are less likely to avail themselves of the concession for passages for wives now that only half the cost is granted than officers who have homes abroad, and as the latter are so greatly in the minority, a substantial saving should be effected thereby in assistance to wives' passages.

The complaint that the proposals are unfair and should be abandoned because only certain officers benefit, is very clearly answered in paragraph 6 of Your Excellency's Message. I do not think that any Member here today could subscribe to any suggestion that

this Colony can now afford to revive the concession originally granted in 1920 which covered all pensionable officers, and I must speak frankly on this point and say that I deprecate very strongly the 'dog-in-the-manger' attitude expressed by some who feel that if they cannot have this concession, then no one should. Moreover, it is not only a very selfish attitude, but it is also a shortsighted one, because though these Juniors do not benefit now, their case for some assistance in the future will be the stronger later, and it is surely only reasonable that those who have long service and who have worked well for Government and have obtained promotion as a result of it, are the most deserving to receive the benefit of this concession.

As regards the last objection that the whole scheme should be abandoned as it can only be implemented at the expense of the lowest income groups, I think I cannot do better, if Your Excellency will permit, than to read the telegram which has been received from the Secretary of State on the subject:

"I shall be glad if you will cause the British Guiana Trades Union Council to be informed that I have received and considered their telegram on the subject of your Message 16 concerning free leave passages, but regret I am not prepared to intervene. The text of the Message explains fully the desirability of your proposals which are in conformity with the practices of the great majority of Colonial Governments and which are, I consider, reasonable. In my opinion the provision of free leave passages on the lines proposed in your Message is an important condition for securing a Civil Service of high standard and quality and the proposal has my full support."

Government has always regarded the cost of leave passages as a necessary and not an optional item of public expenditure.

I ask Members to look at this whole question on a much broader basis indeed. There is an increasing feeling that the Civil Services in the Caribbean should

be federated, and that officers should be able to interchange. If this Colony is to have a Civil Service of high standard and quality to compete with the Civil Services of the other British Colonies in the Caribbean, it is essential that the holders of the higher ranks should gain knowledge and experience by travel. It is the present policy of this Government, where possible, to appoint local men to senior positions, but it is essential that our local men should be properly qualified to hold these senior positions, and one of the ways in which they can qualify is by travelling. In other words, it is just as important for the holder of the post of Comptroller of Customs to go abroad on leave to widen his knowledge as it is for the holder of the Director of Geological Surveys to go back to England to recuperate his health.

My own sincere belief is that if this Government sits back and makes no provision for leave passages, then the whole standard of the Service will stay put and even go backwards, and it may become increasingly necessary for Government to fill key positions by recruiting officers from outside with knowledge of other countries and wider experience and on short agreement which provides for leave passages. If we can ensure that our own Senior officers get the necessary experience by travel and contacts, then I am sure that the result will be that more and more appointments to the highest ranks will come to them both in this Colony and in other Colonies, too. And I most definitely refute the allegation that Government is intending to use leave passages as a means of increasing the number of appointments from abroad.

I should add that there is also a scheme afoot to provide for the outstanding Junior a similar opportunity to qualify for local promotion to a senior post by the grant of scholarships.

Finally, I should say that in fairness to the comparatively few of the officers now recruited from abroad, provision should be made to enable them to return to their homes at the expiration of a hard tour of work in this Colony. This concession is already granted by commercial interests. It is quite unreasonable to say that these officers must find the money for passages for themselves and their families without any assistance. I know only too well that some expatriated officers are so financially placed that they could not hope to take their families back to their homes until the time comes when they are transferred to another Colony and the expense is provided by the receiving Colony. It is a really deplorable position to place these officers in and Members will recollect that during the debate on the Estimates, it was stated that one of the reasons which led one excellent officer to accept transfer was that the Colony to which he was transferred provided assistance towards leave passages, and I remember that some Members then said "Oh, why can't this Government do likewise for this officer in order that he may remain in this Colony?"

If Members want good officers to continue to do good work for British Guiana, then the provision of assistance towards leave passages is a first essential. If Members do not agree and consider that the money should be spent in another manner, then they must hold the responsibility. Government can only put forward for consideration what it knows is right. The Legislative Council is the only representative body which can reach a decision after full discussion and with full knowledge of all the facts. I ask Members not be led away by public clamour of the ill-informed; I ask Members to decide purely on the merits of the argument and to vote sincerely

for what they think is the best for the Service and the Colony. And the cost is not great. I now formally move . . .

"That, with reference to the Governor's Message No. 16 dated 22nd January, 1946, this Council approves of the introduction of Leave Passages Regulations as indicated in the Message and undertakes to provide the necessary funds to give effect thereto."

The COLONIAL TREASURER seconded.

THE PRESIDENT'S OBSERVATIONS.

The PRESIDENT: Before throwing the debate open, it has been suggested to me that it might be desirable and convenient at this time if I said a few words in amplification of what has been said by the Colonial Secretary, and in order further to state the point of view of Government both in this country and in the United Kingdom.

I am particularly anxious that I should have a very full expression of views from this Council as a whole that I can present to the Secretary of State, and particularly as a number of important decisions may depend upon it. As I said, I should rather possibly even adjourn the debate or not proceed to a division until I have been satisfied that I can have a very full expression of views from this Council and from Members as a whole.

I should just like to make one preliminary remark, and one that is quite personal. I regret that it should be necessary, but it has been brought to my notice more than once in the last few weeks that it is inferred that the Governor has his leave passages paid by this Government, and that the Governor retires with a pension from this Colony. I would just like to say that this question of leave passages does not in any way touch me. Both these statements are untrue. I do not draw anything in the way of costs of leave passages between this Colony and the United Kingdom,

whether it is on leave or on duty. It did not cost this Government when I assumed duty in the Colony, and it will not cost it one cent when I finally retire. My visit to the United Kingdom in 1944 had nothing charged against this Colony's funds for passage expenses, and the statement that the Governor draws a pension from the Colony in which he has served is also untrue. I shall not draw one cent from this Colony as pension.

Now for the question before us, the motion moved by the Colonial Secretary. What I should like to emphasise is precisely that the question is first, second third, and last, one of the quality in the public service. It is solely that question of quality in public service. Is this Colony prepared to endeavour to raise the standard of its Service to that level that is necessary if Guiana is going to make that progress and development of which we hear so much? Now the question has come forward at this time because it has not been appropriate or convenient to bring it forward during the war years, and because it is now proper in planning the future of the next ten or twenty years to take the matter into consideration with a view to securing some improvement in the public service. It is possible that when I came here in 1941 I did not think it important to raise the question then, I thought there might be other ways from experience over these last four years, and it certainly has impressed me how necessary this step is in some form or another.

