

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

Friday, 17th October, 1941.

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

PRESENT.

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

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

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

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

The Hon. E. A. Luckhoo, O.B.E., (Eastern Berbice).

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The Hon. Pcer Bacchus (Western Berbice).

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

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

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

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

The Hon. T. Lee (Essequibo River).

MINUTES.

The minutes of the meeting of the Council held on Thursday, 16th October, 1941, as printed and circulated, were confirmed.

ORDER OF THE DAY.

SECOND SCHEDULE OF ADDITIONAL PROVISION, 1941.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Mr. G. C. Green, M.B.E., Acting): Sir, I move:—

THAT, this Council approves the Second Schedule of Additional Provision for the period 1st April to 30th June, 1941, required to meet expenditure in excess of the provision made in the Estimates for the year 1941, and not included in the First Schedule of Additional Provision, which has been laid on the table.

The Schedule which has been laid before hon. Members gives a total of \$100,000, and Members will see that of that sum \$41,000 is required for Colonial Development measures, \$30,000 for public officers' pensions and lump sum payments due to retirements not foreseen, and \$11,500 for loans to Co-operative Credit Banks which are being made to assist in the furtherance of agriculture. I propose during consideration of the Schedule to ask leave to move in some items which are of urgency, and which it was not possible to include in the printed statement. I move that the Council resolve itself into Committee to consider the Schedule.

Mr. McDAVID (Colonial Treasurer) seconded.

Motion put, and agreed to.

Council in Committee.

AGRICULTURE.

Item 25—Granting of Loans to Co-operative Credit Banks—\$11,500.

Mr. JACOB: I am not against the additional provision of \$11,500 now required but I would like to make a few observations with regard to the working of these Co-operative Credit Banks. I notice that Co-operative Credit Banks are governed by Ordinance No. 28 of 1933, and the Board is composed of the Director of Agriculture as Chairman *ex officio*, one Elected Member and three members of the public. There are five members on the Board. I asked certain questions recently and I am glad to say that replies have been given and in time on this occasion. I notice from the replies that there are 22 Banks in the Colony—4 in Essequibo, 10 in Demerara and 8 in Berbice—and the total amount available this year, according to the reply to my question, is \$30,000. There is a statement in the replies to my questions which reads:—

“In addition, authority has been sought to provide \$10,000 more which, if approved, will make a total of \$30,000 available this year.”

I take it that the sum of \$10,000 mentioned in the reply refers to the \$11,500 now asked for. If not it would make the amount \$11,500. It would appear that all the capital these 22 Banks have is \$30,000 or \$40,000. The reply to question No. 5 is:—

“During 1940, loans were made to peasant farmers only as under:—

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

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

It does not matter whether the amount is correct in respect of the advances made to cane-farmers, rice-farmers, coffee-farmers and coconut-farmers, but the total amount advanced during 1940 is the handsome sum of \$14,819.72. In question No. 6 I asked:—

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

The reply to that question is:—

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

I want to ask Government if it is really serious in establishing and carrying on Co-operative Credit Banks in this Colony? I will answer that question myself—“No.” This Government is not definitely serious and it will not be definitely serious until something serious happens. Here we have all the organizations possible—22 Banks and a Secretary with a capital of \$40,000—and the total amount advanced in 1940 was only \$14,819. You have a staff—maybe they are working terribly hard doing what? The Colony of British Guiana has 22 Co-operative Credit Banks with a capital of \$30,000 or \$40,000, the most disgraceful thing I can imagine. I also have in mind that during the serious flood some years ago, which was followed by a partial drought, a Committee was appointed to go into the question of giving assistance to the producers of every kind, particularly rice producers. I think the hon. Colonial Treasurer was Chairman of that Committee, but its report never saw the light of day, and although I asked for it in this Council and outside of the Council I have not seen it up to the present time. It is a confidential document I am told. After all these years and after applications have been made from time to time, that is the position as I have stated. Is this Government really serious in assisting people by means of loans? I say definitely “No.” When it will become serious I do not know.

The statement was made here yesterday that all middle-men should be exterminated. It is true we have some very dishonest middle-men and some very honest ones too, and that by the extermination of fraudulent importers the Colony would be better off. I think these middle-men have been exterminated to some extent by other men, yet we have these industries in a parlous condition. What do we find? I am going to deal with the export figures in connection with our coffee industry. In 1928 we exported 410 tons valued \$137,933, but last year it came down to 4½ tons valued \$794, a systematic and progressive decrease. Up to the end of August this year we had only exported 30 lbs. That is how the industry has been

exterminated, the middle-men have been exterminated. The Banks have not helped the farmers, and the export of coffee has been exterminated. When the coffee industry asked for help of the right kind and at the right time it was not given any help at all. Perhaps some statement may be made here that Government was willing to help but applications for help were not made. This Government went to the expense of sending two Members of this Council to Paramaribo who came back and reported that some help should be given to the industry, but the majority of the Committee decided "No." Well, the industry has definitely gone. I do not know whether there will be sufficient coffee produced in this Colony for local consumption. However, that is another matter.

As regards the coconut industry the exports of copra, coconut oil and coconuts in 1928 were valued \$382,888. Those are Customs figures. Last year the value of exports went down to \$76,582. This year, up to the end of August, we exported 14,980 gallons of coconut oil. I have not got the value but I do not think the value of the exports from the coconut industry this year will amount to \$1,000. From \$382,888 in 1928 the export value of the coconut industry has declined to \$1,000. That is how the honest middle-men have been exterminated and how the industry has been exterminated to some extent.

I must refer to rice. In 1928 we exported 18,083 tons valued \$1,114,146, but in 1940 the exports dropped to 11,676 tons valued \$708,063. That is how the rice industry has been exterminated to a large extent. According to figures I have seen in one of the newspapers the quantity of rice exported this year up to the 30th September was 6,881 tons. Last year it was roughly 1,000 tons per month. Thus we have the rice industry wonderfully managed by the experts of this Colony, experts in finance, business and every conceivable thing. That is what has happened to the rice industry after you have exterminated some of those middle-men, some of the pests.

I want to say a word or two about transport. All those products for export have to be transported, and I wonder if the Conservator of Forests thought of the cargo services running empty

most of the time in certain parts of the Colony when he was making his speech yesterday. I want him to think a little bit about those exportable crops which have declined so much, some to nothing, and what will be the revenue of the Transport and Harbours Department. Yesterday my friend referred to freight rates. I have a document here and I think the Conservator fell into a trap yesterday when he compared rates of freight. I think it is within the recollection of this Council that I have always complained about our excessive freight rates. I have not only compared the West Indies with British Guiana but Canada with British Guiana. I have compared the freight rates on our luxurious liner, the *Tarpon*, with those on the Canadian National Steamships. This document has no date but it relates to the Transport Department's North West Service. This is what I find: that the freight rate on a bag of rice from Georgetown to the North West District is 40 cents.

THE PRESIDENT: Is the hon. Member getting back to the item on the agenda?

Mr. JACOB: I am talking about the lending of money to Co-operative Credit Banks to develop this industry. I think I am within my right. The freight rate on a bag of rice from Georgetown to the North West District, a distance of about 155 miles, is 40 cents, while from New Amsterdam to Georgetown, a distance of about 70 miles, it is 10 cents. I would like the Conservator to think about that. Mere superficial knowledge of one or two items will not help this Council or the Colony. I would like to refer him to sugar. The freight rate on a bag of sugar shipped from Georgetown to the North West District is 48 cents as against 42 cents from Georgetown to Canada. On a bag of flour shipped from Toronto, Canada, the charge is 50 cents, but to ship that bag of flour from Georgetown to the North West District the charge is 60 cents. I think those three comparisons are sufficient. When my friend wants to talk about freight rates and passenger rates he must be quite certain about his facts.

These exorbitant freight rates have been responsible in a large measure for people not taking these necessary loans, because you may lend a man all the money he wants but if you charge him 12 per cent. interest and impose other conditions, no sensible

man would borrow. No sensible man goes to the Co-operative Credit Banks because of the red-tape and pin pricks, and the useless questions which are asked by the officials of the Banks. What beats me is that an Elected Member has been sitting on the Board all the time and has not pointed those things out to the Government. I am not going to say the same of the Director of Agriculture who is a member of the Executive Council. He is definitely responsible for this slow progress, if there is any progress at all. What is he there for? He is a member of the Governor in Council which controls the whole Colony. What has he to say about this unsatisfactory state of affairs? He has no responsibility. Government is not responsible, and its principal officers have no responsibility. Have they shown any initiative in matters of this kind? The Colonial Secretary said yesterday that I talk about Boards while I am a strong advocate of Boards. Yes, I am definitely so, but I am an advocate of Boards to be managed by Members of this Council and this Council alone, Members who have to account to the public and have to go to the country and ask for their votes for five years. Every Board should have an Elected Member as Chairman, and every member of a Board should be a Member of this Council. In that way we will have progress. It is time Government took a note of these things and some change was made.

Mr. DE AGUIAR: I would not have risen to speak on this subject but, unfortunately, like the hon. Member for North Western District (Mr. Jacob), I have been dreaming dreams and perhaps seeing visions, and maybe I too am suffering from a little confusion of thought. I had hoped that the hon. Member would have indicated to this Council what he desired to be done under this Head we are dealing with, and possibly suggested an amendment that the loans to the Co-operative Credit Banks might be increased to half a million dollars.

Mr. JACOB: No Member of this Council has the right to move an amendment to increase any amount.

Mr. DE AGUIAR: I said "suggest that the amount might be increased to half a million dollars." The hon. Member was not bold enough to take that step, and per-

haps quite rightly too, because I imagine that as he proceeded with his speech he would have discovered that he was somewhat confused. It is very amusing to sit in this Council from day to day and listen to expressions of opinion by certain hon. Members. The hon. Member who has just taken his seat stated here, and expressed it as his opinion and advice, that the Rice Marketing Board should not ship any rice. I am very happy to say that that advice was not accepted. What really happened was that the Board shipped whatever surplus rice was available at the time, and that no doubt accounted for the figures quoted by the hon. Member. If his advice had been taken possibly the figures would have been a little less.

The hon. Member spoke about coffee. It is true we would like to have a little more coffee than we have, but the Committee gave reasons why the industry found itself in the position it is now. Even if we had a million tons of coffee I question whether we would know what to do with it. We could do with a little bit more for domestic consumption but I have not so far missed my cup of coffee. We are all in agreement with the hon. Member that we should try to improve our production of crops, and I think that has been Government's intention. If it never was before, it certainly has been so within my knowledge since the outbreak of war. Every effort was made to increase our production of various items—rice, ground provisions, etc.—and if we have not succeeded there must be good reasons for that. Perhaps we may not be able to point to increased production of some items, but it is not fair that the hon. Member should get up on certain occasions and champion one cause, and almost in the same breath criticize another. This morning he criticized an Elected Member for being on a Board, and five minutes afterwards he said that Boards should be run entirely by Elected Members. I do not understand his logic. He made the specific charge this morning that there was an Elected Member on the Board and he did not see that more money was lent. I certainly am not a member and therefore I cannot be accused of defending myself. I am asking the hon. Member to reason a little bit. If he wants assistance from brother Electives he must not take up the attitude he persistently takes up. He

needs no advice and I do not think he is capable of accepting any advice.

Mr. C. V. WIGHT: I agree with the hon. Member for North Western District (Mr. Jacob) that there should be an extension of the general application of the co-operative system and, if necessary, an extension of the provisions of certain Ordinances to loans which are made. I take it that one would be correct in saying that the general tendency is to grant loans on the security of a guarantor or a pro. note. Why not adopt certain provisions of the law so as to allow facilities to the poorer community, especially those engaged in the rice industry? For instance Government might extend the provisions of the Pledge of Goods Ordinance, Chapter 66. There is also an Ordinance which deals with applications for loans by sugar estates and under which the Bank is automatically given a form of preference. Why not extend the provisions of that Ordinance to the case of rice proprietors or small men? I know I will be told that in the case of sugar estates Government is dealing with large areas of land and responsible persons, but I would suggest that if it is necessary to have some responsible person, provision might be made whereby the person in charge or the proprietor of an estate may be guarantor for the loan. I do not know whether that would appeal to the Banks or to Government, but I think it would be a great fillip to the ordinary farmer, and I know that the Comptroller for Development and Welfare has advocated a system of peasant farming, a suggestion which I made on the second occasion I took my seat in this Council. We do know that some of those farmers live from day to day. Their loans are usurious; in certain cases they are paying hundreds per cent. They may be able to get a bag or two of rice for themselves but there is no doubt that a great deal of advantage is taken of them.

I am a strong supporter of the Rice Marketing Board. I do not pretend to know a lot about rice but I do endeavour to read a little about marketing, and I would suggest to certain hon. Members that they can obtain the journals from which they can learn a good deal about marketing and be able to devise a scheme which is constructive.

