

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

Tuesday, 16th December, 1941.

The Council met at 11 a.m., pursuant to adjournment, His Excellency the Governor, Sir Gordon Lethem, K.C.M.G., President, in the Chair.

PRESENT.

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary, Mr. G. D. Owen, C.M.G.

The Hon. the Attorney-General, Mr. E. O. Prætheroe, 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. Mc David, M.B.E., Colonial Treasurer.

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

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. F. Ogle, Director of Education (Acting).

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

The Hon. G. O. Case, Consulting Engineer.

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. Gonsalves, O.B.E. (Georgetown South).

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

The Hon. Peer Bacchus (Western Berbice).

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

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

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 12th December, 1941, as printed and circulated, were confirmed.

ANNOUNCEMENTS.

APPOINTMENT OF LIVESTOCK AND MARKETING OFFICERS.

THE PRESIDENT: I would like to make one or two brief pronouncements before we proceed with the Order of the Day. The first is with reference to the debate last week on Agriculture. I took it that the general feeling of the Council was that we were in favour of the appointment of a Livestock Officer and a Marketing Officer. Those are applied for by application to the Secretary of State for the Colonies under the Colonial Development and Welfare Act and involve no expense to this Colony, but at the same time the formality of procedure demands that the items be put on the Estimates. Telegraphing the Secretary of State I requested him to proceed straightway with the appointment of the two Officers. I feel that I have the support of hon. Members in so doing, and when the time comes hon. Members will take the formal action of putting the item on the Estimates.

SECURITY OF TENURE OF RICE LANDS.

Another matter arising out of last week's debate on the Rice Industry is the one particular point raised as to the question

of security of tenure, and Government is appointing a Committee to deal with that subject in particular. The terms of reference are now under discussion, and as soon as those are settled the Committee will be appointed and asked to go to work.

PEACEFUL PICKETING LEGISLATION.

I have also to announce that I am going to put before this Council an Amending Summary Jurisdiction Bill dealing with the subject of peaceful picketing. I feel myself under an obligation to put such a Bill forward now that complete agreement has been reached between the Secretary of State on the one side and the Labour Adviser, Mr. Norman, on the other side as to the particular wording of certain points. I am now ready to put the Bill before the Council. It will not, I expect, please everybody and various amendments may be desired and pressed on Government. We will discuss those in due course. I feel it my business at least to put that Bill before the Council, and I hope that the legislation will be passed in one form or another as required.

HIGH COST OF LIVING.

I have to make one more pronouncement and that is on the very important question of the cost of living. I had that under discussion with a number of persons, individually and in some cases a few of them together, over the last ten days or even more. I agree with the opinion expressed that it is a matter of first and vital importance to the Colony and on it largely hangs directly and indirectly the other question touching remuneration. It is hedged about with difficulties, every kind of difficulties, and during these last two years we have had before us various private interests and public interests. My view is that the time is ripe now when everybody should feel it is in the common interest to come together and, even for example the mercantile firms in their own interests, to get some kind of established basis. The difficulties, we know, are great and throw a considerable burden on the organization which is going to carry it out, but we have to face that. As far as Government is concerned I am prepared to put every facility forward to get on with the job.

I am going to ask the Officer in charge, the Conservator of Forests, to make a

statement to the Council before the end of the week as to the difficulties and means of meeting them and what he will call on me and on the Council to help him with. Therefore as we should get on with the utmost expedition, I am going to permit him and the hon. Comptroller of Customs to be excused from their accustomed attendance on the Council in order to get on with those proposals right away to-day. As I said, I feel Government has an obligation to get on with that matter with the utmost despatch. There is this allied question of remuneration and I have had special representations from lower paid officers of Government in one form or another, and I have formulated certain queries and ideas of my own but that cannot take priority over this all-important question of the cost of living which, I think, we all desire to see dealt with first.

GOVERNMENT NOTICES.

INCOME TAX (AMENDMENT NO 3) BILL

Mr. McDAVID (Colonial Treasurer) gave notice that at the next or a subsequent meeting of the Council he would move the introduction and first reading of the following Bill:—

A Bill intitled an Ordinance further to amend the Income Tax Ordinance, Chapter 38, by increasing the rates of tax payable by persons and companies, other than life insurance companies, and for purposes connected with the matters aforesaid.

NOTICES OF QUESTIONS.

Mr. JACOB: I beg to give notice of the following questions—

THE PRESIDENT: The procedure, I am advised, is that you hand in your questions to the Clerk.

Mr. JACOB: They were handed in yesterday.

THE PRESIDENT: Notice is therefore given.

THE RICE INDUSTRY.

Following are Mr. Jacob's questions:—

1. In view of the fact that the British Guiana Rice Marketing Board has placed on record on 29th November, 1941, in its report for the period ended 30th September, 1941, that "unless any

further loss is sustained before the entire crop is harvested, the crop is still likely to constitute a record, the present estimate being 51,000 tons of rice", will Government give details as early as possible as to how this estimate was arrived at by stating, if possible, the acreage reaped and to be reaped and the bags of rice obtained and to be obtained in the several Constituencies in the Colony, each separately?

2. Will Government state what quantity of rice has been sold in advance for export in 1942 to Trinidad, Barbados, the Windward Islands, the Leeward Islands and other Markets, each Market separately?

3. Will Government state what quantity of rice it is estimated will be exported out of the Colony during the periods ending April, June and September, 1942, each period separately?

4. Will Government state what area will be planted during the spring crop of 1942 and what is the estimated production provided weather conditions are favourable, or as favourable as in 1941?

CULTIVATED AREAS OF THE COLONY.

1. Will Government state what area was under cultivation at 30th September, 1941, of the following Crops:—Sugar Cane; Rice; Coconuts; Coffee; Citrus; Limes; Tobacco; Plantains; Corn and other vegetable crops in detail, in each Constituency in the Colony?

LIVESTOCK STATISTICS.

1. Will Government state the number of Livestock at 30th September, 1941, in each of the Constituencies in the Colony, viz:—Cattle; Horses; Buffaloes; Mules; Asses; Sheep; Goats; Pigs, etc.?

ORDER OF THE DAY.

B. G. SCHOLARSHIP VALUE.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Mr. G. D. Owen): I beg to move—

That with reference to Governor's Message No. 1 dated 29th November, 1941, this Council approves of the sum of \$165 over and above the present value of the Scholarship £900 being granted to the 1937 British Guiana Scholar to enable him to complete his course of studies and of the value of the scholarship being increased from £900 to £1,000 for the time being owing to the considerable rise in the cost of living in the United Kingdom since the outbreak of War.

Representations have been made to the Government by the Director of Colonial Scholars in the United Kingdom to the effect that the 1937 Scholar has had to incur considerable expense owing to the fact that in 1940 he had to move from place to place in order to carry on his studies and also had great difficulty in get-

ting accommodation, and when he secured accommodation he found the cost considerably more than it had been in the previous years. The Director has recommended that in view of this an additional amount be made available to that Scholar and the sum recommended is \$165. That will enable the Scholar to complete his studies.

The Government wishes to go further and ask this Council to approve of the British Guiana Scholarship being increased in value from £900 to £1,000 for the time being. The reason no definite period is given is obvious. One does not know how long the War is going to last and how long it will be before conditions become normal after the War. It is therefore thought that the sum should be increased. The alternative to this proposal is that the Scholars will not be able to complete their course of studies, selected by them and approved by Government, and the very object of the award of the Scholarship will be defeated. I hope hon. Members will see their way to support the motion which I have the honour to move.

Mr. C. V. WIGHT: I beg to second that motion.

THE PRESIDENT: The motion has two parts. Is there any objection to my putting the whole as one?

Mr. JACOB: There are two Guiana Scholars actually in the United Kingdom now, and I take it that in respect of one it is being recommended that £165 be given him, and in respect of the other I do not know whether the additional £100 is to be given him. While it is extremely a good gesture on the part of Government to increase the value of the Scholarship in view of present conditions, I think the Scholar who arrived there recently will find it difficult to carry on even with that £100 extra. I trust Government will go into the matter and see if it is not advisable to increase the amount for the other Scholars actually in the United Kingdom now even more than by £100.

Mr. C. V. WIGHT: In seconding the motion I would like to ask if the amount will be added as from the date of a letter Government received from me on the subject about a year or a year and a half ago. I have not the precise date with me

now, but I had written in regard to one particular Scholar. I say so advisedly.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I am afraid I cannot give any specific date as to when this motion takes effect, except to say that every Scholar now in the United Kingdom and all future Scholars for the time being will receive £1,000, with the exception of the 1937 Scholar in respect of whom special recommendation has been made.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I wish to support the motion, and all I have to say about it is that this Government only waits until somebody from abroad tells it what to do. More than two years ago, as soon as the War commenced, I drew attention to the 1937 Scholar, who has a widowed mother and to whom he was writing and telling of the hardship he was suffering, but nothing has been done until somebody in England sends and says "You have that boy nearly stranded here" and asks "What you are going to do about it?" Government goes about with its eyes blind and its ears deaf to every appeal from this Council. It is, however, better late than never.

Mr. OGLE: (Director of Education, Acting): I may explain and give a little more detail than the hon. Colonial Secretary has done. Mr. Matthews made application some time ago for an increase in his allowance on account of having been forced to go from London to Aberystwyth. Through the bombing of London his College, the London University, was obliged to go to another place where it would not be disturbed. His journey was made under difficulties and after he had been there for three months he was forced to transfer to another University—Oxford—at considerable cost and also to take up residence in the City of Oxford which was also full of evacuees and therefore had very little accommodation for outsiders. What little accommodation there was would be as a result at a very high cost. The matter was dealt with at the time and, subject to the approval of the Legislative Council, the Director of Colonial Scholars was asked to give him an extra amount of £18 per quarter to meet those expenses. He has now taken his degree with second class honours, which is a very good performance in the circumstances, and he wishes to take the fourth year post-graduate studies.

