

## LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

*Thursday, 9th October, 1941.*

The Council met at 10.30 a.m. pursuant to adjournment, His Excellency the Officer Administering the Government, Mr. G. D. OWEN, C.M.G., President, in the Chair.

### PRESENT.

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary, (Acting) Mr. G. C. Green, M.B.E.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The Hon. M. B. Laing, O.B.E., Commissioner of Labour and Local Government.

The Hon. L. G. Crease, Director of Education.

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

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

The Hon. J. Eleazar (Berbice River).

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

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

The Hon. Peer Bacchus (Western Berbice).

The Hon. E. M. Walcott (Nominated Unofficial Member).

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

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

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

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

### MINUTES.

The minutes of the meeting of the Council held on the 8th of October, 1941, as printed and circulated, were confirmed.

### ORDER OF THE DAY.

#### TENANCY OF RICE LANDS.

Mr. C. V. WIGHT, on behalf of Mr. Mr. LEE, asked and the COLONIAL SECRETARY (Acting) laid over replies to the following questions:—

Q. 1. Is Government aware that proprietors of rice lands are increasing their rents? If the answer is in the affirmative, will Government state what steps are being taken to prevent this increase? Is Government also aware that the owners of rice factories have increased their charges to mill padi?

If no action is being taken to prevent these, will Government state whether any increase in the price of rice will be made?

Q. 2. Is Government aware that landed proprietors, who are owners of rice mills on these said estates, are refusing to mill the padi of the tenants, and are compelling them to sell their padi to the mill?

Q. 3. Is Government aware that such proprietors have during this small or Spring crop paid less than the market price fixed for padi received at their mills?

If the answer is in the affirmative, will Government state what steps are being taken to prevent this?

Q. 4. Is Government aware that the several tenants are under threats of dispossession, if the padi is not sold to the mill?

Q. 5. Will Government protect these poor tenants by introducing some measure of legislation to give them some security of tenure for the duration of the war?

A. 1 to 5. The Government is aware that the relations between land-owner-millers and padi growers are in many cases unsatisfactory although the fault does not lie only with the former. Representations have also been received on behalf of the proprietors urging that statutory protection should be afforded them with respect to advances made to padi growers who, it is claimed, in some cases dispose of their padi fraudulently after having received advances against it.

With regard to land rents, the hon. Member's attention is invited to the letter dated 13th June, 1941, addressed to him by the Colonial Secretary, in which he was informed that it is considered that legislation to control rental charges of rice lands would be impracticable.

With regard to milling fees, etc., draft amending Regulations to the Defence (Rice Control) Regulations, 1940, are under consideration which would enable milling fees to be fixed if necessary, and would also provide power to the Governor to take suitable action in any specific case of exploitation of padi growers by a miller.

With respect to the price of rice the hon. Member's attention is invited to Notice No. 1313 in the *Gazette* of 4th October, 1941, in which the Rice Marketing Board announce an increase of 20 cents per bag in the Board's purchase prices for all grades of rice.

Regarding padi purchases the Government is not aware that there has been any general breach of the regulation fixing a minimum price at which padi may be purchased from a grower. The specific incident to which the hon. Member drew attention in his letter to the Colonial Secretary dated 26th May, 1941, was investigated and settled on 4th June, 1941, by the District Agricultural Superintendent who found that the padi in question was so poor in quality that it could not be manufactured into even the lowest grade of rice and consequently arranged for it to be returned to the growers for use as stock feed.

#### GOVERNMENT COLONIAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEMES.

Q. 1. Will Government state what schemes, proposals and/or memoranda were submitted to Sir Frank Stockdale for the improvement and development of the Colony by the Government?

Q. 2. Will Government supply the Members of this Council with copies of the said memoranda and etc., as given?

A. 1 & 2. A number of projects were submitted by the Government and discussed with the Comptroller for Development and Welfare during his visit to this Colony in March, but they were not prepared in the form of applications for assistance from the Colonial Development and Welfare Fund. Since the Comptroller's visit, however, reports dealing with Agriculture, Public Health, Drainage and and Irrigation have been received from him and his Advisers and these have been laid before the Legislative Council.

Applications for assistance to enable a number of the proposals in the reports to be carried out have recently been submitted by the Government to the Secretary of State, and estimates in respect of other schemes are in the course of preparation.

#### CO-OPERATIVE CREDIT BANKS.

Mr. JACOB asked and the COLONIAL SECRETARY (Acting) laid over replies to the following questions:—

Q. 1. How many Co-operative Credit Banks were in operation as at June 30th, 1941, in the Counties of Demerara, Berbice and Essequibo, giving each separately?

A. 1. Twenty-two Co-operative Credit Banks are in operation:—

In County of Essequibo	4
In County of Demerara	10
In County of Berbice	8

Q. 2. What was the amount of Capital in these Banks; how much was subscribed by their members; and how much was loaned by Government as at June 30th, 1941?

A. 2. The paid-up share capital of these Banks is \$68,901.99. At June 30th, 1941, Government loans to these banks amounted to \$55,936 of which \$34,630 has been repaid, leaving a balance of \$21,306 owing. Further loans to these banks, amounting to \$8,000, have been also approved of which \$2,500 has since been taken. In addition, authority has been sought to provide \$10,000 more which, if approved, will make a total of \$30,000 available this year.

Q. 3. What is the rate of interest chargeable by the Government on loans to the Co-operative Credit Banks? Is it possible to reduce the rate of interest?

A. 3. Government charges interest at 4 per cent. per annum on all loans to Co-operative Credit Banks. The rate for these loans and for all Government loans to Local Authorities was reduced from 6 per cent. to 4 per cent, with effect from 1st January, 1935. 4 per cent. is considered to be an appropriate rate.

Q. 4. What is the rate of interest charged to members or borrowers, on loans from the Banks?

A. 4. Thirteen Banks charge interest at 12 per cent., eight charge 10 per cent., and one Bank charges 8 per cent. per annum on loans to members. The profits of Banks return to members up to 6 per cent. on shares.

Q. 5. What amount was loaned to Cane, Rice, Coconut and Coffee Farmers to the end of December, 1940, giving each separately?

A. 5. During 1940, loans were made to peasant farmers only as under:—

Cane	...\$ 1,289 00
Rice	...\$ 11,964 51
Coffee	...\$ 1,304 00
Coconuts	...\$ 262 21

It is impracticable to analyse all the loans which have been made by the banks under the above heads.

6. What additional amount was loaned to Rice Farmers for increasing the production of rice after the deputation of the Rice Producers' Advisory Committee had interviewed His Excellency Sir Wilfrid Jackson in July, 1940, when it was decided that a sum not exceeding \$150,000 would be made available for lending to rice producers?

A. 6. Under the provision of the Rice Growers Loans Ordinance, Chapter 155, the sum lent to rice farmers through the Co-operative Credit Banks was \$14,649 of which \$13,202.98 has already been repaid to the Treasury. No legitimate application was rejected.

Q. 7. When were these Banks established, and what is the reason for their slow progress, or no progress at all?

## A. 7. Of the Banks under consideration :—

One was registered in	1915
Eleven were registered in	1916
Four	1917
Two	1918
One was registered in	1927
One	1939
Two were	1940

Reference is invited to the annual reports on the working of these Banks, which have been printed and laid before the Legislative Council. These reports indicate the progress which has been made since their establishment and the factors which have retarded their continued development in recent years. As stated in the answer to Question 2 the Banks are now being provided with additional capital in the form of Government loans, and their activities are being expanded at the present time.

## COMPASSIONATE AWARD TO ALI BACCHUS.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Mr. G. C. Green, Acting) : I beg to move—

THAT, with reference to Governor's Message No. 13 dated 25th August, 1941, this Council approves the grant of an *ex gratia* payment of an amount not exceeding \$1,680 to Ali Bacchus, who as a result of an assault on him by ex-Police Constable Barrington in December, 1939, has now become permanently incapacitated.

I think the facts of this case are within the recollections of hon. Members. It was a bad case. It was a case arising out of a bush rum raid carried out by the Police in December, 1939, when P.C. Barrington and other police constables arrested certain persons including Bacchus. At the Police Station a very bad assault was carried out by Barrington on Bacchus. It has been proved that on three occasions at the Police Station this Police Constable assaulted this man in such a manner as to render him permanently incapacitated. The most that could be said in favour of Barrington was that his sanity was in doubt.

It was proved, however, that he was sane and as a result he was prosecuted and sentenced to four years' penal servitude. He is now serving his sentence.

The case of Bacchus has been very carefully considered by Government, and, while no legal liability rests with Government, it is considered equitable that he should be compensated in some manner. He was a labourer and lived with his wife, mother and brothers, and as a result of his incapacitation his wife has had to devote all her time looking after him, so that she who may have become a source of help to the

family has not been able to assist in any way. In considering what payment should be made in this instance Government used as a basis what may have been paid had Bacchus come under the purview of the Workmen's Compensation Ordinance. That was only used as a guide as that Ordinance does not apply and in this case it is only an *ex gratia* payment. In order to ensure that Bacchus's family is provided for Government proposes to this Council that this *ex gratia* payment of \$1,680 should be handed over to the Public Trustee to be disbursed in monthly sums of \$10 for the benefit of the family. I beg to move the motion.

Mr. DIAS seconded.

Mr. ELEAZAR: We do not third motions here, and so I am supporting it because I cannot third it. I have intimate knowledge of this matter because I was the first person outside that got to know what transpired. When it occurred, there were three men with this policeman in the Guard room and two of the men came to me to act in their behalf in the prosecution. Therefore, whatever transpired those men were the only ones to give evidence, and what they said when it had just occurred could be regarded as the truth. While I support the motion to help poor Bacchus, who is a pitiable sight to see, I would ask Government to consider Barrington who is now in penal servitude.

Barrington is one of the most quiet of men. He was a simple inoffensive policeman of eighteen years' standing in the Police Force. He was a very huge man, a half giant. It appears that while arresting the men one of them toppled him over, and notwithstanding that they were taken into the station and Barrington was left in charge of them. The unfortunate boy, Bacchus, was communicating with others outside, and all that Barrington did was to take him up and push him violently down on the bench and so injured his spine. Barrington became so weak that he could not defend himself; he would not say a word in his defence and there was the other man almost lifeless. It was thought at first that Bacchus was playing the fool, then it was discovered that he was injured. At the trial the Judge cajoled and coerced him to say something, but Barrington would not speak with the result that he got four years' imprisonment.

Looking at the injured man, it seems that all one can hope is that kind Providence would one day relieve him. On the other hand, Barrington is a married man with children and, I understand, the injured man may bring an action against him. If Government is going to give Bacchus this money, Government should be satisfied that no action would be brought against Barrington and should make further enquiry and see whether the penalty imposed on Barrington should not be commuted. Barrington has lost eighteen years' service and an action is hanging over his head. I know for certain that the action was started. What I say here to-day is first-hand. It was told to me by the only persons who should know, because they were the only persons besides the injured man in the Guard-room with Barrington at the time. I think that while we consider the unfortunate Bacchus, we can also consider the equally unfortunate Barrington. I do implore Government that in doing this for Bacchus to remember Barrington who is lying in prison. It has been said to be a very bad case from the way it was represented to Government. I think an enquiry should be made as to the action which is to be brought against Barrington to take away his house, and an effort made to see whether Bacchus could not be induced, as Government is helping him, to forego his action.

Mr. JACOB: I think Government should be congratulated for bringing forward a resolution of this kind. I am not aware of all the circumstances, but it does seem to be a very kind gesture. Actions of this kind will certainly be of great benefit to Government. What I would like to suggest is that as Bacchus's two children are six and eight years old respectively, the amount allocated to be disbursed in fourteen years would be better disbursed in ten years, when one child would be sixteen and the other eighteen and both of them be in a position to earn something for themselves. At the present time \$10 per month to feed a disabled man, his wife and two children is far from adequate, and I take it this man must get some attendance and his wife would not be able to earn anything much as a result. I think it would be well if Government consider this suggestion that \$14 per month be given as it is a more reasonable figure for four people, including two children, to live on.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I do not desire to say much in reply except, as regards what the hon. Member for Berbice River (Mr. Eleazar) said, to point out that from the facts at Government's disposal the assault was not of the character to which he referred, but was a very bad case indeed. I do not propose to tell the Council of the sordid details. The only thing that may be said of Barrington is that his sanity was in doubt at the time. On no less than three occasions was the assault committed.

In regard to the request of the hon. Member for North Western District (Mr. Jacob), Government will be very glad indeed to give consideration to the question of increasing the monthly payment and, if the Council pass this motion as it stands, Government would consider increasing the payment from \$10 to \$14 per month.

THE PRESIDENT: I would like to mention that in regard to what the hon. Member for North Western District has said, Government had in mind the ages of the children. One child is six years old and if the payment is \$14 per month it would cease to be made six years hence when the child is only twelve, whereas if it is \$10 per month it would go to the other extreme and end when both children are able to earn something. \$12 per month is the happy mean and may be the right figure. I think the hon. Member suggested \$14 per month, but that would cease when the second child is twelve. I think it should probably be \$12 per month.