I seriously ask Government to reconsider the application of the various Ordinances to the system of Co-operative Credit Banks. I think Government is already in possession of correspondence from me on the subject. If necessary I can supply the Colonial Secretary with the Ordinances I have in mind, and perhaps a few hon. Members may be able to get together and draft an Ordinance which would extend the general working of those Co-operative Credit Banks along the lines I have suggested. I know it will be said that it is a question of finance, and that Government would not be able to afford it, but I think if some scheme could be devised it would relieve Government of financial responsibility which could be carried elsewhere. If necessary I am strongly of the opinion that a loan could be raised in this Colony and it could be utilized for making advances to farmers. The Colonization Fund was restricted to one particular industry in the Colony. I say that without any hesitation. We are now departing from that and are using the Fund for other things.

I do not believe in allowing statements to go out to the public without contradiction, especially when they are directed at me. I speak very plainly, and I think it is well that we do so. The hon. Member for North Western District (Mr. Jacob) has referred to the extermination of honest middle-men. I referred not to honest people. If a man is honest he can go through the world. I did refer to dishonest people and what I said was accepted by the hon. Member. I also referred to the class who will state in this Council and boast about it, that they are prepared to buy for as little as possible and sell for as much as they can. In other words they will squeeze those unfortunate people who are lowly placed and sell to those who can buy. Those are the persons to whom I made reference, and I hope I shall not have to make reference to them again, but if necessary I shall have no hesitation in doing so.

Mr. SEAFORD: The hon. Member has referred to the use of the Development Trust Fund as being restricted. The Committee cannot initiate any project for assistance from the Fund; that has to come from Government. The Committee can only recommend. What that money can be used for is definitely laid down and

controlled by Ordinance. If the hon. Member looks into it and sees what the money has been used for I think he will find that up to the present it has been used entirely for the development of minor industries in this Colony and nothing else.

Mr. WALCOTT: Unlike the hon. Member on my left (Mr. Jacob) I do not like to hear my voice too often in this Council, but I must take exception to the remark which he has made from time to time during this session. The hon. Attorney-General accused him of rudeness and I think he admitted that he did not know what courtesy meant, but I think he should also—

Mr. JACOB: I rise to a point of order. I admitted nothing of the kind.

Mr. WALCOTT: It is strange that the hon. Member has to rise to a point of order whenever he finds that somebody does not agree with him. I say he is a stranger to courtesy, veracity and probity. It seems a strange accusation to make, but he has made those accusations against several Members of this Council and especially directed them at Government. Government Members, unfortunately, have not as free a hand as I have, and I intend to use that free hand. In speaking about rice the hon. Member for North Western District (Mr. Jacob) made a direct attack on the Rice Marketing Board. He claims that the Rice Marketing Board is greatly responsible for the reduction in the production of rice. Of course I quite understand his not liking the Rice Marketing Board. He does not like the control because he is no longer in a position to take advantage of the poor unfortunate grower and miller. He has accused the Board of breach of trust, and I think most of the members of the Government too.

It has come to my knowledge that the hon. Member had a private interview with Mr. George Hall when he was here. I had intended to ignore that. He would not have expected it to come to my knowledge, but Mr. George Hall, being an honest man, naturally took steps to find out whether the statements made to him at the private interview were correct or not. It has come to my knowledge that at that interview this Member had the temerity to suggest to Mr. Hall that when I was a member of the Rice Marketing Board I

deliberately took the opportunity to make money out of the knowledge I obtained on the Board. He accused me of giving information to a firm in Water Street as the result of which they bought up a lot of rice previous to the price being fixed by the Board, and that I shared in those profits. Now, sir, the Member knew or must have known that he was not telling the truth when he made that statement, and I wish to say here that I had nothing to do with anything of that kind; I was not interested in the slightest. We can only imagine what his action would be in such circumstances, and he apparently saw my picture when he looked into his own glass. Statements made by that Member in this Council have had more to do with the decrease in production of minor products in this Colony than anything or anybody else has said. He and another Member, who is unfortunately not present this morning, have made more mischief and more trouble in the country districts of this Colony than perhaps even Government can imagine.

The hon. Member spoke about coffee. I suppose his memory is very short; he has forgotten what led up to the decrease in coffee production. First of all there were years of low prices. He himself has pleaded in this Council that special help should be given to the coffee industry. It was not possible; it could not get the help that it required. The floods had something to do with it, but the quality of the coffee produced here was not suitable for sale abroad. The Liberian coffee which is produced here used to be sold in large quantities to the Scandinavian countries, but Africa began to produce large quantities of similar coffee which could be sold at a much lower price than the cost of production of that coffee in this Colony. The result was that our exports of coffee went down. The coffee beans were left on the trees; it did not pay the producers to pick their coffee and they left the beans on the trees to rot. Then came the flood which certainly did a lot of harm to the industry. It is a pity the hon. Member for North Western District does not try to remember or to find out what are the real causes of lower production.

He spoke about coconuts and coconut products. As you know, and most people

know, my firm for years were the only exporters of coconuts from this Colony. I suppose the hon. Member thought a lot of money was made out of it but instead of that money was lost. However it kept the poor people who were interested in coconuts alive, and with my eyes wide open I deliberately lost a couple of thousand dollars a year so as to enable them to carry on. The hon. Member accused me once in this Council of being a member of the Copra Board and of using my knowledge as such to further my own ends. He was proved not to be speaking the truth in that matter, and I think I have proved that he was not speaking the truth when he spoke to Mr. Hall about rice. I deprecate having any Member of this Council, who thinks he is privileged, speaking licentiously about other Members of the Council, and I do not think Government should allow it. If the hon. Member thinks he is free from attack or prosecution for libel when he makes those statements in and out of the Council then he is wrong, as he may find out very shortly.

Professor DASH (Director of Agriculture): There is very little for me to reply to. I think the hon. Member for North Western District (Mr. Jacob) expects this Council to indulge more or less in mental gymnastics in an effort to follow him from Co-operative Credit Banks to freight rates to Canada. I am not going to do that. I think the general position of the Co-operative Credit Bank movement in this Colony is very well known. The hon. Member asked a series of questions recently concerning the Banks, replies to which have been given. I have searched through all of those questions and I cannot find one relating to the indebtedness of those Banks.

He has spoken with reference to capital and I think his ideas were somewhat confused. At any rate he gave me that impression. After all these Banks have a capital of their own in addition to what Government lends them from time to time. When I was asked by the Governor in 1933 to take over the Banks I found a very sad state of affairs. There was so much money outstanding for one reason or another that Government actually ceased lending to them, and it was only after we had remodelled the Ordinance governing them and made an effort to stabilize conditions—as far as we could

that Government recently decided that the time was ripe for it to make further loans to these Banks. That, I am glad to say, is going on, not perhaps in as big a way as we would all like, but so far as I can judge it is sufficient for the needs of those Banks. Besides that, under the provisions of the Rice-Growers Loans Ordinance, Chapter 155, an old Ordinance dealing with special loans, a fair amount of money has been lent through the Co-operative Credit Banks for reaping, bagging and harvesting. It is quite clearly stated in the reply to question No. 6 that no legitimate application has been rejected, which shows that as far as the administration of the Banks is concerned we have done our very best in meeting the requirements of growers who have found it necessary to borrow money under that Ordinance. More recently, too, I am glad to say, several new Banks have been organized, and on the whole the movement seems to have taken on fresh life.

Of course one point the hon. Member does not realize is that a banking business is after all a business, and loans must be made in a businesslike way. There are questions to be asked and careful investigations to be made. We have to go into every single application, and many formalities have to be gone through. We cannot lend money without proper security. I cannot quite understand the gist of the hon. Member's criticism. He feels that not enough money is being lent in the present circumstances, and perhaps we may be inclined to agree with him, but at the present time there are no facilities for lending any more than we have been lending. After all it is for the farmers to join the Banks and take advantage of the facilities offered, and I hope that when such questions as security of tenure have been closely investigated and some definite system worked out it may be possible to extend in many directions. It cannot be supposed that credit banks of this nature can in any sense be regarded as large commercial banks, and the loans they provide must necessarily be limited to sums within the ability of the small cultivators to repay. All these points have to be taken into consideration in doing business in this country.

The hon. Member spoke rather ungenerously, as he usually does, in reference

to the staff of these Banks. I do not think he knows very much about the operations of the Banks, or is familiar with the routine matters which have to be put through. Each Bank is a separate unit working with a Committee and a Secretary, and the membership of some of the Banks is fairly large and each man's position has to be investigated. There is therefore a considerable amount of routine work involved, and some of those Secretaries have to do it at rather small pay. So far as the Department of Agriculture is concerned we have a Registrar and a Secretary of the Board who, I must say here, is whole-heartedly devoted to the work he is doing and gives me a great deal of help in all the various ramifications of the working of the Banks. Without his help we could not get on as well as we do. I deplore that spirit, which is creeping up more and more in the hon. Member, of discrediting people who are trying their best under very difficult circumstances to do a job of work. There is no attempt to give credit or praise but only to blame, and the hon. Member will realize what effect that has on a staff.

Some of the points raised by the hon. Member with regard to crops have been satisfactorily answered by the hon. Mr. Walcott. I did not quite follow what the hon. Member for Western Essequibo (Mr. C. V. Wight) was referring to, but it probably had reference to that old Ordinance—Chapter 155.

Mr. C. V. WIGHT: The Ordinance which I had in mind is really the Agricultural Relief Ordinance, Chapter 152. I am not saying that it can be applied in its present form; it would need some little readjustment. Then there is Chapter 153, the Sugar Industry Assistance Ordinance, which was not brought into operation when a certain sugar estate could have been saved. It would have provided a very considerable amount of employment if the aid of that Ordinance had been invoked. I am quite aware of what the hon. Member for Georgetown North (Mr. Seaford) has said, but in the Colonization Fund Ordinance, No. 7 of 1937, I see no reference to minor industries. I was aware of that because I have studied the Ordinance and I have had to advise on one or two schemes under it. The

Ordinance only makes reference to "the promotion of agriculture or other industry." There is no need for me to try to analyse those words or attempt to interpret their meaning. As regards the question of security for loans to small farmers I think it could be embodied in an Ordinance. They could all be made registered charges and the elasticity of the Ordinance could be extended.

Professor DASH: I do not think I can argue the point out with the hon. Member; it is one with which I am not very familiar. I have already indicated that in the case of Chapter 155, the Rice-Growers Loans Ordinance, we are using it to good effect.

With regard to crops, we know that the hon. Member for North Western District (Mr. Jacob) keeps going over old ground. I do not know whether he thinks we are such a dense lot of people in this Council that we would not understand what he is trying to say. He raised the question yesterday of the fluctuation in rice production as compared with sugar, and I took the opportunity to point out that even under the best conditions a short-cycle crop like rice was always subject to more violent fluctuation than a long-season or long-cycle crop such as sugar which is in the ground for 12 or 14 months and goes on in ratoon for two or three years. I pointed out that even in a big country like Canada wheat production, which is comparable with rice, shows a maximum output in some years while in other years it may be reduced by half.

We all know that marketing conditions must affect production to some extent. In the case of Liberian coffee the hon. Mr. Walcott has dealt with the question very fully and I think hon. Members realize that Liberian coffee has for some time had no value whatever in the export market. There has been a considerable production, even over-production, of a better type of coffee. The hon. Member has referred to the report of the Coffee Committee and I think he knows that the recommendation of that Committee was that Government should assist the coffee cultivation when the price of coffee fell below 5 cents per lb., and almost immediately afterwards the price of coffee was stabilized around 5 cents, and has steadily gone up until in the last

year the farmers were getting 10 cents per lb., but still they would not pick it. They say they have not the labour. Here we have a very substantial local market and yet production has decreased. The drought has had something to do with it but I do not think that is the whole story.

The hon. Member also raised the question of coconuts, but we know the position very well. The crop has recovered from the drought and we hope that before long we shall have enough for the local market.

THE CHAIRMAN: The question is that item 25 be passed.

Mr. JACOB: I think I should be given an opportunity to reply.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL: I move that the item be put.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY seconded.

Item put, and agreed to.

Mr. JACOB: I wish to raise a point of order.

THE CHAIRMAN: There is no point of order; a motion has been moved and passed.

Mr. JACOB: I was on the floor. If Your Excellency rules me out of order I will have to sit down, but I should be given an opportunity to reply to the controversial accusation made by the hon. Mr. Walcott.

THE CHAIRMAN: A motion has been put and passed.

Mr. JACOB: I say that when that motion was put I was on the floor.

THE CHAIRMAN: Will the hon. Member resume his seat?

Mr. JACOB: My point, sir, is that the motion was out of order as I was on my feet when it was put.

THE CHAIRMAN: The motion was in order.

Mr. JACOB: My point is that I was on my feet when it was put.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL: Whether

the hon. Member was on his feet or not the motion was in order; it was a complete closure.