I have to speak with a certain amount of candour. I am certainly not anxious to wound or depreciate endeavours of public servants, but I have to say that there are certain things in our system, our set-up as it is now, that are far from satisfactory. I have seen it both in Georgetown and outside, that lack of initiative, lack of keen sense of responsibility and anxiety to keep

Government work at a high level, that endeavour to have each unit of Government working as in one organisation, each linking up with the other, and that addiction to routine and lack of humanism which I have criticised more than once in this Council and outside. I know people will say an officer enters the Government service well equipped; after a time his zeal becomes blunted, he feels frustrated, and he ceases to be more than a routine officer in a rut. That may be quite true. It is true many services, many Government services, in particular, and there are many causes for that just as there are many remedies.

One of the remedies is the recent legislation to enable seniors to retire at 50 or 55, and so it may be possible to speed up promotion, which has been in this Colony too slow. Another remedy is the opportunity given to junior officers for study and in the form of scholarships, and the special assistance which will be available in these coming years. I had today a paper in front of me showing the remarkable number of 200 scholarships spread over ten years: the British Council scholarships, Development and Welfare Scholarships, the Nuffield Scheme, and our own proposals for engineering scholarships. Again there is now established a much greater degree of promotion on merit.

There is now this other remedy, and that is to ensure that officers in responsible posts, senior posts, do get a "break" at reasonable times in their service, a "break" from being, as the Colonial Secretary said, cooped up in Georgetown. That is one of the conditions of our Service: the being cooped up in small, limited sphere. Therefore, in order to secure the better Service required, it is necessary to provide for that break which will give an opportunity to particular officers of stimulating mind and health, and sharpening their whole attitude to their work. I

am told there is not such a system in our sister Colony of Jamaica. That may be, but conditions there are quite different, far more opportunity for change, or to get to North America. From Guiana, a short holiday in the West Indian islands or in this Colony is not enough to provide that break if we want quality.

The Colonial Secretary has mentioned a question again, that of interchange. We have Trinidad. Trinidad can take officers from Guiana, offer the same salary or a little better, and give them this passage concession. Are we going to get an officer from Trinidad to come here without such a privilege as that? If we want officers and our Service to compare with other Colonies, we must have similar conditions.

Then there is the suggestion which the Colonial Secretary mentioned that there is some sinister move now at the end of the war to get Colonies to take a great influx of Englishmen from the Services. That is completely unfounded, and if there is anyone who considers he has authority for such a statement, then I must say that what he heard or read he completely misunderstood. I know from experience at the end of the last war, that the Imperial Government felt a real responsibility to place in employment all deserving ex-Servicemen, and the Colonial Governments were asked to take what they could. There was nothing wrong in that. It may be done again. But we have the over-riding policy of the Colonial Empire, particularly in the Caribbean area—and if I may say so, in any Colony in which I have any influence—of the maximum degree of appointment of local officers wherever they are qualified. Any suggestion to the contrary is completely unfounded.

Touching this question of importee officers. Any realist must know that we have to take a certain number. We can

not fill all our technical posts. Are we going to get officers easily? Certainly not. The commercial community will say we should have expert advice on this and on that, such as income tax. Can we get the men? No. I am pressed to fill vacancies at the Bishops' High School and the Queen's College. Can we get the officers? We do not fully. I had personal correspondence recently from the Colonial Office explaining this difficulty, and saying the difficulty is not primarily that of salary, but rather the conditions of service, and that this is not generally an attractive Colony which officers will join. The fact remains it is a question of conditions, and there is the fear that the officer will be cooped up in Georgetown for an indefinite period of years without getting a break. That is what we are suffering from now in this Service. But this question is only a minor factor, and the major one is that of the great benefit to the local man from travel.

The Colonial Secretary mentioned the question of finance. He said the figure was not in itself extremely high. It is not. It is comparatively a low figure, low compared with the hundreds of thousands and millions we spend on the increases to the rank and file of this Service, for example on bonus in the public service generally. But more important than all this it is a comparatively small figure to what the Colony will gain or lose according to the standard of our Service. Can anyone believe that if in our Transport and Harbours system we had had a General Manager or a number of senior officers well fitted by knowledge and experience, who were given from time to time opportunities of broadening their experience and knowledge we should have been landed in our present condition?

I was recently in the Courentyne and I saw what has been causing this Government a great deal more than it need. We would have been saved

several times this expenditure per annum had we had a general level of active-minded officers anxious to see that this and that does not go to pieces. We are suffering from officers sitting back and not being alive to what they might do. It is the system, and that is where we are losing more money than we would spend on a small figure like this.

There is another instance: a very important negotiation with authorities outside this Colony. The matter was handled almost exclusively by the Colonial Treasurer with me, and it is because the Colonial Treasurer is a first-class officer, with that keen sense of judgment and responsibility, that this Colony was saved not \$24,000 or \$30,000, but hundreds of thousands of dollars. You may say that the Treasurer has been an officer not going on leave and without any concession of leave passages. That may be, but it may be the exception that proves the rule, and the Colonial Treasurer, with some other officers of this Service whom I have greatly praised, have been those most able, better than most, to keep in touch with things and up to concert pitch.

What I wish to emphasise is that we want officers in the top grades who are fitted physically and mentally with resilience and with stimulated active minds. I do not think we will achieve this except by practice and giving them the chance of such stimulation of occasional travel away in the world outside, and that is what we will not get under our present system.

That takes me back to where I began: the question of quality of the Government Service. Speaking as Governor, can a Governor be asked, can he be expected to stand up to a demand which, in my experience, is far heavier than normal? Can he be expected always to motivate activity; or as has been said in this Council, if the Governor will move you can get anywhere? Can you expect me, or

my successor, to carry on the successful development of this Colony, a difficult country, as often said, with a blunt instrument? That is what we have, an instrument in far too many parts blunt. The various important parts of the Government machinery should be directed by keen and flexible Damascus blades, and not by hack instruments or blunt cutlasses. Let me emphasise this realist point of view. Let me emphasise the principle of this matter. The form or details may be varied, but I would say in one way or another we have got to meet this imperative need to have good service. If we cannot, I shall have to regard as very seriously qualified, the possibility of this greater development of Guiana, of which we hear so much of industrialisation, interior, wherever it is, I shall have to regard as seriously qualified. I support the move of the Colonial Secretary.

Mr. AUSTIN: Sir, perhaps, as one of the old Members of this Council, you will permit me to say a few words. I cannot agree with the hon. the Colonial Secretary when he said that Your Excellency's Message was clear. It has been cleared up now by his remarks and yours also, and although I am inclined towards a contributory scheme I think there is still some necessity for more clarification. First of all I would like to say that the old Combined Court had never been ungenerous as regards the granting of assisted passages or pensions to officers who have come to this Colony—square pegs who could not fulfil their duties. We have been generous and we will continue to be generous, but are we a champagne Colony? Can we afford to copy what is done in Trinidad, Jamaica, and the West Coast of Africa, with their large populations when we have a bare 400,000 people? I understand that our Civil Service is as large as those of Jamaica and Trinidad although the populations in those islands are much larger. I should like

to find out, if it is possible to obtain an answer, if those who have joined the Civil Service within the last few years would be entitled to free passages under these new proposals.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Does the hon. Member refer to officers holding posts for which it is proposed to provide leave passages?