In the circumstances it is necessary to finance that fourth year, and that is the reason for an extra amount of £111 which, in the opinion of the Director of Colonial Scholars who is in close touch with all British Guiana Scholars and more or less handles their financial affairs in England, will carry him through the final year and his post-graduate studies. He will have £165 in addition to his £900. If we take into consideration the fact that all other Scholars are to have their allowances increased from £900 to £1,000, this means the extra £65 given to Matthews is really to meet the extraordinary expenses that he had in his two changes which the other Scholars had not. I think that is reasonable and, I also think, the Director of Colonial Scholars will inform the Government of British Guiana immediately it is found that £1,000, the proposed new value of the scholarship, will not meet the expenditure of the Scholars.

Motion put, and agreed to.

ESTIMATES—1942.

The Council resolved itself into Committee and resumed consideration of the estimates of expenditure to be defrayed from revenue for the year ending the 31st December, 1942, which have been laid on the table.

AUDIT DEPARTMENT.

Sub-Head 1—Personal Emoluments.

Mr. JACOB: I consider the Audit Department to be the "watch dog" of Colonial expenditure and I am not too certain whether sufficient use is made of the officers at the proper time. I wrote to Government several letters concerning irregularities etc., and I am sorry to say I have not been able to get very satisfactory replies. Then I thought I should write the Auditor. I did so on the 19th March and got a reply on the 20th referring me back to the Colonial Secretary. The matter is exactly where it started. I merely want to say that more use should be made of the Auditor's service, and when questions are raised they should be investigated very promptly. I think Your Excellency is aware of certain correspond-

ence that has passed with you and other responsible Officers of Government, and I urge that something be done in those matters and not merely looking at the papers and vouchers. That is not sufficient to check irregularities. I am not suggesting, however, that any of those irregularities will be checked, but I am saying they will be greatly minimised. Immediately a report is made concerning a particular Department the officers of that department should have very little to say about the matter. The Audit Department, I suggest, should be called in and should go into the matter very carefully. If I may make reference to what has happened in public works expenditure in regard to the reconditioning of drainage works at Craig, Golden Grove and Nabaclis, I think Government fully realizes what I am referring to, and it is not necessary for me to refer in detail to those matters. I do urge that something be done by the Audit Department very promptly.

I was looking at the report of the Director of Colonial Audit, dated 31st December, 1939, which was received by me on the 18th November, 1941. I have found no reference therein to the irregularities I have complained about since 1940. No doubt it is too early. I urge that unless they are investigated very promptly it is no use talking about irregularities and no use expecting the vouchers and payments of Government to be in order.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I am very glad the hon. Member has given me an opportunity to make a statement on this subject. On the 9th October, in the afternoon of that day, the hon. Member made very serious accusations about Public Officers. He insinuated that they were thieves and I called upon him to withdraw the statement or prove to me at some other time that it was correct. The hon. Member undertook to prove that and, therefore, did not withdraw his statement. I asked the Director of Public Works.—

Mr. JACOB: Let me correct that statement right away. I undertook to prove nothing but to co-operate with Government in finding out those things. Government has the documents,

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: The

Hansard report is available. I asked the Director of Public Works to see the hon. Member and have a talk with him in connection with some specific irregularity to which he had referred. The Director of Public Works did so and undertook, providing the hon. Member gave certain information, to carry out the investigation himself. In other words, the Director would go to the outlying district and hold the examination in person but, he said, he must be informed of the name of a certain individual. The hon. Member said he was not at liberty to name the individual as he had given his word not to do so. Then I gathered there was some doubt as to whether that individual existed and the hon. Member undertook to find out whether the information was reliable and then to inform the Director of Public Works. The Director said that when he got that information he would proceed. After two weeks the Director of Public Works heard nothing further and so informed me. I then wrote to the hon. Member and reminded him that he was pressing for an investigation and that it would be held when he replied to the Director of Public Works. Nothing further has reached the Director of Public Works on the subject. Probably the hon. Member would say he was not referring to that case but to another matter. Your Excellency can rest assured that the matter is being investigated. You gave me instructions with regard to it. If the hon. Member thinks his cases can be traced overnight he is mistaken.

Mr. PERCY C. WIGHT: I thought the hon. Colonial Secretary would have replied to the hon. Member for North-Western District (Mr. Jacob) in this respect: "I think it is quite unbecoming of any Member of the Legislative Council to go to the Auditor with any matter pertaining to Government". It is certainly within my knowledge of him that he proved a very capable secretary of two concerns I have had to do with. He should therefore have known better than to address a communication to the Auditor. I think he should be told very definitely that it is improper conduct. An auditor stands between a company and its shareholders in commercial life, and it is the same with Government. He can never expect to receive a reply from the Colonial Auditor on a question of that sort. Personally, I deprecate conduct of that description coming from Members of

the Legislative Council who, I think, should know very much better.

Mr. JACOB: I should like to say in reply to the remarks of the last speaker that what he considers improper in regard to a matter of this kind I do not. I merely asked the Auditor to see what the position was. In fact I might have gone to see him—that is the way to check anything you see wrong—in the same manner as the Director of Public Works asked to see me, but the hon. Member for Georgetown Central (Mr. Percy C. Wight) thinks differently and, I think, I shall have to excuse him. Your Excellency has stated that at this time there should be greater collaboration and co-operation between Government and Elected Members of the Council. If what the hon. Member stated is his conception of what should be in the future, then I must say that I entirely disagree with him.

Mr. C. V. WIGHT: I would also like to add that collaboration should also be extended among Elected Members of this Council!

THE CHAIRMAN: I do not know if it is necessary for me to say anything, but for the purpose of record I will say that in matters of defalcations or abuse of public money the primary responsibility rests upon the Head of the Department concerned to ensure that the money has been spent properly; secondly on the Treasurer who has power and authority to ask questions and examine vouchers coming before him, and to ascertain whether the amount is within the estimate of Government. The Auditor stands in an entirely different position and, I think, we have to record for the protection of the Auditor that no one should think he can be used at any time for any criminal investigation or as a detective on Government accounts. He is to some extent outside the Government just as the auditor of a commercial firm is somebody outside the commercial firm though you have to carry him on the estimates, because Government as a public body, just as in the case of a firm, pays the Auditor a fee. The purpose of having the Auditor is to examine details of expenditure, certify that the accounts of Government have been entered absolutely correct in terms of the estimates and regulations governing expenditure and the collection of revenue.

But he is appointed from an outside body altogether, the Colonial Audit Department which handles the audit of all British Dominions and Colonies, and his sphere of action is pretty definitely limited. He is limited to the examination of accounts, inevitably some time after, possibly a year after, the actual expenditure has been made. He serves such a purpose that this Colony, in having its accounts properly audited, is in a position to face the world. It can, for example, raise a loan as its credit is good, and I know that in raising money in the United Kingdom the *sine qua non* is that the accounts are adequately audited. I have served in a Colony where I myself objected to the inordinate expense of the Auditor, as we were only having a part-time auditor, and the Director of Colonial Audit said if I persisted in my objection he would take away the Auditor and not be responsible for the examination of accounts. What can happen in a Colony is something like this. I, as Governor, can informally appeal to the Auditor and ask him for advice on a particular point. If he is well inclined he would give it but he may decline. If I ask him to investigate a particular point as a very special matter he may, but normally he could in the first instance refuse. Within the regulations laid down if he cannot give the time and does not think it proper to go into the matter at the first stage he would be right in refusing. I could not go and tell him: "There is a little scandal, look and see what it can be." It is quite improper for me as Governor and any Member of the Legislative Council to go to the Auditor and make any demand or suggestion for him to make any inquiry. I think that stands as regards the duties of the Auditor in the Government.

Items passed without amendment.

GOVERNOR'S OFFICE

THE CHAIRMAN: I would like to recall one thing to the Council. I was perturbed at the considerable amount of overtime work in my own office. My Private Secretary never got to bed until 12 o'clock last night and that happens every day. He works for long, long hours overtime every week owing to the enormous number of cablegrams, which are not being received as the result of the War, to be deciphered. In the last Colony I have served we used to have one in peace-time

of that character once a month, but we are now getting several every day, some exceedingly long being of three or four pages typewritten. A good many do not affect us but they do come to us and we have to decipher them and send replies. I told the Private Secretary this morning that we must make arrangement whereby he would be assisted in this matter. Under my Head in the Estimates I would reduce the amount of travelling allowance in order to have something for that need. I made a certain proposal to my Private Secretary whereby he would get assistance from private persons and be relieved of a good deal of the long hours spent. It is not quite arranged as yet and I may come back to the Council with it.

Items passed without amendment.

CUSTOMS.

Consideration of this Head was deferred to a later period.

EDUCATION.

Sub-head 1—Personal Emoluments.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I ask leave to move in a sub-item to read: "d. Second Inspector of Schools (\$1,920 by \$120 to \$2,400)—\$1,920." It is necessary to have an additional Inspector of Schools. In fact it is recommended that there should be more than one, but Government is only asking for one for next year. I would like to mention that the increase in attendances at schools has been considerably over those of the past few years. In 1925 the enrolment in Primary Schools was 41,800 whereas in 1940 it was 55,700, an increase of approximately 14,000. The Director of Education may have more recent figures. I know the numbers are increasing. I hope hon. Members will see their way to increase the strength of the Inspectorate by the addition of this Inspector. It is a post between the Inspector of Schools and the Assistant Inspector of Schools.