THE CHAIRMAN: I have already put the motion and the item has been passed.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I beg to move that an item be inserted under Head III.—Agriculture—sub-head 30—Government Produce Depot, \$4,500. The Council will recollect that it was mentioned a few days ago that this item would be brought forward as representing the working expenses of the Produce Depot for the current year.

Mr. JACOB: I am opposed to the insertion of that item. I take it that this Depot is going to handle all kinds of local produce, rice excluded, I think, because the Rice Marketing Board handles that, but including coffee, coconuts and ground provisions. I should like to take this opportunity to refute the statement just made by my friend, Mr. Walcott. He accused me of making untruthful statements in this Council and he challenged my probity. I wish to say that I do the same. I challenge his probity and I state definitely that he has been making untruthful statements here. It is unnecessary for me to dilate on all the statements he has made, but it is common knowledge among the members of the Advisory Committee of the Rice Marketing Board that my friend, while he was Governing Director of the firm of E. M. Walcott & Co., was charged—and that firm was charged—using information which he got in confidence from the Rice Producers Advisory Committee for the benefit of his own business. The matter went to such a stage that suddenly the Board was dissolved and a new Board formed.

THE CHAIRMAN: I would like to tell the hon. Member at this stage that what he is talking about had nothing whatever to do with the dissolution of the Board and the starting of another.

Mr. JACOB: I must claim that I am within my right, but I accept your ruling. I would like to add that the gentleman concerned was a member of the present Rice Marketing Board in November, 1939. I was not in the Colony at the time

but when I returned here about the 16th or 17th of November my friend, the hon. Member for Essequibo River (Mr. Lee) spoke to me about things which were going on and we interviewed you, sir, as Colonial Secretary, and the Colonial Treasurer. At that interview we stated certain things we had heard and asked you whether it was not highly irregular that Mr. E. M. Walcott, the Governing Director of a firm licensed to export rice, should be a member of the Rice Marketing Board. You will recollect that you said he was not a member of the firm; that the firm was in liquidation and was not doing business.

Mr. WALCOTT: The firm was in voluntary liquidation.

Mr. JACOB: I think, sir, you will recollect, and the Treasurer will recollect that the Secretary of the Board was telephoned to and it was discovered that the firm were licensed exporters of rice. We then urged that Mr. Walcott should not remain a member of the Board because he was using the information he obtained as such for his own benefit and his firm's benefit. The result was that Mr. Walcott was asked to resign and he resigned. That is a fact. Whatever the excuse was I do not know. I was looking up the debates to see whether he had given a reason for his resignation. I could reiterate charges against my friend for using information obtained from official sources for his personal gain. Government knows that Mr. Lee and myself have letters challenging certain things. They are still going on and will go on until we get to the bottom of it.

Mr. McDAVID: (Colonial Treasurer): May I ask what the hon. Member means by "They are still going on?"

Mr. JACOB: The letters are still there.

Mr. McDAVID: I think the Council is entitled to know what the hon. Member is referring to.

THE CHAIRMAN: I have not the least idea. I would like to know what reply the hon. Member is waiting for.

Mr. C. V. WIGHT: I rise to a point of order. The hon. Member for Essequibo River (Mr. Lee) is not at

present in his seat and I do not know whether the hon. Member for North Western District (Mr. Jacob) has his permission to refer to certain letters. I speak because at the present moment I am engaged in a matter and I do not know how it may or may not affect the position of the hon. Member who is absent. The hon. Member has referred to certain correspondence which it may be at this stage not advisable to mention. That will be a matter for the hon. Member for Essequibo River. In his absence I am asking the hon. Member not to refer unnecessarily, or more than becomes necessary, to any correspondence passing between him and the Government in relation to certain matters.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member said something to this effect: that these things have been going on since 1939 and Government has letters on the subject to which no replies have been received. I think the Council should know to what the hon. Member is referring.

Mr. JACOB: I did not say that no reply had been received; the matter is in progress. There is a letter now in the hands of the Colonial Secretary asking about the large sale of rice that was made by a particular firm to the Rice Marketing Board, and certain other details in connection with it.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: Once more the hon. Member refers to portions of certain letters. If he desires to pursue this matter, in fairness to Members of the Council he should tell them the contents of the letter.

Mr. JACOB: It is not possible for me to tell the Council of the contents of the letter at this stage, but the letter is there in the hands of Government asking for certain particulars. I think the receiver of the letter would be in a better position to disclose its contents. Is he going to deny that that letter is there unanswered? I would like an answer to that question. The Colonial Secretary and you, sir, as President, know of certain transactions.

Mr. McDAVID: I have seen the letter to which the hon. Member refers. It asks for no information but makes certain insinuations. I have read it very carefully be-

cause it borders very closely on libel. I myself am looking very carefully into it and I warn the hon. Member that if at any time I find the slightest imputation of dishonesty which would enable me to bring a charge against him, I shall certainly do so ; and I want to say that that charge will take a criminal form, as I have not the slightest intention of sharing in any financial spoils.

Mr. SEAFORD : I rise to a point of order, sir. The hon. Member for North Western District (Mr. Jacob) said that you, as President of the Council, know of certain transactions. I fail to see how you, as President, could have knowledge of those matters.

Mr. JACOB : As President of this Council now you know that the hon. Member for Essequibo River (Mr. Lee) has spoken to you about certain matters.

THE CHAIRMAN : What the hon. Member means is not that he has spoken about the matter to me as President of the Council but as Colonial Secretary.

Mr. JACOB : That is so, sir. I said that as President of the Council you are aware of certain things.

THE CHAIRMAN : I understand what the hon. Member means ; the matter did not come to my knowledge as President of the Council but as Colonial Secretary.

Mr. JACOB : It may be a distinction without a difference, sir. I cannot dissociate you from certain facts that are there. As regards what the hon. Member for Western Essequibo (Mr. C. V. Wight) has said, I will say that the letters were written by me, signed by me and sent to the Government, and I am stating to the Council that it does not matter what threats are put forward ; whether one, two or three libel actions or proceedings for criminal libel are taken against me. I would be sent to jail for trying to exercise a constitutional privilege and whatever happens it does not matter. I say that with the utmost confidence and from the bottom of my heart. It does not matter whether in trying to discharge my duty here all the forces are brought against me to put me in prison. Some of us have to make sacrifices. One hon. Member said I was not speaking the truth.

I hope that some official investigation will be made so that the truth could be told. It is true that during the interview with Mr. Hall the hon. Member for Essequibo River (Mr. Lee) and myself referred to certain letters, and Government was aware of the fact that we were going to take the matter up with Mr. Hall. The letters passed through the Secretariat and the interview was arranged through the Secretariat. We did mention to Mr. Hall—

Mr. C. V. WIGHT : May I ask the hon. Member to confine his reference to himself and not refer to the hon. Member for Essequibo River ?

Mr. JACOB : I must ask the hon. Member to allow me to conduct my affairs here and make the speech I want to make. I say that the hon. Member for Essequibo River and myself interviewed Mr. Hall and did make certain statements, but to say that we challenged the honesty of my friend in our interview with Mr. Hall is absolutely incorrect.

THE CHAIRMAN : I think it is absolutely useless to pursue this matter because, so far as I am aware, no other Member was present at the interview. I know that the hon. Member is inclined to object when he gets some of his own back, but I do not propose to allow that part of the debate to continue.

Mr. JACOB : I was surprised that the Chair did not call the hon. Member to order when he made reference to me. That matter did not come up here at all this morning, but I welcome the exposure and I think the public will know on whom they can rely. That, I am confident about.

I do not know what is the reason for this vote of \$4,500 in connection with the Produce Depot. I understood from the debate a few days ago that there was a sum of \$4,000 invested as capital in the Produce Depot.

THE CHAIRMAN : I would like to explain that the item dealt with a few days ago related to expenditure in 1940. We are now dealing with 1941.

Mr. JACOB : The Depot had a capital of \$4,000 and incurred an expenditure of \$900 in 1941. We were told definitely that it was being run at a profit, but now we are asked to vote \$7,500.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I am sorry, I appear to be suffering from an infirmity. (laughter). I think the figure quoted by me was \$4,500.

Mr. JACOB: I do not think it is an infirmity to mistake a 7 for a 4. I think it is generally admitted that the arrangement in this Chamber is not very good as regards sound. I understand now that \$4,500 is to be added to this supplementary estimate to meet the expenses of running the Depot in 1941. The Depot is paying its Supervisor \$2,180, and the Council is asked to vote another \$4,500 to meet expenditure in 1941, yet we understand it is being run on business lines. I object very strongly to this new item, and further I want to say again that the Depot is competing unfairly with other sellers of merchandise in the street because it sells to Government Departments, and we do not know at what prices. It is only fair that those Government Departments purchasing from the Depot should only do so after tenders have been called for, so that the Depot should compete in the ordinary way with other traders, and if the Depot's tender is the lowest it should be given preference. That is another way in which loss cannot be shown, and how cost accounting is known to the Government but not known to me.

Oranges were bought by the Depot at \$1.08 per 100 and sold at \$3. One hon. Member said it was profiteering. I do not know if it is going to be disputed. Then again we were told by another hon. Member of profiteering in coffee. I understand that the Depot has paid a higher price for coffee than that fixed by Government. I think I will get evidence about it—the bills which have been issued. Most people do not keep bills but people have told me that they sold coffee to the Depot at a price above that fixed by the Government. Here we have a Government Department breaking one of the Defence Laws.

Mr. DEAGUIAR: I would not have risen to make any contribution to this debate because my memory seems to be somewhat better than that of the hon. Member for North Western District (Mr. Jacob) with regard to this particular item, but I have risen to mention that I have no objection whatever if the hon. Member wishes on every occasion to make refer-

ence either to the Government Produce Depot or some other Government Department. He is at liberty to do so, but I think it is an objectionable waste of time for the hon. Member to rise from his seat on nearly every occasion to plead ignorance of the subject under discussion. I wish to remind the hon. Member that when the hon. Colonial Treasurer spoke on this item not so long ago he made the definite statement that \$4,500 would be included in a further supplementary estimate in respect of 1941, and he proceeded to state that whatever revenue was derived from this Depot would appear on the revenue side of the Colony's budget. Is the hon. Member's memory so short, or is it that he could not understand what was being said at the time by the Treasurer? Does he expect me to sit here as one of his colleagues and permit him to waste my valuable time? I would suggest to the hon. Member that if he has no regard for his time he should have some regard for that of his colleagues.

Mr. SEAFORD: I am going to support the item for the reason that although Government may lose money by the Depot I think it is an effort to help the producers in this Colony, and I think the Council has every sympathy for those people.

I would like to refer to the debate which has been taking place in this Council. It is one of the most degrading spectacles I have witnessed in every sense of the word. Not only do we lose time but one feels ashamed to be connected with a Council in which such behaviour occurs. Not very long ago this Council was regarded and respected for the manner in which it conducted its affairs, but I regret to say that has completely passed, and it is one of the most regrettable things for this Colony that those who are supposed to represent the people should come here, not to do good for the people, but under the protection which they get by being able to say what they like, to attack Government officials and other people. The debates remind one more of a brothel than of a Legislative Council.

Item put, and agreed to.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I move the insertion of another item under

Agriculture which I feel sure will have the unanimous approval of the Council. It is a new sub-head, 31—Loans to stock farmers, \$1,000, I would ask the Director of Agriculture to explain what the sum will be used for.

Professor DASH: I think hon. Members are aware that on the East Bank considerable development is taking place which I think spells something good for the farmers in that area. There is a demand for fresh milk, vegetables, etc., and I think the time has arrived when we should try to assist in the development up there in every possible way. This money has been asked for with a view to making advances to certain selected farmers to assist them to purchase stock, and under the guidance of the Department of Agriculture we hope to be able to show them the more modern methods of stall-feeding cattle. That is one of the things specially recommended by the Comptroller and his advisers. Anyway, by helping those farmers we shall also be using this small sum as a demonstration to others, and we hope in due course there will be considerable development on the East Bank in dairying. That is the reason why at this stage it is considered a good thing to ask for this amount to be able to carry out a project of that kind.

Item put, and agreed to.

LAW OFFICERS.

Item 3.—Fee to Counsel for prosecuting at Criminal Sessions, \$200.

THE CHAIRMAN: I must express regret for having made an incorrect statement to the Council a few days ago. The Council was asked to vote \$600 under this sub-head and I made the statement that there would be no further amount asked for. I had overlooked the fact that another \$200 had to come forward in connection with the same Criminal Sessions.

Mr. JACOB: I notice from this that the total is \$950 for the first half of the year. A sum of \$600 has already been provided. I take it that it is possible that there will be further additional provision for the balance of the year, and as I said on the last occasion, it would be far better to employ someone permanently to do this

work, rather than employ temporary outside assistance.