Mr. JACOB: I take it that the money will be invested and that some interest will accrue which will help to extend it.

THE PRESIDENT: Very little. I do not want to commit Government to \$14. Leave it to us and we will give it further consideration and see what would be best.

I would like to say a word in regard to what the hon. Member for Berbice River said. While I appreciate the provocation to which policemen are very often put, I have read this case very carefully and certainly think some cruelty was definitely done to that man. Barrington was given a perfectly fair trial and sentence was imposed on him by the Court, and I am

not prepared to interfere further with the matter.

Mr. ELEAZAR : I simply said Government acted on information it had prior. I am saying that two of the three men present came to me about an hour after the occurrence and told me the whole story. I do not know what was dished up in the Court. When I make statements here I do so either on my own or on first-hand information.

Motion put, and agreed to.

Motion passed.

#### 1940 FINAL SUPPLEMENTARY EXPENDITURE STATEMENT.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY : I beg to move—

That, this Council approves the final statement of supplementary expenditure for the year 1940, additional to that included in the Schedules of Additional Provision for the year 1940, already passed by the Legislative Council, which has been laid on the table.

This should be regarded as a sort of winding-up for the year 1940. It is the final statement of supplementary expenditure for the year. I think, perhaps, if I invite hon. Members' attention to one or two large amounts it might assist in the consideration of the Statement when we go into Committee in the usual course.

On the first page hon. Members will see under Head VIII A—"Education"—the sum of \$5,203.68. That is for the purpose of meeting the revised rates of salary to teachers under Regulation 80 (now Regulation 95 in the New Code). Under Head XV—"Magistrates"—there is an excess of \$3,800 on Crown Witnesses' Expenses. It is not possible to control that item. Under Head XXIII—"Miscellaneous"—there is a sum of \$1,350 in respect of which the Council has already given its approval in principle. The original amount of \$6,000 was under-estimated. Under the same Head on the next page is the sum of \$3,936.67 as contribution to the B.G. Airways, Ltd. It represents an increase on the annual subsidy. With respect to this the Council has already given its consent to this increase in respect of 1941 and this is in respect of the period, 1st October, 1939—31st December, 1940.

The principle has been already accepted by this Council. Under Head XXVIII—"Police"—there is the sum of \$3,075.70 for uniforms. This is due to the rise in the price of materials. Under Head XXIX—"Poor"—there are a number of items which, I think, speak for themselves. Under Head XXXIII—"Prisons"—there are two items of \$1,800 each, due to the continual increase in the prisons population and the increased cost of commodities.

On the third page under Head XXXVI—"Public Works, Annually Recurrent"—there is an item of \$7,943.18. This is required to meet a temporary excess of the vote for Unallocated Stores. Under Head XXXIX "Sea Defences" the sum of \$4,933.19 is required for maintenance. It is due to considerable damage done to the earth dams in all districts during September and October last by high spring tides. Under Head XLVIII—"Colonial Emergency Measures"—there is the sum of \$11,658.99, an extraordinary expenditure in connection with the war.

On page 6 under Head XV—"Magistrates"—there is another item of Crown witnesses' expenses, \$1,075, due to the unusual number of long cases. Under Head XIX—"Medical, Hospitals and Dispensaries"—there is an amount of \$1,000. In most of these cases, it is expenditure on dietary and other incidental expenditure and it is not possible adequately to control that during present conditions.

On page 7 under Head XXIII—"Miscellaneous"—there is the sum of \$1,980 for telegrams required in excess of the vote that has been already granted. At the bottom of the page there is also a sum of \$1,004 more than already granted for payments under the Workmen's Compensation Ordinance.

On page 8 there is an item of \$2,023, which is to cover the increased cost of water supply and the cost of installation of meters, etc., in line with Municipal Water By-laws, 1938.

Turning to page 10 under Head XXXVI—"Public Works, Annually Recurrent"—there is an item of \$3,317.19 which is due principally to the renovation of the ceiling and walls of this Chamber. From my own personal knowledge it was an extra-

ordinary difficult job carried out in a very efficient manner.

I do not think there is any other particular item to which I need draw attention. In the Committee stage I hope to answer any questions which may be asked, and I now beg to move that this Council resolve itself into Committee to consider, item by item, the Final Statement of supplementary expenditure for the year 1940, additional to that included in the Schedules of Additional Provision for the year 1940, already passed by the Legislative Council, which has been laid on the table.

Mr. McDAVID (Colonial Treasurer): I beg to second the motion principally because I would like to invite hon. Members' attention to the results of the year's working as set forth in the Colonial Treasurer's Report for 1940, which has been laid on the table. There has been no previous opportunity for referring to those figures and, I think, hon. Members would be certainly interested, if they have not already read that report, to hear a very brief summary of the position.

We were very fortunate in closing the year, 1940, with a surplus of \$206,475 on the working for that year. That is to say revenue for 1940 exceeded expenditure by that sum. Not only that, but the Council will remember that by reason of the resolution which was passed some time in August last year this Council undertook to relieve the Imperial Government of its undertaking to pay a grant towards certain very special reconstruction works so that all the expenditure on those works amounting to \$231,362 has been met from the Colony's Budget without any grant from Imperial Funds. Further than that, this Colony has also waived payment from the Colonial Development Fund of another \$41,452. Those two items were taken on the Colony's expenditure and notwithstanding that, we also had to pay temporary war bonuses amounting to \$177,000 while our war vote came to another \$52,000. Notwithstanding all these we ended the year with a surplus on the working of \$206,475. I think we were very fortunate in doing so, as no one anticipated the position would have been as happy as it turned out to be. The final result is that the surplus at the end of last year stood at \$982,083.

With regard to the excess expenditure

now before the Council for consideration, I would just like to mention that although it is rather a large amount yet the actual net total of excess expenditure on what we may call the normal budget is only \$13,000 above the original appropriations in the approved estimates for the year.

Mr. JACOB: This statement reads "Final Statement of supplementary expenditure for the year 1940, additional to that included in the Schedules of additional provision for the year 1940, already passed by the Legislative Council." If that heading is correct, I do not see the necessity for bringing this forward today. I wish to say that when a heading is put on a statement it should convey its actual meaning. This heading says: "Already passed by the Legislative Council."

THE PRESIDENT: Additional to the schedules already passed.

Mr. JACOB: That is one point it does convey to one. I am not satisfied that it does not still convey to some people that this thing has been already passed. It is put in that way to mislead. Further these expenditures have all been incurred—I do not know if that is going to be disputed—last year and probably the year before, and here it is on this day, the 9th of October, we are asked to pass additional provisions not already passed. The whole thing seems to me rather absurd, and it looks more absurd when a responsible Council like this is to continuously stage these things. We are here just to formally agree to these expenditures, as they have been incurred and already included in the hon. Colonial Treasurer's statement of expenses.

The PRESIDENT: I do not know if it would save time, if I remind hon. Members that at the beginning of every year a schedule of this sort is brought up dealing with items which it was not possible to pass at the conclusion of the previous year. I admit that it is rather late in the year to bring it before the Council, but it is a schedule which is put annually before this Council. This is not the first occasion that it has been done.

Mr. JACOB: I agree, but my point is that it should have been brought up before the first quarter of the year had

passed and not in the last quarter. The fact is, if criticism is offered here it is practically useless. I know that Government does not like to get criticism from the Elective side of the Council, but we have to justify our position here, although we may not be required here. It looks like a farce. I do hope the time is not far distant when this thing will come to an end. This is only the preliminary to our going into committee. I have various matters to raise just to let them get on the records to show that there are a few persons, particularly one, who never approve of these things.

**THE PRESIDENT:** I quite agree with a good many of the things you have said. It is unfortunate that a schedule of this sort is brought in October, but the only previous occasion on which it could have been placed before the Council was in February last. Speaking from memory, I do not think there has been a meeting since then, and I know that the schedule was not ready in February. I think it is usual to bring it in March or April, as we are never in a position to do so in February of the year following the year to which it relates.

**Mr. JACOB:** I had written to this Government asking that a meeting of the Council be called some time in April because there were so many matters I had to raise. One is apt to get disgusted, but I have made up my mind not to get disgusted and to raise them still.

Question put, and agreed to.

Council in Committee.

#### AGRICULTURE.

Item 29—Passages of Mr. and Mrs. J. D. Gillespie, \$239.85.

**THE COLONIAL SECRETARY:** rise at this stage to make an explanation to the Council in regard to a matter on which there has not previously been any opportunity to inform hon. Members fully. If hon. Members would look at the item and two similar ones—one on page 2 under Post Office, “Passages of Mr. and Mrs. J. O. Reilly, \$458.08,” and the other on page 3 under Prisons, “Passages of Mr. and Mrs. W. F. Hodgson, \$207.87”—it would be noticed that the

note in the remarks column refers to Colonial Regulations 95 to 100. Those regulations were adopted by this Government in 1937 and laid before this Council on the 17th December of that year. It is quite natural that, there being no particular explanation at the time those regulations were laid, hon. Members were not fully acquainted with the purport of those regulations. I think it is only fair that, this being the first opportunity which has since arisen, the Council should be fully informed of the purport of those regulations.

Those regulations are the result of the Committee set up by the Secretary of State some years ago with Lord Plymouth as Chairman to consider leave and passage facilities of Government Officers in the Colonial Empire, and they relate specifically to the facilities to be granted to Officers on transfer. Under the old regulations the procedure which had been approved and adopted was a simple one. That is to say, on an officer coming to this Colony from abroad this Colony paid the full cost of his passage and that of his family in accordance with that procedure which was laid down. Conversely an Officer transferred from this Colony would have the cost of his and his family's passages paid by the receiving Colony. The new regulations change that system. They are based, as I say, on the principles laid down by the Plymouth Report which at the very start were based on a consideration that does not exist in this Colony. That is to say passages are paid when officers proceed on leave. That consideration does not at present apply to this Colony, and under these regulations to which I refer when an officer is transferred from this Colony to (say) Nigeria, this Colony which is the transferring Colony will be asked to pay either the full cost of the officer's passage from here to England or a proportion of that cost based on the amount of resident service which the officer has at the time he leaves here. The underlying principle is that on transfer officers should be encouraged to take such leave as is due to them prior to taking up appointment. In such cases this Colony will be incurring a liability which has not hitherto been approved by this Council.

Looking at it from the other side, if an

officer came here from Nigeria under the old conditions this Colony has to pay the entire cost of his passage, but under the new regulations if in the course of coming here he goes to the United Kingdom and is allowed to take such leave as is due to him by the transferring Colony, which will be Nigeria, that Colony will be responsible for at least a proportion of the cost of the passage from Nigeria to the United Kingdom.

At first blush it may appear that this Colony is undertaking a liability far greater than that which now exists, and on the first occasion it has been applied with these three items it appeared as though this Colony is going to be saddled with greater expenditure than was agreed to in the past. Consequently representations were made by this Government to the Colonial Office pointing out that the new regulations were based entirely on the principle that all Colonies had agreed to the principle of free passages on leave, and stress was made that in the long run this Colony which does not now pay leave passages might find itself saddled with greater expenditure. As the result of that representation it has now been ruled that where an officer proceeds to the United Kingdom on transfer elsewhere merely for the purpose of taking his leave and not as a necessary part of his journey to the Colony to which he is going, a Colony like this which does not pay leave passages will not be called upon to pay any proportion of the cost of that officer's passage to the United Kingdom. In the meantime these three particular cases have arisen and the regulations as then enforced are applied to them.

But let us take the case of an officer coming here from Nigeria. To come here he will in normal circumstances have to travel *via* the United Kingdom, and in those circumstances the transferring Colony, which will be Nigeria, will pay the cost of the passage from Nigeria to the United Kingdom or at least a proportion of it. On the other hand if we transfer an officer from here to Nigeria and it is necessary for the officer to travel *via* the United Kingdom and not by a more direct route, then this Colony will be asked to pay the proportion of the cost of the passage from here to the United Kingdom. We have a case of an officer transferred from here to Barbados. Under

the regulations as they originally stood, it appears that an officer could rightly claim he is entitled to go to the United Kingdom before going to Barbados, but under the ruling laid down by the Secretary of State no charge against this Colony will arise because that is not a necessary part of the journey in getting to Barbados.

I think that with this exception to which I have referred as now adopted by the Secretary of State the Colony will not pay any more than it is paying at present. We had a case not very long ago of some officers transferred from Palestine to this Colony. The Colony under these regulations was relieved of the proportion of the cost of the passages from Palestine to the United Kingdom, so I think that in the long run this Colony will not pay more than at present and in fact, speaking for myself from a study of the situation, I feel that in the long run this Colony really stands to benefit financially from these transactions.

There is one other point, which His Excellency has reminded me of, on which we have a ruling. There are one or two Colonies which have not adopted these regulations. Barbados is one of them. In such circumstances it has been ruled that the regulations will not apply but *ad hoc* arrangements will be made in each particular case. I think it is only fair to the Council that on this occasion it should be fully informed of the purport of the Regulations which had been laid before the Council as far back as 1937. I hope I have made myself clear. I endeavoured to do so. I hope Council will vote the amounts and adopt the principle.