Mr. AUSTIN: Yes. There have been one or two appointments recently, and one or two recent arrivals. There are senior and junior officers who will now be entitled to free passages. Will they be given secondary consideration to the more senior officers who have not the length of service which others have had? I think that point needs some clarification by the Colonial Secretary. Will officers who have given excellent service and are due for retirement on pension be entitled to free passages? I would not oppose it but I would like to have the point made clear.

There is another point which arises with respect to the question of West Indian Federation. I understand that Trinidad provides its civil servants with assisted passages, but Jamaica does not. If Federation is adopted would we accept officers from the West Indian Islands and provide them with free passages to wherever they may wish to go? Before you made your remarks, sir, I was in favour of what I may term a contributory scheme. I would like to see all Government officers given assisted passages, not necessarily to the United Kingdom but outside the Colony. British Guiana has its attractions, but many of its people would like to broaden their outlook by going abroad. I was very pleased to see in Mr. Rooke's report on the Transport and Harbours Department special reference to the good work of the young men of the Transport Service, and I think he stressed the point that if they were given facilities to go

abroad they would be assets to the Colony. I am of the opinion that the senior officers of the Civil Service should be provided with assisted passages under a contributory scheme. I also very much desire to see the junior members of the Service receive similar benefit from the taxpayers of the Colony.

Mr. JACOB: I am not at all happy about this motion. I feel that the Colony is not in a fit financial position to undertake this responsibility at the present time, and until the finances of the Colony improve I think this motion should be rejected. I was looking at the Budget figures during the last few days and I observed that the estimated deficit for 1945 is \$2,707,491, and for 1946 it is \$2,892,115, a total deficit of \$5,599,606 for the two years as against an accumulated surplus balance of \$6,950,659 to the end of 1944. So that if the total amount of the deficit is deducted from the surplus balance the estimated surplus at the end of 1946 would be \$1,351,053. We have not heard from either the mover of the motion, Your Excellency, or the Treasurer, who seconded the motion, that the finances of the Colony are in any better state at the present time. Perhaps they are; I do not know. I sincerely believe they are somewhat better, but that has not been made clear by our financial experts. That being so, I think the Colony is not in a position to undertake this expenditure at this time after having undertaken all kinds of expenditure recently.

I am not going to say that the Secretary of State is responsible for this motion. In fact I accept the view that he will not intervene, but that it is something being done by the Government of this Colony in collaboration with the West Indian Colonies. I put that complexion on it because I believe the civil servants of these Colonies would want to do something in their own interest. I do not make that state-

ment because I think there should not be a certain amount of self-interest, but unless these Colonies looking at their finances from a different viewpoint I think their financial positions will continue to be precarious. Your Excellency has stated that you found recently in Berbice and other places a tendency towards wasteful expenditure. You have found that people do not show any initiative to do the right thing at the right time. That is exactly what I feel—that if we are to have progress and prosperity in this Colony and throughout the West Indies there must be a complete change of Government. The representatives of the people, who will have no direct responsibility or interest, should be the people, as in all democratic countries, to look after the finances of the Colony.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Does the hon. Member suggest that the people to look after the finances of the Colony could have no direct responsibility?

Mr. JACOB: That is the position in England and in the United States. For instance, in England the Chancellor of the Exchequer is elected. I do not mean personal responsibility. I may refer to what I have actually written as a member of the Committee which went into the question of anomalies in regard to the salaries of professional and technical officers of the Civil Service. We found that senior Government officers, who were members of the Committee, were thinking solely of themselves.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: You mean self-interest. You used the wrong word.

Mr. JACOB: Perhaps. They have responsibility to do these things but they are blinded by self-interest. The responsibility is theirs nevertheless. I was trying to make the point that in order to perpetuate this system, perhaps those in authority are thinking of

Treasury control of this Colony in the near future. Perhaps all these schemes are put forward so that the Colony will become bankrupt. Within two years our accumulated surplus of four years is practically gone. What is to happen next year? If we go on at this rate, by next year our accumulated surplus will be completely gone and in the years to come we shall have to go back to the British Exchequer and this Colony will revert back to Treasury control.

So I say, until and unless the responsibility for the finances of the Colony is removed from Government Officials and placed in a large measure in the hands of elected representatives of the people I will not support this scheme. For over a century we have had in this Colony lack of progress or very little progress in most directions. That is not going to be disputed. We do find a certain amount of progress, but after a century of British rule here should we not expect a far better Colony than we have? The responsibility must be placed on Government Officials. It is true that during the last three years there has been a certain number of Elected Members on the Executive Council giving a certain amount of advice, but I am doubtful whether that advice is worth anything, constituted as this Council is. Until those representatives who are advising Government have a direct responsibility to the people I can see no prospect of progress at all.

I am going to see how certain hon. Members of this Council will vote on this matter. It is perfectly clear that the finances of the Colony do not warrant this expenditure. If the finances of the Colony warrant it, I would be the first to support this measure. It is clear that public feeling is very high on this question. We have had one of the recognised — I use the word advisedly — institutions, the Trades Union Council, unanimously opposed to this measure, I understand. That Council, I think, is represented in this

Council and, I think, in the Executive Council as well. That Trades Union Council has a certain amount of responsibility. It is true its membership may be small and the majority of us, Members of this Council, have no direct responsibility to the people. So far as I am concerned, I do not represent even one per cent. of the people of my constituency. Be that as it may, I am the Representative of the North-Western District. The majority of Elected Members of Council represent two or three or possibly four per cent. of the people of their respective constituencies. Therefore the representation of the people in this Council is not around 20 per cent. This Council constituted as it is and composed mostly of Government Officials and chosen Members who are Nominated Members having responsibility to the Governor or the Government, cannot speak on behalf of the people of the Colony.

Mr. C. V. Wight: I must rise to a point of order on that! The hon. Member has no right to say that hon. Members cannot speak on behalf of the people who elected them. The whole of that part of his speech is totally irrelevant to the motion.