Mr. MACKAY: I would like to say a few words under this Head. I am told that to put myself in order I must move the reduction of the vote by \$1. That I am now doing. This question of Education on which every one has expressed an

opinion is causing a good deal of alarm, especially as one knows and as the hon. Colonial Secretary has pointed out when it was previously discussed, the vote has increased by \$204,000. What I think is causing equal alarm is that this Colony is not getting value for this money. When I say this Colony, I am not referring only to the taxpayers but also to those boys and girls who are receiving education at the expense of the State. As regards that I quite agree, as we all know, it is the generally recognised principle that the State should give a certain amount of education to the people, but the type of education given to the boys and girls in the Primary Schools is not one that really fits them for their life's work after they have left school. Take one case in point that I know something about. My firm gets applications from boys and girls whose one ambition, it seems, is to get a job in the Government Service or in a commercial firm to do clerical work, and in the majority of cases the letters of application are written very ungrammatically and furthermore what is extremely important they should be in decent handwriting. As regards that I am told that handwriting seems to be a matter of no concern at all. I speak from experience gained. I have a son who happened to do exceedingly well at school in England, getting credits in all his subjects at the examination, but his handwriting is absolutely appalling. How the examiners who had to pass him took his handwriting I do not know. I cannot.

There is another thing with regard to education in the schools. I certainly think that the education, as far as the children are concerned, is actually poor. In my day there were painful forms of procedure which are not, I am informed, carried out to-day. Apart from the education, I certainly think that from the actual learning the young generation should be taught a greater sense of responsibility and be made to realize that they are not being educated so much from the point of view of learning as the educating of their minds. They should also be taught to use their hands as well as their brains and the ordinary courtesy and respect of everyday life. One has not to go very far here to see that. Go to the Cinema! All of us who have been brought up properly know that when the National Anthem is being played we are to take off our hats and

stand. At the Cinema the people simply run out of the place during the playing of the National Anthem. The main part of my argument is that I certainly think we should get better value for the money spent on education to-day. It is alarming the results we are getting from the education of the children in the schools. I do commend the question of the education of the children in the schools to the serious attention and consideration of Government.

Mr. JACOB: I agree in part with the hon. Member who has just taken his seat, but I think if he were to look into the expenditure of this Department in detail he would see that even if you were to curtail the expenditure on education it would not amount to very much, but when the condition of the whole Colony is taken into account, when it cannot be disputed that 30 per cent. of the children of school-going age are not in school, then I cannot agree that the money spent on education is not properly spent. I have in my hand the Report of the Director of Education for the year 1939. At page 3 under Finance it shows that the expenditure on Administration (Personal Emoluments) rose from \$26,178 in 1937 to \$38,273 in 1939, a difference of roughly \$12,000. That is on administration alone. While I believe from personal observation that the administration of the Department could have been a little better, I cannot wholly agree that the expenditure on this Department is not the right kind of expenditure that we are voting year after year in this Council. I see that provision is made to add another Inspector of Schools. May I enquire when did an Inspector visit the North-West District? When I was in the District in February this year I understood an Inspector had not gone there for a very long time and further, that owing to the attitude adopted by the Director of Education, the people in charge of the schools there, particularly the Anglican Body, were finding it very difficult to get fully qualified teachers to take up appointments in the North-West District. No teacher is desirous of going to the North West District under the conditions that prevail there at the present time when teachers can get appointments under better conditions elsewhere in the Colony. When recognized Christian Bodies make representations with recommendations based

on actual knowledge of the facts, I am a little surprised that the Education Department turns down those recommendations. I was told by the persons in charge thereof that although recommendation was made for the appointment of a particular teacher who was not qualified but could adopt herself to conditions there, at a low salary so many obstacles were raised that it was felt useless pursuing the matter further. The Director of Education has the right to appoint an unqualified person to be a teacher and, looking at this Report, I see that the number of Uncertificated Teachers employed (469) is more than the number of Certificated Teachers employed—371 excluding Head Teachers. I am not suggesting that Certificated Teachers should not be employed. Preference of employment should be given to them, but in remote parts of the Colony the recommendation of the Managers of the schools should be accepted in order to facilitate the education of the children in those parts. For some years, I believe, there was no examination held for Certificated Teachers and that was responsible in some measure for some teachers not being fully qualified. Why the Department should act like that I do not know. If it is for reason of economy then it is definitely false economy, when such recommendations are made and they are not accepted.

I feel, sir, that despite what I am saying now there are brighter days ahead. I am particularly pleased to see in Your Excellency's speech (printed as Legislative Council Paper No.12c) at page 10 that it is anticipated to spend \$100,000 per annum for five years to rehabilitate existing schools. I think that is an expenditure in the right direction. I do not know if the hon. Nominated Member who spoke is going to say anything about that expenditure. I think the sooner it is recognized that the percentage of literacy among children should be 100 per cent. the better it will be for all concerned. The money spent on children between the ages of 6 and 14, probably 16, is money very well spent. There may be differences of opinion in regard to the curriculum. I am not wholly in favour of the curriculum. I do not expect it to reach perfection in my lifetime, but certainly more ought to be done to bring us nearer perfection. Year after year severe criticisms are made

against the expenditure on this Department but, I think, they were never well founded. The comparisons that were made were never in regard to the increasing population and following the trend of events not only in British Guiana but the West Indies and other parts of the world. I trust we will get through this vote in a very short time.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I have been here for a number of years. I have been a country schoolmaster for many years and I tell you that every word of the hon. Nominated Member is absolutely correct. Fortunately or unfortunately, I have children who have matriculated, and my complaint is against their handwriting. I have said to them "Are you going to have a typewriter to do your writing?" and they simply laughed at me. The writing is simply ridiculous. It seems that no attention is paid to writing in the schools. I know I am going to be told I am going back 100 years. Why should not I? The days are passing but things remain the same. In my days there was good writing. It used to be said that your transport to success in life was your writing. To-day that is out of the question. When the hon. Member said that the criticism is misplaced he does not know what he is talking about. I do not know that anybody in this Council grudges spending money on education, but the criticism is that though the money is given there is always the question of how to keep down the cost of education. I think there is something wrong with the system and it should be enquired into. My boy should not spend the same number of days in a primary school as I had to spend. Teaching has become a science and surely he should get through a little quicker. I think what is required is to confine the children to the things they should know now and leave that which they must know in after-life until they get an idea about them. The schools are attempting to take some of the things they should know in after-life and mix them up with the things of today, and so none is done properly. That is the conclusion I have come to after years of experience. If the children in the Primary Schools are given a good foundation in the three R's—if they learn to express themselves properly, to write well and to apply the rules of Arithmetic—which are the things you begin life with, and the after-life or greater

things are allowed to remain until later, we would make a move forward.

What is the Department doing about that? Of course the Department will say their hands are tied; there is no money. That is their excuse, but it is not good enough. As a matter of fact the stuff we are getting for what we are spending is not up to standard. That is what we complain about. You can give us better value for the money which we are paying. Somebody should go into the question and see if the system is at fault. To my mind it is at fault. Post-primary things are being forced on the primary schools and the children learn neither properly. When a boy gets to 14 years there should be somewhere for him to go and learn something that he would meet up with in after-life, and when he leaves there he is fit for anything. But the attempt is made to mix both, and in doing that both suffer. That is my view. From my experience as a schoolmaster and as a father of children up to the present time, my view is what the hon. Nominated Member expressed and nothing short of that. The children have no manners. They seem to take no interest in character-building in the schools. I am wondering whether they still read the New Testament in the schools. We want to spend the money if we have got it and to spend even much more so that we should have schools for those who are not going, as the hon. Member for North-Western District has said. It is not the fault of the schools nor of Government: the fault lies somewhere else. The people prefer to get a bit a day from the employment of their children rather than to send them to school. I am speaking about the finished article. For the money spent we should get a better quality education.

Mr. JACOB: May I rise to a point of correction and remind my hon. friend, who is a legal practitioner, that there is a law for the compulsory attendance of children at school? They are bound to go to school otherwise it is the responsibility of Government.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I do not know the Officer who is to jump behind them in the punt trench and carry them to school. The hon. Member knows that during the reaping and planting seasons of rice the school is empty. The parents must learn

that they have to take their children to school. When they have realized that then you can blame Government. But you have parents who prefer to get eight cents for the labour of their children than to send them to school. Government has done its best in the matter and the parents must do the rest.

Mr. DEAGUIAR: It is obvious that the hon. Member for North-Western District does not fully appreciate the remarks made by the hon. Mr. Mackey. I do not propose to repeat them for his benefit because the hon. Member on my left was at pains to point out that we are not obtaining results from the money we are spending. That is a fact no one can deny. The question as to whether a large percentage of illiterate children are roaming about the Colony is not under discussion, but if it was we may try and solve that problem separately.

Mr. JACOB: May I correct the hon. Member by drawing his attention to the item "Chief Attendance Officer" under the Head in the Estimates?

Mr. DEAGUIAR: That is what is wrong with this Colony. The people of this Colony are too much accustomed to be spoon-fed. Merely because this Government provides Attendance Officers is no reason that there should be such a large percentage of illiterate children. I am not quite sure about it. The one regret I have as a Member of this Council is that when the time came for taking the Census of the Colony we were up to our necks under war conditions, and we agreed that the taking of the Census should be withdrawn so as to save a few dollars. I regret that decision every day, especially when points like these arise. We are not sure of the figures quoted by the hon. Colonial Secretary as to the number of children attending school within the last 10 years. I am not so sure that there is such a large number at the moment, but even if there is the primary responsibility rests with the parents. So far as I am concerned that is my view.