Mr. C. V. WIGHT: Having heard the hon. Colonial Secretary I have been driven to wonder whether the Colonial Office has by the Colonial Regulations of 1937 decided to give legislative sanction to that oft-repeated phrase in this Colony "Birds of passage". It would appear looking at this Statement—I have read it and I make no mistake that it is not additional provision—there is some confusion. On the first page one sees three items dealing with passages in respect of three officers. There is a constant repetition throughout the whole Statement of "Passages". I am going to ask this Government, if the Colonial



Office is not aware of it and has not decided on any payment, that great care be taken in the selection of officers and thus diminish the necessity of officers having to travel round the world and having any part of the passages paid by the community in which they were. The hon. Colonial Secretary persisted in his reference to a certain part of the Empire—Nigeria. Why, one does not know. He then differentiated with Barbados. We know Barbados and all about it. We do not know how many officers have been transferred to Barbados, but we know Barbados does not like any infiltration. That is why, perhaps, they did not enter into the scheme.

While it is necessary to have transfers, those transfers should be requested by those communities who desire them. The passages of certain officers in certain cases may be willingly paid and the vote readily acquiesced to by the majority of Members of the Council. An officer may during his regime in this Colony make himself so objectionable that one may consider the advisability of giving him a bonus in addition to his passage to get him out of the Colony. I would ask this Government particularly to bear in mind the question of these transfers and passages and to make strong representation to the Colonial Office on that score. Why go to Nigeria to get an officer transferred here when we have the adjacent West Indian Islands and the cost of passages will not be so much? I ask that it be borne in mind when making appointments and transfers to give consideration to the fact that an officer transferred to this particular colony from elsewhere than the West Indies will necessarily sojourn in England on leave on the way out. I am not referring to any particular officer or item, but just generally to the question of passages and the cost thereof. The hon. Colonial Secretary quite glibly said we are going to be benefited by the arrangement and it will not be such a financial burden to this Colony. No doubt it may be so, and I quite appreciate his perspicuity in so far as this matter is concerned. We have had some debate which in no way arose from our apprehension of the future increase in the total aggregate this Colony may have to pay in regard to the cost of passages on the transfer of officers.

Mr. ELEAZAR: The intention is very apparent. It is part of the policy of the Colonial Office and this Government to bring all these "misfits" into the country and mismanage its whole affairs. That is why this Government is here and this country is as it is to-day. The hon. Colonial Secretary could not help every time he opened his mouth referring to Nigeria. I wonder why he did not say Hong Kong. There was a gentleman here to whom everything was Hong Kong. The people who have been brought here from the East—present company excepted—always are not wanted here. They come here with blurred vision. When they see men with the same pigment as the men they left behind but with nothing else in common, they say after a while that the country does not want them and they do not want the country. The Colonial Office in order to govern these Colonies, because the population is mostly coloured, must first send officers to the East where they see the people in a most primitive or half-nude condition and then send them here. It cannot mix. The latest importations we have had from the East were very objectionable to the general rule, and if I had the power and this Council would follow me I would ask the Colonial Officer not to send any officer from the East here, and when we get "misfits" here to give us the liberty to pay their passage, give them a bonus and send them back to the East. We do not want them here. One of Your Excellency's immediate predecessors told us on one occasion here that so-and-so was said by the Secretary of State, and when he was told: "You mean to say he settled it and we cannot touch it when you bring it before us?" he said that was not correct the Secretary of State meant subject to the approval of the Legislative Council. But we are not always told that. Why we are not given the opportunity as in Barbados to say "we do not want this thing and as the occasion arises we will act"? I have no doubt that we were given here to understand that the Secretary of State did so-and-so and we must fall in line and say so. I remember there was a time when Government Officers were given leave and those, who wanted more than three months, must go out of the Colony, but I cannot remember that their passages were paid. Why must we pay the passages of people who are going on holiday?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I rise to a point of order! It is not a case of paying the passages of officers going on holiday but of paying a proportion of the cost of the passage of an officer transferred, who in the course of his journey necessarily has to touch the United Kingdom and whilst there opportunity is taken to have such leave as there is to his credit. This Colony has not accepted the principle of paying the passages of officers on leave. It did at one time, but that does not exist now. At that time all ranks of Government Officers got their passages paid. I would like to make that distinction. This Colony does not now pay the passages of Government Officers on leave.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member does not quite understand. In regard to leave it is just the reverse to what he thinks. What the hon. Colonial Secretary said is this; if an officer is removed from here and sent to Nigeria and he goes to the United Kingdom for a holiday before going on to Nigeria, this Colony, as it does not grant passages to officers on leave, will not pay as much as the one that does. It is when an officer is going straight from one Colony to another that the transferring Colony will pay a proportion of the cost of the passage. There is no question now of paying passages for officers going away on leave.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I quite understand that, but we do not seem to see the same thing. A man going to Nigeria goes to England for two months before proceeding on to that Colony, and this Colony pays his passage to England. I strongly protest against the continuation of the policy of bringing officers from Nigeria and anywhere else in Africa. They are "misfits" and will continue to be so. Government does not know what "birds of passage" and at some times "birds of prey" we get here, present company of course excepted.

Mr. DE AGUIAR: The hon. Colonial Secretary stated more than once that he was very glad for the opportunity to inform this Council of the decision that was arrived at by the Colonial Office in regard to this. I rather expected to hear him say also that he was very grateful for the opportune moment afforded him, because immediately followed the hon. Colonial Treasurer, who told us in a few

words how well off we were and therefore we should be generous in the way of granting passages to public officers. What I am concerned about is this: Whether or not this Colony will face greater liability in the future as a result of that decision? I am not prepared to express any opinion at the moment, but what is quite obvious is that the hon. Colonial Secretary has put up quite a few propositions as coming from Nigeria. Perhaps, he could have gone farther afield and given us the case of an officer transferred to the Pacific, but he might be faced with a problem there. I do not know why he did not go as far as that. Perhaps, he had good reasons.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I used Nigeria not for any specific purpose but because of a fair example. I could have gone farther afield but in presenting the case on behalf of this Colony I wished to use a fair example. If we go further afield the benefit to the Colony under the new regulations becomes greater.

Mr. DE AGUIAR: I hear so much about the benefit to the Colony being better.

THE CHAIRMAN: What he means is, we will pay less if an officer is transferred from Fiji. I mention Fiji because I succeeded an officer in Barbados who was transferred from Fiji, and I know how many hundreds of pounds (sterling) it cost. In the case of an officer transferred from Fiji to British Guiana with leave to his credit and stopping at the United Kingdom, this Colony will not pay so much towards his passage. That is what is meant by saying that it will be of benefit to the Colony, as we will pay less.

Mr. DE AGUIAR: I hear so much about paying less. Somebody has to pay, though it may be less, when an officer from Fiji or the Pacific is coming here and stops at the United Kingdom to spend his leave. The position may be the other way about. We may have to send an officer there and in that case we will have to pay. The point I am making is that some Colony has got to pay, because the passage of the officer is being paid wherever he is coming from. We may gain in one instance, but we have to pay. What I am complaining about is this. Perhaps the hon. Colonial Secretary did not state it. I

would like to know whether this Colony was consulted on the question of the change of these Regulations, because I have no knowledge of that having been done. I am more concerned about these changes taking place without this Colony being consulted, either the Government or the Legislature. Any decision involving transactions of a financial nature, this Legislature must first be consulted, Secretary of State or no Secretary of State, and I am opposing this vote on the principle that I have no knowledge that this change was put forward to this Council before it was adopted, in the same way that I have always taken up the attitude when speaking on Supplementary Estimates that money is spent without authority from this Council. I am quite prepared to concede that in some instances it is practically impossible to obtain consent in the first instance, but I do not like any new item appearing unless this Council had the opportunity before of going into the matter.

I do not want to raise the question of liability again, but with all due respect to the opinion expressed by the hon. Colonial Secretary I know the time is going to come. The few instances that have occurred so far put us on the right side of the account but that is not in my opinion the correct view that should be taken of this decision. Whether or not this Colony is going to be on the right or wrong side, I still maintain these regulations should not be adopted unless this Council was first consulted.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I would like to answer the hon. Member for Central Demerara, (Mr. De Aguiar) on the question of prior approval by this Council. I thought I made it clear that this appears to be the first opportunity that has arisen for making the Council fully informed of the purport of these regulations. The regulations were sent out to this Government and were accepted in principle, and on the first opportunity a copy was laid before the Council, but as I said the Council was not then fully apprised of the purport of the regulations. It is not intended even now that the Colony should be forced to accept this liability, if it is the wish of the Council that it should not be accepted, though it is Government's recommendation. It would, however, be in

the interest of the Colony and of the Colonial Service generally that these regulations be accepted. No opportunity had previously arisen prior to the cases of these three particular officers, and as the cases of these officers fall within these regulations they were considered accordingly, and the Council is now being made aware on the first suitable opportunity of what the regulations mean and what the Council in passing the Supplementary Estimates will be accepting.

Mr. ELEAZAR: Has this money been paid already?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: In this case, yes, because the regulations had been accepted by Government.

THE CHAIRMAN: I cannot say why they were not put before the Council sooner. It may have been anticipated when the regulations were laid that shortly after that a case would have occurred and then the vote would have come before the Council and an opportunity given to Members to express views thereon, as had been done before. Four years have passed before the first case has come to the Council, but the regulations were laid in 1937.

Mr. DE AGUIAR: That is my complaint. It is not sufficient to say the regulations were laid some time in 1937 and that is a good reason for their adoption. Members of this Council had no opportunity of criticizing them. Is their submission as lays by Government the only form?

THE CHAIRMAN: The very fact that the hon. Colonial Secretary in referring to these items took the opportunity of explaining the regulations shows that Government does not regard the laying of the regulations before Council as sufficient. Government has taken this opportunity to bring the regulations to the notice of the Council, but why it was not done before in some other form I do not know. These are the first passages to be paid under the new regulations.

Mr. DE AGUIAR: It would have been different if this Council had been approached on the ground that these regulations had been agreed on by the

Secretary of State and laid over by the local Government in this Council, and this is something we would have to do as it is something we have really accepted. But this Council has not accepted these regulations. When it comes to matters of a financial character in which this Council is interested, I have already advised this Government that every opportunity should be afforded Members to express their views thereon before coming to the Council for approval of the expenditure.

Mr. C. V. WIGHT: It appears that the money was paid on the understanding that Government can pass it through the Council with its majority. What would be the position if Government thought it advisable or could be persuaded to throw the debate to open voting? Unfortunately there are few Elected Members present. I agree with the hon. Member for Central Demerara that this money has been paid and all we have been asked here to do is to give formal sanction to it. It is useless at the present moment opposing it, but it does call for some strong criticism on the part of Government's action.

Mr. JACOB: I have been listening attentively to all that has been said. We have been talking nearly an hour and Your Excellency has been repeating that this is the first opportunity that has presented itself to put this matter before the Council. Your Excellency has been serving in Barbados. I think there is a principle there of the House of Assembly, which is appropriate to this Council, meeting every fortnight, and I think that same principle is to be found in several of the Crown Colonies. Why is this Council not called more regularly? I do not know that any Elected Member of this Council knows. I do not accept the explanation that this is the only opportunity Government had. I am inclined to think that opinions expressed here are not even considered. Government had every opportunity to do so. I was looking at the debates for this year and comparing them with those of last year this year's volume is about half the size of the previous year's. Why that is so, I do not know. Maybe it is economy in another way, I do not know. So far as I am concerned, having accepted member-

ship here I am prepared to come here as often as possible, and it is time that Government realize that the assistance of Elected Members is absolutely essential for the progress of this country. I do not accept the explanation that this is the first available opportunity Government had of bringing this matter forward, when the expenditure had been incurred since last year and the year before. I feel this Council should be treated with a little more courtesy. No useful purpose, however, will be served in objecting to the vote.

THE CHAIRMAN: I hope the hon. Member will pass this vote. It is rather difficult at this late date to deal with the question. If the Elected Members are all opposed to it I would ask them to pass it on this occasion on the promise that their representations will be forwarded to the Secretary of State, if it is the unanimous feeling of the Elected Members that an item of this sort should not be passed.

Mr. DE AGUIAR: I would make a similar request but in a slightly different way. I suggest that we pass the item as it stands, as the money has been already paid, pending a review of the general question of passages of officers. The views of the Council expressed today may be communicated to the Secretary of State, and we may intimate to the Secretary of State that we have no intention at present to take part in these new regulations they have put forward. I do not think the matter should stop there. We may find we are creating an injustice and that is why I suggest the whole thing should be reviewed in that light.

THE CHAIRMAN: I was hoping when the hon. Member for Western Essequibo (Mr. C. V. Wight) said that we are not in a position to say whether it will cost more or less, that he would have said further that these regulations have been in force for four years and we have been able to judge their effect only for a limited period, whereas if we try them out for another two or three years we should be in a better position to present a case to Government. I would rather hon. Members consider trying out the regulations for a further period of a year or two and seeing what the financial results will be.

