

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

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

FRIDAY, 15TH OCTOBER, 1954.

The Council met at 2 p.m. His Honour the Speaker, Sir Eustace Woolford, O.B.E., Q.C., in the Chair.

PRESENT

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

Ex-Officio Members;—

The Hon. the Chief Secretary,
Mr. F. D. Jakeway, O.B.E. (acting).

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

The Hon. the Financial Secretary,
Mr. W. O. Fraser, O.B.E.

Nominated Members of Executive Council :—

The Hon. Sir Frank McDavid,
C.M.G., C.B.E. (Member for Agriculture,
Forests, and Lands and Mines).

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

The Hon. W. O. R. Kendall (Member
for Communications and Works).

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

The Hon. G. H. Smellie.

The Hon. R. C. Tello.

Deputy Speaker:—

Mr. W. J. Raatgever, C.B.E.

Nominated Officials :—

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

Mr. J. I. Ramphal.

Nominated Unofficials;—

Mr. T. Lee.

Mr. W. A. Phang.

Mr. L. A. Luckhoo, Q.C.

Mr. W. A. Macnie, C.M.G., O.B.E.

Mr. C. A. Carter.

Mr. E. F. Correia

Rev. D. C. J. Bobb.

Mr. H. Rahaman.

Miss Gertrude H. Collins.

Mrs. Esther E. Dey.

Dr. H. A. Fraser.

Lt. Col. E. J. Haywood, M.B.E., T.D.

Mr. Sugrim Singh.

Clerk of the Legislature—

Mr. I. Crum Ewing.

Assistant Clerk of the Legislature—

Mr. H. H. Tross (acting).

Absent :—

The Hon. R. B. Gajraj—on leave.

Mr. R. B. Jailal.—on leave.

The Speaker read prayers.

MINUTES AMENDED

Mr. Speaker: I beg to move that the minutes of the meeting of the Council held on the 10th September last, as printed and circulated, be amended. It is a question as to how the minutes themselves have been framed, and if hon. Members approve the amendment I will have it inserted. If you look at page 3 of the minutes you will find these words appearing therein:

"The Chief Secretary then intimated that he had obtained His Excellency's consent under Section 48 (2) of the British Guiana (Constitution) (Temporary Provisions) Order in Council, 1953, for the suspension of the relevant Standing Orders to enable him to take the Bill through its remaining stages that day."

I suggest that the words "for the suspension of the relevant Standing Orders" should be deleted and that the words "to move that the relevant Standing Orders be suspended to enable him to take the Bill through its remaining stages that day," should be substituted therefor.

A similar amendment ought to be made later on the same page in the paragraph (under the Cinematograph (Amendment) Bill), which reads:

"The Attorney General intimated that he had obtained His Excellency's consent under Section 48 (2) of the (British Guiana Constitution) (Temporary Provisions) Order in Council, 1953, for the suspension of the relevant Standing Orders to enable him to take the Bill through its remaining stages that day."

There again, the words "for the suspension of the relevant Standing Orders" should be deleted and replaced by the words "to move that the relevant Standing Orders be suspended to enable him to take the Bill through its remaining stages that day." The minutes will be amended accordingly with the approval of hon. Members.

Minutes, as amended, agreed to.

ATTORNEY GENERAL RETURNS.

Mr. Speaker : I am sure that all of us would like to welcome the hon. the Attorney-General back from leave. I hope he has enjoyed his holiday.

The Attorney General: Thank you very much.

MR. RAMPHAL'S APPOINTMENT

Mr. Speaker: I don't see the hon. Member, Mr. Ramphal here and I do not know whether he is coming this afternoon. I do not know also when next we shall meet in Council, but although he is absent I would like to place on record our congratulations to him on his appointment to the permanent post of Commissioner of Labour, in which position he has been acting for some time past.

Mr. Raatgever: I do not know if I am in order, Sir, but I intended to speak on the same subject and perhaps I should do so now. I venture to think that the appointment of Mr. Ramphal is a very popular one. It has afforded much pleasure to those of us who know him and appreciate his sterling qualities. I feel certain that he will fill this post with dignity and honour.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

LEAVE TO MEMBERS

Mr. Speaker: I have to announce that the hon. Member, Mr. Gajraj, is absent from the Colony on leave and I think his leave will extend, under the present arrangements at least, until October 30.

Mr. Jailal is also absent on public business abroad and his leave will be extended until November 7.

Mr. Lee had written to ask for leave, but I notice that he is now in his seat.

Mr. Lee: I have been able to attend.

Mr. Speaker: I wish the hon. Member would let me know when he returns on similar occasions in future. Those are all the announcements.

REPORTS AND DOCUMENTS

The Financial Secretary laid on the table the following documents:

Record of Proceedings of the Eighth Meeting of the Regional Economic Committee of the British West Indies, British Guiana and British Honduras.

Report of the Eighth Meeting of the British Caribbean Oils and Fats Conference: 28th June-2nd July, 1954.

Report of the Executive Commissioner, Board of Commissioners of Currency, British Caribbean Territories (Eastern Group) for the year 1953.

The Report and Financial Statements of the Trotman Trust Fund for the year 1953 together with the Director of Audit's certificate and report thereon.

SUPPLEMENTARY ORDER PAPER

Mr. Speaker: There are two other items on the Supplementary Order Paper which, perhaps, might be incorporated here. They are:

- (i) Minutes of meetings of Finance Committee held on the 9th and the 23rd of September, and on the 1st of October, 1954, and
- (ii) Statement of Loans from Voted Expenditure written off during the period ended 30th June, 1954.

The Financial Secretary: I beg to lay these two documents also on the table.

Agreed to.

Mr. Lee: I don't know if I am in order, but with regard to the last-

mentioned document — Statement of Loans from voted Expenditure written off during the period ended 30th June, 1954,—I do not think the Financial Secretary is in order in presenting it in this way. I should like to know whether it should not have been done by way of a motion so that we might discuss it.

Mr. Speaker: It is all a mere formality; the hon. the Financial Secretary is merely laying the Statement on the table, but I do not think it is open for discussion now. The hon. Member has asked a question, but I cannot give him the answer now. I think he should speak to the hon. the Financial Secretary about the matter.

Mr. Lee: I was only questioning the procedure.

Mr. Speaker: I understand.

Sir Frank McDavid (Member for Agriculture, Forests, Lands and Mines) laid the following document on the table:

The Trading and Profit and Loss Account for the year ended 31st December, 1953 and the Balance Sheet as at December, 1953, of the Government Processing Factory together with the Director of Audit's certificate and report thereon.