Here we are asked to vote \$672,878 for what is known as Primary Education. It is true that it includes a vote for grants to Secondary Schools. This vote has been rising year by year, and I suppose what is

exercising one's mind is where it is going to end, how much more we are going to be called upon to pay. The obvious question arising out of that is what are we getting for it. There is a small vote for practical training and in addition to that there is another form of practical training for women at the Carnegie Trade School calling for \$13,000. Against that there is a small amount of revenue to be taken into consideration. I think that is the side of our education that needs more examination. A paltry \$25,000 goes towards what I may term the practical side of training. Either that is too little and the other too much or *vice versa*. If we agree with the view that "collar and tie" employment, as it is commonly called, is limited then we must devote our attention to the practical side of training. It is the only way in which we can hope for results. Personally, I do not see where you are able to find work for them. There is no doubt that the trained man is a better type of citizen. We want that, but at the same time we have to give the training that will make them useful after they have left school. Hon. Members have been given several illustrations of what happens to some of these unfortunate children who are not able to make good after they have left school.

May I enquire what is the policy of this Government in regard to the Carnegie Trade Centre for Women? Perhaps a brief history of that school may be of some interest to Your Excellency. That school was built with funds provided by the late Andrew Carnegie. I think the amount was £10,000. With the money that was left after providing the building they were able to carry on the training there for some time, until in 1937 when the fact of the usefulness of the school in the community became quite obvious and Government came into the picture. From the figures I have before me, in 1937 the sum of \$1,445 was voted. It seems that was only for part of the year. Nevertheless before all of this was done this Government appointed a Committee on which Judge Verity, now appointed Chief Justice, was Chairman. That Committee met and made certain recommendations. How many of those recommendations are going to be adopted I do not know, but I am nevertheless glad the school is now being put on some kind of footing from

the practical side. The question is whether sufficient encouragement is being given to the work of that school. I do not want to give the figures for 1938, 1939 and 1940. Government expended \$12,509 and the revenue was \$7,471, leaving \$5,038 as the actual cost to Government. I merely quote those figures to show that although under this Head the expenditure is shown as \$13,624 there is revenue to come in which, I notice, is put down as \$4,000. We all know it will be greater than that.

It seems that the work of that school is one that should be encouraged. At the present moment there are over 100 girls there and the school is overtaxed. I make this statement very feelingly. I do not know that the work of the school is being encouraged. I do not think the work done there is receiving the sympathetic and earnest consideration of this Government. Certain proposals have been put up from time to time and the response has not been quite satisfactory. I have risen merely to bring that matter forcibly to the attention of Your Excellency so that you will give it consideration as soon as you get a chance. I know that the children are taught there to use their hands, and after receiving training in that school they are able to earn a livelihood. The school wants more encouragement, but it is my view that up to the present time Government is not sympathetic enough towards it. Why, I am not in a position to say. It would be a shame on the Colony if that institution is allowed to go under through lack of interest and sympathy on the part of Government. It is no use having a school of that type unless you have the right type of teachers and you will have to pay them. I do not see the wisdom of establishing classes for domestic science and needlework and expecting the teachers to get salaries on the border-line of those of uncertificated teachers. The view has been expressed by someone in a position to know, whose name I will not call at the moment, that the staff should be classified along with the staff of the Secondary Schools. I can see it coming that the school is probably going to go down owing to the lack of sympathy that it is receiving at the present time. I can arrive at no other conclusion than that at some time or other that institution is going to find itself in the position of not being able to carry on and not because pupils are

not there. The actual position is that there are more applicants than the space available. There is not sufficient accommodation, and so the need exists. The people here are anxious to obtain practical training for their children so as to fit them for after they have left the Primary School, and unless this Government is prepared to foster schemes whereby practical training will be brought into effect we will continue to have them looking for "collar and tie" jobs, the avenues of which are extremely limited.

Mr. JACKSON: I should like to congratulate the hon. Nominated Member, Mr. Mackey, on his effort to perpetuate the age-long cry in this Colony that we are not getting full value for the money expended on the pupils of the Primary Schools. Time and again this question has been raised in this Council and, despite Government's efforts to give primary education a practical turn, still the cry goes on. Hon. Mr. Mackey referred to the handwriting of the pupils of our schools as seen in the applications for jobs that go to him, and that he states is inexorable. I am wondering whether the hon. Member is referring to the Primary Schools, for I am positive that if he visits any of our Primary Schools—

Mr. MACKEY: To a point of explanation! I referred to both.

Mr. JACKSON: If the hon. Member can spare a little time to go with me into any of the Primary Schools in the City or country districts, selected by him, he would receive firsthand information and experience by asking the teachers to set the children to write. He would see that the handwriting of our schools is exceedingly good. (Mr. Eleazar: Question!) I am positive that the question raised by the hon. Member for Berbice River is not of any worth. I am quite sure the Director of Education will be able to support my statement that the handwriting of the pupils of the Primary Schools in this Colony is distinctly good. I do not make these remarks wildly, but those who have not been in the schools for some time and are trading on past experience cannot prove that the handwriting of the children is not good. Let them visit the schools and see the children's handwriting.

With respect to the cry that the Colony is not getting full value for the money spent on education, I do not know what really is expected of the pupils of our schools. We get here from time to time destructive criticism in connection with the Education Department and Primary School pupils, but those who destroy will not offer any constructive criticism. A Committee was appointed to investigate primary education in this Colony and also to suggest alterations in the curriculum. It is simply showing that those persons who speak loudly of our not getting full value for the money spent on education had not the temerity to attend and give evidence in connection with this matter and also indicate to the Committee the kind of education which is required for this Colony. A good deal has been said of the amount spent on education. When you consider that the amount works out at about \$12 or \$13 per head for a whole year in respect of the children, you cannot regard that as being too much to spend on the children of the Colony. I know that in these matters the amount that we have to pay must be large, but that is to be expected. When they speak of this large amount do they wish to reduce the amount spent on education? Reference was made to uncertificated teachers. I wonder if hon. Members can visualize what the expense would be for education if all the teachers were certificated. Let them figure it out. Take the amount paid to certificated teachers and multiply it by the number of teachers we have, and then you will see that if all were certificated teachers the Director of Education would have to come to the Council and ask for \$1,000,000. An uncertificated teacher is not necessarily an unqualified teacher. There are numbers of teachers who under the old régime has served a Pupil Teacher's Course. Those teachers have kept up their work and they have had an amount of training in the school during their Pupil Teacher's Course and, although not fortunate enough to obtain certificates as teachers, yet in a measure they are fairly good teachers for the work expected of them. Then we have the female teachers some of whom have taken a course in preparatory work and are immensely suited to train young children. Some, unfortunately, have to train 70 to 100 or more children. They are admirably suited for that work but because they did

not obtain the Head Teacher's certificate they are also called unqualified.

I think that in this matter of primary education a good deal is attributed to the teacher which is really not his duty or his function to operate. Reference has been made to the manners of the children, and somebody was bold enough to say the teachers in the schools take no notice of character-building. This, I say, is a libel on the teaching profession. The children are in the schools for five hours a day and the other 19 hours are spent where they live, perhaps in squalid surroundings. They live in and breathe an atmosphere which comes from within sordid surroundings. The teachers while the children are at school endeavour to teach them good manners as will stand them in good stead in life, but when those children leave school they go back to the sordid surroundings from which they came. I know that the teacher is blamed for everything in connection with the children. It is a common thing to say the children go to school and do not learn good manners. I believe that if the teachers did their duty to the children in respect of moulding their character it would not be out of school. Teachers are not responsible for the conduct of the children out of school. They do their best in the schools, but prevailing conditions make it difficult for the results of their efforts to be seen. It is immensely unfair for them to be charged with the misconduct of the children. Have we not got numbers of children from the Primary Schools who are a credit to themselves, to the schools, to their homes and to the country? I do feel that we have numbers of children who have made good. I will not mention any names, but around this table we have Members of this Council who have never darkened the doors of a secondary school, the speaker included, and I am sure there are others who are a credit to the country. Let us not gauge the work of the Primary School and the Primary School teachers by what is seen in the streets.

The Council resumed and 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 Estimates for 1942 under Head VIII.—Education.

During the debate Mr. Laing (Commissioner of Labour and Local Government) entered the Chamber and took his seat.

Mr. JACKSON (resuming): Before the adjournment this morning I referred to the surroundings of the pupils and instanced them as one reason why a good many of the pupils behaved in an unseemly manner in the streets. I also referred to the economic condition of the people at the present time, as instanced by the housing problem, and I suggested that as the majority of the pupils of the primary schools, or large numbers of them, live in tenement rooms where they listen to all sorts of things, I did not think their misconduct should be attributed to the teachers.

Another point is the need for additional Inspectors. As a matter of fact there is need for a larger number of Inspectors, but if Government is offering one at the present time I think we ought to accept it. The present conditions do not permit of the Inspectors paying nearly as many visits to the schools as they should. There was a time when an Inspector of Schools was regarded as a monstrosity and was never welcomed in the schools. It was the time when there was a system of payment by results and the Inspector paid surprise visits in order to detect irregularities in connection with the keeping of the registers. At the present time an Inspector of Schools is welcomed in the schools, and part of his duty is to study the methods of the teachers and assist them in their work. He is a man who has done practical teaching, and if he is not satisfied with the method adopted by a teacher he sets an example himself as to how the work should be conducted. His work in that respect is very much appreciated, but the number of Inspectors is too small. As a matter of fact it has been recommended that we ought to have County Inspectors, but I hope and I think I am sure we will get this additional Inspector. If I had my own way I would place him in Berbice where he would be able to take the hon. Member for Berbice River (Mr. Eleazar) around to some of the schools so that he might have a look at the handwriting and com-

pare it with his own. The hon. Member would then be in a better position to speak about it here. I hope the Council will pass this vote and that the additional Inspector will be stationed in Berbice.