Mr. ELEAZAR: The money has been already spent and we must consent to it, but we must make it clear that we are not accepting the regulations at all. We put ourselves in the same position as Barbados and will deal with the cases as they occur. To get Government out of an invidious position we agree to the vote.

THE CHAIRMAN: It is not within my power to amend the regulations. I will forward the debate to the Colonial Office but I cannot give an undertaking now that the regulations will no longer apply to this Government. This Government has in the past informed the Secretary of State that they have been adopted, and I am not in a position to say if that decision can be varied.

Mr. DE AGUIAR: In addition to forwarding the debate, there is one specific request I would like you to make—if Government has previously committed itself then put it as a request from the Legislative Council—that this Colony no longer wishes to continue under these regulations. It seems that the Executive Government has more or less made a promise in the matter.

THE CHAIRMAN: The Council has only heard the views of four Elected Members on the subject, and I cannot say that it is the wish of the Council.

Mr. DE AGUIAR: I do not know if you would like to take a vote on the request.

THE CHAIRMAN: What is before the Council now is the item.

Mr. DE AGUIAR: I have no desire to embarrass Government, but if the vote is negated by the Council and it would assist you in the request I make, then we might do so.

THE CHAIRMAN: You may assist me in the way it is put before the Secretary of State; that is the only assistance I need. I do not want the hon. Member to think I am asking him to revise the Leave and Passage Regulations.

Mr. DE AGUIAR: It is certainly my wish and that of each Member who has just spoken. It is a request going forward

that this Colony no longer wants to take part in those regulations.

THE CHAIRMAN: I may remind the hon. Member that the Secretary of State pointed out, when representations were made, that the scheme was devised in the interests of the Colonial Governments generally and he found it very difficult to withdraw that scheme from this Colony so shortly after introducing it. He made the suggestion that we try it out a little longer as we had not had an opportunity of testing it. I would ask hon. Members to consider trying out the regulations for a further period. We may find the results to be the reverse of what is anticipated.

Mr. DE AGUIAR: What I am afraid of is this: This is the only opportunity we have to let the Secretary of State know that we have no desire to acquiesce to the regulations. Unless the Secretary of State is communicated with at once he may come back.

THE CHAIRMAN: I am not sure that the hon. Member is not in the minority among those who have spoken.

Mr. DE AGUIAR: I am going to formally move that the item be deleted.

Mr. C. V. WIGHT: I second it.

THE CHAIRMAN: That is a negative motion. The procedure is to vote against it.

Mr. DE AGUIAR: I am quite prepared to do that, so long as there is opposition for this Government to convey to the Secretary of State.

The CHAIRMAN: Perhaps the hon. Member may move the suspension of the Standing Rules and Orders so as to be able to move a motion to that effect.

Mr. AUSTIN: I rather think this matter can be got over by suggesting to the Secretary of State that the Legislative Council desires to review the whole situation in respect of the passages of Government Officers on transfer from this Colony and *vice versa*. As far as I know of this matter, I think it is still under consideration by Government. A final decision has not yet been given. All these costs have

been paid because no final decision has as yet been come to. Until the matter is debated, I think, the Legislative Council may pass these items and at a later date debate the question as to whether the passages of officers transferred to the Colony should be paid on the lines as set out in the regulations.

**THE CHAIRMAN:** I think I am right in saying that the hon. Member for Central Demerara will be no better off. The regulations came before the Council in 1937 when they were laid and any Member has the right to move a motion in respect of that lay. It has been brought to his notice now, if he did not realize before that the regulations had been laid and adopted.

**MR. DE AGUIAR:** The request I make is that pending a later revision of the payment of passages the Secretary of State be informed that in the meantime this Colony through the Legislative Council no longer desires to join that scheme that was put forward.

**THE CHAIRMAN:** The majority of the Council have not yet expressed that view. I have only heard the views of four Members. If a motion is brought forward it would be debated and Government would have some idea of the feelings of the Council in the matter.

**MR. ELEAZAR:** The question is that these regulations have never been adopted by this Council, and to say you are taking it now is begging the question.

**THE CHAIRMAN:** Colonial Regulations do not come before the Council to be approved, but the effect of the regulations can be dealt with by the Council. The effect is to cause expenditure and that is the form in which they are considered. This Council cannot brush aside the Colonial Regulations but the desired effect can be attained by refusing to vote the money required. I am suggesting that if a motion is moved and it is intimated that it is the wish that these passages be not paid, that would be the best way to bring it before the Government. It is not a question of refusing to pass the regulations.

**MR. C. V. WIGHT:** If we vote on this

particular item, we do not want to be told that we are estopped from raising the point because we have already agreed to these passages having been paid, having passed the items as they are. I do not think, however, it is necessary to have much debate on it. If, as I suggested, the motion can be shortly disposed of and a vote taken on it, then we can go right ahead with the items.

**MR. JACOB:** I cannot agree with the remarks of the last speaker. The Council has a right to vote to-day and not withhold its vote to to-morrow. I think the suggestion made by Your Excellency is the best one, and also that made by Mr. Austin.

**MR. WALCOTT:** It seems to me that for the last hour and a half I have been listening to a discussion which reminds me of having a funeral service before there is a corpse.

**THE CHAIRMAN:** I wanted to give hon. Members an opportunity of expressing their views. It is unfortunate that this lapse of time has occurred.

**MR. WOOLFORD:** The first item here deals with the case of Mr. Gillespie; he was Agricultural Superintendent and was transferred to another Colony. But am I right in saying that he was succeeded by Mr. Bell who came from Palestine and his passage was paid on the basis of these regulations? The opportunity had occurred to endorse the basis on which it was paid.

**THE CHAIRMAN:** Mr. Bell came here in 1939 and these regulations have been in force since 1937.

**MR. WOOLFORD:** Hon. Members have been referring to the three items that can be classified together. Mr. Howieson was seconded to this Colony for a specific time—

**THE COLONIAL SECRETARY:** To a point of correction! We are not dealing with Mr. Howieson's case.

**THE CHAIRMAN:** Mr. Howieson's case is not one of the three. The second is Mr. Reilly's on page 2 and the third Mr. Hodgson's on page 3.

Mr. WOOLFORD : Members have been referring to the three items on the first page. Whether I am mistaken or not, I have risen to find out if it is the intention of the Elected Section that when a vacancy occurs in this Colony the cost of the passage of an officer filling that vacancy is not to be borne by Government. Whilst this matter is under discussion I presume it is not the intention of hon. Members to say that the cost of the passage of an officer leaving this Colony and going to Nigeria or Fiji is not to be paid. The only point of difference is what is the proper proportion to go on. These regulations have been adopted with the view of being of benefit to the Colony in the near future, but they may prove not to be of benefit to the Colony in which case I suggest that this proposed motion be borne in mind and at the particular opportunity brought into effect. At the moment I cannot see how any Member can say definitely they will be either of advantage or of no advantage to the Colony. It is very embarrassing to hon. Members like myself to vote one way or another. What the hon. Member, who moved the motion, can do, is when the vote is under discussion, as this is a specific vote, to vote against it, but he cannot disturb the general effect of the adoption of the regulations.

Mr. DE AGUIAR : I do not think the hon. Member was in his seat when I was speaking.

Mr. WOOLFORD : I was present and was not sleeping. I heard every word. I hope he was not speculating as to whether I was paying attention or not.

Mr. DE AGUIAR : If he was, then probably he did not hear the various propositions put up by the hon. Colonial Secretary when he was dealing with the matter and even the one I was putting up as regards a transferee from the Pacific. I am not prepared to say whether the change in the regulations would be of benefit or not to the Colony. The point I wish to stress is that the adoption of this change was without consultation of the Legislative Council, which is the authority on all financial matters. I do not want it to appear that I am opposed to the item. I am in favour of it, and that is why I ask for no division. I was only speaking

against the principle. I can see the difficulty in approaching the matter, as Your Excellency suggests that it may be remedied in the form of a motion, but I do ask that in the meantime the debate be sent on to the Secretary of State. The motion may not be put.

THE CHAIRMAN : I certainly give the assurance that the debate will be sent on as soon as I get the Hansard report. I would, however, like the hon. Member to understand that if an appointment is made between now and the time the despatch is received by the Secretary of State he should not feel that I have broken my word. I am very glad to hear that he does not propose to oppose the item.

Mr. ELEAZAR : I understand the hon. Colonial Secretary to say that Barbados had not approved of the regulations and so is out of the scheme. If we vote the money now, does it not show we have adopted the regulations ?

THE CHAIRMAN : I do not know in what form the matter came before the Legislature there, but this is the first occasion it has been debated here and the hon. Member for Central Demerara has said he will deal with the matter in a different way. We can now dispose of the item. The hon. Member for Berbice River will have another opportunity of expressing his views when a motion is before the Council.

Mr. ELEAZAR : Then this Council is not doing anything !

Mr. DE AGUIAR : I promise the hon. Member that he will have the opportunity of seconding that motion.

Item put, and agreed to.

#### EDUCATION.

Item 10—Grants to Schools, \$5,203.68.

Mr. JACOB : I have always wanted an opportunity to say certain things in regard to Secondary Education generally, and I am glad for this opportunity to say briefly what I wish to say. I made the point some time ago that there are at least 30 per cent. of the children of school-going age who are not going to school. Some other parties said it was about 40 per cent. I was

happy to find in Legislative Council Sessional Paper No. 8 of 1941—a despatch from the Comptroller for Development and Welfare in the West Indies to His Excellency the Governor forwarding a note by the Medical Adviser to Sir Frank Stockdale on Public Health in British Guiana—the following (paragraph 19, page 9):

School Medical Service—There are some 240 schools in British Guiana and about 80,000 children of school age, of whom nearly 55,000 are on the school rolls.

That gives me the figure of 25,000 children of school-going age who are not in the schools. I do not know if the Medical Expert Adviser to Government would be able to enlighten me as to what percentage of the population would be children of school-going age. It seems, taking the population as 340,000, that 50,000 children of school-going age gives us 23 per cent. of the population. I do not know if statistics are available to show the exact number not in school. I think it is very desirable particularly in this community where lack of education and lack of culture and refinement are as they are. I think that serious attempts should be made to find accommodation for those children in the schools. I do not think the cost would be so prohibitive. I do not think it is beyond the capacity of Government to do that. If the assistance of recognised bodies were not rejected when offered—I am certain there is a feeling among a large percentage of the community that their assistance is not required—there would be necessity for suggestions to be made for improving the general education of the Colony. It will now be admitted that at least 30 per cent. of the children of school-going age are not in the schools. The East Indian Association has calculated that at least 40 per cent. of the East Indian children are not attending school. This is a very serious problem and one that requires urgent attention.

If one compares the expenditure on Education with the expenditure on Police and looks through the Supplementary Estimates, one would be alarmed to see the amount that is spent on Police on the one hand and that on Education on the other hand. I do hope Government would realize that if you educate the people they

would become so law-abiding that there would be very little expenditure on Police work generally. but it does appear to me that is not recognized and appreciated by this Government. I maintain that apart from the number of children of school-going age who are not in the schools, there are large numbers of people between the ages of 20 and 40 who are illiterate. I am going to suggest that something should be done for them. At the moment it may not be possible to do anything for them, but I do suggest that that aspect of the question be very seriously and carefully considered.

I have been writing Government on this matter since April last year, and I have written no less than one dozen letters to the Director of Education, copies of which were forwarded to the hon. Colonial Secretary. I sent a two page letter on the 11th April, 1940, and a four page letter on the 4th February this year, both closely typed. I have tried to bring arguments to bear to convince Government that something should be done, and I have had little or no encouragement. In fact I was greatly discouraged and also those who tried to assist me. I do not know if that statement is going to be contested by Government or by the hon. Director of Education. I have been testing the feelings of a large number of people and they feel that Government is not inclined to encourage education among these people especially when it is known that constructive suggestions have been refused by Government. We have taken this matter up through various means. When Mr. George Hall was here last month the matter was referred to him too, and while we have His Majesty's Attorney-General here agreeing with certain rulings by the Director of Education, we have something else that shows that even if those rulings can be said to be legally right the effect creates an interesting state of affairs. I am not concerned with what the ruling of the law is on the point; I am concerned with the actual state of affairs, and if it is the intention of Government to libel certain people in this community and to continue to keep that libel on and not receive recommendations for improvement, then there is something wrong.

I have seen in the reports of the Director of Education for 1937 and 1938 the following statement appearing:—



It has always to be remembered that of the pupils enrolled 39 per cent. are the descendants of East Indian immigrants among whom there is not yet a settled tradition in regard to school attendance.

Whoever could have started that libel on the East Indian community? If a member of Government is responsible and Government is continuing to repeat that libel then I shall have to look further for the cause. Is Government going to say that as late as 1938 there was not yet a settled tradition among the East Indian people as regards sending their girl children to school? I have had occasion to speak here very strongly on indictments made on the East Indian community from time to time, and I do strongly object to any member of Government libelling these people.