Mr. Cummings (Member for Labour, Health and Housing) laid the following documents on the table:

The Draft Hospital Fees (Amendment) Regulations, 1954.

The Annual Reports of the Director of Medical Services for the years 1952 and 1953.

Mr. Kendall (Member for Communications and Works) laid the following documents on the table:

The Annual Report for the Transport and Harbours Department for the year 1953.

The Annual Report of the Post and Telecommunications Department for the financial year ended December, 1953.

Mr. Farnum (Member for Local Government, Social Welfare and Co-operative Development) laid on the table the following documents:

The Annual Report of the Social Assistance Department for the year 1953.

The Annual Report of the Essequibo Boys' School for the year 1953.

INCOME TAX (AMENDMENT) BILL

The Financial Secretary gave notice of the introduction and first reading of a Bill intituled:

"An Ordinance further to amend the Income Tax Ordinance with respect to exemption from Income Tax."

PUBLIC HEALTH (AMENDMENT) BILL

Mr. Cummings gave notice of the introduction and first reading of a Bill intituled:

"An Ordinance further to amend the Public Health Ordinance, 1934."

RENT RESTRICTION (CONTINUANCE) BILL

Mr. Cummings gave notice of the introduction and first reading of a Bill intituled:

"An Ordinance to amend the Rent Restriction (Continuance) Ordinance, 1954."

Mr. Speaker: I noticed something in the Objects and Reasons of the last Bill in connection with which I am going to suggest an alteration to the hon. Member. I had no opportunity of speaking with him about it before now.

Mr. Cummings: I think I know what you are going to ask, and I propose to amend it in Committee.

Mr. Speaker : It is nothing to do with the principle of the Bill. It is with reference to the wording in paragraph

3 of the Objects and Reasons. Would it not be better if the paragraph read "after the suspension of the sittings of the Legislature."

Mr. Cummings: Yes, I will amend it during the Committee stage.

Mr. Speaker: The Legislature was not suspended; rather it was the Constitution that was suspended.

Mr. Macnie: With due respect to the discussion which took place in the last few minutes, can the Objects and Reasons relating to a Bill be amended without re-publication, or can we so get it on the record.

Mr. Speaker: I think so. The Objects and Reasons merely give you an idea of what the objects and reasons are for introducing the legislation.

Mr. Macnie: It is the printed record in the *Official Gazette* which the public consults to find out about a certain piece of legislation. I do not know how an amendment will get into the record without reprinting.

The Attorney General: The whole point is that the Bill is accompanied by a memorandum of Objects and Reasons; the Member who introduces the Bill may not accept the memorandum in its entirety, and really, the statements made by the Member introducing the Bill forms part of the *Hansard* and seeks to explain what the Objects and Reasons are. In the process of publication it may become necessary to revise a particular clause or point which affects the Objects and Reasons, and therefore when the Bill is introduced the Member explains the Objects and Reasons and that becomes the record.

Mr. Speaker: In any case the hon. Member may amend it without moving the Bill. He will find in the proceed-

ings of the old Legislatures that many Ordinances were prefaced by a number of—

Mr. Macnie : “Whereases.”

Mr. Speaker: Yes, preambles to the Ordinances themselves, indicating the reasons for their introduction.

HOSPITAL FEES (AMENDMENT) REGULATIONS

Mr. Cummings gave notice of the following motion:

“That this Council approves of the Hospital Fees (Amendment) Regulations, 1954, which have been laid on the table.”

PILOT AGRICULTURAL FARM PROPOSAL

Mr. Carter gave notice of the following motion:

“Be it resolved: That this Honourable Council recommends to Government the establishment on the Demerara River of a Pilot Agricultural Farm wherein forty (40) youths with an agricultural bias, between the ages of 18 and 24 years, can be given a two-year practical training course with a view to settling them thereafter on a Land Settlement Scheme.”

NOTICE OF QUESTIONS

RECONSTRUCTION OF EAST BANK ROAD

Mr. Bobb gave notice of the following questions:

“I beg to ask the Honourable the Member for Communications and Works:

- (a) Is there any truth in the allegation recently made by a Member of this Council and repeated in the Press that the U.S.A. Military Authorities had offered to construct at their expense a permanent road from the Air Base at Atkinson Field to Georgetown and that this offer was rejected by Government during the regime of Sir Gordon Lethem?
- (b) Will Government state the full facts regarding any arrangements which

were made with the U.S.A. Military Authorities regarding the use of the Public road between Atkinson and Georgetown for military purposes and for its maintenance, repair or reconstruction?

- (c) Will Government state why reconstruction of this important public road was not undertaken when Atkinson Field became the Colony's Airport?
- (d) Has provision been made in the Development Programme for the reconstruction of this road and what is the estimated total cost?
- (e) How many miles of road have actually been permanently reconstructed and at what cost?
- (f) Is it the case that portions of reconstructed road are already showing signs of serious deterioration and what steps are being taken to remedy defective construction?
- (g) When is the reconstruction of the whole road expected to be completed?

APPRECIATION OF ARGYLL & SUTHERLAND HIGHLANDERS

Mr. Raatgever: Before we proceed with the Order of the Day I feel certain hon. Members will join with me in saying “Thank you” and “*au revoir*” to the officers and men of the Argyll & Sutherland Highlanders regiment who are leaving the country. Members are aware that the troops came here a year ago to help us in our time of need and by their general good behaviour and their friendliness they earned the affection of all loyal Guianese with whom they came into contact. We wish them a pleasant journey to their homeland and trust that they will have very pleasant memories of their stay in our Colony.

I would also like to extend on behalf of hon. Members a very hearty welcome to the Black Watch who are relieving them. They can be assured

[Mr. Raatgever]

of the same kindness and the same friendly co-operation given by all loyal Guianese to their predecessors who are now leaving the Colony. I trust their stay will be as pleasant as that of the Highlanders.

The Chief Secretary: On behalf of the Official Members of this Council I would like to associate myself with the sentiments just expressed.

Mr. Speaker: I will endeavour to convey the feelings of the Council to the proper authorities—I do not know if the hon. the Member for Agriculture can perhaps assist in this matter. I do not know if we can go beyond that.

Mr. Raatgever: I think we can record our appreciation.

Mr. Speaker I will try to have something done.

ORDER OF THE DAY

TRAFFIC NOISES OUTSIDE PUBLIC BUILDINGS

Mr. Speaker : Before the arrival of the hon. the Chief Secretary, on occasions when the Legislature was in session, several policemen were placed outside the Public Buildings directing traffic. Whatever the reason, I do not think the policemen are there today. There is no doubt that the noises now are disturbing and I think we should take notice of the matter. Other Members have had to stop speaking during these noises.