Mr. WOOLFORD: In this Council and in connection with another matter Your Excellency expressed some astonishment that there did not appear to exist in the personnel of this Council those who were capable of offering some constructive criticisms or suggestions in respect of what are now very interesting public measures.

THE CHAIRMAN: I did not quite say or suggest that there was nobody capable of offering constructive criticisms. What I said was that I was amazed during the debate on Agriculture to find that there was a valuable memorandum on the subject but that nobody had preached from that text.

Mr. WOOLFORD: If Your Excellency did not say that I think I am at liberty to make the observation that there does appear to be some reluctance or hesitancy on the part of Members of the Council in refraining frequently from expressing their opinions either freely or at all. I am afraid I have got into that habit myself and I am going to explain why. I do not claim to be an educationist. I have never had the benefit of an actual training experience in any primary school, but I have for many years made a close and intimate study of primary education in this Colony, and at a very early age. Although, as I say, I am not a practical teacher or even a practical educationist I claim to be able to express some opinion which I hope may be of value to Members.

I have only risen because I feel that with Your Excellency's gift for initiative some practical steps may be taken in this Colony during your regime to put a period to a constant repetition of the indictment that primary education in this Colony, as administered through its Codes in the past, has failed to be of benefit to the community. I shall not go into details. The hon. Mr. Jackson referred to at least two Members of this Council who will no doubt allow it to be said that their positions in the community are due in a very large measure to the education they received in primary schools.

The system of primary education in this Colony is the result of the introduction of the Ordinance of 1876, the year in which I was born. We have in this Colony about 238 schools, and Your Excellency should know that for a considerable number of years those school buildings were all owned by the various denominations, with the exception of three Government schools, one in Georgetown, one at Buxton and the other at Beteverwagting. It is important that Members should know that while the Education vote has now reached \$668,000, of that amount \$520,000 is a necessary provision to be made for teachers' salaries. The expenditure under this vote is not dependent upon enrolment but upon average attendance. If school buildings throughout the Colony had to accommodate the number of children of school-going age, amounting to between 80,000 and 90,000, it would be impossible to impart tuition in them. In other words, it would be impossible to enforce the provisions for giving free and compulsory education because there is not sufficient accommodation in the existing school buildings.

I wish that point to be pondered over because, if the system is to continue, and we have to provide for the compulsory attendance of every child of school age, it means that we will have to provide accommodation for them in those various buildings. It is known that the denominations cannot do so, and if we add to the number of what are known as Compulsory Attendance Officers, whose duty it is to see that every child of school age goes to school—if those officers did their duty and the parents and schoolmasters did their duty it would mean that there would not be accommodation in the existing buildings to carry out the Code. At the present moment not only is there an insufficiency of buildings but, as we all know, education is imparted under the school's and under trees. In other words, the number of pupils at present attending schools cannot be accommodated within the school buildings, which makes the function of the teachers very difficult. Half of the children do not hear what is being said because other work is being done within a very limited school area. It must be very difficult to concentrate on what a teacher is saying to 60 or 70 children. I am asking Members to ponder and to try to think out some method of imparting

what is a very valuable thing to the community, viz. primary education.

I sat on a Commission in 1924-25 of which the late Sir Charles Major was Chairman. Mr. Wynn Williams, an expert from England, was also a member and took a very prominent part in the proceedings. His report is a very valuable document. Some considerable improvement has been made along the lines he has advised, but we are very far from attaining anything like satisfactory results from this vote, which is increasing year by year, than we should have been since his visit. We also had the benefit of a visit from an American expert on the Jeannes system. I think his name was Mr. Wright. He visited many schools in this Colony and held many conferences. He deplored the fact that the Board system which, of course, is so prominent a feature of educational life of others similarly situated to our people, could not be reproduced here. He conducted a personal survey and inspected some of the schools. He invited the scholars to answer certain questions and he was amazed, he told me, at the very high average intelligence of some of those untutored boys and girls.

I have risen to make one or more practical suggestions. Your Excellency will find that for many years there was a Board of Education in this Colony. I was a member of it myself and both Bishops were members of that body. There were also two teachers, and altogether it was a very representative Board. I am referring more particularly to the representation of the denominations and the teaching fraternity, and at that time the Governor of the Colony presided over the Board. I think that was a great mistake; it led to its death. He imposed his personality on the Bishops to such an extent that they could not express their views as freely as they would have liked, and I am afraid that was largely responsible for the wish, which became quite general, that that Board should cease to function. Of course, no one was more afraid of him than the Director of Education himself. He was a member of the Board and unfortunately he could not get the Governor to agree with his opinions. But that was an extraordinary case. I am speaking, of course, of Major Bain Gray, the late Director of Education. He was a very excellent man and I have often discussed the matter with him.

I feel now that if the Board of Education had been kept alive, and the Governor's presence not made compulsory, it would have been the proper avenue through which certain improvements might be made. I do not expect Mr. Ogle or the Director of Education to agree with that because they have their own views on Education, and I have no doubt they are experts on curriculum, but I think Your Excellency will find that there is a majority opinion that the Board should be re-established, but not on an advisory basis. I am quite aware that there is an Education Committee, but it is merely advisory, and I have seen some of its work as a member of the Executive Council. There is too much indecision. What is the use of having a Director of Education if he is unable to carry his schemes through with the Education Committee, because they are only an advisory body, and because there is an Executive Council and a Legislative Council? If there was a Board of Education and his recommendations were accepted by the Board this Legislature would never turn them down. I am quite convinced that all the prejudice there is against all these Codes and amendments and notices we have had from time to time, the prejudice I mean on the part of the teachers, has been responsible for much of the discontent which we know exists, and which has led to no important reforms being brought into being.

I am going to give one or two instances. In the Old Combined Court a motion was moved, I think by myself, for the establishment of a Government School. It was so novel a procedure that it was only after a considerable number of suggestions and objections that the motion was carried. I recall that the vote was \$15,000, but the money was not expended in that year. I believe it was revoked, and His Excellency and I visited a place in the hope that Government would be able to buy it, but for some reason or other it was not done. It took many years to do what was considered the proper thing—establish a Government School as was first done in Broad Street. It has a fine background; it is an illustration of what Government schools should be in this community, and I think you will find that the children who attend that school are not those who behave improperly on the public streets. I am going

to tell you why. There is no reason in the world why any scholar should be allowed to continue to attend a school who behaves badly in and out of that school. In a primary school a scholar cannot be expelled or suspended from school for bad behaviour because the law says that primary education is free and compulsory. A schoolmaster has to put up with the bad behaviour of a child and the spread of its bad manners throughout the school. Every scholar that he loses affects his pay because he is paid on the basis of average attendance.

That difficulty exists to a great extent to-day, and although I am not saying that it is responsible for the spread of bad behaviour it is an incident in the teacher's life about which he can do nothing. There is nothing to prevent the transfer of a child from one school to another. If we had school areas that would be impossible. A child who behaves badly in one school should not go to another. There is no secondary school in the world where such an immunity from correction exists, where there is such an absence of order and discipline in the school life because of unruly children or children who are no good whatever. There is no reason why this community should bear the cost of maintaining children who eventually find their way to Onderneeming or add to the number of unruly children that we see about.

Another factor which is not contributing to good results is the poverty of some of the people. I am speaking of some of the parents whom we are condemning for not sending their children to school. We all know that there are times when the weather is a great impediment. There are two sessions in the schools, the morning and afternoon. Isn't it heart-rending even in good weather to see such a large number of children walking for miles unshod and with empty stomachs? A large number of children go to school hungry. Some provision has been made for the distribution of milk and food, but until we can provide against those children whose parents are helpless reaching school in such a state of mind and body that they cannot profit by the tuition that is given them we will never make any great improvement in the country districts. There is a curious anomaly about that. I am speaking subject to correction, but I believe I am right in saying that in

Georgetown the compulsory age for school attendance is from 6 to 14 years whereas in the country districts it is 6 to 12 years. With greater facilities for going to school the children in Georgetown are allowed the benefit of two years longer in school than the children in the country districts. In other words those children whose parents are poor and who have greater distances to travel between home and school are only allowed to go to school up to the age of 12 years while children in Georgetown have the benefit of free tuition until they are 14 years.

Mr. OGLE (Director of Education): I think it is not quite correct to say that children are not allowed free tuition in the schools up to 14 years in the country districts. They are allowed to go free up to 16 years in the country districts and in Georgetown, but normally it is rather unusual for children to remain in school up to 14 or 15 years.

Mr. WOOLFORD: The legal limit is 12 years; they are not compelled to go to school beyond 12 years. In other words if a child in the country is 13 years and is not going to school the Attendance Officer cannot compel it to go to school, but in Georgetown he can. That is the point I am making. We are hearing now that in the country districts children cannot be compelled to go to school after 12 years, but they are allowed to go up to 16, whereas in Georgetown, New Amsterdam and Buxton they must go to school until they are 14 years. Those things are anomalous. There should be one school-age—a unified system. This dissimilarity in the administration of the Code creates a bad impression.

There are some schools in Georgetown which are fairly well equipped, but how many schools are there without desks? Of the 238 schools I hazard the suggestion that one-half of them have not a sufficient number of desks, and I believe I am right in saying that they have not got any benches at all, which is a very serious position. I say that the time has come when we should seriously consider the suggestion I made some years ago—for which I was attacked by the whole community—that we should make primary education free and compulsory only up to 12 years throughout the Colony, and then after that there

should be something like post primary education, also free. Then I think we would have better results. If teachers did not have to impart tuition to double the number of pupils they should, and if there was a well equipped educational system of Government schools they would be able to instruct children between the ages of 6 and 12 in rudimentary knowledge that would fit them for any post that is open to them, provided that that elementary education ceased at the age of 12 and some more practical instruction, something more vocational, immediately succeeded. We want to take a definite line with the school-leaving age which should be 12 years, with no suggestion of introducing agricultural bias or any unusual amount of handcraft. Let us have what I call and what educationist, now call post primary education as distinct from secondary or technical education. I hope, sir, you will be able to do something along those lines. We want a practical advance on the present system.