Item put, and agreed to.

MEDICAL—HOSPITALS AND DISPENSARIES.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I move the insertion of a new item, 32, under this head—Purchase of equipment for Tuberculosis Hospital, Best, \$2,400. Of this amount \$1,885 is a re-vote from last year's estimate, and the balance of \$515 represents increases in the cost of equipment with a small provision for the purchase of a few essential articles of equipment.

Mr. GONSALVES: I would like to take this opportunity to ask whether this item will complete the arrangements for the early opening of the Hospital at Best. I have put in some questions on the subject to which I am awaiting a reply, but I think my enquiry now should elicit some information as to what the position is.

Dr. MACLENNAN (Director of Medical Services): The replies to the questions to which the hon. Member refers will be laid on the table shortly. This small item for equipment, part of which is a re-vote, is due to the fact that certain equipment was ordered and a certain amount lost through enemy action, but that will not interfere with the opening of the Best Hospital. There are certain items which we can buy locally, and we can borrow others. I have been in touch with the Director of Public Works and he hopes that the final retouching of the Hospital will be completed in about a fortnight's time. The hon. Member need not fear that this will delay the opening of the Hospital.

Item put and agreed to.

MISCELLANEOUS—(a) SUBVENTIONS, ETC., MUNICIPAL

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I move the insertion of a new item, sub-head 4—Contribution towards King George V. Municipal Welfare Centre, \$820. The activities of the City's maternity service have been extended and the Municipality has sought Government's assistance for an increase of the amount of the subsidy now paid. After consultation between the Mayor and the Director of Medical Services Government recognizes that the

present subsidy which is, I think, \$1,680, should be increased by a further sum of \$820. That represents one-half of the additional expenditure that is being incurred by the Municipality.

Mr. DEAGUIAR: Incidentally it increases the vote to \$2,500. I am wondering whether it would not be better to increase the vote.

Dr. MACLENNAN: That is the idea I had in mind. The work of this Centre is extremely good and has been remarked upon by all who have visited it. Sir Rupert Briercliffe remarked how good the work was and recently wrote me a letter from British Honduras in which he said that they were going to select a nurse there for training in this particular branch of work, and the original idea was that she should go to Jamaica, but he was going to approach the authorities to have her trained here instead. I think that is a great feather in the cap of the Georgetown Municipality.

Mr. C. V. WIGHT: I would like to add that on the occasion of Mr. Hall's visit he remarked that it was an excellent little effort and he thought matters of that kind should be developed as fully as possible for the benefit of the younger generation especially.

Item put, and agreed to.

MISCELLANEOUS (b)—SUBVENTIONS, ETC.,
OTHER THAN MUNICIPAL.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I move the insertion of a new item, sub-head 29—Grant to Seamen's Club, \$320. We all know that there are a number of seamen who are coming to the Colony at the present time, and the facilities for their welfare during their stay here have been engaging the attention not only of this Government but of the Ministry of Shipping in the United Kingdom. After investigation, the Ministry of shipping has generously granted £1,000 for the enlargement of the facilities of what is known as the Seamen's Club here, on the understanding that this Government would undertake the responsibility of guaranteeing the rental of suitable premises. Negotiations have been concluded and suitable premises have been found. The

sum of £1,000 will be spent in reconstructing those premises so as to provide a suitable place of comfort and rest for seamen while they are here, and the proposal before the Council is that Government should guarantee the rental of those premises which is at the rate of \$80 per month. Of course, if at any time in the future the Club should show a profit, the question whether Government will continue to pay rent will come under consideration. For the moment the Council is asked to guarantee the rent of the premises. For this year the rent for the period 1st September to 31st December is \$320.

Mr. AUSTIN: I should like to support this item and I am sorry that it is on the small side. When we realize the dangers seamen have to incur in coming to this Colony I think we should do all we possibly can to assist them to have as comfortable and happy a time as possible while they stay here. A start has been made and I trust that the new premises will turn out to be a success, because I know that the officers and seamen who come here appreciate very much what has been done for them in the past. If at a later date more money is required to assist them I trust that the Council will vote it.

Item put, and agreed to.

OFFICIAL RECEIVER.

Item 1.—Personal Emoluments—Unfixed Establishment—Fees to Crown Solicitor in Revenue cases, \$200.

Mr. PEER BACCHUS: I cannot recollect having seen an item like this appearing in the Estimates. I do not know that the Crown Solicitor is entitled to fees.

Mr. C. V. WIGHT: For the information of the hon. Member I will say that the Crown Solicitor is entitled to fees. On one or two occasions I raised the question whether those fees should not be commuted and the officer concerned granted extra emoluments, but I have since discovered (I speak subject to correction) that the reason why Government is so adamant to that is that those extra emoluments would become pensionable. I still suggest to Government that those fees and other fees collectable by the Department should

be commuted, and the officer—I presume he would be quite willing—be given some commensurate allowance in lieu of those fees which should go to the credit of the Department. I think that suggestion, if adopted, would be in the interest of the officer concerned and the Colony.

Mr. JACOB: I move the deletion of the item. On the 11th December last year I was told quite definitely that the Crown Solicitor was not entitled to private practice. On page 249 of the Hansard report of the meeting on December 11, this is what the Colonial Secretary said:—

“The Crown Solicitor is not entitled to private practice.”

Then you were good enough to invite me to talk the matter over with you in your office, but having had the request made to me on several occasions, I think it is my duty to raise the question in this Council. I notice it is said here:—

“To provide for the payment of fees to the Crown Solicitor for prosecuting in cases involving the protection of the revenue.”

I do not grudge an officer of Government receiving extra remuneration for extra services given out of official hours, but in this case these services are given during official hours, and I think this is the first time this matter has been raised here. It is a very undesirable practice for officers of the Crown to be doing private work and drawing additional money for appearing in the Courts. I looked up the Civil Service List and I found that the Crown Solicitor's Salary is \$4,800 per annum. In addition he gets \$31.39 (varies) as Trustee, Patqir Fund; \$51.93 (varies) as fees in connection with the Trotman Fund, and \$480 as Commissioner, Income Tax. I have the highest regard for this officer and I would like to take this opportunity to tell the Director of Agriculture that I do not criticize everyone. I have the utmost regard for this gentleman; I think he is a hard-working officer, and if he is entitled to £5,000 by all means let him have it if Government thinks so, but I do object to fees being paid in this manner. It may be necessary to increase his emoluments as suggested by the hon. Member for Western Essequibo (Mr. C. V. Wight), and if he gets extra emoluments why shouldn't he get a lump sum bonus and pension as well on those extra emoluments?

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL: This item represents fees paid to the Crown Solicitor for representing the Crown in what are called revenue cases. The position is that under his agreement of service he is entitled to fees if he prosecutes in those cases. If he does not prosecute of course he does not get the fees. Whenever possible one of the Law Officers does those prosecutions. It is quite true that he prosecutes during office hours but, of course, it naturally follows that his own work which he would normally have done in official hours, has to be done out of official hours. I hope that hon. Members will not begrudge these particular fees because, as a matter of fact, those prosecutions entail quite a lot of travelling all over the country at great inconvenience to himself, and he could quite easily say he would not undertake them. It would cost a great deal more to get a private practitioner to do the prosecutions, and Government would have to provide transport. Actually these fees are very well earned, and Government gets off very lightly. The fees bear some resemblance to the amount recovered. The hon. Member referred to private practice. I take it that was a slip. The Crown Solicitor appears for the Crown in these cases.

Item put, and agreed to.

POST OFFICE.

Item 4.—Rent, Branch Offices, \$180.

Mr. JACOB: I wish to refer to certain correspondence with regard to the delivery of letters. I think the present system ought to be changed and changed very quickly. It is not fair to taxpayers who reside in certain places, not remote places, that they should not get their letters delivered direct from the Post Office. I have submitted certain letters to the Government and a list of a number of people residing in the particular area.

THE CHAIRMAN: Is that one of the unanswered letters?

Mr. JACOB: Unanswered, but acknowledged. There is a system of acknowledging letters, but in some cases after an acknowledgement the matter ends there. The correspondence refers to the Bush Lot Settlement on the Essequibo Coast. The hon. Member for Western Essequibo

(Mr. C. V. Wight) is present and should rightly bring the matter up.

Mr. C. V. WIGHT: The hon. Member has challenged my seat and is prepared to give up his seat in the North Western District. I have that also in writing.

Mr. JACOB: Unfortunately I can only hold one seat. (laughter). I think if it were possible for certain hon. Members to hold seats for every district in this Council, and on every Board and on every Committee they would be delighted. I have not that ambition yet. I expect to be in one or two places and to do my duty there to the best of my ability. It happens that 54 persons have written and asked me to state that they would prefer their letters to be delivered at their houses. Perhaps it may be said that I should give the names of those 54 persons. I am willing to do that if it is the wish of the Council. I have only risen to put the matter on record so that it can be said that certain members of the public are asking for certain things, and so that the attention of those in authority may be drawn to the fact. I know that the debates go to the Colonial Office and, after all, it is recognized that His Majesty's Secretary of State is the person directly responsible for all these Crown Colonies. His attention may be drawn to matters affecting the public here which are represented in the proper place. I have a letter from the Postmaster-General dated September 27, 1941, in which he states:—

"If the residents care to do so I would authorise the issue of a joint private bag for residents at Bush Lot Settlement on payment of \$5 per annum service fee in the name of the principal resident, and letters for posting and delivery could be placed therein."

It may be said that the Postmaster-General wants to give some help to those people, but why should a private individual or private individuals pay \$5 for a private letter bag when they are supposed to enjoy the privilege of residents in the Colony? When it is considered that it is an isolated settlement which was a failure at one stage (The Director of Agriculture may not agree with that) and is now reviving, and out of a total of 213 persons 54 are cultivating 298 acres of rice land and own 89 head of cattle, if they are not to get the ordinary postal facilities, and medical and other facilities are restricted, in the

name of all that is holy can settlements be successful in this Colony? Why isolate these settlements? In the first instance the Bush Lot Settlement was wrongly established. (Professor Dash: Question!) We have different ideas. I wish to goodness my ideas would coincide with other people's. If the Settlement had been made alongside the public road with easy means of communication and with medical and other facilities there would have been a thriving peasantry and a thriving Colony, but if we are going to have settlements isolated, without proper roads, and when it rains children have to wade to school—

THE CHAIRMAN: Has the hon. Member travelled along that road? I have travelled by car.

Mr. JACOB: I have travelled on it dozens of times.

THE CHAIRMAN: I thought the hon. Member said there was no proper road.

Mr. JACOB: I do not call that a proper road. I do not know whether it is good in rainy seasons or whether it is a road on which children would like to travel in rainy seasons to go to the Anna Regina school.

Mr. CREASE (Director of Education): The Settlement has a school of its own.

Mr. JACOB: I was merely making a general point about the Settlement. (laughter). My point is that it is necessary that the Settlement should have all those facilities. Maybe my hon. friend is correct that there is a school there, but I would like to know under what Regulation that school is run? I will take the opportunity later on to ask that question. The people at Bush Lot should be given every facility to receive their mail, and I am certain that the present staff there would do the work if they are asked to. But if they are not told to do it they will not do it. In fact if obstacles are put in their way they would not do it. The present staff at the Anna Regina Post Office can do this slightly increased work. Postal facilities throughout the Colony should be improved very greatly. I am not suggesting that the whole thing should be transformed right away. There should be gradual changes, but Government declines to budge.

THE CHAIRMAN: I would like to correct the hon. Member. That question is actually before the Colonial Secretary now. It has not been pigeon-holed, but unless the Post Office is given an increase of staff they cannot deliver the letters of the hon. Member.

Mr. JACOB: Some people prefer to adopt a different method. I had a definite reply and I am respectfully submitting that Your Excellency's statement does not conform to that reply. I have a definite reply from Government that it is impracticable. I raised the question again and I gave definite cases. For instance there is a Post Office there and a person residing on the other side of the road, in Virginia village, gets his letters direct from the letter-carrier, but persons residing on the other side, not further but probably nearer, do not get their letters direct and in time. I am submitting with all confidence that if it is the intention to raise the cultural standard and the educational standard of the people then this is one of the means of doing so, and it is absolutely necessary if Government looks at it from that point of view. I have raised these points in order that some record should remain for some of us to see that not all of us are prepared to keep the people in their present state.

Mr. C. V. WIGHT: I am not quite sure whether the hon. Member is deprecating the system of private postal agencies. The hon. Member may think that I am not in touch with my constituency. He has challenged my seat and is willing to give up his and to show that, after all, Hitler is not the only dominating force in this world. I do not write as often to the Government as the hon. Member does, but I do write fairly frequently. It is difficult to say whether the hon. Member suggests that there should be postal agencies run by the Post Office in those outlying districts, or whether there should be private agencies who would sort and make the necessary delivery of private letter bags. One gets so many conflicting suggestions. The hon. Member does not try to suggest something to Government which may be acceptable but just comes forward with this or the other.