THE CHAIRMAN: I do not think it is a libel, but a view expressed by the Head of a Department in his report.

Mr. JACOB: This fact must be appreciated, and I do not think it is appreciated up to now by the majority of Government Officers, that they are servants of the public, servants of the people.

THE CHAIRMAN: I think Public Officers regard themselves as Government Servants.

Mr. JACOB: And I think Government regard itself as something apart from the people. It has got to be appreciated that if all the people of this Colony go away there would be no room for any Government Officer. It has got to be appreciated that as long as there are people in the Colony there will be Government Officers to look after their best interests. I do hope that aspect of the matter would be appreciated by every Civil Servant in this Colony, and if that is done this country would progress and that rapidly. Here we have the people in this Colony anxious to get all the education they can and organised bodies, even the Church, are anxious to assist but to no account. I have known a case where the Church appointed a qualified master as Head Teacher of a school and the Director of Education said he would accept that teacher as an Assistant and not as a Head Teacher. After the Governing Bodies of Schools appoint teachers no Director of Education,

according to the Code, has a right to override that decision. I think the Director of Education in this instance exceeded his authority to a very large extent. Let us say the Law gives him that power, what is Government going to do, allow that state of things to continue? I think that with the assistance of recognized organisations the expenditure on Education will not be so great. I do urge that this Government tackle this problem and that quickly.

Long before 1930 I began to put my views to Government. I have visited areas in Berbice, where Government has been compelled to appoint an additional Magistrate and erect an additional Police Station, and have found in a small settlement with 200 children of school-going age that 60 of them are not going to school. When it was brought to the notice of the Education Department that those 60 children have been going to a school the head teacher of which is not qualified the Department said that such is a private school and they have nothing to do with it. But the people are contributing to the taxes. I found the father of a family, aged 40, illiterate, the mother, aged 36, illiterate and their children illiterate. Those children who have been going to school for five years are not even in the second standard. Not only the Education Department but the Education Committee too is responsible. The hon. Member on my left (Mr. Jackson) is on that Committee.

Mr. ELEAZAR: And so am I.

Mr. JACOB: Three hon. Members of this Council are members of that Committee and what representation have they made? Have they come to this Council and protested against the manner in which Government is acting? Because they want to hold on to their seats on that Committee they will not say anything about Government's inaction. I would definitely refuse to be a member of a Committee or to sit on it if constructive suggestions are put there and they are not looked into. But we have this sort of thing going on for nearly a century. I would be surprised after I have taken my seat if I am not torn to pieces for bringing forward this matter. I am expecting it, but so long as I do my duty to the community

it does not matter whether I receive the support of a single Member of this Council or not. If this Council adopts a different attitude progress would be recorded. This Council is responsible to a large extent if proper education facilities are not provided. This Council has never done its duty to the people of the Colony. I am looking forward to the day when the whole thing will go and something else take its place. If the majority of hon. Members of this Council continue with their present attitude I shall refuse to be associated with them. I do deprecate the attitude adapted by the majority of Members. Three-fourths of the hon. Members of this Council are taking absolutely no interest in the welfare of the people.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL: To a point of order! The hon. Member has no right to be rude to Members of Council even in this Chamber, and to suggest that three-fourths of them have not performed their duty is a gross abuse which should not be permitted. He should not be permitted to be rude to Members of the Council even in this Chamber.

Mr. JACOB: I do not know if that opinion is correct. I do not know that as a Member of the Council I can be rude to other Members of Council.

The Committee adjourned for the luncheon recess until 2 p.m.

2 p.m.—

The Council resumed and resolved itself into Committee to resume consideration of the Final Statement of Supplementary Expenditure for the year 1940.

Mr. JACOB, (resuming): When the Council adjourned I was endeavouring to explain that the majority or three-fourths of the Members of this Council, including the Elected Members, have not discharged their duty to the people of the Colony.

THE CHAIRMAN: I will remind the hon. Member that Members of this Council are entitled to claim courteous treatment in debate. To make a statement of that sort cannot be regarded as treating Members of the Council with the courtesy to which they are entitled.

Mr. JACOB: I find it difficult to hear you, sir, at this end of the table.

THE CHAIRMAN: I said that Members of this Council are entitled to courteous treatment in debate. To make a statement such as the hon. Member has made is not treating Members of the Council with the courtesy to which they are entitled.

Mr. JACOB: I agree with you, sir, that it is well to be courteous to everyone. but I am stating a fact; I am prepared to substantiate it. I am stating that that is the impression I have formed.

THE CHAIRMAN: That is quite a different matter. The hon. Member may have formed that impression but he cannot take advantage of his seat in this Council to be discourteous to Members. I must ask the hon. Member to keep to the item before the Committee.

Mr. JACOB: This is the point I am making. I have travelled throughout the Colony during the last few months and Your Excellency is aware of that fact. The hon. Member for Essequibo River (Mr. Lee) and I have discussed the constitutional issue and conditions in the Colony generally from one end of the country to another, and we have held at least 25 public meetings which were largely attended and at which certain resolutions were passed. I claim and submit with all respect to every other Member that while their feelings may be wounded by what I am saying, I have a constitutional right—

THE CHAIRMAN: What has that got to do with the question of increasing the vote under Head VII A.—Education—Grant to schools?

Mr. JACOB: I am going to appeal to this Council, whether it is accepted or not, that votes of this kind should be increased. I have been making that appeal continuously. That is the object of my speaking in this strain, and I am saying that it is my privilege to be able to express the views of the people whom I represent in this Council. Whether those people's views are in conflict with those of my brother Elected Members and the officers of Government is absolutely no concern of mine. I am here to discharge the duty imposed upon me by the privileges of this

Council, and I maintain that I am within my right in expressing the views of my constituents and the inhabitants of the Colony in this Legislative Council. They may not be very courteously expressed—I am not going to quibble about that; we may have differences of opinion as regards the manner of expression—but I maintain that if any hon. Member is satisfied that the educational facilities offered here are good I disagree with him 100 per cent. I am contending that they are far from satisfactory, and I am submitting further that if they are improved we will have a better country and will spend less money on police stations and other services unessential to the good government of any colony. That is the object of my speech here to-day, and while I am not out to court displeasure—His Majesty's Attorney-General said I was rude but I do not wish to be rude to anyone; I am the humblest individual in the country; I speak to the humblest man and I hope I may speak to the highest. We meet on equal terms; there is no superior individual. We have to respect the Chair and the Chair alone. If the Chair rules me out of order I will sit down, but I am not going to accept that from any single individual.

THE CHAIRMAN: There is one point I wish to refer to and that is with regard to accommodation. The hon. Member said he hoped Government would soon come forward with a vote to increase the accommodation in the schools. I would like to take this opportunity to inform the Council that the question of accommodation is being investigated now, that is to say additional accommodation required, and what it would cost to provide it. Estimates are being prepared and the matter is being pursued.

Mr. ELEAZAR: The hon. Member poses as a champion of education in the Colony. My friends who, like myself, are members of the Education Committee, treated him with the contempt which he deserved, but I am not of that temperament; I cannot stand it. Who made the hon. Member the champion of education in this Colony? Good manners is the foundation of education. A man who has not good manners cannot claim to be an educated man. He comes here and attacks other Members. What is the mean-

ing of that? Where was the hon. Member when other Members were advocating educational reform in this Colony? He was looking after rice and assisting to keep without education the very people whose cause he is now championing.

Mr. JACOB: I strongly object; I rise to a point of correction. My hon. friend is suggesting that I employed people on rice cultivation and kept them out of school. Is that what he is suggesting?

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member said that you may have been interested in rice at the time. That, I think, was his remark.

Mr. JACOB: I do not think the hon. Member is justified in making such a remark because, from the first day I entered this Council, I have been talking about education and the improvement of education.

THE CHAIRMAN: I do not think the hon. Member should object to the remark because he has always been interested in rice.

Mr. ELEAZAR: My friend must be able to take what he is always ready to give.

Mr. JACOB: I object to these personal references.

Mr. ELEAZAR: My friend gives blows and he must take them. I am giving him a dose of his own medicine. The hon. Member was here when members of his race approached the Governor at the time and made a tremendous row that East Indian girls should not be sent to school.

Mr. JACOB: That is distinctly untrue. I rise to a point of correction.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I state without fear of contradiction that the Swettenham Circular was due to a request made by the East Indian community. There is no question about that. The Governor thought he was doing them a service because they asked for it but they came back and began to complain. A tiger does not lose very much through marks on its body. These people are from the East. They regard education as nothing, money as everything, and they would work in the field for a bitt rather than go to

school, and they regard other colonists as fools because they worry about education. They are reaping what they have sown. We who thought education was of value tried to get it for all and sundry. Those who thought it was of no value disregarded it. If they now complain of illiteracy it is what they have earned. My friend claims to have gone over the whole Colony and spoken to everybody. He sent a letter to my district saying that he had been invited there. He even sent one to me. I do not know by whom he was invited but when I wrote the leading man in my district and asked him about it he sent a man from the Man Power Association—

Mr. JACOB: I rise to a point of correction. I am not connected with the Man Power Association at all and I did not send to any member there. Mr. Conrad Semple and Mr. Meakan approached me and the hon. Member can approach them.

THE CHAIRMAN: I would suggest to the hon. Member for Berbice River that he shorten his speech.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I am glad to do that, sir, but the hon. Member cannot make statements which are unfounded and get away with them. It is unfounded to say that the people of my district invited him; he invited himself.

Mr. JACOB: I rise to a point of correction. I can name the party who invited Mr. Lee and myself.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I have nothing more to say. My friend has got what he asked for. Whenever he opens his mouth he puts his foot into it. In my last breath I will make him understand that he is not the only pebble on the beach.

Item put and agreed to.

**PUBLIC WORKS—ANNUALLY RECURRENT.**

Item 18—Unallocated Stores, \$7,943.18.

Mr. JACOB: Yesterday, while the debate was proceeding, one or two hon. Members interrupted and I do not think the debate ended in a very satisfactory manner. I should like to refer to the Hansard report of the debate on the 11th December, 1940, at page 278, in which the President said:—

“If the hon. Member has any information in his possession I think it is his duty to place it at the disposal of Government. If it is put in my hands and it is sufficient to justify an investigation I would see that a proper investigation is made.”

That followed a lengthy debate in which I tried—I may not have been successful—to point out certain irregularities and over-payments in respect of public funds. The hon. Member for Essequibo River (Mr. Lee) and I received several complaints and several written requests that we should endeavour to check some of the irregularities, and in view of His Excellency's promise I addressed a letter dated the 28th June to the Colonial Secretary, enclosing a letter dated the 24th January from a person residing at Plaisance village, complaining of several irregularities and over-payments in respect of public funds on the East Coast, in the Plaisance—Beterverwagting area. I also enclosed a copy of another letter dated the 27th June from Golden Grove which reads as follows:—

THE HON. C. R. JACOB,

Dear Sir,

We have the honour to inform you that it was brought to our notice that in the work of clearing the sea channel at Golden Grove, under the supervision of Mr. Harrison, Overseer of the Drainage Board, names have been entered on the Paysheet when those persons did not work. We, therefore, ask you, most respectfully, to ask the proper person in authority to instruct the Paymaster not to pay out monies on an authorisation for the said clearing of the channel, on Monday the 30th inst., then it would be seen that monies would remain unclaimed.

Thanking you in advance,

Yours faithfully,

Mr. C.V. WIGHT: May I ask, sir, what item we are discussing at the present moment?

THE CHAIRMAN: Head XXXVI, item 18.

Mr. WIGHT: I draw the Council's attention to Rule 30.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member appears to me to be in order. We are dealing with the head, Public Works—Annually Recurrent.

Mr. WIGHT: If the ruling of the Chair is to that effect then we can go into the

whole of the Public Works Department and irregularities. I submit to the ruling of the Chair but I wish to call the Council's attention to that aspect.

Mr. DIAS: May I ask the hon. Member to favour the Council with the name of the writer of that letter?

Mr. JACOB: I do not wish to disclose the name publicly because of the possibility of victimization and what not, but I am in possession of the original letter.

THE CHAIRMAN: If I am correct I think this matter has not yet been finally settled. I am not quite sure because many cases have been brought to the notice of Government. Whether this particular one is one of them I cannot say. If it is I really do not see with what object the hon. Member is raising the question now.

Mr. JACOB: As I said at the beginning, the debate yesterday did not end satisfactorily, and one or two hon. Members suggested that they knew absolutely nothing about these matters. I will just give one or two cases and I will show what is the result since the investigation began. I think the Council should be apprised of these matters and I should be given every opportunity to ventilate them in this Chamber.

THE CHAIRMAN: Government still wants to get to the bottom of any irregularities but I cannot see any advantage in ventilating those matters at this stage.