Mr. JACOB: I am merely stating a fact. The fact is the hon. Member who objects to my speech by virtue of his election to this Council does not represent more than 3 per cent. of the people of his constituency. He has no responsibility to the other people, the 97 per cent. of his constituency, and, as I was saying, until and unless this Council is representative of 20 per cent. of the inhabitants of the Colony it cannot be said to be representative at all. I am merely making this statement to show that whatever is the decision here, perhaps after the General Elections and after the list of voters has been completed, we may see what kind of representation we have in this Colony. I was saying that the Trades Union Council is definitely

opposed to this motion, and I as well as most Members of this Council have received a communication from that Body to that effect. It was also reported in the Press. The Secretary of State for the Colonies has very rightly said that he is not going to intervene in the matter, and Your Excellency has stated that in order to have a high standard of quality in the Service, it is necessary to have these Regulations passed. If we have not had that standard up to the present, I do not think we will have it in the near future when these Regulations are passed. I do not think that by merely offering leave passages we will get a better type of officer coming here. I can give a few instances. Take the case of the Commissioner of Labour. When this Council suggested a salary of £1,000 per annum the Secretary of State said that for him to get a suitable man for the post the Colony should offer a salary of £1,200, and the Colony immediately did so. I do not think this Government can give a single instance where in order to get a Specialist Officer to come out here an increase of the emoluments or an increase of the travelling expenses and allowances has been asked for and has not been granted. So to say that because you offer better facilities you will get a higher status or better quality of officer, I do not agree.

On the other hand what is the actual position? We find ourselves in a position here continuously restricting the educational facilities, so as to have our young people unable to govern well and to remain so permanently. We are told that whenever the opportunity offers the local man, provided he is competent, will be given an executive position in the Government Service, but Government is actually hindering in a large measure the people from becoming so competent. Bishops' High School for Girls at the moment, it is stated, cannot get a responsible staff highly qualified. I state that seriously. Queen's College also

cannot get qualified people for its staff. Perhaps we want one qualified in English to teach History or *vice versa*; that is good enough for the people. If we are not able in those institutions to shift the teachers around and to have the qualified staff required, I do not think this Colony should be burdened with this inefficiency much longer. Queen's College must remain for some time with accommodation for only 400 pupils. Government must continue to pay the ordinary people \$12 and \$16 per month. I would like to say that some people are still earning much less than \$12 per month. All these things should be looked after before we consider these perquisites for highly paid officers who, I think, are fairly well treated. Until we are able to pay our working people a better wage, or junior employees a living wage, and until the Colony's finances are in a better position, I am afraid I cannot support this motion.

Further, if I am to accept as true the statements that are made from time to time that we want in effect the Imperial Government to confer Self-Government on us or to give greater self-government to the people, why not extend the educational facilities in respect of Primary, Secondary and Technical Education? I may be told: "Oh, yes; we are doing so." But it is being done at a snail's pace, as we have not the money to spend in every direction whereby the adults in this Colony can in the near future attempt to do all these things themselves. I am satisfied that we have in this Colony and the West Indies men who are wholly capable to administer the Government of these Colonies, but the opportunity is not given them. Whenever the local men are promoted to the higher posts we find there is almost entire satisfaction in this Colony, Why? We have several Government Officers, including the hon. the Colonial Treasurer, who have done exceptionally well as local men. The Trades Union

Council may not be quite clear on the point, but there is the suspicion that the reason for these high positions being so well provided for is to make the people who will fill them feel that they alone are to enjoy all these benefits, and it will be the duty of those responsible for the selection of officers to select them from abroad. I suppose that is the main objection of the Trades Union Council and, I trust, those actually elevated to this Council will do the same

I was looking at the Advisory Committee—the Chairman's report on the efficiency of the Public Works Department. Here you have a Department in which the majority of officers are not local men, and we have had an exposure of the worse things coming from that Department. In the other Departments where we do not have imported officers those things are never found. We have Queen's College where the majority of the staff have come from abroad, and they are not giving the Colony the best service. I find that our revenue figures are not helping us. In fact until this Colony is able to export larger quantities of the various kinds of our products, the Colony will always be in a state of stagnation. What are all our experts doing in this matter? We are not actually bringing into the country as much money as we ought. What have our experts done in this direction during the last twenty years? What has the Agricultural Department done about it? I find whenever I take a few instances that we have not been well served since these imported officers are here and are enjoying all the benefits of the posts they fill. I hesitate to think that by offering greater benefits to those who come in the future, we will obtain any progress. In Your Excellency's Message reference is made to other parts of the Empire. I refrain from saying very many things in that respect, because I feel that British Guiana is best able to decide for its

own people. I think, sir, it is not necessary for me to say anything more. I shall vote against this motion.

Mr. WOOLFORD: I hesitate to speak so early, but it is one of the few occasions in my life on which I feel some doubt in supporting this particular proposal. It is a fact that representations have been made by some members of my constituency that I should oppose this motion, and yet I feel that I would be wrong in doing so. I remember when we had what was called "Assisted Passages," when we were paying those assisted passages to Europe, and I also know that as the result of what really was discrimination a period was put to its continuance. There were cases where Officers have had, perhaps at least twice, assisted passages granted them while others had been refused them. That should never have happened, and there were those circumstances in which a particular Officer was in ill-health and Government was justified in allowing that Officer to go away on leave, but he could not afford the passage to do so. There were also many cases where Officers took advantage of assisted passages to go to Europe and had difficulty in maintaining themselves there owing to the low salaries they received.

Personally I have risen for the express purpose of seeing whether this matter cannot be examined a little more closely by a Committee. The hon. Member for Eastern Demerara (Mr. Humphrys), who has just left the Chamber, must have heard the remark I made to the hon. Nominated Member, Mr. Austin. I asked Mr. Austin to suggest to Government the appointment of a Committee which will meet at once and quickly come to a decision. I would like to see the lower ranks of the Service given the opportunity to go abroad. Some limited amount should be provided them to leave this Colony and make contact with others abroad. It is a remarkable fact that

those who had the advantage in certain directions which I do not care to mention now are in far better circumstances than those who have not had such an advantage. The reasons you, sir, have given and also given by the hon. the Colonial Secretary are sound, but I think that every opportunity should be given to persons born in this Colony who have not had the privilege of leaving it to gain what I consider a good adult education. I think it will be for the good of the Colony, and I suggest that this question be examined by a Committee which can meet at once. I do not accept the view that there is any racial or other discrimination. It is not disclosed in the proposal as such, and I am glad to think that has not been pressed. There is considerable opposition on the part of the people not so much on the ground that the proposal is to benefit Europeans from abroad as on the ground that a greater number of persons should enjoy this benefit. I think that the Colony should make up its mind to afford it by some means, which the Committee may be able to advise, and to extend this benefit to a greater number.

Dr. SINGH: This Colony had been liberal in providing free passages to the members of the Civil Service and their wives, but those passages were suspended for the reason that our income was not steady and we had to think of our Budget. British Guiana is really unfortunate and, I believe, there is no other Colony in the position of British Guiana. We have been shouldering huge expenditure on Sea Defences. That had cost this Colony much. At some times when the spring tides were accompanied by heavy winds much damage was done and our engineers, although they tried their best, were not able to remedy the situation. I do trust Providence will help us in that regard. If money is saved it should be used in useful projects for the Colony's benefit. Recently

we have had a revision of the salaries of the Civil Service, and that certainly must have made inroads into our finances.