A Primary Education Committee sat here in 1938 and I was Chairman for some time. I have never been able to understand the reason, but would you believe, sir, that the Anglican Body in this community would not take part in the proceedings of that Committee? His Lordship the Bishop had his reasons and I know what they were, but no member of that Body gave evidence before that Committee although it controls the largest number of schools. Therefore when you hear people speaking of public opinion in this Colony I do ask you to be careful. There is no public opinion in this Colony. You will find on close examination that although the hon. Member for North-Western District (Mr. Jacob) speaks of public opinion so often there is no means of ascertaining public opinion in this Colony.

Mr. JACOB: Question!

Mr. WOOLFORD: If the hon. Member questions me I will say that the method adopted by him of visiting constituencies has never failed to meet with success. I have done that before he was born. I have never known a resolution which was not accepted at a public meeting. Everybody votes "Aye," and if you are a pleasant, plausible speaker you have

no difficulty with your audience at all. In fact my experience is that long before the resolution stage is reached many of the people have left the room; they leave before the resolution is put. (laughter). The hon. Member must have had that experience, and I take it that his laughing means endorsement. I suggest to you, sir, to pay the greatest respect to those resolutions in feeling but not in practice as being at all representative of public opinion.

I suggest that the report of the Primary Education Committee be carefully read by every member of the community. Although the Committee did not have the benefit of the long years of experience of the Anglican community I am sure there is not very much to object to in that report. Let us implement it. In my opinion what Government has done with that report it had no right to do. It has taken out a paragraph here and there and asked the Council to adopt it. It should be possible for Government to put the report of a Commission or a Committee as a whole before the Council, but it dare not do so. That is exactly what happened in the case of the report of the Primary Education Committee. The Code of 1919 has been altered and into the new Code of 1939 several amendments have been introduced, including increases of salaries, etc., but Government has avoided the real issue. I am asking you, sir, to face the issue and invite those members of the community who are qualified to express an opinion to say whether the Board of Education should not be re-established.

I hesitate to think what is going to happen. I can see that the Churches will not be able to maintain their school buildings. I can see that if there is anything like a demand on the part of Members and acquiescence on the part of the Council in the appointment of additional Attendance Officers children will be whipped into the schools and if the Indian community, alive now to their responsibility, say that their children should go to school, and if there is going to be an increased number of Indian girls of school-age going to school, this Colony is going to be faced with a greater problem than it is at present. Those children are not going to Anglican, Roman Catholic or Methodist schools; they are going to ask for Indian schools.

The Churches are unable to maintain their school buildings on the grant-in-aid they get; they cannot afford to do it. I am appealing to Members to say what is going to happen to the Education vote unless there is some collaboration between the denominations and Government, and between members of the community in responsible positions like ourselves and the parents of those children.

Year after year when this vote comes up I hear the same remarks. The hon. Member for Eastern Demerara (Mr. Humphrys) deplores the increase in the vote. I agree that the vote has increased. When I joined the Combined Court it was \$166,000; it is six times that figure now and I cannot see how it can be arrested. But better results should be expected from this expenditure if we put our heads together and by a system of loan, or by an application to the Colonial Development and Welfare Fund we try to rid the community of this increasing burden on the financial resources of the Colony.

I have confined my remarks to primary education and I hope that what I have said may be of some benefit to those who think along the lines of those who depreciate the value of primary education. It is of inestimable value in this community, and I say unhesitatingly that whatever an individual may think of it, it is my opinion that what recently occurred on the sugar estates of this Colony would never have occurred if those lads who had never been to school had had anything like a scintilla of training in order and discipline. It was an undisciplined, untutored lot who got out of hand, and I think I make no reflection on the East Indians when I say that you will find that they formed a large proportion of the people who created that trouble on the sugar estates—not men of my race who were not present in any numbers. It was the young men of the East Indian community whose parents had neglected to send them to school, who were prominent in those outbreaks, but in years to come we will not find the East Indian creating trouble of that kind because he is being better educated, and because the future mothers of that generation are being educated to day, an opportunity which the present mothers never had.

Mr. C. V. WIGHT: I do not propose to enlarge on the debate because there has been a despatch from the Comptroller for Development and Welfare relating to Education in this Colony. We have not been placed in possession of that document and therefore I think any remarks which may be made at the moment would be rather premature or a reiteration of those made in the past. There are two features which one might draw the Council's attention to. The first is the rising tide of expenditure which can in no way decrease but must continue to rise. Sir Rupert Briercliffe has made certain recommendations with regard to the establishment of a school medical service. It is true that part of that expenditure will be borne by the Colonial Development Fund, but at the same time he indicates that a certain portion of it will have to be borne by this Government. Sir Rupert also states that it would be very costly to make the school buildings in this Colony comply with the usually accepted standards of school hygiene and sanitation. We must take it, therefore, that this Colony will at some time endeavour to arrive at those standards, and that it will be a costly business. He also indicated that it should be part of the duties of District Medical Officers to visit the schools. One can hardly see the reason why it should not be part of the duties of District Medical Officers to visit schools even if it entails a curtailment of their private practice in the districts and some increase of their emoluments as Government Medical Officers. No doubt that will receive the consideration of Government.

There is also another aspect. Is this Council going to say that the pay of teachers is sufficient? That expenditure must necessarily increase and continue to increase. I have not seen Mr. Hammond's recommendations on the subject, but some teachers are miserably paid. They start as pupil teachers at \$10 or \$12 per month, and as uncertificated teachers they draw \$24 per month after years of service. Do we say that those people who Members suggest should be responsible for the welfare of the children in the schools, not only their healty but their manners and handwriting, are adequately remunerated and will be so in the future? Those are matters which will have to be considered and will swell the expenditure under this vote. I think rather than continue this

debate we should await the result of the examination of the existing system by the expert who has been specially delegated to investigate it. My personal view is that the system is not all that it might be, but it would be well to await the report of the expert.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I regret to have to rise again but this debate was never anticipated. The hon. Member who spoke first did not say that the money spent on education was too much. He made it clear that his view was that for the money we are spending the quality of the article could be better. Hon. Members have left that question entirely undebated. I say that from my own experience as a schoolmaster. I was once asked not to teach grammar in the school and told that I would not be paid for it if I taught it. I never entered one school in which I did not teach grammar. I have over and over told the last Director of Education that he was misdirecting education in this Colony. He could not understand me and he complained to the hon. Member for New Amsterdam (Mr. Woolford). It was not in the interest of certain members of the community, the capitalist class, that the people of the Colony should have anything like a decent education. They were to be prepared only for the field; anything outside of that was ridiculed as training them for white collar jobs. The Director of Education knew that and shaped the system of education to suit.

It is said that desks are not sufficient. Is that not within the knowledge of the Education Department? A single teacher is expected to teach 80 children. All those drawbacks simply emphasize what we are saying, and the Department knows them as well as anybody else. We see children looking into a book and doing silent reading? In reading one must do correct pronunciation, distinct enunciation and fluency. How can those qualities be attained by silent reading? And that order came from the Education Department.

I have heard a good deal of special pleading for the schoolmaster and his qualification. Whoever said he was not qualified? As a matter of fact the schoolmasters are doing a lot for the money they are getting and the qualifications

they have. The hon. Member for North-Western District (Mr. Jacob) branched off again to the poor uncertificated teacher. Whoever said that he cannot do the work he is engaged to do? The agricultural bias scheme is balderdash. Why waste a boy's school-life in the early stage by making him soil his clothes to the detriment of his parents' pocket, and call it agricultural bias?

Having gone through a primary school myself, and having taught as a schoolmaster, I must have some idea as to whether the system of primary education is good, bad or indifferent. Why should I have to wait for a few weeks for Mr. Hammond to tell me, or for Mr. Wright, an American, to tell me what is required? I proved to the late Director of Education that he was misdirecting Education in this Colony. You go into the schools to-day and you will not see a single copy-book. The result is that the child has nothing to imitate, and is left to his own device. Education in this Colony has never been good. What has been given has been given grudgingly.

Mr. HUMPHRYS: On this question of education I usually speak early, but on this occasion I waited until almost the last for this reason: I have been endeavouring to analyze what is really behind all the complaints of hon. Members, and it seems to me that this is a matter which should be looked straight in the face. Is it not a fact that the money spent on education as it is being spent is wasted? That is what it amounts to. We are told we are not getting the best for our money. It amounts to this: that the money is being wasted. If that is not what hon. Members mean I wish they would use plainer words, because that is certainly the impression I got from Members who suggested that something better could be done. I agree with the hon. Mr. Jackson when he says that it is easy to destroy. Members have not put forward any constructive criticism. Let us have less primary education and more post primary education. That has been impressed on Government year after year.

I want to ask the hon. Member for Berbice River (Mr. Eleazar) how many years has he not said in this Council that we can get better value for our money but

we are not getting it? Is that consistent? I want to ask Government whether it considers that we are getting full value for the money we are spending, or are we not? I trust Your Excellency will give your opinion on that point, although in justice to you it must be remembered that having been only a short time in the Colony it is a very difficult matter for you to express a full opinion on. What we do feel is that while primary education is essential we are spending more money than we ought to spend having regard to the finances of the Colony. Members will not doubt that this matter of education is their very close preserve, and when it comes to election time Members are afraid of losing votes.