Mr. JACOB: So far as I am concerned the matter is at an end, but this letter—

Mr. ELEAZAR: Is the hon. Member entitled to bring anonymous letters to this Council or to say he is withholding the names of the writers? Is he in order? I am not taking him at his word for anything, and if the name of the writer cannot be given the Council I cannot see how the letter can interest this Council.

THE CHAIRMAN: The letter is not anonymous. If the name of the writer is revealed it may interfere with the investigation which is proceeding.

Mr. JACOB: That is correct, sir.

Mr. ELEAZAR: Is the hon. Member

entitled to read a letter and not disclose the name? We do not know whether it is home-made or written at all. (laughter). I am not prepared to take the hon. Member at his word for anything.

Mr. JACOB: If my friend will give me an opportunity I will give a very satisfactory explanation. His Excellency, Sir Wilfrid Jackson saw the original letter.

Mr. DIAS: First of all I do not think it is proper for any Member to read any document dealing with any subject except it is an authorized document. He cannot read letters or extracts from letters addressed to him. I will remind the Council that some time ago the hon. Colonial Treasurer was prevented from reading from the minutes of the Rice Marketing Board on the hon. Member's objection.

THE CHAIRMAN: He having made the request before the letter was read, in this case it has already been read.

Mr. DIAS: I am submitting on a point of order that the hon. Member cannot read a portion of a letter; he must read the whole letter, and if it has a name he must disclose it. That is a point of procedure.

Mr. JACOB: I am amused really. Your Excellency is aware of this letter; a signed copy is in the hands of the Colonial Secretary—in fact the full correspondence. I am just reading a portion of it. I stated that I wrote a letter to the Colonial Secretary dated the 28th June with certain enclosures, and I read part of a letter which was enclosed. All the correspondence is in Government's hands.

THE CHAIRMAN: The letter can only be read with the permission of the Chair, and if you want my permission to read it I will give it on the one condition that the whole of the letter be read and the name of the person who wrote it.

Mr. JACOB: If Your Excellency rules that I should read the whole letter as submitted to the Colonial Secretary this is the letter.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: And the name too.

MR. JACOB: The name was not submitted to the Colonial Secretary.

THE CHAIRMAN: If the letter is read to the Council I will require that the name of the writer be read as well.

MR. DE AGUIAR: I take it that the main object of the hon. Member's observations is to inform the Council of what is going on in the Public Works Department. Personally I would be very little informed unless the hon. Member gives me the full information. I must know the full facts.

MR. JACOB: I think I will give you the facts.

THE CHAIRMAN: Do you intend to give the name?

MR. JACOB: Sir, I submitted to you as Colonial Secretary a copy of a letter which did not have the name of the writer.

THE CHAIRMAN: I wish to ask the hon. Member a question. Is he prepared to give the name after reading the letter?

MR. JACOB: The name is not on the letter.

THE CHAIRMAN: An anonymous letter cannot be read.

MR. JACOB: It is not anonymous. If I am given an opportunity I will explain that by reading my letter forwarding certain enclosures. The last paragraph of my letter reads as follows—

THE CHAIRMAN: I am not going to permit any portion of that letter to be read unless the whole letter is read and the name of the writer is given.

MR. JACOB: I am going to read my letter to the Colonial Secretary. It is a very lengthy letter and I will only read a portion of it.

THE CHAIRMAN: The Council wants to hear the whole letter, not a part of it.

MR. JACOB: I will read my letter of the 28th June. It states:—

CONFIDENTIAL.

Sir,—I have the honour to confirm our conversation of yesterday, regarding over-entries and

over payments by certain officers of the Public Works Department and/or the Central Drainage and Irrigation Board.

2. As I mentioned to you at the interview, in view of what has happened in regard to the complaints made by the Honourable Theo. Lee and myself, with respect to over-entries and over-payments by the Department mentioned above when work was being carried on at Craig Village and Golden Grove—Nabaclis, and the assurances given to me by His Excellency the Governor at a recent meeting of the Legislative Council, when I referred to the matter, that he would personally welcome information which would lead to the prevention of a waste of public funds, I stated that I was not prepared to give certain material details which may be used, as was done previously, to cover up irregularities that are being and have been arranged.

3. As payments will be made by the Paymaster on Monday, June 30th, I am forwarding herewith copies of the following, for immediate attention:—

(a) Statement by a resident of Plaisance, dated 24/6/41, whose name I am withholding for the present;

(b) Copy of a letter, dated 27/6/41, from residents of Golden Grove Village, whose names I am also withholding for the present.

4. In regard to (a), it is not necessary for me to make any comment at this stage. But as regards (b), I recommend that the suggestions contained in the letter be carried out, and the "authorisations" be impounded by the Paymaster, on presentation, so that the signatures may be verified and the persons named in the authorisations be called or brought up immediately by the Police, and a statement taken from each person, who should state clearly whether he or she was employed; and by whom; what kind of work was performed; where was the work performed; the number of days worked; in whose company was the work done; what was the rate of pay arranged; what amount he or she expected to receive; who was authorised to receive the amount entered in the paysheet; and when and where the authorisation was made and signed. All this should be done on Monday, if the allegations are to be investigated, and a watch kept on the overseer and foremen, to see that no contact is made by them with the persons whose names appear in the Paysheets, but who did not turn up to receive the money against their names.

5. While on this subject, I am enclosing copies of two letters, dated June 11th, 1941, from a resident of 26, Saffron Street and from another resident of Ruimveldt Waterside, regarding employees of the B.G. Rice Marketing Board, for the information of His Excellency the Governor. The names of the persons who wrote the letters are also withheld for the present.

6. Mr. Lee and I are willing to give every assistance possible to put a period to these irregularities or to greatly minimise them, if our advice and assistance are accepted.

7. On my return from the North West District on Friday, July, 4th, I shall arrange to see you again to ascertain what progress has been made in this matter.

8. As arranged, Mr. Lee and I will see His Excellency the Governor at 11.30 a.m. to-day, when we will leave a copy of this letter, and discuss the matter in greater detail.

I have, etc.,  
(Sgd.) C. R. JACOB.

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary,  
Public Buildings,  
Georgetown, Demerara.

I do not know if the Council wants to be burdened with all those enclosures.

THE CHAIRMAN: Are those the anonymous ones?

Mr. JACOB: I repeat that they are not anonymous. I have the originals which I am prepared to submit to you. They were submitted to His Excellency, Sir Wilfred Jackson, and after His Excellency was perfectly satisfied he ordered an investigation.

THE CHAIRMAN: I do not think any Member of the Council wishes to hear those letters unless the names of the writers are disclosed. You submitted the letters to the Governor but I do not think hon. Members wish to hear them unless they can be informed of the writers' names.

Mr. JACOB: I have a confidence; I have told these people in confidence that their names would not be disclosed except at a judicial enquiry, and I am not prepared to break that confidence.

THE CHAIRMAN: I suggest that the hon. Member should withhold the letters from the Council.

Mr. JACOB: I was merely reading a portion of the letters to convince the Council that the letters are there, and you will admit that these letters are in Government's possession.

THE CHAIRMAN: If that is what the hon. Member wishes me to say I will certainly say that they are in Government's possession.

Mr. JACOB: Following that I wrote another letter dated the 9th July complaining that the investigation was not proceeding as I expected. Then I received a letter dated the 28th July, written by you, sir, and we arranged that certain things should be done, and those things were done. I wrote another letter dated the 18th July, complaining against a member of the

Drainage Board connected with those enquiries. Then I received a further letter from a resident of Hopetown village, West Coast, Berbice, complaining about other irregularities there. I forwarded a copy of that letter, under date 27th August, to the Colonial Secretary and asked that the matter be investigated. Since the 27th August when that letter was forwarded, making specific charges against certain officials of the Department, I have received no reply. After investigating the matter with the Deputy Director of Public Works I received a letter from him dated the 20th September, suggesting something further to be done. I wrote again on the 30th September, suggesting what further should be done, and on the 4th October, I received another letter from the Deputy Director of Public Works. In view of the tenor of that letter I am not prepared to carry on this matter any longer. We have spent all this time—the hon. Member for Essequibo River (Mr. Lee) and I—we have tried our best, but I am sorry to say we have not received the co-operation expected from Government.

THE CHAIRMAN: Government seems to have been in communication with the hon. Member a great deal.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I do not want to be drawn into an argument over this matter but this is the crux of the whole affair. The hon. Member declined to have any investigation made through the recognized channels of Government. He has told me in his own words that he distrusts the Police. He and the hon. Member for Essequibo River (Mr. Lee) wish to conduct this investigation in their own manner, in their own professional manner.

Mr. JACOB: I am afraid I cannot allow the Colonial Secretary to make incorrect statements. We have not stated that we wanted to conduct the investigation in our own manner but in a particular way with the co-operation of the Government. (laughter). I cannot understand the laughter. We did not want to leave it entirely to the Public Works Department or to the Police, because another matter was left in the hands of the Police and we heard nothing more about it. We wanted to have some say in the matter, to see how the investigation was proceeding and direct how it should be proceeded with.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I did not interrupt the hon. Member when he was speaking, but despite his interruption at this stage I will say that what I have stated is correct. The hon. Member told me in no uncertain terms that he did not trust the Police Department. I was present at an interview with his Excellency, Sir Wilfrid Jackson, when the hon. Member asked that the investigation should be conducted in the manner suggested in his letter.

Mr. JACOB: I am afraid that is not strictly correct. When His Excellency telephoned for the present acting Colonial Secretary we had already left.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: That is so, but nevertheless a request had been made of the Governor that the investigation be carried out strictly in accordance with the procedure set out in the hon. Member's letter. I was given specific instructions by His Excellency to follow minutely the procedure laid down by the hon. Member. Two persons and two persons alone were acquainted with the contents of that letter, the Deputy Director of Public Works and myself. Sealed orders were given to those concerned, but because nothing has transpired up to the present from the allegations made by the hon. Members they continue in their allegation that no co-operation is given; that everything is wrong; that nobody is out to help and that in fact the entire structure of Government is rotten from the top to the bottom.

Mr. C. V. WIGHT: There is a solution—appoint the hon. Member to the vacant post of Deputy Commissioner of Police.

Mr. WOOD (Conservator of Forests): No, Director of Public Persecutions.

Mr. JACOB: If I read a letter of the 4th October from the Deputy Director of Public Works I think it would throw some light on the matter. The letter reads:—

Public Works Dept.,  
Georgetown, Demerara,  
4th Oct., 1941.

IRREGULARITIES, OVER-ENTRIES AND OVER-PAYMENTS, PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT.

Sir,—I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 30th ult. bearing the above heading and used in this instance without prejudice; in reply I beg to advise you

that as the men concerned are not regular employees of the Department I have no authority to call them to present themselves to the Cove and John police station at any time unless I am prepared to pay them for the time involved.

2. This being out of the question I have to suggest that any steps taken to interview those men must be a matter for yourself entirely.

3. I regret the delay in answering your letter, for which my absence in Essequibo was responsible.

I have, etc.,  
F. H. ALLEN,  
for Director of Public Works.

This letter does not bear out the statement of the Colonial Secretary that they have carried out everything as indicated by us and we are not co-operating. This letter definitely brings about a breach in the whole arrangement.

THE CHAIRMAN: If the hon. Member will deposit the money to which those men would be entitled for missing a day's work I am sure the necessary steps would be taken for them to interview the hon. Member at the place suggested.

Mr. JACOB: Thank you very much, sir. Yesterday you gave me an assurance that the matter would be further investigated and I said I would give proof. The onus is on the Government and not on me to spend money on Government business. I am spending sufficient time. I have spent all this time trying to stop the waste of public funds and that is what I get from the Chair itself.

THE CHAIRMAN: There is no vote to which such an amount could be charged.

Mr. JACOB: Your Excellency has the power to order an investigation to check irregularities which are going on, and if Your Excellency is not prepared to do it I am not prepared to pursue the matter any longer.

Mr. DE AGUIAR: I would like to ask a relevant question. If I remember correctly this item—Unallocated Stores, \$1,000—is a sort of token vote. I do not understand why we are called upon to vote this increased amount of \$7,943.18 under this head. I want to know about the corresponding credit which was to take place all the time. Perhaps the system has been changed again. I would like to be informed whether there has been a change in the system, and whether all the money spent in 1940 was a total of \$8,943.18,



Mr. McDAVID (Colonial Treasurer): I know the hon. Member has a peculiar fondness for this vote and I anticipated such a question from him. It would be perhaps clearer if the two figures comprising that difference of \$7,943 had been indicated on the supplementary estimate itself, but they are shown in the statement of actual expenditure in the Colonial Treasurer's Report, and if the hon. Member has a copy he will find that the purchases under Unallocated Stores for the year total \$75,000 odd, and the issues from those stores total \$66,000 odd, so that this item here really represents the excess of the purchases under Unallocated Stores for the year over the amount issued and charged to votes. Consequently its value is represented in actual stores on hand at the end of 1940, the value of which is recorded in the Colonial Treasurer's financial statement.

Mr. JACOB: I understand that a certain quantity of cement, public property, was transported from the Public Works Department Store to some place on the West Coast of Demerara recently.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member is referring to a case which is now receiving the attention of Government.