The Chief Secretary I will take the matter up with the Commissioner of Police.

Mr. Cummings: There is a motion standing in my name and a Bill in respect of which I have had His Excellency's permission to seek your leave

to move the suspension of the Standing Rules in order to proceed with them today, but after discussion with the hon. the Attorney General, who expressed the opinion that we should only use the privilege of seeking the Governor's permission to go through with matters of urgency, with which I agree, I do not intend to proceed with them as there is no pressing urgency for them.

Sir Frank McDavid: Not only the Governor's permission but the permission of this Council.

Mr. Speaker: I have always thought that we should not proceed to take the third reading of a Bill the same day, except in cases of some emergency, as subsequently mistakes might be found in the measure and we are unable to recommit the Bill to make the corrections. I have had some experience of occurrences of that nature, and I am afraid I have been accused of stubbornness because I would not meet the desire to conclude a Bill in one day. Subsequently mistakes may appear in the Bill which may lead to difficulty in the long run, particularly as there is no Second Chamber where mistakes, which may arise in the course of legislation, can be revised.

SCHOOL CHILDREN AND THE CINEMAS

Mr. Carter : I rise to move the motion standing in my name on the Order Paper, which reads:

"Be it resolved that this Council recommends the enactment of legislation to prohibit the admission of children of school age, that is, between the ages of six and fourteen, to cinemas or other houses of entertainment between the hours of 8.00 a.m. and 4.00 p.m. on such days when schools are in session, except when films or shows are sponsored by educational or cultural organisations with the approval of the Department of Education."

As you are aware, Sir, British Guiana is at the cross-roads. There are a

number of people who are of the opinion that the situation with which we are faced has sprung upon us, as it were, overnight. These of us, who have the interest of this country at heart and have been studying the various aspects of life and conditions which have been responsible for our present plight, are well aware that the causes are many and varied, and if a halt is to be called it must be called now by strong and determined measures. There is much juvenile delinquency and crime in this Colony these days, and there is much talk about these problems. Although only some of the suggestions are worthy of consideration all have been made with a view to finding a solution to the problems of juvenile delinquency and crime. As you are aware, Sir, juvenile delinquency is not a cause but rather an effect. This cause lies in the mind, and if it is to be corrected then it must be done by building character, and this can only be achieved by inculcating in youthful minds constructive and wholesome ideas, such as the principles of truth, honesty, self-reliance, godliness and a willingness to work hard. Precept, visual education and good literature would materially assist in this education.

In presenting this motion for consideration by this honourable Council I do so with absolute confidence that it will find unanimous favour and support, because it concerns the moral and educational upliftment of our Guianese children who are the future men and women of the Colony. If anything is to be done to save our children from a life of crime, immorality and uselessness, it is imperative that it should be done now. Let us not fail in our sacred duty to our children. Let us therefore tackle this problem now, and let our approach be realistic. No one can gainsay the fact that entertainment is good and serves a useful purpose, but I do

say that any or all forms of entertainment will not serve our children well. The entertainment served up to our children by the cinemas is, for the most part, thrashy, demoralizing and unwholesome. When we consider how plastic and impressionable the minds of children of school age are, we can well imagine the psychological effect of the gangster pictures, the Western or cowboy pictures, and the cheap and degrading types of romance shown on the screen. Morbid instincts are aroused in children of that age and they develop an aversion to school which is reflected in unsatisfactory school work. Their normal everyday life is affected and their sense of values distorted.

But that is not all, Sir. The 1.30 p.m. matinee show interferes with one of the fundamentals of civilized life—education. For children to attend matinee shows at that hour of the day they must abscond from school. Many of those children are of poor parents who can ill afford the price of a matinee ticket. The result is that truant school children molest persons around the cinemas for cents and pennies, or steal and sell eggs, empty bottles and small articles around their neighbourhood in order to get money for the matinee shows. In some cases they sell their school books and report that they are lost, or they steal other children's books and sell them. There is always a ready market for school books.

In the case of school girls the 1.30 p.m. matinee is a common trysting time with men, and when I say "men" I do not refer to youngsters of their own ages but matured men who attend those particular shows with the express object of inveigling those girls by offering them gifts and money. The result is that after a few such meetings these school girls are ensnared and eventually perverted.

[Mr. Carter]

Every Member of this Council knows the value of education, and that British Guiana needs it now. The world of the future to which these children will belong will need it even more, and I believe it is the ambition of all parents, regardless of their status in life, that their children should get as much education as their means can afford. But although primary education is compulsory in British Guiana and the Police and officers of the Education Department are empowered by law to pick up children of school age found loitering about the City during school hours, hundreds of children of school age can be found in the streets and around hotels, restaurants and cake shops, and not one of them apprehended, even for questioning. At night the situation is even worse. Children are seen on the streets and around cinemas, cakeshops, hotels, restaurants and even dance halls up to a late hour, but no one seems to be interested in what should be done about it, or perhaps even in the effect it would have on those children.

I have only singled out the 1.30 p.m. matinee shows at the cinemas because they take place at an hour when children should normally be in school, but cinema shows on the whole, as we know them, the local vaudeville shows with their suggestive songs and dances, the juke box parties, at which small children are allowed to dance to the music of lewd calypso song records, are things which should not be allowed. In the United Kingdom and certain parts of the U.S.A. and Canada, and in the neighbouring country of Venezuela the doors to such forms of entertainment are closed to children under 18 years of age, but my motion is not intended to cover so wide a field.

At this point I would like to make a few suggestions which might be incorporated in the proposed legislation

if my motion is accepted by this Council. The present law of compulsory primary education should be vigorously enforced so as to ensure that every child of school age attends school. I would also suggest that every school child should be provided with a celluloid covered school identification card to be worn on all occasions when a child is away from home. A stock of postcards should be supplied to all primary schools for postage "On H.M. Service". On one side of the cards should be printed a short letter with blank spaces for the names and addresses of the parents of a child who has been absent from school. At the bottom should be a postscript stating: "Cancel this side before posting." On the other side of the postcard should be printed the name and address of the school to which a parent must reply stating why a child was absent from school the previous day—whether through illness, errand or delinquency. The headteacher of the school should be required to keep a record of such cards and the replies received, and if a reply is not received after three days a report should be made by the teacher to the Education Department which should take steps against the defaulting parent immediately.