As regards the question of free passages, I think it should not be confined to Senior Officers but, it should be open to the whole Service. It is true, it will be an encouragement to the people who have come from England, but our local men also deserve the benefit of going abroad to the Islands, or Canada, or the United Kingdom. We live in a small Colony and by going abroad we make contacts with others, see things from different angles and we broaden our ideas. Perhaps when these Officers return to the Colony they will be better able to administer with a greater degree of efficiency in this Colony. But, sir, the other point I wish considered is that the passages should be given to the Senior Officers either to the United Kingdom or Canada and to the Officers of the lower ranks to the West Indies only. I do not know really the position of the finances of this Colony, but if it is not good then I suggest that 50 per cent. of the cost of the passages should be given.

Mr. KING: I am rather enamoured with the suggestion put forward by the hon. the Deputy President (Mr. Woolford). This is a matter which can be more properly discussed by a small Committee which may be appointed for the purpose of going into the matter more thoroughly. I personally am against his suggestion that free passages be limited to a certain class of Government Servants. I am definitely in favour of Government Servants being helped to leave this Colony for the benefit of their health and, as the hon. the Deputy President has put it far more clearly than I can, for the enlargement of their minds. I will support any reasonable suggestion whereby the lower income group of the Service through the assistance of Government as

regards passages will be enabled to leave the Colony on furlough. I personally feel that members of the Civil Service earning between \$100 and \$150 per month are more in need of a change and recuperation than those who are earning salaries that afford them the comforts and luxuries of life, and I do believe the Service will be far better so far as actual service is concerned if Government can see its way to assist those Civil Servants earning around \$100 per month. I do feel they are more in need of help than those earning over \$200.

I feel it will be very difficult for this Council as a body to sit down here and work out a scheme which will be acceptable to this Council. I do not believe the hon. Member for North-Western District was sincere in his statement that this Colony cannot shoulder the burden of assisting Civil Servants to leave the Colony on furlough. This Colony has undertaken expenses comparably greater than—what I consider—this paltry sum we are now asked to vote. I say without hesitation that now that we are asked by a somewhat benevolent Government to assist Civil Servants to render better service to the Colony by being able to leave the Colony for the benefit of their health, I am certainly in favour of helping the Civil Servants of this Colony but particularly those who are not in a position to leave the Colony on furlough. Otherwise, many of those who are born here and raise a family here may never get as far as the Beacon, as they may never save sufficient to do so on their own and they may not live to enjoy the benefits of this scheme. That is why I feel, Your Excellency should adopt the suggestion of the hon. the Deputy President. The Council will then be in a better position to consider the proposal coming as it does from a Committee appointed by Your Excellency which has thrashed it out and put to this Council some definite pro-

position which, I am certain, Members of this Council will accept. I certainly support the suggestion of the hon. Deputy President.

Mr. GONSALVES: The hon. Member who has just taken his seat has spoken on the lines on which I had intended to speak, and I have also been anticipated by the Deputy President. At first blush one was inclined to think this was not the time to vote such a large sum of money for this purpose, but since there is no fear on the part of Government as regards this expenditure I feel that the principle underlying the motion might be extended a little further. When I read the Message I thought that perhaps the starting point might have been the grade of the Clerical Service which carries a maximum salary of \$100 per month. If free passages are to be provided I think that grade of the Service should be considered. I arrived in Council towards the end of the Colonial Secretary's speech, but I heard him mention that Government could not get satisfactory service from its officers unless leave passages were provided. I take it that that argument would equally apply to officers in the lower grades. If that principle is accepted by this Council I would suggest that leave passages should not be limited to senior officers.

There are so many points involved in this proposal that I am inclined to the view that it might well be referred to a Committee of this Council. In the present mood of the Council I think if the motion is pressed it might be thrown out, but if Government is disposed to give some consideration to the junior members of the Service the result of the motion might be different. I therefore suggest that the appointment of a Committee should be favourably considered.

Mr. LEE: I would like to find out from the Colonial Treasurer whether in three years' time we will

not have to approach the Imperial Government with our hats in our hands for assistance to meet our deficit? If we have to meet these deficits how can we be generous to the civil servants of the Colony? Did civil servants not know the conditions of their employment when they accepted appointment? Those who have come from abroad knew that they were coming to a tropical climate, and the colonial employees know that the heat and burden of the day would compel them to take holidays if they can afford to do so. I cannot support any motion for free passages for civil servants until I see that the Colony can afford the expenditure, and Government must regularize the conditions of service of the junior members of the Service so that they may be afforded the same holiday facilities as other civil servants in the higher grades. Government employees in certain lower grades are not even allowed to accumulate their leave. They are entitled to 14 days' leave every year, but they are not permitted to accumulate it in 3 or 4 years in order to go abroad on holiday. I say it is not in the interest of the Colony that civil servants should not be given facilities to go abroad. If we want to improve our Civil Service all grades of the Service should be granted leave facilities. After he has served four years a Government employee should be given one month's salary to assist him in paying the passages of himself and his family.

Can the experts say that in 1948 we will be able to balance our budget? Will there be sufficient money to provide sufficient accommodation for the education of our children? Apart from Queen's College there are other schools in the City, the Masters of which have told me they could teach 25 per cent. more pupils, but not in the pens they have at present. Yet we are asked to vote \$30,000 which perhaps could build two schools. Government is trying in every possible way to put this Colony back under Treasury control.

The PRESIDENT: I must take this opportunity to deny any such intention. It is quite untrue. One of the objects of my visit to London in 1944 was precisely to see how we could carry on for 10 years without going to the Imperial Treasury.

Mr. LEE: I am glad to hear that, sir, and I sincerely hope it will work out as you expect. If we could accumulate a surplus balance of 7 million dollars in the next five years we could approach the Imperial Government with a request for greater elected representation in this Legislature. With all due respect to the advice given to you, sir, I feel that we are not heading the right way when this Council is asked to accept this motion. The public is not in agreement with the proposal to grant free passages only to a privileged class of civil servants.

Mr. C. V. WIGHT: I rise to support the suggestion that a Committee of this Council should be appointed to go into the proposal more fully. I am not inclined at the moment to support the motion as it stands for several reasons, and I think it stands a very good chance of being defeated if Government decides to press it now. I do not agree with certain of the arguments put forward by the Colonial Secretary. Some of them strike one as being rather specious. For instance the mention of the question of Federation. If we are going to have Federation and a Unified Civil Service then automatically we would come within the orbit of leave passages as granted in the other Colonies.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: To a point of correction. That is not so at all. At present Jamaica does not grant leave passages, but Trinidad does. My object in mentioning that particular point was to show that Trinidad and British Guiana lead in the matter.

Mr. WIGHT: I take it then that if we have Federation Jamaica would be excluded.

The PRESIDENT: Federation of Civil Services.