Item 18 put, and agreed to.

#### EDUCATION—SCHOOLS, INSTITUTIONS AND MISCELLANEOUS.

Item 16—Children's Breakfast Centre, \$471.50.

Mr. JACOB: It is a very good thing for a Breakfast Centre to be carried on in Georgetown but I am wondering whether similar provision cannot be made in certain remote parts of the Colony for some assistance of this kind to be given, particularly in Essequibo. I do not know whether my friend, the hon. Member for the division, was told about it, but I think a public service of this nature should not be confined to Georgetown but should be extended to Essequibo.

Mr. CREASE (Director of Education): It is only provided in Georgetown.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member's remarks will be noted by the Director of

Education and I will ask him to give consideration to the point.

Item put, and agreed to.

#### LABOUR AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT.

Mr. JACOB: Under this head I would like to refer to the recently created Canals Polder Country District. As a member of the old Canals Polder Authority I know that when the Authority was going out of existence a resolution was carried recommending to Government that the area be converted into one or two Village Districts. That resolution was carried unanimously. Even the Association in the district, although there was some disagreement as to the kind of Authority they wanted, desired something better than what they got. In a Village District the people elect two-thirds of the members while Government nominates one-third, but in a Country District all the members of the Authority are nominated by Government. The outgoing Authority recommended that one or two Village Districts be created; the people themselves asked for something better, and while they were advised by myself and the hon. Member for the district (Mr. A. G. King) that they could not get anything and that it would be too cumbersome, they agreed that a Village District would be the best thing for them. To the surprise of the people and to my great astonishment a notice appeared in the *Official Gazette* of the 7th June, 1941, creating the Canals Polder Country District. The names of the Councillors appeared in the *Gazette* of July 20, and since then I think there was one meeting of the Authority.

There we have a large number of people who, in my opinion, are capable of managing their own affairs, asking for something but the Local Government Board thought it wise to give them the worst kind of government they could get. The Local Government Board consists of the Colonial Secretary as Chairman, the Commissioner of Labour and Local Government as Deputy Chairman, and a few Elected Members and Nominated Members of this Council. That kind of treatment might have been all right some time ago, but as the result of serious dissatisfaction with the administration of the whole Colony a Royal Commission visited the Colony and made certain recommendations which have been accepted

in principle. In paragraph 26 the Royal Commissioners recommend specifically:—

“...More, and not less, participation by the people in the work of government is a real necessity for lasting social advancement.”

In another part of the document the Royal Commissioners recommend in paragraph 36:—

“...Some initiative is required of Government to ensure the proper organisation under the Local Government Law of all rural and village communities, wherever situated, and whether or not they have happened to express a desire to be brought within the scope of the Local Government Board.”

Here we have the Royal Commissioners specifically advising this Government that the people must be given greater opportunity to manage their own affairs—they have recommended so far that there should be adult suffrage at least in the villages. I do not think it is going to be argued that even in village administration the villagers should not have the right to vote. As a matter of fact in Jamaica the Secretary of State for the Colonies gave the Legislative Council the privilege of adopting adult suffrage, and I am saying that there can be no doubt that villagers at least in this Colony should have adult suffrage. The Royal Commissioners have recommended that village communities should be given a greater opportunity to manage their own affairs.

The outgoing Authority recommended it; the people themselves asked for it but the Local Government Board has given them the worst possible form of government. I cannot reconcile that attitude of Government, and I must lay the blame specifically on the Colonial Secretary as Chairman of the Local Government Board. I am confident that if he did not represent the Government on that Board and the Colonial Secretary had recommended to the Board that it was only right and proper that the people should be given a better form of government the Board would have granted it. Responsibility must be placed somewhere and I am submitting that the responsibility must be fixed on the Board and the responsible officers of this Government. Government has specific instructions from the Secretary of State for the Colonies—

THE CHAIRMAN: I would like the hon. Member to remind me again of those

specific instructions. He read a portion of one of the paragraphs of the recommendations of the Royal Commission but I am not sure whether he is suggesting that one of the recommendations was that Village Districts and not Country Districts should be formed. I would like to be clear on that point.

Mr. JACOB: I will read the recommendation again.

THE CHAIRMAN: I wish the hon. Member would. I have the Recommendations before me and the hon. Member did not read the recommendation I see here.

Mr. JACOB: I thought these recommendations were so well known and the quotations I have made were so well known that it would be unnecessary to read the whole paragraph.

THE CHAIRMAN: I did not recognize the quotation made by the hon. Member, and that is why I turned it up.

Mr. JACOB: I took paragraph 26 and read a portion of it, but if Your Excellency wants me to read the whole paragraph I will do so.

THE CHAIRMAN: I have a copy of the Recommendations before me but I think hon. Members of the Council would like to know the contents of that paragraph.

Mr. JACOB: Under the heading “Constitutional and Closer Union” par. 26 states:—

26. We do not support either of the extreme proposals put before us for the grant of immediate and complete self-government based on universal suffrage, or for a wide increase of the authority of Governors which would convert the existing system into a virtual autocracy; the one because it would render impossible the financial control necessary if, as we consider to be inevitable, substantial assistance is to be afforded by His Majesty's Govt. through the West Indian Welfare Fund and otherwise; the other because it would be politically a retrograde step. More, and not less, participation by the people in the work of government is a real necessity for lasting social advancement. At the present stage, we attach more importance to the truly representative character of Legislative Councils than to any drastic change in their functions

I only read two and a half lines of the paragraph in the first instance where it

says distinctly "More, and not less, participation by the people in the work of government is a real necessity for lasting social advancement."

THE CHAIRMAN : That recommendation has reference to the Legislative Council.

Mr. JACOB : Very well, sir, I will read the other part. On page 28 par. 36 reads as follows :—

36. *British Guiana*: Outstanding loans-in-aid from the Imperial Exchequer should be converted into free grants, outstanding obligations on account of the work of the Boundary Commission and of Loans from the Colonial Development Fund should be remitted, and in future loans-in-aid should be avoided. Special measures should be taken to protect the Amerindian peoples of the remote hinterland. Some initiative is required of Government to ensure the proper organisation under the Local Government Law of all rural and village communities, wherever situated, and whether or not they have happened to express a desire to be brought within the scope of the Local Government Board.

I am submitting that paragraph 36 must be read in conjunction with paragraph 26. If that is admitted then what justification had the Board to give the people less than what they asked for? The Royal Commissioners have made it clear that the present system is not satisfactory, and they suggest that the people should be given a greater opportunity to manage their own affairs. Instead of giving them the same opportunity Government has given them less. That is what has happened in the Canals Polder. Government, in order to keep the people down and definitely hinder the progress of this country—

THE CHAIRMAN : I cannot allow the hon. Member to make such a statement. If he accuses Government or any individual Government officer of doing all he could to keep the people down I will not allow it.

Mr. JACOB : I am submitting with all confidence that the Local Government Board acted in this instance against the wishes of the people and against the recommendations of the Royal Commission. I do not think it will be disputed that there is great dissatisfaction in the Canals Polder at the moment. As a matter of fact the system of Government is such that by actual coercion you get things done. The District Commissioner goes around asking people to be members of the Board.

Officers actually go around telling the people what benefits will accrue to them if they become members of Local Authorities. I have evidence to show that that is done.

THE CHAIRMAN : I hope it is not anonymous.

Mr. JACOB : I have the evidence here. When I stated yesterday that I had the evidence I had the evidence.

Mr. WALCOTT : But we never saw it.

Mr. JACOB : I did not want to show it too early; you are not going to have it to victimize those people. When I made the statement this morning that this Council is not fully representative of the Colony, grave objection was taken to it. I am expressing the view which has been put to me over and over again. As a matter of fact I am going to the Canals Polder on Sunday to see those people and to suggest what further steps they should take. They have asked me for my advice; I am not hiding anything from Government. Whenever I get a communication I send it along. At present I am not prepared to give the names of certain people in certain cases because I know the result, but in other cases in which people do not mind I can give their names.

But I have been digressing again. I believe these things are done to throw me off my balance. (laughter). The point I was making is that here Government had a wonderful opportunity of using its initiative and creating a Village District in the Canals Polder, thus giving the people an opportunity to look after their own affairs. I would like to have a definite statement from Government as to why it disregarded the recommendation of the Royal Commission and the request of the people themselves.

Mr. JACKSON : The conceit of some people is definitely amazing, and their effrontery still more alarming. It does seem to me that there are certain hon. members who feel that they are the last word in everything; that whatever they say or do is correct, but everything Government does which does not meet with their views is wrong. I deprecate such conduct by Members of this Council. The Local Government Board has been charged

with not giving the people the best system of administration they can have. The best system seems to be what the hon. Member for North Western District (Mr. Jacob) considers the best.

Mr. JACOB: I rise to a point of correction—what the people asked for.

Mr. JACKSON: A child might ask for a knife to play with but the wide-awake parent would not give it. It must not be taken for granted that everything a person asks for should be given to him. The initiative of our worthy friend might be the best thing for anybody to adopt, but I am satisfied in my own mind that so far as the Local Government Board is concerned it discharges its duty to the best of its ability and provides for those for whom it is responsible what it considers enough for them. If anyone objects to that let him object, but he must not foist on the public his views and ideas as to what ought to be done.

I do think that when one poses to be the be-all and end-all of everything he simply makes a mistake. I remember reading when I was a child at school the following passage:—

“Young people at the period when they are acquiring knowledge are very liable to self-conceit, and thus by their own folly defeat the great purpose of instruction, which is not to make them vain but wise. They are apt to forget that knowledge is not for show but for use, and their desire to exhibit what they know is invariably proof that their knowledge is superficial.”

I am inclined to think that those words might be taken in good part by some of us around this table, and that we should be more tolerant of the views of others instead of endeavouring to foist our views upon the whole community, including this Council, and be annoyed when they are not accepted. (applause).

Mr. C. V. WIGHT: In endorsing the remarks of the hon. Mr. Jackson I desire to refer to that portion of the debate in which the criticism of the hon. Member for North Western District resolved itself into a question of representation of the people. The hon. Member has stated here repeatedly that in his opinion there are only two Members capable of representing the people in this Council. The hon. Member forgets that we

will get nowhere in this Council without the co-operation of every hon. Member. Nothing can be achieved by personal abuse by the hon. Member of certain hon. Members. In a spirit of ill-breeding or ill manners the hon. Member approached the constituency of another hon. Member in regard to the Kitty district. Does the hon. Member not know that there is a difference of opinion on the question of raising the status of the Kitty Local Authority? Does the hon. Member not know that I was asked at a meeting by certain persons to make representation to raise the status of that village, and does he not know that the hon. Member for Central Demerara (Mr. DeAguiar) has been approached in another direction? What must the Local Government Board or any other body in such a position do in such a case? If the Board decided in favour of one side it would be attacked by the other.

The hon. Member in reading certain documents in Council this morning suggested that if the names of the writers were disclosed there might be victimization. Will the hon. Member say that he has refrained from disclosing certain correspondence relating to a business arrangement between himself and a leading firm of the Colony, Messrs. Booker Bros., because he is afraid of victimization?

Mr. JACOB: I rise to a point of order.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I yield to no one in respect of my knowledge of representation in the villages but I will not put my knowledge against that of the hon. Member for North Western District (Mr. Jacob). I support the remarks of the hon. Mr. Jackson, but perhaps the height of his language might miss its mark. I will therefore tell a story of a little boy who asked his father for a bicycle and his father told him to pray to God every night and he would get a bicycle. The boy prayed until one morning he awoke to find a tricycle outside the door of the bedroom. The little fellow exclaimed “Oh Lord, do you mean to say you don't know a bicycle from a tricycle?” (laughter). The father knew that the boy was too small to ride a bicycle. I know the people in the villages because I have been a Councillor and a Chairman. They very often ask for bicycles when they cannot even ride tricycles. Government has done the correct thing. In this Council

I protested some time ago and told Government that the worst thing they could do was to give the villages the right to elect their own Chairmen. The people of the Canals Polder may think not, but Government has done the best thing for them. They think they can ride a bicycle. (laughter).

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member's story is quite appropriate because we are dealing with the subject of transport and travelling under the head Labour and Local Government.

Mr. JACOB: I am not at all surprised at the remarks of the last three hon. Members who have spoken. It is well that they were drawn out and that the public should know the contempt with which they are treated in this Council by hon. Members who represent them.

Mr. LAING (Commissioner of Labour and Local Government): That there have been requests from the people of the Canals Polder area that there should be a Village Council for that area is perfectly correct, but it is incorrect to say that their representations were disregarded. As a matter of fact they received very careful consideration. The anxiety of the Local Government Board was, of course, that there should be some administrative authority in the area to carry on the work of the district, and it is quite impossible to appoint a Village District until it has gone very thoroughly into the matter and a voters' list has been prepared. If the hon. Member for North Western District (Mr. Jacob) will refer to the local Government Ordinance he will find that the preparation of a voters' list takes a considerable time. There would have been no Local Authority in power at the present time had it been decided that there would be a Village Council. There are also other points to receive consideration because the Canals Polder is very different to an ordinary Local Authority in the country. If the hon. Member intends to visit the Canals Polder in order to suggest what further steps should be taken I would suggest that he should come and see me so that I may put him in a better position to advise the people.