Officers recruited from among the personnel of the Education Department should be empowered to enter cinemas and other places of entertainment and demand from any child who, in their opinion, is of school age the production of the school identification card. A note should be made by the officer of the information on the child's card, and he should notify the management of the cinema or other place of entertainment that the child is of school age and must be expelled from the show, and that the person in charge would be prosecuted. A child of school age who is found without

its identification card should be taken into custody for the purpose of its identification, and a report made to the school concerned.

If we are going to prohibit the admission of children of school age to cinemas and other places of entertainment during school hours we must naturally provide healthy forms of entertainment. As visual education has a great attraction for young people I would suggest that Government obtain from the U.K. two mobile film projector units with a supply of educational films, and train two or more driver-operators. The film units should be for the exclusive use of the Education Department, and a Committee should be set up comprising the Director of Education, as Chairman, other members from the Education Department, the Social Welfare Department, the British Council, the B.P.I. and representatives of the Churches, to prepare a programme of wholesome visual education and entertainment which is so necessary for our children. I commend the motion to the Council.

Mr. Speaker: Has the hon. Member arranged for anyone to second his motion? It is always advisable to do so.

Mr. Carter: Yes, Sir.

Mr. Bobb: I rise to second the motion moved by my hon. friend, and I would like in support of it to say that I am very pleased that he has given so much thought to a matter of this kind, and has evidently been at pains to collect a lot of information on the subject. There is no doubt that we are all solicitous for the moral welfare of our children, and there is hardly any misgiving that there will be unanimous support of the motion, even if there is some disagreement as to the manner in which it should be implemented. I observe that he was careful enough to leave that to

the intellect of the legal section of the Council. It is not strictly his concern to suggest what the *modus operandi* should be, but to ensure that the intention of his motion is before the Council and that it receives the support he wishes it to have.

I would like to add one or two points to what the hon. Member has said. One is the fact that it is not only the cinema that is presenting a grave problem to the proper upbringing of children in these days. There is another means of communication which has not reached us yet but which is going to pose probably an even greater problem. When television reaches British Guiana our troubles will begin afresh, but at present the cinema and the radio, valuable as they are, are presenting some dangers which we cannot afford to ignore. It is recognized, of course, that all things of that nature are potentially dangerous. It depends upon how they are going to be used in order that the danger might be minimised to the greatest possible extent. Reports have been made to me — my assistance has been sought — to put some stop to the playing of gramophone records conveying very obscene themes.

What struck me when the report came to me was that it came from a quarter known to us to be associated with the commission of juvenile delinquency and crime. Certain persons were very much perturbed over the situation and were wondering what could be done. Here we have a very useful effort that could be turned to one's advantage. In the case of the cinema, there are several aspects which need to be carefully studied. The hon. Mover of the motion is quite right in saying that at a certain period the attendance of school children at

[Mr. Bobb]

the cinemas should be prohibited—and I refer to that period when the schools are in session. I would refer however, to the period when the schools are not in session and when there is no control over the children. I think that on such occasions these shows will be made available to the children. It seems to me that the responsibility for the children then could be removed from within the ambit of the Education Department and could become the concern of the parents.

I feel sure that no amount of legislation in itself would be a corrective sufficient for a danger of this kind. This motion certainly stresses the need for more work in the realm of moral welfare—voluntary work—and for arousing those concerned with the welfare of the children to see that they are given greater protection in these matters. Unfortunately, one is often confronted by parents who see no harm in this kind of thing. I am therefore not as sure as the hon. Mover that this motion will receive the unanimous support of the parents. Be that as it may, I think there is need for giving the motion every consideration and I trust that as a result of this debate some further step will be taken in the right quarter and legislation introduced which would prove to be a deterrent, as the motion suggests.

I should like to reiterate that this matter is very largely, in my opinion, a matter outside the range of legislation. I do agree, however, that all those concerned with the education of children should give careful thought to this matter in order that the dangers resulting from shows of this kind would be reduced if not eliminated. If we had enough money to spend it might have been possible to increase the staffs and so assist the Attendance Officers, especially those who are un-

able to give sufficient attention in this particular field.

There seems to be opportunity now—for a long time—for private individuals to come forward and assist these Officers, providing the social end, as it were, to our education programme for the solution of this problem in the Colony. It is precisely that type of person, I suspect the hon. Mover had in mind when he spoke about visiting the cinemas, and I would suggest getting in touch with parents also who would tell their children about the use of the cinemas. It could be also said that within the limits of the personnel now available the Education Department is doing as much as it can, and I myself am not quite sure that anything more can be done without considerable increase in personnel. On the question of the general desire to see that the children get a good education I would add just one word and that is, we need also to make sure that we are providing sufficient leisure facilities for the children. There are not adequate playgrounds and in the absence of such playgrounds it is difficult to say how creative leisure can be introduced. We have to give consideration to all the positive measures that ought to be taken in order to enable the children to get the best possible results from the general system of education.

This question of creative leisure for children is one of the greatest problems of the present time. There are difficulties such as finding the correct type of persons to do the job, finding the finances with which to introduce it and the necessary support to make it thorough and effective. I trust that there will be no difficulty at all on the part of this Council in coming to a decision that this motion should be passed, and that action on the part of those appointed to look

into the question of its implementation will not be delayed.

Mr. Macnie: I wish to congratulate the hon. Mover of this motion for the care and the thought which he has, very clearly, given to it — the carefully-chosen language which he used in introducing it and so on. I am sure that all of us here fully sympathise with his objective, but I for one cannot agree with his method of approach. I cannot agree, even though I may stand alone, that the enactment of legislation will prevent a cinema proprietor from admitting a child between the age of 10 and 14 years to some form of entertainment on his premises, especially those forms of entertainment held between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. on holidays. I also feel that even if the legislation went further and included all hours of the day and night it would fail to remove the evil which we have in mind. I would not support legislation of that kind because I feel that we ought to be extremely careful about the enactment of restrictive legislation. I feel that the mere enactment or the mere bringing forward of legislation would not remedy the evil of which the hon. Member has so ably spoken. To my mind, Sir, the problem is a social one from beginning to end. I think the hon. Mover was speaking with particular reference to the town although, with all due deference to the hon. Member for Communications and Works, I notice that New Amsterdam has been relegated by the Housing Department to the status of a village.

The problem, Sir, looking at it from the point of view of Georgetown, lies in two spheres. In the first place, it is recognized that all is being done that can be done, and that is as regards the question of housing. The housing situation, as we know it in

the City, makes it extremely difficult if not impossible, I suggest, for us to provide the type of home life which we all wish every child and every family to enjoy.