I have written to Government in some cases suggesting that people are prepared to work without remuneration, but

Government has replied that it is not prepared to accept people's services without remuneration. The Postmaster-General should have a discussion with two or three hon. Members and arrive at some decision as to what is the best method of serving these outlying districts. There evidently is some dissatisfaction in those districts where the postal service is not really up-to-date and can do with a little improvement. I do not say that it would not necessitate some slight increase in expenditure, but I hope Government will go into the matter in dealing with the Estimates.

Mr. JACOB: As usual I have not benefited by that recent speech. I made a definite statement as to what I thought should be done, and I think Government is aware of it.

The Council resumed and adjourned for the luncheon recess until 2 p.m.

2 p.m. -

Mr. Dias and Mr. Lee present.

The Council resolved itself into Committee and resumed consideration of the Schedule, item by item.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: The hon. Member for North-Western District (Mr. Jacob) referred to certain correspondence he had with Government to which he had no reply. I would just like to state that when he first raised the question about postal facilities on sugar and other organized estates, he was informed that it was impractical for the Post Office to undertake a house to house delivery on such estates. He has approached Government again in the matter, but so far no practical suggestion has been put forward. With regard to the Bush Lot estate's postal facilities, it is quite true that there are 54 families on the estate which is about one and a half miles from Anna Regina Post Office, but from the information at my disposal I understand that only about 10 per cent. of them receive mails at irregular intervals and the actual number of letters received average one per day. The staff of the Anna Regina Post Office is fully occupied and cannot be given any further work, and it is hardly a practical solution that an additional rural letter-carrier be appointed

for the purpose of delivering one letter per day. In actual practice, I am informed, there is little or no inconvenience caused as the residents pay daily visits to Anna Regina to transact their ordinary business, as there is no shop at the settlement, and the letters are collected on those visits.

Mr. JACOB: As usual the facts as stated by my hon. friend are not strictly correct. He says that no practical suggestion has been put forward. I think I have interpreted that correctly. The practical suggestion in regard to this particular settlement is that—

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: To a point of order! When I referred to practical suggestion I was referring to the general question of delivery on sugar estates.

Mr. JACOB: If I am asked to make a practical suggestion I am willing to do so. In my letter to the Postmaster General I stated that I am willing to discuss the matter with him. I have done my part of the transaction. I have it definitely that the letter-carrier at Anna Regina would undertake the delivery of the one letter per day at the settlement, and I would suggest to this Government that the one letter per day be delivered at the settlement. Perhaps it is amusing to hon. Members that these people only get one letter per day, but I would like to be advised how many letters go to Anna Regina every other day, as steamer communication to the Essequibo Coast is every other day. Let us have an estimate of the number of people living around the Post Office at Anna Regina to be served by the letter-carrier, and the percentage of letters handled for that population. If the postal facilities are not difficult and are there, why should the people write letters of complaint about the matter? Is it the intention of this Government to keep these people in that state all the time? That is the crux of the situation. They are isolated on the settlement there, and the argument that they only receive one letter per day and therefore Government cannot employ another letter-carrier to take that one letter to them is very absurd to my mind. The Postmaster General should be ordered to have it done.

Mr. SEAFORD: I disagree with that.

It is the most absurd suggestion in the world, to employ a letter-carrier to deliver one letter per day. I have never heard of that. Not only in this part of the world but in England there are districts where the people have to go miles to obtain their letters from the Post Office. You have got settlements all over the country—up the Mahaicony, Mahaica and Bonasika Creeks. Must Government provide letter-carriers to take letters there? There would be no limit to that, if they are to go to certain particular places.

Mr. JACOB: There again my remarks are misinterpreted. I never suggested certain particular places. I said, I am willing to agree that at certain places it is not practical at the present time. As I had instanced the case of Cane Grove, am I going to be told that at Blairmont where there is a Post Office certain letters are not delivered direct to certain people and not to others unless through one or two or four intermediaries? The principle is bad. The postal authorities should deliver letters in the coastal areas at least. I am not talking of the Creeks, or Savannahs, or the interior. It is distinctly absurd to say that at Cane Grove, which is one side of the public road and there is a Post Office at Virginia Village on the other side of the road, the people should not have their letters delivered as enjoyed by those of the village. Is it the idea that postal facilities should not be provided the people on estates? I am suggesting most definitely that those postal facilities ought to be provided and it can be provided at little or no cost. It can be carried out at the Bush Lot settlement without any cost, and if each individual place is taken it can be carried out with very little cost.

Mr. SEAFORD: The hon. Member lives on contention. I would like to know from him how letters can be delivered to people on settlements where you have ten families with exactly the same names and there are no streets and no house lots. It would take a letter-carrier days and days searching for them. The hon. Member knows that as well as ever.

Mr. JACOB: I may be contentious, but when I am right I am right. I maintain it is possible and practicable. I have had the benefit of travelling—

Mr. SEAFORD : Very little !

Mr. JACOB : Abroad they have got houses of ten storeys and yet it is done. Immediately Government makes a start, I guarantee that within a few months definite and practical arrangements will be made throughout the Colony to facilitate it. Does Government want anything better than that? Let us have a test of it. I challenge Government and the whole Council that I can make it work within a limit of six months. If you want something practical, there is a challenge.

Mr. SEAFORD : Is the hon. Member also prepared to guarantee loss of money and of registered letters? Does he guarantee all those?

Mr. JACOB : The whole trend of thought in this Council and of Government is to do as little as possible for the population, to keep them uncultured, uneducated and without proper means of being cultured.

THE CHAIRMAN : Does the hon. Member realize what is the annual increase of the Education Vote?

Mr. JACOB : I would like to see it doubled.

Item passed.

PUBLIC WORKS—ANNUALLY RECURRENT.

Item—Maintenance and Reconditioning of Public Buildings, \$1,276.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY : I beg leave to move the introduction of an item under Head XXXV—Public Works—Annually Recurrent—“ Sub-head 1—Maintenance and reconditioning of Public Buildings, \$1,276.” That sum represents the cost of certain very essential repairs and renovation to Government House, and this Council is asked to approve of the amount.

Item passed.

The Council resumed.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY : I beg to move that the original motion be amended by the deletion of the words “ which has been laid on the table ” and by the substitution therefor of the words “ as amended in Committee.”

Mr. McDAVID (Colonial Treasurer) seconded.

Mr. JACOB : The amount ?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY : The additions to the Schedule which were moved in amounted to \$10,096.

Motion as amended put, and agreed to.

TOBACCO CULTIVATION DEVELOPMENT SCHEME.

Professor DASH (Director of Agriculture) : In the Message, No. 16, relating to the resolution before the Council, the attention of hon. Members was invited to Resolution No. XVII passed on the 14th March, 1940, in which the Council approved of a grant of \$8,500 from the Development Trust Fund for a scheme for the development of tobacco cultivation and the training of local tobacco growers. As the Council will recall, the tobacco expert, Mr. T. W. Bradshaw, was provided by funds from the Colonial Development Committee on the other side to assist us in our efforts to establish a local tobacco industry mainly for the supplying of local leaf tobacco to cigarette factories and manufacturers of black fat tobacco. That scheme was outlined in the Sessional Paper referred to, and it was scheduled to run for three years—1940 to 1942. In recent months it became evident that we had reached a stage whereby that scheme would have to be extended and modified. We were training young men in tobacco work, and our experience up to a few months ago indicated that if we were to make any progress at all we could not depend on the ordinary growers taking advice from the Tobacco Officer and carrying out what he considered the correct methods both as regards cultivation and curing. Therefore with the young men we had on the experimental area we felt, that if we were to make that progress we would all like we should begin to set them up on their own plots under the guidance of the Tobacco Officer and so get the benefit, while on their own plots, of his advice before the time came for him to leave the Colony.

Briefly then this scheme calls for the taking in of ten (10) acres of land which have been kindly furnished us on easy terms by the management of *Pln. Cane Grove*. Two (2) acres of the ten (10) will still be retained for experimental work and

the other eight (8) acres will be allocated to eight trainees who already had the benefit and experience of previous work as it had been going on at La Bonne Mere. Each trainee, who has so far shown any merit in the preparatory stage, will be given an acre of land to cultivate under the supervision of the Tobacco Officer and an advance to cover his living expenses at the rate of fifty (50) cents per day while the crop is growing. An account will be kept of all the expenditure, including labour, rent, fertilizers etc., and when the crop is reaped it will be graded, bulked and sold co-operatively through the Department, the amount obtained being credited to the account of each individual according to the grades supplied by him. So this scheme really contemplates carrying on operations designed to extend this industry to a stage where those young men will not only be doing the art of tobacco cultivation but instructed in co-operative methods and encouraged to work together as much as possible. Under normal conditions there should be enough left on each individual's transaction for the trainee to set himself up, and in that way other trainees can come in as the scheme develops and be dealt with in the same way.

I have tried to say at some length what we have in mind, because it is my confirmed opinion that if we are to develop the tobacco industry at all it would have to be efficiently controlled from beginning to end. I do not wish to take up the time of the Council too long by going into all details covering just what I mean, but it is clear that we shall have to license growers, take on definitely the grading and control of operations relating to grading and in due course, I think, some organization will have to be developed through which all tobacco grown in the Colony will have to be handled. At present I think it must be known to some hon. Members at any rate that there is a great deal of loose selling going on, and anyone having rubbish in the way of tobacco to sell can get fair prices because of the protection it enjoys. If that sort of thing is to continue, any hope we may have of establishing on sound lines a tobacco industry would fail. That is the direction, I think, in which our work is tending. I am getting the Tobacco Officer to go into details, study legislation in other countries and put together what I feel will

be the framework on which we may work and on which in due course this Council will be advised. That is the position, and I do not think I need say anything more at this juncture. I have made clear what we have in mind and why we are modifying the scheme. The appendix gives the details of expenditure, and it will be seen that we have made an allowance in respect of the original scheme which has been deducted from the total estimate. There is a small printers' error in the fourth line of the appendix. It should be "erection of bulk sheds." With these remarks I beg to move—

THAT, with reference to the Officer Administering the Government's Message No. 16 dated 9th October, 1941, and in pursuance of section 11 of the Colonization Fund Ordinance, 1937, this Council approves of the scheme for the extension of the development of tobacco cultivation and the training of local tobacco growers set out in the Message involving a grant of \$6,970 from the Development Trust Fund.

Mr. SEAFORD seconded.

Mr. C. V. WIGHT: I think I am going to support this measure, as I believe I smoke more Rupununi tobacco than any other Member sitting around this table. I hope some day to be able to smoke some of this tobacco which is to be produced by the scheme. What I would like to ask the hon. Director of Agriculture is, whether he is going to confine his activities to development of this kind. I do not know if he is aware—no doubt he is—of the experiments that are being made at the present moment in Brazil with coffee, whereby a process is being investigated to make "bakelite" from coffee. I do not know if he can make any experiments along that line, if so I also welcome any provision on the Estimates for some sort of experiment along that line. I do not know if he is aware, but if not, perhaps, he would be able to make the necessary enquiries. I do not know how it would affect us if we could find an avenue for the utilization of coffee possibly through some experiment.

Mr. JACOB: I rise to support the motion and to make one or two observations on it. I wonder why an estimate of this kind is not put in the ordinary additional provision, so that this Council can go into it and obtain one or two points from the questions raised from time to

time? For instance, I would like to be advised whether any of this tobacco would be exported from this Colony. I do not know if the industry is to be developed to such a stage as to make it possible for British Guiana to export tobacco. If it is to be so developed then probably we may double the proposal, this being a Government proposal. We know there are certain trusts or combines that would like to monopolize the whole tobacco industry the world over. It is admitted here by nearly all the hon. Members of this Council that you have to give up coffee now. At one time hundreds of thousands of dollars were spent to grow coffee here and to make it an exportable crop. To-day it has been said you have to forget coffee. I agree to forget coffee, but I am hoping that after this has been done for tobacco we will not be told in ten year's time—I hope to live that time—that we have to forget tobacco and start something else.

Whether this is a long range view or just a short range view and whether it will be in the interest of the country to go on spending money on something this Colony cannot successfully compete with in the world market, I do not know. The fact is that at the moment it looks like an effort in the right direction, whether we should do it in a small way or not is another matter. I understand from the Message that experiments are being carried out at Cane Grove, but I have heard La Bonne Mere mentioned. I do not know if it is being done at both places. This resolution has my sympathy, but I am going to watch it and see how the production and the curing is going to progress. I am sorry the hon. Member for Berbice River (Mr. Eleazar) is not here, because he said the other day that the gentleman concerned does not know a thing about tobacco and the curing of it.