Mr. WIGHT: If the Colonial Secretary confined his remarks to federation of Civil Services I beg his pardon. His argument may not then be so specious. Even if there is a federation of Civil Services and Jamaica does not come into the scheme she would still be able, as she has done in certain cases, to offer very much higher salaries to senior officers, some of whom have already left for Jamaica on that score.

The question of an extension of the proposal down the line is one which I think needs serious consideration. It has been suggested that we might adopt a scheme whereby all civil servants might be assisted as regards leave passages. I am asking Your Excellency to consider the suggestion of the appointment of a Committee to go into the question.

Mr. FERREIRA: I think the Colonial Secretary has been very frank. I agree with him that holidays abroad certainly play a large part in broadening and improving the outlook of those concerned, but at the same time it appears to me that there are civil servants in the lower grades who have never had the benefit of any travel abroad. It seems logical that some of those in the lower grades should be given some form of assistance to enable them to go abroad—if not to Europe or America, to the West Indies. I am therefore in favour of the scope of the motion being extended to cover a wider field. I realize that it is impossible in a debate of this kind to arrive at a decision which would be acceptable to the majority of the Members, and I think it would be foolhardy on the part of Government to try to force the issue. I think we should not allow this debate to degenerate into a class issue. Those officers who have worked their way to the top

deserve something, but I think Government should also assist those lower down in the scale. One hon. Member suggested that when a civil servant joined the Service he did so with his eyes wide open and knew the conditions of his employment, and that Government is under no legal obligation to grant him leave passages. That may be so, but there is no reason why Government should not try to improve the conditions of service of all grades.

I therefore strongly suggest that Government appoint a Committee to go into the matter promptly. A Committee would be able to find out what the Colony can afford, and put up something which would be acceptable to the Council. There is no reason why such a Committee should not be able to put up something so as to enable this motion to be brought up before Council within three months.

Mr. JACKSON: I have been listening very attentively to the debate, and I would like to say at the outset that everyone realises the benefit of a holiday and a change of air and scenery. Sometimes I feel in this Legislative Council that some of us ought to have a holiday abroad in order to broaden our views and ideas, and when we come back we may be a little more logical in our speeches. If I had the power and the means I would pay the passage of at least one Member so that he might have a holiday (laughter). I think he knows to whom I refer, and I think he would benefit by it, and the Council would be saved a good deal of headache to understand what he says sometimes, or to get at the gist of his arguments.

I am strongly of the opinion that the motion deserves some support, but I also think that better attention should be paid to those in the lower grades of the Service. I realize that the financial aspect will require careful attention, but I feel that if civil servants were compelled to take holiday and go out of

the Colony the Service would be all the better for it. I hope that we may be able to extend the scope of the motion to the lower grades of the Service, but if it is put to the vote as it stands I would support it.

Mr. CRITCHLOW: I am between the devil and the deep sea (laughter.) The Civil Service Association has asked me to request Government to extend the scheme for leave passages to civil servants earning \$840 per annum. On the other hand the Trades Union Council has asked me not to support the proposal at all. I do not agree with the Trades Union Council for this reason: I have regard for human beings, and whether a person is a civil servant or any other servant he should, after working for a period of time, be granted leave and facilities to make the best use of such leave. That is my conviction.

I have been told at several meetings that Members of the Executive Council are compelled to vote how Government wants them to vote. I have always denied that suggestion because Government has never told me how I should vote. I know that some Members of this Council have told people that Members of the Executive Council are compelled to vote how Government wants them. The Trades Union Council cannot make me do anything against my conscience.

I agree with the suggestion that a Committee should be appointed to go into this matter. My opinion is that there should be a contributory scheme for civil servants' leave passages, and I hope that will be one of the aspects of the matter which the Committee will discuss. The financial aspects of leave passages is always a serious question. I do not know whether Government has the money or not.

Mr. THOMPSON: I do not feel that assisted leave passages are any guarantee of efficient service, but if Government officers are assisted to go

abroad on holiday their health would benefit and Government would save a good deal of money. For that reason I feel that assisted passages should be general, but I do not suggest that an officer should be allowed to travel to the United Kingdom if he has not the necessary funds to do so. The matter bristles with difficulties which should not be glossed over lightly. In the circumstances I am supporting the suggestion that a Committee be appointed to go into the matter thoroughly.

Mr. SEAFORD: I think the hon. Mover in his remarks has put his case very clearly and very fairly, and I feel quite sure it must have had some influence on Members of this Council. Listening to the various speeches made, I have come to the conclusion that, except in one instance, no one here is against the principle of granting leave passages, but the difficulty seems to be where to draw the line. It has been suggested that a Committee be appointed to go into this matter but, sir, I have seen committees of this Council appointed and have not reported for eighteen months. That is where the difficulty lies. As one hon. Member said, we would be in a position to know that this Colony could afford. To determine that, it is going to take the Committee eighteen months. I do not know which Committee can say what the Colony is in a position to afford at the present time. I agree with the hon. Mover when he says the Senior Officers should have a break. It is the Senior Officers—the Heads of Departments and their Assistants—who have to bear the heat and burden of the day. They do not sit and work only during office-hours. I know from personal contact those hours extend to hours of the night, as they take their work home. It is the responsibility and the long hours of work that tell on persons, whether they are Civil Servants or otherwise. Not only has it been said that a break is required, but it is essential in my opinion that Officers should go abroad and should know what is happening in other Colonies; they

should meet and contact people abroad and discuss things with them. I do not think a Member will disagree that that is the kind of education which can do this Colony more good than anything else but, as I see it, it is to know where to draw the line.

One hon. Member said that all employees in the Civil Service should be granted leave passages. I wonder if at that moment he thought what that is likely to cost. That will cost hundreds of thousands of dollars. If we adopt that, I am afraid the schemes of housing, education and such like would have to go overboard. I do not think any Member here will agree to that. It is suggested that a limit be placed at \$1,200 per annum. As I said before, it is to know where to draw the line. It is also suggested that it should be at \$1,920. I am satisfied that if we draw the line at \$1,200 those below that will have a grouse, just as those below \$1,920 have a grouse today. I think, if they take a long view of it and think about the position, they would see it is not wise to stultify this proposal which is now before the Council, for the reason that those people earning between \$1,200 and \$1,920 per annum will in a short time come up to that scale and get the benefit of this proposal. It is a benefit which those who deserve it and who rise in the Service will obtain, and those are the people you wish to have the advantage of travelling and of a wider education, if I may call it so.

The point was made also about our being unable to fill certain positions in the Colony. We know, sir, that the Medical Service is short of doctors. We know, sir, that it is not possible for us to fill those positions from within the Colony. We know, sir, that we have been trying to get medical men from abroad, but under the conditions we are offering it is not possible to do so. The same thing refers to the Masters for Queen's College. I think I am correct in saying that we had eleven tempor-

ary Masters acting at Queen's College. The same also refers to the Bishops' High School and, as you know, to the Engineers of the Public Works Department today. We have been trying for years to get men to fill those positions, but the conditions we offered were not attractive. The result of that has been, in a great many cases we have had to appoint men at the maximum salary instead of at the minimum salary working up to the maximum figure, and we have had to appoint them on contract for three years so as to get them. What does that mean? When you employ a man from abroad on contract you have to pay his passage out and his passage back again to his home and, therefore, he gets the condition which we propose now, and that cuts against our local people—those we appoint to those posts not under contract and not having to be brought here and taken back home. It reacts against the local appointee which, I do not think, anyone in this Council desires.