The second problem, as I see it, is that the City, especially in the congested parts, is sadly lacking in recreational grounds, to which not only children but the youth of the community in general can go and occupy their minds and bodies in games. I suggest that without those factors and the right type of school life the child is up against a problem in acquiring a true sense of what is right and what is wrong. The child who has a true sense of what is right or wrong for that, or for some other reason does not skulk. I have friends around this table with whom I went to school and who know that as school-boys we were afraid to skulk because we knew what would happen next day. I see one of my friends on the opposite side signalling. But, seriously, the child with a sense of fairplay will not skulk or will very rarely skulk to go to the cinema or to do anything which he or she should not do. The root of the problem lies with the children rather than with the cinema.

The hon. mover dealt with matinee shows held during school hours, but there are matinee shows every school day from 5 p.m. or 5.30 p.m. which a child can attend without skulking. On Public Holidays cinemas go out of their way to show what are described as "action films"—whether it be a cowboy, or crime film, or whether it be sex it must be packed with "action". They have "double features" at quite an early hour in the morning, on through the day and in the night. Much as I associate myself with the hon. mover's concern for the problem, I do not feel that the remedy lies in his proposal, for there are other forms

[Mr. Macnie]

of distractions whether the child goes to the cinema or not, and I refer to the comic strips—or funnies as they are called in North America—penny dreadfuls—I do not know how many Members here can tell what they are—and certain types of radio programmes. Then there are types of music which the hon. Member referred to, and which can be heard at the street corners where parlours play them all the time to attract customers. Thus, unfortunately, because of the fact that home life and recreational facilities such as playgrounds are lacking, these evils are there. Unfortunately, too, whether for the dreadful need of having to raise funds—or whatever it may be—school halls are frequently used as dance halls. For a child to see and know what goes on in and around on those occasions, on the very premises where he or she is being educated, is, I suggest, to do the child's mind no good.

I feel that the remedy lies much deeper than the mere enactment of legislation and its enforcement. I suggest that the remedy lies with the Social Welfare and Housing Departments, the Educational authorities and the Municipality, who must endeavour as early as possible to clear areas and provide places where children may run about and use their minds and their bodies in a healthy and proper manner instead of having to do so in backyards and in streets. Let the children have recreation in places provided for them, under proper guidance. They will not need much guidance once the proper facilities are given, for it is amazing how children can educate themselves. The problem should be fairly and squarely faced as a result of the admirable way in which the hon. mover has presented his motion, which I regret I cannot support in its present form.

The Chief Secretary: The motion before this Council has been considered by Government. It has been decided to support it. None of us, I feel, think that legislation is the ideal way of dealing with the problem. Certainly, I agree, it will not be the complete answer to juvenile delinquency. But it is true that education of children between the ages of 6 and 14 years is compulsory in this Colony and it is, therefore, the duty of Government to ensure that the people are not conniving at any breach of that law.

The cinema proprietors have readily responded from time to time to requests that they should refuse admission of children between those ages during school hours. The position improves for a time according to reports from the School Attendance Officers, but then tends to fall away; human nature being what it is, cinema proprietors find it hard to turn away people with money. We have considered whether the problem can be met in another way, by the alteration of the matinee hours so as not to conflict with school hours, and we have put it to the cinema proprietors, but they have not been able to accept it. The keeping of children away from cinemas during school hours places a burden on the School Attendance Officers, and if we were to make this fully effective we should have to increase considerably, the number of School Attendance Officers. We are therefore supporting the motion and will prepare legislation to implement it. I trust that the hon. mover will entrust the actual mechanics of implementing the motion to the Member for Education in consultation with the Law Officers. We will show him the legislation in draft before putting it to the Council.

Mr. Lee: I am rather surprised at Government supporting and intend-

ing to bring legislation in order to prohibit children going to the cinemas during school hours. It does not need any legislation at all. As Your Honour knows, there is a Cinema Board existing which grants licences to Cinemas to operate. Why then are we going to legislate to say that children must not go to the Cinemas between the hours of 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. when that Board can certainly be instructed by the Government to see that the Cinemas do not open between those hours except they are granted a special licence for the purpose? My hon. Friend on my right (Mr. Lord) has remarked to me that that would be preventing adults from having the privilege of attending those matinee shows. Let him find out who are those adults. Why should they enjoy the right of attending matinee shows at 1 p.m.? Much as I am in sympathy with the motion, I challenge the Government to implement it, because they would thereby be restricting the liberty of the subject which, I think, they are not entitled to do. I feel sure they cannot endorse the suggestion of the hon. Mover that the children should be given identification cards. Are we going back to a Fascist State?

The Attorney General: May remind the hon. Member, when he talks about a Fascist State, that the hon. the Chief Secretary referred to compulsory education.

Mr. Lee: I am talking about the hon. Mover's suggestion that certain things be done. I say it is absolutely wrong to do those things which, in support of his motion, he says should be done, as that would be to a certain extent making British Guiana a dictatorship country.

The Attorney General: With compulsory education?

Mr. Lee: The hon. Mover said— if I am wrong the hon. Mover can correct me when he is replying — that the children should be given identification cards, and that the School Attendance Officers be empowered to request the production of those cards at any time.

The Chief Secretary: That is not part of the motion, and it has not been accepted. That is a suggestion put forward as a method of implementing this resolution. The mechanics of implementing the motion are to be worked out afterwards.

Mr. Lee: I can only attack the hon. Mover's motion and Government's support of it. I am only saying that in my opinion the hon. Mover has not put any facts before this Council showing that so many children have been convicted of stealing books, or their parents' money, in order to attend the cinema shows. Has it been proved to this Council that children have been charged by the Police for begging alms at the cinemas? There may be one or two cases of begging but there have been no charges. If the Police were vigilant enough and the Government was vigilant enough to see that it did not occur in the streets or around the cinemas, and if the Government change its attitude, the children would keep away from the cinemas to beg of those who are sympathetic enough to give them a penny. Has the Police prosecuted any persons for receiving those books that had been sold to them by children? How then can we indict the children of this country by saying that they have such perverted minds as to steal each other's books and sell them so as to be able to attend the cinema shows? I cannot sit down here and allow that indictment to be made against the children of this country.

I am in sympathy with the motion and would agree that during school

[Mr. Lee]

hours children should not go to the cinemas. That is entirely a social matter. It is the duty of the school teachers, the parents and the Government to see that the children attend school, and it is therefore necessary to find out from Government what they are doing towards those children who do not attend school. If the Government accepts the challenge and wants to support the motion, let them say to this Council. "We have figures that show conclusively the children are skulking from school."