Mr. ELEAZAR: The hon. Member knows that I am not afraid of mine because I have had to help him with his election.

Mr. HUMPHRYS: I know that and I have probably helped the hon. Member with his. It is true that primary education is an essential service, but there are other essential services, and we feel that other services are being neglected as the result of the expenditure on primary education which is not administered to the best advantage. What we feel is that primary education, as it is administered at present, tends to make a pupil feel that when he leaves school he is going to get a clerical job. He is not taught the necessity of using his hands, and that he has to make a living by using his hands. The thought of manual labour becomes abhorrent to him, and he expects as soon as he leaves school to get a proper job for the education he has had. In this Colony we have not got jobs for the number of young people who become qualified, and I will tell Your Excellency that in a certain Department of the Colony there was recently a job vacant at \$20 per month and there were 400 applicants. I do not think any of them had less than a Junior Cambridge certificate while many of them had reached Matriculation standard.

What is the good of urging pupils to obtain primary education up to 14 years when they want to take higher examinations and not have jobs to offer them? That is why we feel so strongly that there should be post primary education, and that

vocations should be taught them. The obvious reply to that is that if that were done we would have to spend more money still, because vocational education will cost as much or more. Therefore let us cut our coat according to our cloth; limit the age of primary education, as suggested by the hon. Member for New Amsterdam (Mr. Woolford) and give the children vocational education afterwards. I feel that if that had been adopted years ago, instead of teaching children nothing but parrot-like repetition and giving them no real useful knowledge, this Colony would have progressed a great deal more and we would not have had thousands of people unemployed to-day who have passed examinations to qualify themselves for high clerical positions which are not available in the Colony.

I do ask for the sympathy of the Council. I repeat that primary education is necessary. It is an essential service and we must maintain it, but having regard to the present war situation we should not increase our expenditure on it. Let it remain *in statu quo* until conditions are normal again. The Council is doing a wrong thing to increase expenditure on a service like education while the war lasts. Every year we find \$50,000 at least being added to the education vote. I am appealing to the Council to let us maintain the service we have without any further increase until the war is over. Last year I made a similar appeal and the hon. Mr. Jackson took me very much to ask about it and said he was sure the British Government would feel that we were doing wrong by not increasing an essential service in spite of the war. No responsible Government could possibly feel that it should increase a service of this nature while the war is on. There are services far more essential which we should maintain and even increase. I refer for instance to the Medical Service, and I am quite sure that certain requirements of the Medical Department are cut down in order to allow more expenditure on education. It is not right, and I appeal to the Council not to increase any service which, although necessary, is not in the strict sense absolutely essential at the moment.

Mr. ELEAZAR: The hon. Member is of the tribe who think it is very essential that we should not spend money on primary

education but ask Government to enlarge police stations, to make a larger jail to create criminals and provide the means of punishing them.

Mr. HUMPHRYS: I have not said that it not essential to spend money on primary education. I said that our expenditure on education should remain just where it is while the war is on, and that we should endeavour to have post-primary education to teach people how to work and not only to expect jobs because they can read, write and pass examinations.

Mr. ELEAZAR: Primary education is not to teach children to work; it is to lay the foundation for education. Post-primary education is to teach them how to work. I regret to see that the hon. Member, for whose election I worked so hard, has so many reactionary opinions, but I never regret doing a good deed. I have spent several nights assisting the hon. Member to come here and say wrong things. (laughter).

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: Before the Director of Education speaks I wish to say just a word with regard to the Carnegie Trade Centre for Women. The hon. Member for Central Demerara (Mr. de Aguiar) said he had a feeling that Government did not support that institution as it should, and he went on to quote figures with regard to its revenue and expenditure. If I heard him correctly I think he said that during a part of 1937 Government spent \$1,445 on the Trade Centre, and that in 1941 the net expenditure was \$5,038. In 1942 the net expenditure was \$9,120. I think that shows that Government has been spending a fair amount on the Centre, and that the expenditure has not remained stationary. What I really think the hon. Member had in mind was the fact that the Committee which advises us regarding this institution, and of which he is a member, recommended wholesale increases of salaries to the staff, but that recommendation has not been accepted by Government. I think the staff consists of ten, and the hon. Member is aware that since the outbreak of war Government has tried to avoid putting before the Council wholesale increases of salaries but has come forward from time to time with what it considered particularly hard and deserving cases. Six of the ten

members of the staff who were recommended for increases are on a higher salary scale than two of the Masters of one of the leading secondary schools in this Colony. The Committee recommended a salary scale of \$600 to \$720. There are two Masters at Queen's College on a salary scale of \$570—\$720. One has been there for 10 years and the other for five. If Government put forward a wholesale recommendation of that sort I can assure hon. Members there would be many more coming forward in respect of equally deserving cases. I think that is probably what the hon. Member had in mind when he said that Government was not giving the institution support.

There is one suggestion I would like to make to the hon. Member. I have made it to a person concerned with the Centre. The Committee should instruct one member of the staff to keep track of the young women who pass through the institution. I have on more than one occasion asked the Principal whether any indication could be given as to what happened to those who have passed through the Centre, and I was told that they have kept in touch with a few of them. I think it would be a help to the Committee if they could say that they have had so many girls, that so many are in domestic service and so many are seamstresses, and so give some indication of what becomes of them. I have been told that quite a number of them do work not connected in any way with the type of training they have had. I believe the favourite place to get work is at the "Brown Betty!" I do not think it is worth paying a staff salaries equivalent to some of the Masters at Queen's College to turn out girls for such work. I have not seen a list of the girls who have passed through the institution. No doubt the hon. Member makes a point of engaging some of them. I have done that myself. I have taken on no less than three but I am sorry to say that I have none of them now, although I do not think I am a hard taskmaster. I am afraid I have not been successful with applicants from that institution for employment in my household.

I think it was the same hon. Member who asked when the increase in expenditure on education is going to cease, and pointed out that for the last four years, since 1938, Government has had to come to this Council for an

increase of \$50,000 on the vote. I think I am safe in saying that it will be another \$50,000 next year, for this reason: it is impossible for Government to keep the expenditure down so long as there is free compulsory education. The population is increasing and the number of children attending school is increasing, and as long as we are compelled to provide accommodation and teachers for them we must ask the Council to provide the money. The only alternative would be to do away with compulsory education and limit the number of schools. I fail to see how Government can avoid coming forward every year for an increase of \$50,000, as apart from the schools which are short of desks and furniture, 85 out of the 238 schools are overcrowded. Buildings have to be provided as well as equipment for those schools in the very near future. It may be possible to obtain some of the money for that purpose under the Development and Welfare Act.

I think it is pretty safe to assume that the whole system of primary education in this Colony is in the melting pot. There is no doubt about it that the system has to be changed. The hon. Member for Berbice River (Mr. Eleazar) is obviously in favour of going ahead, for all we are worth, training boys for white-collar jobs. What the hon. Member for Eastern Demerara (Mr. Humphrys) says is perfectly correct. I do not know the particular case he referred to in which there was a vacancy in a Department and 400 applied for it, but I can tell the hon. Member that Government has such a long waiting list of candidates with the necessary qualifications for appointment to the Civil Service that when they are selected by the Committee and moved from the waiting list to the selected list many of them become over-age before a vacancy occurs. It is no good going on like that educating boys who cannot be employed by Government. I get many letters from young men when an appointment is made, reminding me that they had been selected eight or nine years previously and asking why some other candidate has been appointed. There is bound to be an age-limit for entry into the Service or we would be appointing boys whose ages are far too high for the salary they would receive, and they would not be satisfied. There will not be work for boys if we go

on training them as at present. I am not suggesting that we should do away with primary education, but I agree that we have to consider what sort of primary education children should receive in order to fit them for work to-day in the Colony. It is quite clear that the system will have to be changed, and as soon as the Comptroller's report is received it will be laid before the Council.

Mr. ELEAZAR: The Colonial Secretary cannot forget that I have for years advocated technical schools and farm schools, and that the Carnegie Trade Centre came from my suggestion. When the money was obtained for the Farm School it was diverted to the Centre. How are those things consistent with the remark that I am advocating training for white collar jobs?

Mr. JACOB: I think the whole bone of contention is that too much money is being spent on primary education, and I think there was a little confusion in bringing in secondary education over 14 years. At present a child may remain in a primary school up to 16 years but compulsory education applies up to 14 years. I wish the Council to bear that in mind. We have neglected education for a considerable time, with the result that the last census shows that the percentage of illiteracy was a little over 50 per cent. of the population of the Colony. Are we surprised then to find what has been stated by the hon. Mr. Mackey, the hon. Member for Central Demerara (Mr. DeAguiar) and others? Even the hon. Member for Berbice River (Mr. Eleazar) complained of a lack of manners among school children. If there are illiterate parents, particularly among the working classes, what is going to be the result? Accompanied by a head teacher the hon. Member for Essequibo River (Mr. Lee) and I visited an Indian settlement where we held a public meeting at which 200 persons were present. Those people were clamouring for a primary school for the education of their children between the ages of 6 and 12. After listening to them I selected three of the most intelligent looking men in the crowd and asked one of them what was his name and age. He said his age was 40.

Mr. C. V. WIGET: Did I hear the hon. Member say that of the 200 persons only three were intelligent?