Mr. SEAFORD: When this scheme for growing tobacco came before the Colonial Development Committee I can assure hon. Members that the hon. Director of Agriculture and Mr. Bradshaw made a close examination of it. I do not think the majority of members of that Committee were at first greatly impressed but, however, the feeling was and my feeling is that anything we can do to help any minor industry or to give it a chance of developing we should do it. It is with that

object in view the Committee agreed to support it. I think it is not a very large sum involved. It is but a small sum, and it is only right that we should spend this amount to foster any industry put forward with any chance of success. But I do say, that personally I am not very optimistic of our ever growing tobacco in this Colony on a commercial scale. I have discussed the matter with one or two people and all I have heard is that the humidity of the air in this Colony is far too much for curing tobacco, as the product immediately after curing absorbs moisture. I know it can be done by pressing and keeping the tobacco pressed, but even then moisture gets into it. I may be entirely wrong, and I hope I am. I am not opposing this vote as I think it is only right that we should foster any industry that is going to help the Colony.

Mr. AUSTIN: I would like to support this motion. Some years ago the then Comptroller of Customs when tobacco was mentioned as being grown in this Colony, said: "Where is the revenue derived from the importation of tobacco to come from, if you allow the people to grow tobacco here and sell it?" I am glad to see Government has changed its view in respect of not only tobacco but other locally grown stuff as well. Although tobacco to all intents and purposes is a fairly new industry and may not meet with the approval of some of the older villagers, I think the younger generation have a chance to start a new industry, as the hon. Member for Georgetown North (Mr. Seaford) has just said. I am very glad indeed to add my support to this motion.

Professor DASH: There are just one or two points I desire to reply to. First of all La Bonne Mere is a section of Cane Grove, but it is the section on which experimental work has been done. This modified scheme is going to be carried out at Cane Grove proper where there is greater scope for extension and the soil is more suitable for the extension of the crop. That is why it was arranged with the Estate Authorities for a change of the site. I do not think anyone in this Colony has ever felt optimistic enough to believe that this is a tobacco country. It is true, as I have pointed out before, tobacco does grow wild here but that does not mean it is of

the quality that people smoke. It is a highly specialized industry and, I believe, I am right in saying—I have had some experience with it—that there is hardly any other crop in the world which calls for such a delicate nicety of soil and conditions in order for the crop to flourish and produce that quality of leaf which is necessary in the manufacturing process. One can get a very heavy yield of leaf of a quality which cannot stand the process. That is the important point to bear in mind.

I think from the beginning I have taken up an attitude about tobacco in British Guiana that my own view after experimenting with it was that we can produce a type and grade of tobacco that can find its way into the cheaper grades of cigarettes manufactured here. I am pleased to say that is definitely the view of the Tobacco Expert. It is true that we have curing difficulties arising out of climatic conditions, but they are not insurmountable. As the hon. Member for Georgetown North (Mr. Seaford) pointed out, it is a question of keeping the tobacco after it has been removed from the barn as it tends to re-absorb moisture and that brings on mildew. While the trouble cannot be wholly eliminated it may, however, be kept under control. Personally I think we may expect to have trouble with that, but I think it involves in the long run control of the acreage under cultivation. There is no need to carry tobacco stocks so long as to subject it to loss from mildew and make it worthless. Taking all in all we have a reasonable chance of providing the Colony with a certain amount of locally produced tobacco for use industrially.

The question of export is entirely another matter. I will not say it will not be exported from British Guiana. All I say is that I see no hope for it as competition in the outside markets is too great, especially in the case of those countries better suited for its cultivation. I may say that we have sent samples of our curing to the Imperial Institute in London for further report, which is being awaited with interest.

The only other point is that mentioned by the hon. Member for Western Essequibo (Mr. C. V. Wight). He raised the question of industrial development in the use of coffee. I know all about that. I have read about it, but here at the moment we hardly

have enough to drink or sell and I do not think we should concern ourselves with industrial developments until we are producing an overwhelming surplus, which is hardly likely. Brazil is seeking ways and means of using up its surplus of coffee. At one stage they burnt the crops because they could not get rid of them in order to inflate prices. They destroyed the crops in order that successive crops might benefit. It is an interesting point, but I do not think we need pursue it very far. I think I have covered the entire ground.

THE PRESIDENT: The hon. Member for North Western District has it in mind that Government purposely avoided placing this item on a supplementary estimate so as to prevent him making more than one complaint. This is the usual method of approach in connection with the expenditure of money under the Colonization Fund Ordinance of 1937. Hon. Members are aware that the Development Trust Committee has to deal with the application first and it goes to the Secretary of State for the Colonies and then comes to the Legislative Council. Hon. Members will see in paragraph 3 of the Message that the sanction of the Secretary of State for the Colonies is being sought. The reason why we have not waited for his approval is because the Council will not be sitting much longer and we are anxious to get the resolution passed on the understanding that it will be approved by the Secretary of State for the Colonies which is required under the Ordinance.

Question put, and agreed to.

Motion passed.

ROYALTY ON BOARDS, PLANKS, AND SCANTLINGS.

Mr. WOOD (Conservator of Forests): I beg to move the following motion standing in my name on the Order Paper—

THAT, in pursuance of section 17 of the Crown Lands Ordinance, Chapter 171, this Council hereby makes the Crown Lands (Amendment) Regulations, 1941, altering the First Schedule to the Principal Regulations with respect to the royalty on boards, planks and scantlings, as printed in the *Official Gazette* dated 4th October, 1941, and circulated.

It is not a very large matter really, but

the last occasion when the royalty on sawn timber, boards and scantlings was fixed by amendment of the Crown Lands Regulations was in May, 1938. Those rates of royalty have not been altered since, but the situation has changed since then. At that time it was hoped that under the then existing conditions the lower rate of royalty on sawn boards would create some encouragement for sawing on the site in the timber grants, but on the outbreak of war and the resultant virtual prohibition of the importation of foreign lumber into the Colony a loss of revenue had to be faced in the Customs Duties which were previously levied on that wood. After a long discussion with the principals of the saw-milling industry on the various ways of trying to recover that revenue and the exploration of various avenues, the unanimous recommendation of the industry was that the simplest thing was to raise the royalty on logs to a point which would cover that royalty which otherwise would be lost. It was agreed by the whole industry that really the saw-milling industry would benefit by the prohibition of the importation of sawn timber, and the original aim was that the saw-milling industry should carry the additional revenue which would be lost from the cessation of importations. However, the whole thing was explored and everybody agreed that, assuming difficulties are in the way, the simplest and most satisfactory solution was to increase the royalty and consequently the royalty on logs was increased. But it was overlooked at the time that the royalty on sawn timber produced on timber grants remained unaltered. That put us in a very anomalous position.

The majority of the saw-mills in the Colony, which are situated in Georgetown, New Amsterdam, East Bank Demerara and along the West Coast Demerara, buy their raw materials in log form paying royalty on the logs, whereas a few mills which are situated at a point above where royalty is collected on logs are in the position of sawing their logs above the point where the royalty is collected and thereby paying royalty on sawn timber, which in effect works out just about half. Consequently they are put in a position of being able to saw logs for the payment of half the royalty paid by the other mills. The present amendment of the Regulations is

designed to make the royalty on sawn timber correspond to the present rates of royalty payable on logs. That is the object of the amendment of the Regulations under the Crown Lands Ordinance which I am now moving.

Mr. McDAVID (Colonial Treasurer) seconded.

Question put, and agreed to.

Motion passed.

GAMBLING PREVENTION (AMENDMENT) BILL, 1941.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Mr. Pretheroe): I beg to move the second reading of—

A Bill intituled an Ordinance to amend the Gambling Prevention Ordinance, Chapter 95, by exempting certain lotteries and sweepstakes from the operation of the provisions thereof and by constituting the Sweepstakes (Charity) Committee.

Hon. Members will remember that in October or November, 1939, an amendment was made to the Principal Ordinance—the Gambling Prevention Ordinance. That amendment was made as an experiment to ascertain if the scheme then proposed would function satisfactorily. In brief the scheme was that instead of numerous charitable organisations each running a sweepstake they should all benefit by receiving allocations from one large sweepstake. To give effect to the scheme all sweepstakes, other than the large one, were prohibited and three Charity Commissioners were appointed to operate the scheme. They were charged with two duties—firstly to decide which charitable organisations should benefit from the central fund which was to be provided by the Demerara Turf Club, Ltd., and secondly to assign to each approved organisation the proportion of the total amount available it should receive. The Commissioners were assisted in their labours by Accountants and in due course the required Bill, which probably caused the draftsman a headache, was prepared and duly enacted.

Admittedly in 1939 the scheme was an experiment, and consequently that particular Ordinance just quoted was limited to end on the 30th June, 1941. Some little time before that day Government met and considered whether or not that system was satisfactory. Enquiries were made and the balance of opinion was that it was working smoothly; there were people who thought that some other charities should be added, and others thought some charities should get a bigger proportion. On the whole the system was considered satisfactory, though the charities did not get as large an amount as everybody thought they would. The reason was that you had the Red Cross and Bomber Funds and various other charities to which large amounts were contributed by this Colony and to which the Demerara Turf Club, Ltd., itself contributed. Bearing that in mind you have to conclude, I think, that the Ordinance proved itself satisfactorily and that the whole matter should now be perpetuated. With that in view a draft Bill was prepared, printed and published in the *Official Gazette*, but no meeting of the Legislative Council took place between the printing of the draft Bill and the day the Ordinance expired. That draft Bill was therefore useless and a fresh Bill had to be prepared. That was done but with differences in certain parts which I will explain as I go along.

As regards the Bill itself, clause 2 sets forth new sections which are to be placed in the principal Ordinance. The principal Ordinance itself, owing to the expiration of the old Gambling Prevention (Amendment) Ordinance, 1939, now lacks two sections—20 and 21. This Bill endeavours to place back not two sections but four. Section 20, as set out in Clause 2, is word for word the same as section 20 of the 1939 Ordinance which has expired. There is no change of any sort. Section 21, as set out in Clause 2, is the same with two minor exceptions as the first four sub-clauses of 21 in the expired Ordinance. The two exceptions are in sub-clauses (3) and (4). The word "Auditor" has been substituted for the word "Auditors" in each sub-clause. Down to that stage this Bill reproduces the Ordinance which expired in June literally word for word except for the two amendments.

Section 22, as set out in the Bill,

changes the name of the Board who control these charitable allocations. They were called "Charities Committee." They objected to that as individuals and bodies were induced by the name to cause them much work with requests for grant. They thought that if their title was changed it would reduce the r mail bag. After some considerable thought the ungainly name of "Sweepstakes (Charity) Committee" has been adopted. They themselves suggested it as they thought it might assist them. There is no objection to it. Section 22, as set out in clause 2 of the Bill merely appoints the Commissioners under the new name.

We now come to Section 23. Under the old Ordinance the Governor in Council appointed three persons who would decide which charities should receive money and what proportion each should receive. When the Ordinance expired that Committee ceased to function. Those Commissioners spent two hard years conscientiously deciding which were the right charitable organizations to receive money and working out the percentages to five places of decimals that each should receive. It is earnestly desired to see that the new Commissioners should not go through all those difficulties and worries and all that hard work again. The only way that can be done is as it has been done in Section 23, which says in effect that the approved charitable organizations which received money from the Commissioners before they vacated office on the expiration of the Ordinance should continue to receive it under this Ordinance in the same proportion as under the old Ordinance. In other words the approved list is maintained the same as it was under the old Ordinance and the proportion received by each charity remains the same as under the old Ordinance. This Bill seeks to put each charity which received a contribution in the same position it would have been in if the old Ordinance had not expired.

Section 24, as set out in Clause 2, gives the Governor in Council power to prescribe regulations for the control of the Sweepstakes Committee. They themselves asked for that.

Clause 3 of the Bill repeals the Schedule. When on the 30th June the Ordinance expired the Section under which

the Schedule was made also expired—the Schedule was left high and dry. This merely clears up the oversight when the 1939 Ordinance was passed.

Clause 4 enacts or hopes to enact that this Ordinance should come into operation on the 1st July, 1941. That is the day following the date the 1939 Ordinance expired. Trusting that this Bill would be enacted the Commissioners have in fact continued to make their contributions to the Charities concerned. They continued to operate as if the new Bill had been published to come into effect before the 30th June. Therefore, it is hoped this Council will vote that Clause 4 stands part of the Bill, which dates it back to July.

Professor DASH (Director of Agriculture) seconded.

Mr. WALCOTT: Your Excellency, I feel I have a little grievance if I understand the hon. Attorney-General correctly. He said the charities were not satisfied with the amount they were getting as they expected to get more through the Demerara Turf Club Ltd. than they had been getting. I would not like to criticize, but at the same time I think that if they had put in the same amount of work for the Turf Club in the selling of sweepstake tickets as they used to do in selling tickets for the various charities, their contributions would have been very considerably greater. I hope they will try and do so in future.