I know that when I was at Queen's College if you did not attend school your Master requested of you an excuse from your parent or guardian, and if that was not forthcoming you were reported to the Principal and, if no satisfactory reason for your absence was given, you received the cane. That was a deterrent to the children attending Queen's College. But apart from that, the children at Queen's College did not make it a habit to abscond from school. Now and again they would at Christmas time take an hour or two from school and take an excuse from their parents which was satisfactory to the Master. Why should not that principle be applied to the public schools? Why should there not be a method whereby the teacher demands from the children some written excuse from the parent or guardian, some method whereby the teacher reports to the parent that the child has not attended school?

There is no co-operation between the teachers and the parents, if I may say so. And now I indict the Government. There should be in every village or district where there is a public or Government school a Parent-Teachers' Association where parents and teachers would meet regularly—if necessary bring in legislation to make it compulsory for them to attend the meetings

— and agree on the manner in which the school should be conducted. But what do we find? The Government has not provided residences for the Masters and teachers in and around the schools in the villages. How then can one say that the teachers must take an interest in the welfare of the children?

I sympathize with the hon. Mover of this motion but, Sir, let us face facts as we have them here. He has not suggested some other form of recreation for the children. The hon. Mr. Macnie or the hon. Mr. Bobb has stated that the Government and the Town Council have not provided sufficient recreation grounds and diversion for the children. They have failed in their duty in that respect, but it is now being sought to bring legislation to impose on the children, who are to be men and women of the future this, Fascist form of control that they must walk about with an identification card. I cannot agree to it.

Mr. Speaker: Would the hon. Member permit me to interrupt him? I detest interruptions myself. When the hon. Member started to speak he prefaced his remarks by saying there is a Cinema Board in existence created under an Ordinance. That Ordinance was enacted in 1912. Where is the section that gives the Board power to prevent what we are now discussing? Some of the laws have been so frequently amended that you cannot read what has happened because of the annotations made on them.

Mr. Lee: Your Honour, I bow to your remark, but may I suggest that the Government should try its utmost to let us have all the amendments here so that we can refer to them. But, Your Honour, I think it is a recent Amendment Ordinance which empowers the Board to limit the time or otherwise for which the licences are to be

granted. As it stands now, as Your Honour knows, there is a Cinema Board and if you want to apply for a cinema licence, which is a yearly licence, you have within a certain time to make that application in which you state the number of days you would like the cinema to be opened, the hours and other attending circumstances. That application is sent to the Board, a meeting of the Board is held and the application is considered. It is then granted in the form of the issue of a licence in which the hours of opening are limited.

Mr. Speaker: I do not think the question of limitation of hours arises. The motion seeks the restriction of the entry of children into Cinemas. What we are trying to gain some agreement on is in what way we should restrict their entry during certain hours of opening.

Mr. Lee: What I am suggesting to this Council and to the hon. Mover is that if this Council or this Government can direct the Cinema Board that the hours between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. be not granted to any cinema to hold shows, except in some special case. My hon. friend on my right says the Members of this Council might demur on the time, but I suggest that because, if you cannot allow children to go to the 1 p.m. matinee, why allow men and women to go when there is a 4 to 6 p.m. matinee? The same pictures are shown at 1 p.m. and at 4 p.m. I am taking my example from the country cinemas where, save and except in a very large village, the cinemas are only opened on Saturdays or Mondays for a 1 p.m. matinee. In the country districts children occupy their time in more useful ways. We should adopt the principle of occupying the time of the children in the City in some other way. It is a social necessity. I respectfully submit that the proposal in

the motion would be a restriction of the liberty of the subject. That is my point. A child should not in any way be restricted in its liberty of action! I am positive that with proper handling the majority of the children would obey the instructions of their parents and teachers. Instead of seeking the co-operation of parents and teachers it is suggested by the motion that this Council should pass legislation to prohibit the admission of children to cinemas during school hours. Who would be prosecuted? A child would have to be taken before the Juvenile Court and its parents too, but flogging is debarred.

The Attorney General: The hon. Member has not dealt with the cinema proprietor.

Mr. Lee: I would like the hon. the Attorney General to go into the figures and tell this Council what the cinema proprietors get from the 1.30 p.m. matinee shows. I know that many of them would be glad to be restricted in regard to those shows. Some of them are losing money by those shows. The power used costs more than the returns.

The Attorney General: Therefore they should welcome any provision whereby they would be assisted in not using current.

Mr. Lee: I am not saying that they would not welcome it, but why should we pass legislation when Government already has the power under the existing law to direct the Cinema Board to restrict the hours for cinema shows? I say that no evidence has been placed before this Council to justify the enactment of such legislation as the hon. mover suggests.

Mr. Carter: Mr. Speaker, I am desirous of withdrawing the motion. (*Hon. Members:* "No, no!")

Mr. Speaker: Order, order! Before he rose himself the hon. mover

[Mr. Speaker] -

perhaps did not know that the hon. Member, Mr. Sugrim Singh, had risen to address the Council.

Mr. Sugrim Singh: I rise to support the motion in principle, and in doing so I wish to congratulate the Administration on its decision to accept the motion in principle, leaving the details of its implementation to be worked out. I think we are all agreed that my friend, the hon. Member, Mr. Lee, is always most eloquent in defending the liberty of the subject. I admire his eloquence and his rhetoric, but I certainly did not follow his logic this afternoon. We agree that it is a social problem but I did not take my friend seriously when he suggested that we should not restrict the action of a child. Is there not legislation in our Statute Books restricting not only children but the liberty of adults? Aren't children of a certain age not prohibited from entering rumshops and purchasing a commodity which might be harmful to them? There are several duties and responsibilities which fall on parents, but at certain times it is somewhat awkward—and in some cases impossible — for parents to discharge those duties. There are scores of instances of legislation which has been enacted to achieve what is desired in regard to the protection of children.

As regards the question of putting pressure on the Cinema Board I really cannot follow my friend's argument at all. The way I look at it is that there is a Compulsory Education Ordinance for which there would have been no need if parents were alive to their social obligations. Government had to introduce legislation to compel parents to do something which they should do on their own in the interest of the education of their children. There is provision in the law against the employment of children of school age. I say that subject to correction by the

Commissioner of Labour who is here, and I have to accept the statement made by the hon. the Chief Secretary that especially in the City of Georgetown—and the point was clearly made by the hon. Member, Mr. Macnie—that problem is most pronounced.

It has been stated that the attendance of children in schools staffed and maintained by Government has been affected by the propensity of children who play truant from school and find themselves within the precincts of the cinemas. The hon. Member, Mr. Lee, asked what proof have we got of that? I can answer that. Isn't it a fact that is so notorious or so patent that, as a member of the Bar, he knows that a Court could be asked to take judicial notice of it? How often have we not gone to the cinema and been molested by youngsters who, sometimes in a very rude manner, either ask for something to make up the cinema bill, or to provide the whole bill? The more popular method is to say they have 10 cents and ask for four cents more.