THE CHAIRMAN: I hope the hon. Member will accept that invitation.

Mr. JACOB: I am surprised at the attitude adopted in this Council. I feel that while there are legal obstacles they are not insurmountable and they could have been removed before now. I welcome the suggestion that I should see the Commissioner of Labour and Local Government on the matter but I do not think I have the time. (laughter). I know he is a very persuasive gentleman and he would tell me all kinds of things, but if I do not advise the people according to what he said—

THE CHAIRMAN: I think the hon. Member is afraid of the Commissioner's persuasive powers.

Mr. JACOB: I am not afraid of that, but what I am afraid of is that the hon. Member will not use a little bit more of his initiative. Greater energy is required, and Government must realize that \$180,000 has been spent in that area and there is dissatisfaction and litigation by the Drainage Board against some of the people. There is going to be trouble and I was beseeched to go there on Sunday—not that I wish to go. In fact I declined to go on several occasions. I feel that I should go and give the people some advice. I want to know what Elected Member in this Council consults his constituents as often as some of us do. I want to know if it is not their duty to speak on behalf of the people whom they represent. However, election time is coming.

#### LAW OFFICERS.

Item 3—Fee to counsel for prosecuting at Criminal Sessions, \$795.

Mr. JACOB: I have always questioned this item. I consider that far too much money is spent in paying outsiders to prosecute at the Sessions. I remember distinctly that before the Assistant Attorney-General was a whole-time officer outside assistance was employed. Later it was said that if a Crown Counsel was employed and the Assistant Attorney-General was made a whole-time officer there would be no necessity to go outside for legal assistance. Those things have been done, but the employment of legal assistance still continues. In the other Supplementary Estimates, I think this item appears in two or three places.

THE CHAIRMAN: I take it that the hon. Member has read the explanatory note in which it is pointed out that it was because the Assistant Attorney-General was appointed to act as a Judge.

MR. JACOB: I am not going to speak on the other items but I wish to take this opportunity to say that I do not think this amount was spent during the whole period. I would like to know whether this expenditure cannot be avoided. I do not know whether the Legal Members of the Council know anything about it, but I have been asked by several legal men how it was that previous Attorneys-General have prosecuted on behalf of the Crown at the Criminal Sessions and the present Attorney-General has not prosecuted one day since his arrival in the Colony? I do not know whether that practice should not be continued, and whether outsiders should be employed continuously and public funds used to such an extent. Perhaps there are good reasons why the present Attorney-General does not prosecute on behalf of the Crown—maybe he has more work to do as the result of the war—but I do not think he has given that assistance which previous Attorneys-General have given to the Colony up to two years ago. The finances of the Colony are not in such a healthy state as to justify the legal members of the Government in asking for legal assistance from outside. I am objecting to this expenditure. In fact it is no use objecting to it because the money has already been paid. I am suggesting that in future greater care should be taken in appointing outsiders so frequently to prosecute on behalf of the Crown.

THE CHAIRMAN: I hope the hon. Member does not judge the work of the Attorney-General, or any previous Attorney-General, by the time he spends in Court.

MR. JACOB: I am just making a comparison. We had no Crown Counsel in those days; now we have a Crown Counsel and a full-time Assistant Attorney-General, and yet we are paying all this money to outside legal practitioners. This is not the only item of its kind.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL: I was delighted to hear the hon. Member speak on this particular item four times or more. He has drawn attention to the fact that I

have not appeared in Court in a criminal prosecution since my arrival in this Colony. That is quite true, but it so happens that this particular vote is incorrectly shown against Law Officers because the Assistant Attorney-General was lent to the Judicial Department for six months and after that was on sick leave for three months, so that for nine months of the year he was absent from my Chambers. That brought the staff down to two, and the remaining officer, the Crown Counsel, with the exception of 6½ weeks, was in Court and never in chambers. The result was that I was the only Law Officer in chambers throughout the year with the exception of 1½ months when I had the assistance of the Crown Counsel. In addition to the work of my predecessors—and I know that they complained that they were overworked—there is an eruption on the other side of the world called war which unfortunately reacts on this side, and the repercussion is considerable. It is quite true that the hon. Member has said he has no idea how much work has been cast on the Law Officers as a result of this war. Morning, noon and night I am called upon to give immediate and urgent decisions, to express my opinion as to what decisions should be. This morning I was up at 1.30 to give a decision with respect to a boat which was to sail in 15 minutes. I have endeavoured to the utmost of my ability to keep expenditure down in this Colony. I know how badly off the Colony is. I believe I am making a correct statement of fact now when I say it is the only Colony of the Empire which has not engaged an extra Law Officer as a result of the war. Barbados has an extra Law Officer and I think every other Colony has. This Colony has not done so yet.

In addition to the extra amount of work suffered by all Colonies we have additional troubles—the question of air bases. The hon. Member would not know how much extra work that cast on the Law Officers. I can assure him that at least 1½ hours a day of my time is spent on questions concerning the air bases. He will realize that my predecessors did not have that work. Then we have the question of Constitutional Reform and the Commission appointed to consider the various points, which was unable to decide certain questions relating to its terms of reference. Those matters have thrown an enormous amount of extra

work on the Law Officers. During the year in question we were not at full strength and the result was that outside aid had to be called upon if the prosecutions were to be performed. It stands to reason when two Courts are sitting you have to employ two counsel, and, as it happened this year, the January session was sitting at the same time as the April session, with one Judge sitting in the January session and two Judges sitting on the same day in the April session you want three prosecutors. I cannot in any way lessen or shorten the sessions, and as long as that happens additional assistance will be required.

As pointed out in the note, the excess is solely due to the fact that the Assistant Attorney-General was lent to the Judicial Department and served with great distinction for six months, after which he proceeded on three months' sick leave. I think that charge should in common fairness be shown against the Judiciary vote; the Law Officers Department incurred no extra expenditure.

**THE COLONIAL SECRETARY:** The hon. Attorney-General has fully explained the position but I would like to add a personal note. I have been associated with a number of Attorneys-General throughout my career and I can speak with personal knowledge of the tremendous excess of work which has devolved upon the Law Officers.

Item put, and agreed to.

#### MEDICAL—HOSPITAL AND DISPENSARIES.

**MR. BLEAZAR:** For some considerable time I had been asking Government and I had great trouble to get Government to appoint a Committee to enquire into the working of the Public Hospital. They have gone off at a tangent again and I am not sure whether Government should not be asked to appoint another Committee to make further inquiry, because all is not well at the Public Hospital. It seems to me we are getting a set of people from Africa or Asia, anywhere except from the East, and they are bringing all kinds of innovations into the country, and when people resent them Government supports them on the pretext that it must support its officials. It is an open secret that no fewer than 35 of those hard-working people, the wardmaids at the Public

Hospital, are out of employment because of an innovation introduced by a recent arrival in the country—that they should all go on their knees to scrub the Hospital floor. When they complain they are told it is done all over the world. That may be partly true but it is partly untrue, and a lie which is partly true is the worst kind of lie. I have a friend who had to attend hospitals in France, Austria and Germany, and he tells me that that sort of thing is unknown in those places.

I feel that labour of that kind is unjustifiable because not many days ago I was reading an article by a doctor, an M.D., in which he pointed out that what is known as housemaids' knee, a form of disfigurement, is the result of scrubbing on the knees. At least within the last 15 years I cannot remember seeing wardmaids scrubbing the floor of the Hospital on their knees. If that was a necessary thing to do I cannot imagine why it was not ordered by the Surgeons-General we have had from time to time. I do not wish to make invidious distinctions, but of the Surgeons-General we have had during the last 50 years I remember Dr. Godfrey particularly. He was very much interested in the working of the Hospital; as a matter of fact it was he who introduced the system of bringing Nursing Sisters to the Hospital.

After all these years it is a person who has come to the Colony just four months ago who says that the wardmaids must go down on their knees to scrub. A woman who had been employed at the Hospital for 18 years has been dismissed for disobeying orders. I would not be surprised if a doctor called upon a clerk one morning to wash his car, and if he refused he was dismissed for disobeying orders. I understand that the matter was brought to the Governor's notice, but His Excellency never worries with those things. I cannot believe that the Medical Department cannot find any other device by which the floor of the Hospital can be scrubbed. It looks to me a spiteful act, and I am emboldened in that opinion by the opinion of the doctor in the article I have referred to. I am told by a high official "These people must do what they are told. They have not done it and others have taken their places." If there is unemployment in the country why wouldn't other

people take the work? That is no reason why people should be oppressed.

I know of an incident in New Amsterdam in which a man was called in from his day off and told to do something which was not part of his duty, and because he refused to do it he was interdicted from duty for refusing to carry out instructions. That man happens to be a bandsman and was off for the day. When he was called in he found that the other members of the Band had refused to play because they wanted some consideration. Because he joined the others in their stand he was interdicted from duty for refusing to obey orders. Was it fair to that man? Times are hard and unemployment is rife. It is not fair to bring oppression on these people. I regard it as a form of oppression. The Head of the Department seldom knows of these things, but if he does know he has an excuse; he is expected to uphold his subordinate officer. We are told that it is the discipline of the institution. So long as I am here and have an opportunity to speak I shall let Government know these things. I want it to be known that the people of the Colony have to look forward now to poverty, blood and fire after the war, and I do not think anybody in this Colony should push them on too quickly. Do not take advantage of the unemployment which is rife in the country to add to the burden of the people of the country. It has never paid any Government to have people who delight in being tyrannical towards their less favoured brethren for one reason or another, knowing that their decision would be upheld because the Head of the Department does not wish to interfere with the discipline of the institution.

An innovation of that kind at the Hospital was bound to cause trouble. The medical profession must be sadly lacking if it cannot find any other methods of cleaning the floor, and I do not think it is so lacking. I mention the matter here because I feel very strongly about it, and but for my health at the time I might have done something. I think the lady responsible should have been sent home. Those women who have been dismissed have contributed to her salary. I have no doubt that if you enquire you will find that this person has come from Tanganyika, Nigeria, or perhaps

South Africa or Hong-Kong. We must not complain although we are being squeezed. Things are not going right at the Hospital. These people are not to be allowed to use the institution as if it were their own property. After all the people of the country have to pay the piper. Even Crown Colony Government cannot hold my tongue. Cases of this kind should be looked into by Government and Government should take a more sympathetic view of the matter. It would be unkind, unfair and un-Christian for me to stand here and say anything disparaging of His Excellency in his absence, but he was here and he did nothing.

THE CHAIRMAN: I happen to know that the Governor had a great deal to do with it.

Mr. ELEAZAR: He might have done a great deal but it was not very effective. His great deal amounted to little or nothing, because the only contention of the wardmaids was having to go on their knees to scrub the floor. They protested and they were dismissed for insubordination. The topic of the day in this country should be what can be done to win the war, and after we have finished with the enemies abroad we can deal with the enemies at home. We should be discussing measures as to how we could help to win the war. When I come here with a complaint it has merit in it. These people have a great grievance.

Mr. JACOB: I will tell the Council something I have investigated. I have been told by several people that the accommodation, sanitary arrangements, linen and so forth at the Public Hospital are very unsatisfactory. I asked permission, and the Resident Surgeon accompanied the hon. Member for Essequebo River (Mr. Lee) and myself through three of the Wards of the Public Hospital. We were surprised at some of the things we saw. There may be some shortage of accommodation but I do not regard that as very serious, but there is a shortage of beds, mattresses, pillows, bed sheets pillow cases and blankets. We found patients lying on the bare beds with just a blanket over the springs. We found others lying on mattresses on the floor, without sheets, blankets or pillows. In some cases there were pillows without cases. After we had gone through the three Wards Mr.



Grierson agreed with us that there was a shortage of those materials. I am not prepared to say what further discussion took place, but the conditions at the Hospital were simply deplorable.

Dr. MACLENNAN (Director of Medical Services) : Was the visit made at night ?

Mr. JACOB : Yes, we went purposely during the night because in the day you cannot see these conditions very well. In the night the patients must be in bed and we went purposely around 8.30 at night. Maybe I have no right to do these things ; I am intruding.

THE CHAIRMAN : No, hon. Members are welcome to these institutions. I am sorry the hon. Member paid his first visit this year and not sooner.

Mr. JACOB : I think the Director of Medical Services will correct you there, sir. I have been paying visits. I have written several letters and I have had replies which I do not consider satisfactory.

Dr. MACLENNAN : I think I told the hon. Member that we always welcome visits by hon. Members to any institution, and I think the hon. Member knows that.

Mr. JACOB : The treatment meted out to me in this Council in the debates on Education and the Public Works Department was not very kind, but I anticipate that it will be my duty to make certain remarks here until the session closes.

The Council adjourned until 10.30 a.m. the following day.