The hon. Mover also referred to the exchange of public servants in the Islands. I think it is well known that lately it has been suggested that certain officers from other Colonies should come here. That has been turned down because of the conditions obtaining in our Service. We know that certain officers are leaving us also because of those conditions. As has been pointed out by you, sir, is it likely that we will get an officer from Trinidad to come here on transfer if he does not get the same conditions of service as he gets in that Island? It is on account of that, we do not get the higher class Officers which this Colony deserves. The hon. Nominated Member said this is not a "champagne" colony. I agree with him, but we may call it a "rum" colony. To a lot of us a "rum" colony may be better than a "champagne" colony, if we do get the right type of men we want. We do not have them here, and it is our hope to educate our own people to fill those

positions. I trust that by so doing this Colony may be turned into a "champagne" colony.

The financial commitment of the proposal before us is very slight when compared with our other commitments and will not interfere with the development works or any proposal which Government has before us. If we were to extend this proposal to cover the whole Civil Service, I am afraid it would knock the ground away entirely from under our feet as regards the other schemes which have been put forward. I would like to repeat the words of the hon. Mover with which I agree. I do feel that by adopting some system of assisted passages it will be in the interest of the Service and in the best interest of the Colony.

Mr. PERCY C. WIGHT: Your Excellency, I am not one of those playing for time. I do not believe in it. There is no one who stands up for the Creole more than your humble servant, but my advice has always been to bring in new blood from abroad as it affords comparison. If it had not been for that, we would not have had a Millard compared with a McDavid and how McDavid compared with Percy King; we would not have had Cameron being compared with Ashmore. That is my method of calculation. I learn more by that than by anything else. What I do feel about the whole thing is this: If you realize the truth of it from a monetary standpoint, it takes \$8,000 of your 3½ per cent. loan to enable you to carry out this scheme. There is no replacement of capital only interest. That is the standpoint from which I look at it. The hon. the Colonial Secretary has certainly put up a case, but I cannot for the life of me see why racial discrimination should be brought into it. A pamphlet has been issued to that effect. This is a cosmopolitan colony and a question of that sort should not be brought up in this Legislature.

When the hon. Member argues that he wants us to decide the matter on its merit, I cannot congratulate him on that argument. It does not convince me. I know full well that we have had men from abroad who had been absolutely a failure. I think Your Excellency would realize that we are rather fortunate in having you. I am paying you, sir, no compliment because I do not expect to get anything from you. If we had more of your type coming to this Colony, then it would be all right. I have not always seen eye to eye with you. You think in millions and I think in thousands. You go about the country, see for yourself and complain; where there is inefficiency you realize it. The others want someone in the office to do their work and they go about having a good time. Yours is not play but hard work.

Let us attack the thing that is ruining this Colony. The fact that we do not get the best brains to come here is simply because your Treasurer is always requiring an increase of the Income Tax. What is the use of giving a man more money with the one hand and taking it away from him with the other? Keep the tax at a normal figure. See that the Income Tax rate is lower than that of some of the other Colonies. That is something to go after. Do not let us give free passages with the one hand and take it away in the form of Income Tax with the other. It is absurd. It has been expressed in this Legislature that an income of \$100 per month is ample for a man with a family. What is that man's position with the expenditure on the necessities of life rising, Income Tax increasing and Insurance rates going up? When we get down a man from the other side under certain conditions and then put on him increased Income Tax, it is not fair. I believe in paying a man for his services. The hon. the Colonial Secretary has said that we want men of

high standing quality. Do you know that the local firm of Bookers was built by Creoles? I question that many firms in Water Street bring out people paying their passages, and when it is found that they do not suit or cannot stand up to the work expected of them send them back, paying their passages again. We have Creoles here who are capable of filling any position barring yours, sir, (laughter) but they do not like to work. I do not happen to know what Mr. Howie, the Income Tax expert, is getting, but I am sure that he is in the £1,200 a year group. We brought Mr. Rooke here and gave him \$200 a week. What have we got for it?

I am certainly not guided by any pamphlets which have been issued. I came here with a perfectly open mind. I am a man of few words and I express my views very curtly. There is no doubt we cannot afford it at the moment, and so you limit it to a certain salary. We are not in a position to do it. You have asked us to increase the salaries of posts so as to get good officers and, as one hon. Member has said, we have never refused. We give you credit for knowing what you are about. But that is not everything. After these officers have come here, they change and are not the same persons as when they first came here. I warn you about that again. A genius is not born every day. We have got one in your person, but how many others are there? We have found them nothing else but failures. You, sir, may leave us at the expiration of your term of office or after an extension of the time for four more years, and when that happens that policy of yours may be found to be entirely different from that of your successor. I am frank in my expression of opinion. The position is that I am against the proposal. I am for the under-dog as well as the man who gets a big salary. The man who gets £1,200 a year can certainly save sufficient in this Colony

to afford him a holiday of five or six months abroad. I am an extravagant old man, I spend money lavishly, and so I know what I am talking about. A man in that position coming here at an extraordinary expenditure under such conditions as I have mentioned finds that an appreciable portion of his emoluments goes to Income Tax. What will be the result? He is certainly going to stand still and not exercise himself in the solution of our problems.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: My argument may be illogical, but it was on the subject of passages and not on Income Tax.

Mr. PERCY C. WIGHT: I say with all due respect I never interfered with the hon. Member when he was speaking. The question of Income Tax is very material to the issue. If a man had to pay 5/- in the £ he would quicker come here than go to Africa or some other place. I cannot see the logic in his argument.

Mr. EDUN: I am opposed to this measure and, I think, I will be able to adduce very cogent arguments against it. So far as I have listened to the various speakers, I have not heard any argument from the proponents that this Colony can afford to lavish money on the Civil Service at the moment. I heard a peculiar bit of psychology just uttered in which the hon. Member said "I spend money lavishly. I am an extravagant old man". If I am to take that as the criterion of life then, I think, there is nothing more for mankind to do but eat, live and die. But there is something more involved in human existence which ought to be the criterion of life, and that is the consciousness of serving one's fellow-man. If I believe in my own mind that I will be serving the interests of this Colony by lavishly spending \$30,000 on this when we can ill afford it, I would do so without hesitation. Sir, it was only recently that in accordance with

the utterances in your own Message the Civil Servants received increases on their salaries. In paragraph 6 it is stated and I quote:—

..... Nevertheless, it is obvious that any scheme by which free leave passages would be granted to all pensionable officers and employees throughout the Public Service is now financially impracticable having regard to the enormous expansion of the Pensionable Establishment which has resulted from recent reclassifications and revisions of salary scales..."