Mr. JACOB: Neither that man nor his wife had ever gone to school. Their eldest child who was 18, and another of 14 had also not gone to school. All of the three men I spoke to and their wives had never been to school, and the majority of their children too. Those of the children who were going to school had been going for 8 and 10 years and were only in the third standard. That was in the County of Berbice. I would suggest that the hon. Member for Berbice River (Mr. Eleazar) enquire at the Education Department where he would see a letter from me dated April, 1940, giving those particulars. The Education Department has been managed by a Committee all these years, but there seems to be something wrong about the Committee too. Now we have a ruling from the Secretary of State that not only Members of the Legislature and the Executive Council but members of Committees should be changed regularly. If Your Excellency would look at the personnel of the Education Committee you will see that the names look very imposing. The Director of Education is Chairman and there is the Bishop of Guiana. I have received complaints from other denominational bodies that they never have a chance of getting on the Education Committee. It is not right that only one denomination should be represented on the Education Committee perpetually; other bodies should be represented as well. There are also four Members of this Council and a few others. I think the time has come when there should be frequent changes in the personnel of Committees and Boards so that we may have new ideas and general improvement.

I have calculated the expenditure on primary education which worked out at \$13 per head in 1939. The figures are 38,806 pupils and the expenditure \$508,781. I have a recollection that I made a comparison with the expenditure on primary education in Jamaica and Trinidad a few years ago, and the expenditure in British Guiana was the lowest. Trinidad and Jamaica spend more per pupil. That does not bear out the argument that we are spending too much on education here.

The hon. Member for New Amsterdam (Mr. Woolford) raised the question of Indian education. I have always refrained from raising racial issues, and I will take this opportunity to make this point: My

friend is a member of the Governor in Council and his words carry weight. So far as I know the East Indians do not object to sending their children, particularly girls, to any school, but a very small percentage of them object to religious instruction in certain schools. In addition to that it may be necessary to have a larger number of female teachers in some schools where there are large numbers of Indian children attending. That is a point which has to be very carefully considered. In an Indian settlement there should be a large number of female teachers and that would solve the difficulty.

The hon. Member for Eastern Demerara (Mr. Humphrys) referred to white collar jobs. I do not know where he got the term from, but I have a suspicion. I would like to tell him that if he would support a movement to have more land made suitable for cultivation even matriculants would go to the land. I have no doubt whatever that the educated children would go to the land if only it was made suitable for them. The hon. Member remarked, and the Colonial Secretary repeated it, that there were far too many people wanting Government jobs and jobs of a clerical nature. I maintain that if lands were made suitable for anyone to plant and rear livestock and be reasonably certain of reaping what he planted a large number of people would forsake the Service. Because it is not possible for young men to make a living on the land they are compelled to seek other sources of earning a livelihood.

It has been suggested that we should not spend any more money on primary education, but when the Police vote comes up we will hear a different tune. Government has been spending far too much on police work in this Colony, far too much on increasing the number of police stations throughout the Colony. I wish to endorse every single word which has been spoken by the hon. Member for New Amsterdam (Mr. Woolford) with regard to the labour disturbances. Educate the people and make them understand what is right and what is wrong and they will certainly do the right thing.

Mr. OGLE (Director of Education, Acting): The debate on education as a whole seems to fall under three heads. First, the

criticism of the value of primary education; secondly, the various comments and discussions on post-primary education, chiefly vocational, and thirdly, mention of specific items in regard to primary education as it is going on throughout the Colony. I do not propose to deal with the second head because a motion has been laid on the table by the hon. Member on my right (Mr. Eleazar) which deals specifically with post-primary vocational education.

In regard to the first head I feel that much of the criticism of the primary schools ignores the fact that we have human teachers dealing with human children. In other words, the human factor has been rather forgotten. There is always great variation in anything into which the human factor enters. For example, there are brilliant children, with good performance, mediocre performance and bad performance whatever the teaching may be, whatever the curriculum may be, and however it is carried out. Therefore, when we find a businessman saying that he has had 20 applications for a job and the applicants cannot write or are ungrammatical, or cannot do arithmetic, that is no proof whatever, I submit, of the teaching and the results obtained in the schools as a whole. When there are about 50,000 to 60,000 children it is impossible to argue on such small and restricted premises. We must consider the reports of people who have actually been to the schools and seen the writing of thousands of children, the grammatical mistakes they make, and what arithmetic they can do. I myself am satisfied that within the curriculum the teachers of this Colony are doing as well, at least as well as they might be expected to do in the way of academic results which they obtain from the children. I do not claim by any means that the curriculum is ideal. I do not think any ideal curriculum has been worked out anywhere in the world so far. I have no doubt that some are much better than others. My own preference—and I think it is the preference of the great majority of Members of this Council from what I have heard to-day—is that the curriculum should be directed towards education for life, but I am afraid that there is a strong tendency to confuse education for life with vocational education.

Vocational education is a specific train-

ing for some special vocation or trade. Education for life so far as primary education is concerned—and I presume that is what we are dealing with particularly now—cannot be vocational education. Primary education is something which is to fit children for life when they leave school, whatever it may be. It may be another school; it may be to assist their parents or to go to a job, but whatever it may be, primary education surely is to fit them for that life after school. Since the majority of our children here do not go to another school, naturally, the primary education in British Guiana must be or should be specially adapted to suit that particular circumstance.

Probably, since education changes slowly and since the system of education in British Guiana, like that of other West Indian Colonies and probably other Colonies, so far as I know, has grown up as a copy of the system of education in England, perhaps not too well adapted it is quite likely that the present system of education is not too well adapted to the particular circumstances of British Guiana. But it is very difficult to change a system of education rapidly, completely or drastically. In the first place we have a large number of teachers who have some rights. We cannot say to them, particularly the older teachers, "This is not the way to teach; we want you to adopt entirely new methods;" because they are men over 40, some over 50 and getting on to 60 who, like the leopard, cannot change their spots. We would have always a considerable number of teachers to change who cannot be changed, and for that very reason—and perhaps it is a good thing too—the system of education cannot be changed rapidly. Therefore, however much we may wish for a perfect system of education we are not likely to get it, and I suggest that so far as our expenditure goes the present system of education after it has been adapted so far as our supply of teachers allows—and that is always a major factor—more specifically to the special circumstances of British Guiana would do quite well. I do not think we should lay any great blame on the teachers as a whole for what is wrong with education in British Guiana now

I do not agree with the idea that education up to 12 years should be limited to the three R's, which some Members seem

to have in mind. That sounds to me like mass production of robots. Education in primary schools surely should tend to develop the mind of a child not only in certain mechanical arts, such as writing, reading and arithmetic. There is also the question of character training. It is important that he should have some knowledge of the country and the Empire to which he belongs, and a certain amount of their history. It is important that he should be given some information as to what is meant by art and all that is connected with it. I do not say that they should be given special training in art or that they should be expert historians or geographical experts, but those things must not be left out of the curriculum. That is what the present-day curriculum hopes to do—to give the necessary basic mechanical training in the three R's as well as to give them some acquaintance, some beginning in the culture which is the right of every child in a modern democratic country.

I would like to deal with some of the points raised by the hon. Member for New Amsterdam (Mr. Woolford) in relation to the primary school system. The first point he made was that the school accommodation will not provide for all the children if they are brought in by the Compulsory Attendance Officers. That is quite correct. The exact figure is not known owing to the fact that there was no census in 1941, but we estimate that between 25 and 30 per cent. of the children who should be in school are not in school. That is to say, that about 25 per cent. of the children of school age do not attend school at all. It is quite true that if they were to attend the school buildings would not accommodate them, but in view of the fact, as Your Excellency has already pointed out in your opening speech, that Sir Frank Stockdale proposes to recommend not only a free grant for the rehabilitation of existing school buildings but also a grant for new buildings and the extension of existing buildings to accommodate all the children who should go to school, I hope that will meet the situation.

The hon. Member next discussed the relation between Government schools and denominational schools in some detail as it affects the floating school population in

Georgetown, and also the question of character training as it is affected by delinquent children who go into the schools. I would like to say on that subject that the Government schools are run under exactly the same rules as the denominational schools. That is to say, that if a Government school is not full a child cannot be refused admission to that school. The same applies to denominational schools, and unless a child commits some specific offence which might be regarded as greatly to the disadvantage of the school generally, that child cannot be expelled from the school. In other words, except by ways of which I know nothing, the head teacher of a Government school cannot select his children any more than the head teacher of a denominational school can.

The hon. Member also referred to the age-limit and pointed out that the age-limit of 14 years in Georgetown, New Amsterdam, and Buxton is not the same in the country. I would like to point out in that respect that the Education Committee, through the Director of Education, has submitted amendments of the Ordinance which deal with that particular matter, one of which proposes that the compulsory school age should be 14 years for the whole population. I am sorry I am not able to give any figures as regards the lack of desks and benches, but I know a large number of schools are short of desks and benches, although I think it would be going too far to say that in fully aided schools, apart from schools in remote areas, there are children without seats, except in one or two isolated instances. However, there is a definite shortage of desks and benches,

and if the hon. Member would like to know the actual number I can supply him with the figures. I may say that that is also one of the matters which has exercised the Comptroller's mind and will no doubt be attended to at the same time as the expansion, repair and provision of new buildings.

The hon. Member also referred to the education of East Indian girls. I think it has been said that East Indian girls would not attend schools unless they were of specific ownership. The actual position is that the number of East Indian girls attending schools has practically doubled in the last ten years. The latest figures I have show that in 1931, which was of course before the withdrawal of the Swettenham Circular, the number of East Indian girls in school was 4,574, and in 1940 the number was 9,470. In the same time the number of East Indian boys increased from 8,927 to 15,525, so that the increase in the case of girls was considerably more proportionately, showing, I think, that the resistance to the education of East Indian girls in the schools as they stand at present is gradually decreasing. I feel sure that when the figures for 1941 are prepared they will show a still larger increase in the number of East Indian girls attending school. When we have our schools rebuilt and extended and new schools erected I feel quite sure that East Indian parents will take advantage of them for the education of their children, both boys and girls.

At this stage the Council resumed and adjourned until the following day at 10.30 a.m.