The point is not so much the type of pictures shown at the cinemas but the desire to keep children of school age in the school. The hon. Member also made the point that those very children attend the 5 o'clock matinee shows, but at the 5 p.m. shows they are usually accompanied by their parents who could decide whether the pictures to be shown are good for children to see. At the 1.30 matinee for which the truant schoolboy hides his books and slate he goes there on his own. The point is that it is accepted that between the ages of 6 and 14 years a child's mind is most impressionable, and the reason why primary education has been made compulsory between those ages is that a child should make the best of the education provided by the State.

My second point is that imitation is a strong impulse in childhood. A child mimics anything and some control must be exercised as to the sort of pictures shown to children. A certain youngster is now Her Majesty's guest for seven years and it is known that every step of his crime was identical with what was shown in a certain picture. I think cinema proprietors should be under some sort of restriction and steps should be taken to see that they show a better type of pictures to children than they do at present. Otherwise they should not get the support of the Education Department which should aim at having the children in school during school hours. Some poor, unfortunate parents often feel that their children are in school when they are really absent. I am asking this Council to support the motion, and I have no doubt that with the proper mechanics the motion will achieve its object. I, like Mr. Macnie, would like to congratulate the hon. Mover of the motion. I am alarmed at the large number of women of easy virtue who can be found at public places in the City at the present time. I certainly think that a great deal can be gained by the implementation of this motion.

Mr. Cummings: I rise to support the motion which has been so ably moved by the hon. Member, Mr. Carter. I must comment particularly on the remarks made by the hon. Member, Mr. Lee, when he said that the liberty of children should be beyond restraint. I am sure the hon. Member must have had something else in his mind, because he referred to the good old days at Queen's College when the liberty of children was indeed restrained. Apparently the hon. Member is trying to approbate and reprobate at the same time, but that cannot be done. This particular piece of legislation aims at

assisting a class of parents who are unable to control their children. It also minimises the possibility of a large number of school children being attracted to the cinemas and prevented from receiving a certain amount of education. I feel that this is a very desirable measure and one which should receive the support of this Council.

Mrs. Dey : When I received my Order Paper for this meeting I made up my mind that I was coming here to-day to support the motion in its entirety. After I had listened to the hon. Mover of the motion—perhaps because I was a teacher—I was able to understand how he was thinking. In compiling his facts I am satisfied that there is a dire need for legislation in this matter, and I am also satisfied that this is a case of grave anxiety relating to children from every walk of life. After having heard the hon. the Chief Secretary give an undertaking that some sort of mechanics would be set up to deal with this matter I thought there would have been no necessity to rise, but when we find ourselves drifting here and there it seems to me that every effort should be made to remedy the situation. I do not believe in looking for a cure for a disease, but in finding its preventive out before it becomes an epidemic. We are faced with an epidemic as it were, and therefore the hon. Mover of the motion has called for legislation to cure it.

As a social worker, I would say that the trouble in this matter lies in several avenues and I was pleased to hear the hon. the Chief Secretary refer to the question of a conference with the Education Department on the subject. I certainly think that we would have to look for a remedy in the very schoolroom because there is a lack of

[Mrs. Dey] understanding there. The link that should exist between the teacher and the child does not exist, and steps are not being taken to make the schoolroom as interesting as it should be to the children. That should be the first step—this question of getting the child interested in the schoolroom. I should like to state a few of my experiences as regards teachers and children. On one occasion I saw some little girls climbing on palings and stealing some flowers. When I asked why they were doing that, they replied that the teacher had said they must bring flowers to make a bouquet. That, I think, is a sort of first step towards stealing and that is where the classroom calls for care. One has got to sympathise with parents who, because of penury and want, cannot exercise sufficient control over their children so as to prevent them from stealing.

With regard to the stealing of empty bottles, I have been a victim in that respect myself. It is a sort of chronic situation that goes on all the time. I can also support the hon. Member (Mr. Sugrim Singh) who referred to the practice on the part of boys in begging patrons at the cinemas for pittance to make up their ticket money. I repeat that steps should be taken to solve this problem with which we are faced, but I am not in favour of putting children in the custody of the Police and taking them to the Magistrate's Court. Perhaps it is because I was terribly in dread of policemen during the early years of my life. As a teacher, however, I taught the children of my own school that a policeman was to be regarded as a friend who must help them cross the road, tell them how to get to their homes, and so on. Therefore, I am not in favour of policemen taking children into custody. There was a suggestion some time ago for

the appointment of a Cinema Board to decide what type of pictures should be shown to children, but I am not sure whether such a Board has been appointed.

Mr. Speaker : There is such a Board.

Mrs. Dey : Thank you, Sir. I desire to support the motion because the problem concerned is one that is producing much anxiety as regards our children.

Miss Collins : I am indeed happy to support the motion. I have listened to the references about the work of social workers and I can assure hon. Members that our social workers are doing their best to see how our boys and girls—the men and women of tomorrow—can be helped in this matter. I desire to congratulate the hon. the Chief Secretary for the views he has expressed, and also the hon. Mover of the motion for bringing it forward. I support the motion wholeheartedly.

Mr. Correia : I support this motion so ably presented by the hon. mover, and I would like to comment on the remarks made by certain hon. Members about restriction of rights. The motion, as I read it, does not restrict children between the ages of 6 and 14 all the time, but only for those periods of time when the children should be in school. So I was surprised when the hon. Member spoke of "Fascist methods of restriction." I think that in our country every member of a family has the right to guide children of such tender ages between 6 and 14. It is not like restricting adults; it is guidance. My friend Mr. Macnie mentioned that the provision of more recreational grounds would help to prevent children from going to the cinemas during school hours, but I think that playgrounds will not help prevent children from attending matinees—

Mr. Macn'e : I never suggested that. My suggestion was that children should have something to go from school to.

Mr. Correia : Anyway, it was stressed that playgrounds and recreational grounds would help to prevent children from going to the cinemas. I appeal to other Members to give their full support to the motion. The hon. Mover made certain suggestions in his speech but at the same time he specifically said that it was left to Government to frame and enact laws giving effect to the motion. Again I say, I wholly support the motion.

Mr. Tello : I rise to support the motion, and at once I want to say that I do not depend much or place faith in legislation. But there are times when we must resort to legislation and I think this is one of those occasions. When one looks back on the history of elementary education here, one sees that it had to be associated with legislation to make it compulsory, and I think if we must vote money from time to time—and a growing amount each year—to facilitate our educational efforts, we cannot sit in this Council and let slip an opportunity to protect and to further the effectiveness of our educational system.