Just recently the salaries of the Civil Servants were increased, and as a consequence the Pensionable Establishment will be increased. If I were to examine the finances of this Colony, I think, sir, with a deficit of \$2,892,115 Members of this Council will not be justified in examining the proposal now without examining how our finances stand. Having listened to you, sir, expounding the ideal of a practical efficient Service I do not agree with you, and I submit most respectfully that in order to gain efficiency this quibbling over spending on leave passages will not remedy the situation at all. The disease is deep down in the blood stream of this Colony. If I were to give a solution to the problem in order to get an efficient Service, I would, if I had my own way about it, usurp control altogether and do not allow any extraneous circumstances to be superimposed upon us here. I do feel that this measure is definitely a superimposition, because it is a well known fact, and every Member of this Council is fully aware of the circumstances, that an Economic Adviser is examining our finances very fully and very comprehensively. As the result of chats I have had with him, I think he is going right and I do not see the necessity for immediate hurry to spend lavishly another \$30,000 thinking that the solution for all our problems will be found in that expenditure.

Sir, I agree with you when you say there were hopeless bottlenecks in the administration in the districts, but if

you were to explore the reason you would find that the system of District Administration is responsible. These very Senior Officers for whom it is intended to spend \$30,000 to go abroad and broaden their ideas by travels are the guilty ones by not endeavouring to pull their weight in order to make an efficient Service. I think, sir, the time has come when we ought to pay Officers by results, and I do not see any criterion as to how we can measure an officer by his ability except by experience of what he can do. This proposal of Leave Passages to Senior Officers, I know what it will mean to this Colony. It will mean the creation of acting appointments from the Head of the Service, the Colonial Secretary, down to the Commissioner of Police. You will get every Senior Officer asking for leave. Look at the number of acting appointments in respect of the Heads of Departments at the present moment. You have the offices of Attorney-General, Chief Justice, Commissioner of Police, Commissioner of Labour, all filled by acting appointees. If we get along like that now, when this measure is passed, and when Your Excellency goes on leave the whole administration will be in the hands of Officers functioning in an acting capacity. That is the curse we have always been trying to escape from, and this measure, I do feel, will never be able to solve the problem at all. I have often heard it said that we have a mediocre Service, and only the other day I heard it said that we have a very blunt instrument which cannot be expected to carry on the development which has been so ably visualized by you, sir. I absolutely agree that we do have a mediocre Service, that we do have a blunt instrument as a Civil Service organization, but do you want to tell me that these Leave Passages will solve that problem? Do you expect me, as a public man studying the economic and political systems of this Colony, to accept the suggestion that this expenditure will solve the problem?

I agree that we ought to make our Civil Service attractive in order to be able to secure the best type of officers, but I have heard it said that although we offered the best salaries during the war we could not secure the engineers we wanted. I know that we have some senior posts which are more attractive than those in some West Indian Colonies. What is needed is an inquiry into the Civil Service, which I realize would take a long time. When I moved a motion in this Council for an inquiry into the Public Works Department I received a rebuff from the Council and Government treated the matter very lightly. They did not consider it necessary to examine how the Engineers and perhaps the Head of the Department were doing their work. I do not expect this leave passage proposal to help to file the blunt instrument.

I too have received a communication from the Trade Union Council about this matter. I have also been listening to various views expressed by different persons, and I do not think this motion ought to go through at the moment. Let us have a financial statement from our Economic Adviser, and then we could say whether or not we could be more generous to all civil servants—perhaps down to those earning \$840 per annum. We have never been ungenerous to any public officer. When we found an officer in distress or stranded in another part of the world we did everything possible to help him. Such cases could be dealt with individually.

It cannot be denied that when the President and Secretary of the Trade Union Council recently returned to the Colony from England and made the statement that there was something sinister about these leave passages the public gave credence to that statement. Why should Government endeavour to force it?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: The reason why Government is doing it is because there is nothing sinister about it. That is the answer.

Mr. EDUN: I would be agreeable to the appointment of a Select Committee if such a Committee would be able to report urgently, because I feel that at this time every item of expenditure, however small, should be carefully scrutinized. In paragraph 2 of Your Excellency's Message it is stated that a scheme of assisted leave passages for public officers on the Pensionable Establishment was introduced in this Colony in 1921 by Combined Court resolution, and was abandoned in 1927 owing to financial stringency.

My own view of the financial situation of the Colony, with these enormous deficits facing us, is that our revenue collection should be accelerated. It follows, therefore, that owing to our financial stringency we ought not to think of granting leave passages to public officers at this time. Public officers have my deep sympathy. I know one or two of them who do need assistance, and they ought to be assisted in some other way, but we ought not to adopt a scheme of leave passages until we know where we are financially. A similar proposal was turned down in 1927 because of financial stringency. Nine years later it was referred to a Committee who in 1936 considered that the time was not ripe for the consideration of leave passages. If I felt that the Colony could afford this scheme without making it appear that it was discriminatory I would be the first to approve of this concession to civil servants. It will be remembered that when it was mooted in this Council that this should be a first-class Colony with a first-class Governor I was one of the first Members to support the suggestion because I believe in the infusion of new blood because I believe in the infusion of new Civil Service.

We are not going to make any technical appointments for a few years. I think a Select Committee should go into

the matter, secure evidence from the lower income groups, find out whether some officers do need immediate relief, and give them the relief they need. The suggestion of a contributory scheme should also be examined. I wish to disabuse the minds of persons who think there is something racial in this matter. Senior officers of Government at the moment are efficient coloured men in whom we feel some pride, and only a jaundiced mind would think that this measure is designed for Europeans alone. That would be ignorance. The time has come when we ought also to ask civil servants to be thrifty, and through a contributory scheme put aside something for the rainy day. They ought to help themselves. I agree with the suggestion that the matter be referred to a Select Committee to be reported on as early as possible.

The PRESIDENT: I take this opportunity to say that Government is agreeable to the proposal that instead of proceeding to a division on the motion as it stands we should appoint a Committee to go into the matter. The terms I propose as an amendment of the motion put forward are—

“That this Council approves in principle of a scheme for the grant of leave passages to civil servants, and recommends the appointment of a Committee of the Council to consider how far and to what extent the benefits of the Regulations may be extended to include officers of lower status.”

One Member has suggested that the Council should adjourn early. I am prepared to take Members' views on the amendment and adjourn until tomorrow, unless Members prefer to deal with the matter now.

Mr. de AGUIAR: I had intended to speak. I would be glad if you will adjourn now.

Mr. LEE: I would also like to say a few words.

The PRESIDENT: If Members are agreeable I propose to adjourn until 2 o'clock tomorrow.

The Council was adjourned accordingly.