Mr. C. V. WIGHT: I do not want to occupy much time, but there are one or two charitable organizations who feel they are not getting as much as they might have done through their own efforts. This Ordinance envisages a period of time previous to 1939 when it was passed. I do not quite know how the Ordinance can meet the situation which arises in regard to the development of any approved charitable organization in the way of an increase in its activities. As against that one must consider also the question of decline in the activities of any other approved charitable organization. It seems to me that the Charities Committee in considering a question of that sort would necessarily consider the question of the percentage. I do not know whether

there should be another sub-section—(5) of section 21—of this Bill dealing with that, or that section 21 (5) of Ordinance 38 of 1939 was elastic enough to provide for that. I have my doubts. There is also the question of the definition of “charitable organization” in Section 21 (7) of the 1939 Ordinance. If that cannot be done I would suggest that the Charities Committee pay some regard to the surrounding circumstances and make, as no doubt they do, the necessary enquiries and have before them the figures and activities of the various bodies who are affected by this Ordinance. In other words they should make a periodical revision of the amount of work done by the various charities, and see whether that work has increased or decreased since the operation of the Ordinance.

I do not like to raise any controversial subject, but at the present moment I am inclined to leave it to those who are in control of the Turf Club to see, as I know they are endeavouring to do, that some of these race meetings are encouraged, even in a small way and whether they make a considerable sum or not, to run their own sweeps and under the auspices of this Ordinance. Personally I would like to see as indicated by the hon. Nominated Member (Mr. Walcott) these sweepstakes reach a sum as great as those in the neighbouring Colonies of Trinidad, Barbados and Grenada and, I think, as indicated also, that with a little more activity on the part of all concerned the desired amount would be achieved in the end.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL: In answer to the hon. Member for Western Essequibo (Mr. C. V. Wight) I may state that I discussed the matter with the Charity Commissioners. Once the scheme is put into operation you cannot alter it. Seventeen names are on the Approved List at the moment and, if they consider another Charity should be placed on it or for any reason any of them should expire, the Commissioners realize that it means another amendment of the Ordinance. The position is such that they are not prepared to carry on the arduous work and to go it all over again. If the situation arises that a new organization is formed and is working in this Colony and it should have a contribution, then it

means another amendment to this Ordinance.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read the second time.

The Council resolved itself into Committee and proceeded to consider the Bill clause by clause.

Clause 1—Short Title.

Mr. JACOB: May I point out that the words "Short Title" do not appear in margin against Clause 1.

Bill passed without amendment.

The Council resumed.

Notice was given that at the next or a subsequent meeting of the Council it would be moved that the Bill be read the third time and passed.—(*The Attorney-General*).

HAYNES PENSION BILL, 1941.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I beg to move that a Bill intituled "An Ordinance to make provision for the payment of a pension to Edwin Allison Haynes" be read a third time and passed.

Mr. DIAS seconded.

Question "That this Bill be read a third time and passed" put, and agreed to.

Bill read the third time.

MILITIA (AMENDMENT) BILL, 1941.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL: I move that a Bill intituled "An Ordinance further to amend the Militia Ordinance by prescribing the age for retirement of Bandsmen and Band Apprentices" be read a third time and passed.

Professor DASH seconded.

Question "That this Bill be read a third time and passed" put, and agreed to.

Bill read the third time.

INTERPRETATION (AMENDMENT) BILL, 1941.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL: I move that a Bill intituled "An Ordinance to amend the Interpretation Ordinance by providing that the appointment of a public officer to perform statutory duties may be made either by name or by the public office held by such officer" be read a third time and passed.

Professor DASH seconded.

Question "That this Bill be read a third time and passed" put, and agreed to.

Bill read the third time.

DRAINAGE AND IRRIGATION (AMENDMENT) BILL, 1941.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL: I move that a Bill intituled "An Ordinance to amend the Drainage and Irrigation Ordinance, 1940, by making provision for the registration of title to land whereon new works are erected in a Drainage and Irrigation Area" be read a third time and passed.

Professor DASH seconded.

Mr. JACOB: I am asked to make a protest in regard to the passing of the third reading of this Bill. I believe that a petition will be presented to the Governor in Council. Your Excellency will recall that with the exception of the two Elected Members who are members of the Drainage and Irrigation Board the majority of the Elected Members were not in favour of the Bill being passed as originally worded. I merely rise to say that your assent should be deferred for a little time until a petition is presented to the Governor in Council.

THE PRESIDENT: I am not sure if

the hon. Member is moving that the Bill be not read a third time, but the correct procedure is to vote against the passing instead of moving an amendment which is negative.

Mr. JACOB: I must confess that I am not familiar with the regular procedure. Whether I move an amendment or not, I think it will be passed. I am simply appealing to Your Excellency that your powers of assent should not be used just now. I am informed that a petition is going to be presented to the Governor in Council. If it is necessary that I move an amendment, I will do so.

THE PRESIDENT: The Bill, I understand, was published in May and I have received no petition.

Mr. JACOB: As has been disclosed during the debate, certain legal proceedings have been started and are pending, and those concerned are surprised that those proceedings have been taken a few weeks ago in respect of something that happened in June. There is another case. At Cove and John where there were certain objections taken to certain works being carried out there, certain parties desirous of passing there with their boat were told they could not pass. The parties replied that they had their lands and must pass to get to them. As the result of what took place the people were charged with disorderly behaviour. These matters have been brought to my notice and I have raised them here so that notice may be taken of them. I am definite that a petition will be submitted to the Governor in Council with respect to the proceedings.

THE PRESIDENT: I suggest that their action be expedited because the hon. Attorney-General is required to advise Government whether assent may be given. If the petition is received it will be forwarded to the hon. Attorney-General for him to consider and advise thereon. In any case I am not giving any undertaking not to assent to the Bill.

Mr. JACOB: Shall I move a motion?

Mr. DE AGUIAR: The hon. Member is not in order!

Mr. JACOB: I am trying to find out what is the correct procedure.

THE PRESIDENT: It is wrong to move an amendment against the third reading of the Bill. The action to be taken is to vote against the motion for the third reading. That has the same effect and is the correct procedure.

Mr. JACOB: Very well, sir.

Question "That this Bill be read a third time and passed" put, and the Council divided, the voting being as follows:—

For—Messrs. Jackson, DeAguiar, Gonsalves, Percy C. Wight, Crease, Laing, D'Andrade, Austin, Seaford, McDavid, Woolford, Dias, Dr. Maclellan, Professor Dash, the Attorney-General, the Colonial Secretary—16.

Against—Messrs. C. V. Wight, Lee and Jacob—3.

Motion passed.

Bill read the third time.

Y.M.C.A. (COLONY TRUSTEES INCORPORATION) (AMENDMENT) BILL, 1941.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL: I move that a Bill intituled "An Ordinance to amend the Young Men's Christian Association (Colony Trustees Incorporation) Ordinance by making provision to vest the property of the Association in the Trustees" be read a third time and passed.

Professor DASH seconded.

Question "That this Bill be read a third time and passed" put, and agreed to.

Bill read the third time.

TRANSPORT & HARBOURS (AMENDMENT) BILL, 1941.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL: I move that a Bill intituled "An Ordinance to amend the Transport and Harbours Ordinance, 1931, by inserting therein provision

respecting the liability of owners or masters in the case of loss or damage caused by vessels under compulsory pilotage" be read a third time and passed.

Professor DASH seconded.

Question "That this Bill be read a third time and passed" put, and agreed to.

Bill read the third time.

NEW AMSTERDAM TOWN COUNCIL (AMENDMENT), BILL, 1941.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL: I move that a Bill intituled "An Ordinance to amend the New Amsterdam Town Council (Amendment) Ordinance, 1940, by correcting certain references to the date from which certain specified periods shall be calculated" be read a third time and passed.

Professor DASH seconded.

Question "That this Bill be read a third time and passed" put, and agreed to.

Bill read the third time.

JUDICIAL PROCEEDINGS (REGULATION OF REPORTS) BILL, 1941.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL: I move that a Bill intituled "An Ordinance to regulate the publication of reports of Judicial proceedings in such manner as to prevent injury to public morals" be read a third time and passed.

Professor DASH seconded.

Question "That this Bill be read a third time and passed" put, and agreed to.

Bill read the third time.

DAVSON CENTENARY FUND (AMENDMENT) BILL, 1941.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL: I move that a Bill intituled "An Ordinance to amend the Davson Centenary Fund Ordinance by conferring discretionary power on the committee to make payments, not exceeding a specified proportion of the

interest available for distribution, to the Committee of the Medical Library at the Public Hospital, Georgetown" be read a third time and passed.

Professor DASH seconded.

Question "That this Bill be read a third time and passed" put, and agreed to.

Bill read the third time.

PENSIONS (AMENDMENT) BILL, 1941.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL: The hon. Member for Georgetown Central (Mr. Percy C. Wight) has been good enough to point out what he considered to be an error in the title. He referred to the word "certain" being mentioned. If he will look at sub-clause (5) of Clause 3 he will see that it says:

This section shall not apply in the case of the death of any officer selected for appointment to the service of the Colony on or after the first of January, nineteen hundred and thirty-six, if his dependents, as defined in the Workmen's Compensation Ordinance, 1934, are entitled to compensation under that Ordinance.

Therefore the Bill does not apply to all officers. With this explanation I beg to move that a Bill intituled "An Ordinance to amend the Pensions Ordinance, 1933, by making provision for the payment of pensions to the dependants of certain officers who lose their lives owing to enemy action while travelling to or from the Colony during war time; by providing for the grant of increased pensions to officers permanently injured while so travelling and by making certain minor amendments" be read a third time and passed.

Professor DASH seconded.

Question "That this Bill be read a third time and passed" put, and agreed to.

Bill read the third time.

INCOME TAX (AMENDMENT NO. 2) BILL, 1941.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL: I move that a Bill intituled "An Ordinance to amend the Income Tax Ordinance by sub-

stituting a new definition of the word "Company" and by defining more accurately the deduction allowed in respect of the payment of Excess Profits Tax when ascertaining the chargeable income for the purpose of Income Tax" be read a third time and passed.

Professor DASH seconded.

Question "That this Bill be read a third time and passed" put, and agreed to.

Bill read the third time.

**SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION (1940)
BILL, 1941.**

Mr. McDAVID (Colonial Treasurer): I beg to move that a Bill intituled "An Ordinance to allow and confirm certain additional expenditure incurred in the year ended the thirty-first day of December, 1940" be read a third time and passed.

Mr. AUSTIN seconded.

Question "That this Bill be read a third time and passed" put, and agreed to.

Bill read the third time.

**CUSTOMS (WAR POWERS) (AMENDMENT)
BILL, 1941.**

Mr. D'ANDRADE (Comptroller of Customs): I beg to move that a Bill intituled "An Ordinance to amend the Customs (War Powers) Ordinance, 1939, by making provision with respect to the date on which it shall cease to have effect" be read a third time and passed.

Mr. LAING (Commissioner of Labour and Local Government) seconded.

Question "That this Bill be read a third time and passed" put, and agreed to.

Bill read the third time.

CUSTOMS DUTIES (AMENDMENT) BILL, 1941.

Mr. D'ANDRADE: I beg to move that a Bill intituled "An Ordinance further to amend the Customs Duties Ordinance, 1935" be read a third time and passed.

Mr. LAING seconded.

Question "That this Bill be read a third time and passed" put, and agreed to.

Bill read the third time.

RENT RESTRICTION BILL, 1941.

The Council resumed the debate on the second reading of the following Bill:

A Bill entitled an Ordinance to restrict in specified areas the increase of rent of certain classes of dwelling-houses and the right to recover possession thereof, and for purposes connected with the matters aforesaid.

THE PRESIDENT: The hon. Member for Georgetown Central (Mr. Percy C. Wight) was speaking on the second reading of the Bill when it was deferred.

Mr. PERCY C. WIGHT: I am very grateful for the postponement of the Bill until to-day. I have been asked particularly to state that in Clause 2 of the Bill the definition of "standard rent" is not clear. It reads—

"Standard Rent" means the rent at which a dwelling-house or land was let on the third day of September, nineteen hundred and thirty-nine, or where the dwelling-house or land was not then let, the rent at which it was let before that date, or in the case of a dwelling-house or land first let after that date, the rent at which it was first let.

I would like it clearly put to me. Suppose I had a house renting for \$30 and after it had been empty for six or seven months I reduced the rent to \$25 rather than continuing to employ a watchman, what is to prevent the rent from going back to its normal figure? That is a situation I have in my mind and would like elucidated. Clause 6 (1) (b) reads—

An amount not exceeding any increase in the amount for the time being payable by the landlord in respect of rates and taxes over the corresponding amount paid in respect of the yearly period which included the third day of September, nineteen hundred and thirty-nine, or in case of a dwelling-house for which no rates or taxes were payable in respect of any period which included that date, the period which included the date on which the rates and taxes first became payable thereon.