A great deal has been said that this is a social matter. I do not claim to be a social worker in the full sense of the word but I have always striven in my own small way to encourage and work along with social workers. Any social worker will tell you that during the last five years, at least, they have looked upon the question of children going to the cinemas and other forms of entertainment as an obstacle to hurdle in their work. I feel that when we record our sincere desire and intention to encourage social welfare in the Colony and we vote money from time to time to give effect to that work and

on the other hand free licence is given to people whose sole intention is not to amuse or educate the children but to make profits, it is at the expense of our young ones. I am not an expert on legislation and I do not intend to recommend the legislative machinery that should be set up, but if the intention of this motion is met in the machinery to be prepared I think we should be all satisfied.

I am sorry that it was necessary to enter into dispute on some of the supporting arguments of the mover. Fortunately, an honourable member of the Bar can use such nice language as "taking judicious notice of certain things" — exactly what it means I do not know. I am glad he employed such forceful language, but he has been accosted and has witnessed accosting being done, so he has actually supported the statement that was so much criticised.

My one regret is, since cinema proprietors and other entertainment organisers feel they are doing good work, that legislation must be enacted to meet the problem. If they would tell us that they would co-operate with Government and other social welfare workers, and restrict the children to hours which would not interfere with their education, I should be a happy man today. And with regard to restrictions, I suppose the volumes of our Statute Books and other law books provide evidence that restriction at some time or other is necessary. I feel that in this case it is not restriction that should not be welcomed : it is restriction with good intention and restriction that is rather limited. I have great pleasure in supporting the motion, and to heighten my own happiness I close with congratulation for my friend the mover in bringing it forward.

Mr. Farnum : As one before whom certain statistics are placed con-

[Mr. Farnum]

cerning juvenile delinquency I would say that there has been a tremendous increase in this social evil. Any move which would tend to reduce it I welcome, and the motion before us will have that effect. Because one must remember that the children who will play truant to attend these matinees during the time of the day mentioned are not the children of the well to do and of the middle class but the children of the domestic servant class. I have been told by welfare workers when they were discussing the question of abolishing the the mid-day meal for school children, that domestic servants leave their homes in the mornings, make preparations for their children to go to school and do not return until evening. So this measure would be protecting a large number of people who cannot help themselves.

It has been brought to my attention that these children go to the cinema. They start by selling their books—and there is always somebody willing to buy them. Having done that, they next steal somebody else's books. Having done that, they look around to get alms. If they cannot get alms, then they steal somebody's bicycle bell or bicycle, and eventually they get into the hands of the police.

Today there are two centres of detention—if you can so call them—at Belfield, for boys up to the age of 10, and in Essequibo from the age of 16 years. After that, they are sent to prison and there deemed as first offenders. That number is steadily growing, so much so that this Council is going to be asked to vote a larger sum for Probation Officers, because if large numbers of children are to be dealt with by the Juvenile Courts there will be need for more Probation Officers. I support the motion be-

cause I believe it will have some effect in checking juvenile delinquency.

Mr. Rahaman: I rise to support this motion so ably moved by the hon. Member. I am very glad he had the foresight to bring forward this motion towards the making of a better Guiana, for such a measure I think, will help to reduce juvenile delinquency and illiteracy in this country. One thing he suggested, with which I do not agree, was that cinema proprietors should be prosecuted for admitting children to matinees during school hours. It will be difficult to determine the ages of the children. I support the motion.

Mr. Carter: I beg to thank hon. Members for supporting the motion in such glowing terms. I was moved by some of the arguments, and since no less a person than the Member for Education, who happens to be the Chief Secretary, is prepared to support the motion I feel that the mechanics of the legislation are in capable hands. So much being said, I find it hard to make any further reply.

Mr. Speaker: I would ask the indulgence of hon. Members to allow an amendment of the motion which would avoid any criticism when those, who have to prepare the draft legislation and arrange the mechanics whereby children ought to be in school, scrutinize whatever other enactments there are. I do not recall there is any amendment of the laws relating to elementary education. There are still a minimum number of sessions during a certain period that a child is supposed to attend school. There are two sessions a day—morning session and afternoon session—and a child need not attend both, since the schoolmasters are not paid on the basis of such attend-

ances. If I may suggest the motion may be amended to read:

"That this Council recommends the enactment of legislation to prohibit the admission of children of school age, that is between the ages of six and fourteen, to cinemas or other places of entertainment between such hours that elementary schools are required by law to be kept open, except when films or shows are sponsored by educational or cultural bodies or societies."

The Attorney General: While I appreciate that, emphasis in the course of the debate has been laid not only on elementary schools for which compulsory education is provided but schools in general. The hon. Mrs. Dey stated in the course of her speech that it was not restricted to any one class. Therefore, if you make the amendment as suggested, you are omitting the other class who may be taking the same role of truants and going off to matinee when they should be in school. I think it would be probably better, because I would be concerned with the drafting, not to limit the terms of the motion in the way in which Your Honour at the moment suggests. I understand what the views of hon. Members are and the Bill when drafted will have to come before this Council for consideration and approval.

Mr. Speaker: Let me give my reason for so doing. In principle the gravamen of the situation is that public expenditure is being incurred to provide free and compulsory education for the pupils of elementary schools. That is the basis of the objection, that while that facility is being given, their training is being diverted by the attraction of the Cinemas. The ages of six to fourteen suggests that. As a matter

of fact the maximum age should be sixteen, as some schools open their doors to children over fourteen. My recollection is, the elementary schools in Georgetown, New Amsterdam and Buxton are the only ones that do so. The law does not allow free elementary education to extend to children over twelve except in those three particular places. But without any change of the law by practice they are allowed to attend school up to fourteen. Whether I am right or wrong I think on reconsideration you might leave out the word "elementary," if you like, I suggest it would be better to get rid of the hours and have a sort of general motion to allow the draft to wander over the subject and not preclude it from including suggestions made by Members in their criticisms of the Bill. I do not know whether it can be done.

The Chief Secretary: It was my understanding that the principle of the motion rather than the actual phraseology of the hon. Mover was accepted, and it would now be Government's task to prepare adequate legislation and then bring it back to this Council for consideration. If it is not in the form that this Council likes it to be in, then it would be debated. I suggest that the actual phraseology of the motion does not matter at the moment.

Mr. Speaker: We have had a very interesting debate.

Question put, and agreed to.

Motion unanimously adopted.

This being all the business the Council was adjourned *sine die*.