With regard to that, you can quite see that it may be made a little clearer. I am very reluctant to accept it as it is. I can offer no improvement but I would like the honourable and learned Attorney-General to consider it. It is quite definitely and clearly set out, but it is not considered so by my interviewers. With regard to sub-clause

(1) (a) I have been particularly asked, and I think it is a very reasonable request, that it should be ten per cent. instead of eight per cent. We are all aware that the prices of house materials have gone up far in excess of all expectation, and at the present moment it is very difficult to obtain wood to do anything. When we say ten per cent., it is only natural that it should mean of the rental and not of improvement expenses. For instance, a room is being rented at 10/- and some repairs are done to it. I take it that provision does not mean 10 per cent. of the improvement expenses incurred but 10 per cent. of the whole rental. To my mind it would be unfair to the landlord if it is based on the improvement. The man may have to repair the whole of that room costing quite a sum of money and therefore the increase percentage should be on the rental and not on the repairs. You can get no bolts, no window hinges. Prices have gone up considerably. A pane of glass costs 300 per cent. more than what it used to be. You may have to paint after effecting repairs. It surely does not seem to be right to put the percentage on repairs over a period of twelve months.

With regard to the restriction on levy of distress for rent I made it a duty to ascertain from the Magistrate's Court and discovered that very few applications are made but Clause 8 reads—

No distress for the rent of a dwelling-house or of land to which this Ordinance applies shall be levied except with the leave of the Court and the Court shall, with respect to any application for such leave, have the same or similar powers with respect to adjournment, stay, suspension, postponement, and otherwise as are conferred by the last preceding section in relation to applications for the recovery of possession.

That is a hardship. Under the 1922 Rent Restriction Ordinance you would have got it at once. It is only fair that should be left in. I do not see why one should go to unnecessary legal expense in the matter. Clause 10 (1) says :

A tenant who by virtue of the provisions of this Ordinance retains possession of a dwelling-house or of land to which this Ordinance applies shall, so long as he does so, observe and be entitled to the benefit of all the terms and conditions of the original contract of tenancy, so far as they are consistent with the provisions of this Ordinance, and shall only be entitled to give up possession of the dwelling-house on giving the notice which would have been required under the original contract of

tenancy, or, if no notice would have been so required, on giving not less than three months' notice.

That seems to be an innovation which is unnecessary at this stage. If I want to go into one of my houses at Bel Air must I give the occupying tenant three months' notice? I do not see why I should be deprived of the right to go into my own property. There is no such scarcity of houses as it is sought to make out. Clause 11 says notice to quit shall be served only after the passing of this Ordinance and not before. Why should it be from March and not from the day of the passing of this Ordinance? Those are the requests I have been asked to represent here.

Mr. WOOLFORD: I feel it very incumbent upon me to make a few remarks on this Bill. It is a very important Bill and I was thinking a great deal about it because I believe it may have far-reaching effects. It is stated in the "Objects and Reasons" that because of our war conditions rentals up to \$720 may be increased, and we are aware that the Bill very largely follows in pattern the Rent Restriction Bill of 1919. I was a Member of this Council in 1919 and the subsequent years, and as far as I can see most of the Members here were also members of the community. My recollection of the conditions which existed in 1919 and the following years is that those were years in which there was a wave of prosperity all over the Colony. There was a disposition to spend money without thinking in any way as to the future. Prices were up and uncontrolled and one did not hesitate to pay the cost of any article because we all felt we could afford it. To use an American slang: "We all joined the prosperity band waggon."

It is because of the recent American invasion, I suspect, that this Bill is being introduced. Although I am not going to oppose it, for certain reasons which I shall give, I doubt very much whether we are wise in enacting remedial legislation because there has been an influx of that kind of population who are ready and willing to pay increased rentals for the premises they occupy. I have risen on more than one reason to say as a Member of the Government that legislation of this kind is somewhat forced. I may add that I say it as an old and independent

Member of the Government, one who is quite at liberty to express my opinions freely. This emergency legislation has been forced on the Government by what I may term the conduct of some members of this community.

Representations have been made to Government for increased protection against the rapacity of landlords. The representations for increased rents were more numerous than the protests against the landlords doing so, and my recollection is that a large number of the labouring classes who inhabit tenement rooms complained of the action of the landlords in increasing their rent. On that occasion the increased rentals they were being asked to pay were due to increased Municipal taxation. That was true; I saw receipts myself. There was a chorus of protests against the action of the landlords doing so. On the other hand it has been my experience to sit on a Committee which invited an audience of both landlords and tenants, especially occupiers of tenement rooms who were feeling this hardship. And what did we find? In every case where there was this protest by tenants against the increased rents, we found the corresponding situation that those people did not pay their rents at all but continued to occupy the rooms because the law allowed them to do so.

I am going to ask the hon. and learned Attorney-General whose time, I know, is fully occupied, to address himself to the situation that has now arisen. It is an economic and social condition which makes very interesting study because at the present moment, as I see it, there has been an increase of employment. I think that one may say there are far more tenants who within the last year have been better able to pay their rents than in the 1919 situation which was entirely different. There is the prospect of their doing so. I do ask that as an excuse for introducing legislation of this kind the conditions that existed in 1919, which were unusual and are not likely to be repeated, should not be urged in support of the increase when, although to-day there is less prosperity than then, there is difficulty in judging whether you should protect the landlord or the tenant. On the one hand those of us who know the City well, know that there have been some few instances in which tenants have vacated

premises in order to allow of an increased rental being received by the landlord. How long is that going to obtain? It may be for a year and a half. What class of house is affected? It refers as far as I see to that class of house which may be said to be occupied by tenants who formerly paid between \$30 and \$40 rising to \$50 or even in cases where the owner occupied it he would naturally charge himself some such rental. This Bill particularly aims at the owner of a property in respect of which the occupancy and the rental of that occupancy produce rentals of the figures I have mentioned.

Under the conditions that existed in 1919 persons who lived in tenement rooms made an exodus to cottages and those who were in cottages lived in large-sized dwellings. I think I am right in saying that during those years of prosperity there was a kind of occupancy that never before existed in this Colony. Owing to conditions which followed, those people who usually occupied cottages or a little larger sized dwelling-houses more or less formed a community who by force of circumstances actually went into still larger dwellings. There was never this communal life before. I know several cases where people, who used to occupy their own tenement rooms and cottages, found themselves compelled to live in apartments or rooms in larger houses. So you have to consider it—I am speaking now in the interest of all kinds of people—from the point of view of the landlord, and if you are saying to this section of the community that those owning tenement dwellings must improve them and make them habitable, you are introducing legislation at a period when it is most difficult for landlords to do so. The hon. Member for Georgetown Central (Mr. Percy C. Wight), himself a large property-owner, can tell you what his own experience is, and there are those of us who know what landlords have to undergo with the cost of materials for premises greatly increased.

One of my reasons for rising is to object as far as I am able and to ask for a reconsideration of Clause 13 (5) which says:

A magistrate may, as a condition of sanctioning any increase of rent or part thereof, require that the dwelling-house be repaired and kept in repair to the satisfaction of the magistrate.

That clause is a new one and it amounts to this. It is not concerned with the land-

lord whose premises are rented for \$40 and \$50 per month. The casual observer would see that those houses are more or less in good order, but the houses in the worst condition are those occupied by the labourer—those who are now getting a job where they could not before; they are earning a certain amount of money to do what they could not do before; they are able to pay their rent. If you enjoin on the landlord a condition whereby if he asks for a slight increase of rent he must be ready and willing to improve the living condition of his tenant, who for the first time is getting an income—something which he never got before—you are impeding expenditure on the improvement of dwellings where it is most needed. Looking at it from the purely economic point of view and from the point of view of both landlord and tenant, I do ask that this clause be deleted for the reasons I have given and for other reasons. I know as a lawyer that to get possession of a house in this Colony it is the most difficult thing. In the case of tenement rooms, the rental of which is \$2.40 and \$3.00 per room, the landlord has to go before the Magistrate and he can only go after the lapse of a period of a month or two. When the tenant appears before the Magistrate he is usually penitent but also penniless and asks for time. He is without any money to pay the landlord or to pay the costs. The landlord loses two months' rent and the expenses amounting to another month's rent before he can get possession. Anyone who has taken the trouble to read the report of the Committee which examined the Rent Recovery Ordinance—I know that report has received the attention of the hon. and learned Attorney-General and that some form of a Bill is on the stacks—would see that clauses 8 and 13 (5) of this Bill should not be introduced until the other form of legislation has been passed. That is say, to go back to the question of distress and regaining possession by distress. I am sure all would agree that if a person cannot pay his rent he should be made to go. You say to the landlord you cannot increase your rent beyond the standard rent, but you leave him without the remedy to which he is entitled and that is to have the tenant who would not pay any rent at all ejected or made to vacate the room. I therefore ask that anything which offers an impediment to the improvement of the dwellings

of the working class, anything which makes the landlord lag behind in the improvement of his dwellings through expenditure should be removed from the ambit of this Bill.

I want to make a few remarks, very shortly, on the position of the Attorney-General. I am one of those who am always being asked by various members of the community why is it the Attorney-General does not appear in the Supreme Court? Why is he not made to take an active rôle in the conduct of various matters that have happened in the Law Courts? I know there was a time when the Attorney-General of the Colony could have sufficient time to appear in the Courts and I daresay that time may come again.

I want to assure those who think the Attorney-General is an idle person that I have been pressing him to pay attention to the present state of many Ordinances in many of which improvements are necessary, but during the last year or so he has been too hard pressed with work to find time to do so. I must ask him to accept our assurance that this new clause would cause very great hardship. I would like to see it excluded from the Bill.

There is just one other matter. That report deals with a situation which is also affected by this Bill, and I do not see how it is going to be cured owing to the position, as I see it, of sub-letting. There is a great deal of it in this Colony. We all know that you have a class of tenant who is at the present moment in possession of certain parts of a house. A dwelling-house includes a part of a house. These people pay their rent not to the landlords but to the principal tenants. What has happened is that when the landlord cannot get his rent from those persons, who farm their houses out, and makes a levy to recover his rent he finds himself faced with a hire-purchase agreement in respect of the furniture in the house. The landlord does not get his rent, the furniture belonging to the sub-tenant. The Full Court gave a decision which although binding on the Magistrate does not prevent the sub-tenant, who knows that under his hire-purchase agreement he is protected against a levy of distress, from carrying on, and the landlord is unable to recover his rent from the principal tenant. That is a piece of social legislation which requires amendment in many ways, but I am

not going to oppose the Bill because I believe that some of the representations are entitled to consideration. I do hope that a correct view will be taken of the relations between landlord and tenant as they exist in this Colony. I believe, although this Bill seeks to protect the tenant from being charged too much, that I am right in thinking that these tenants need no protection. They are enjoying a salary here which enables them to pay this high rent. They are at the present moment free from taxation in their own surroundings and, I believe, the general result of living to these tenants is far more beneficial than Government realises. They are able to pay \$100 or \$150 for renting a house with a considerable amount of furniture. They are not paying too much for the accommodation they get.

Mr. DE AGUIAR: I share most of the views expressed by the hon. Member who has just taken his seat, and also some of the views expressed by the previous speaker. At the same time I am bound to admit that a Bill of this kind is welcome. It has some very good features which will certainly get at the root of some of the evils which we know exist. I refer to what is commonly known as the avaricious landlord. But its bad features are going to strike at those who carry on business as a landlord in the normal course of things. It is a pity. In making these remarks I am not unmindful of the difficulties which faced the draftsman, as referred to by the hon. Attorney-General when speaking on the second reading. He admitted there was a certain amount of difficulties and a certain amount of hardship which may be accrued. I, probably, go a step further than that and say that in my opinion very little attempt is made in this Bill to protect the interests of the landlord and, I think, the hon. Member who has just taken his seat endeavoured to make that point clear. We want to protect the tenant from the avaricious landlord, but at the same time we want to protect the interests of the landlord. It must be remembered that in protecting the interests of the landlord we are not out to do so to the detriment of the tenant. Landlords are doing a big service to the community and for that service they are entitled to their just due.

It is all a "clap trap" in my opinion for those who do not know the difficulties in maintaining these houses in order, to get on soap-boxes and places of that kind and

say that tenants should not pay their rent or should not be ejected if they do not pay their rent. I would like to ask some of these people whether if they had the money to invest in properties they would permit such a state of affairs to continue. I am entirely in favour of a Bill that is designed to meet the poorer classes of tenants, but at the same time I want the poorer classes of tenants to make every effort to meet their obligations. I am certainly opposed to a Bill that goes further than that. In this Bill it is sought to protect a type of house the maximum rental of which is \$720 per annum. I respectfully ask whether this Government has any intention, despite the representation made to it, or is really serious in its desire, to protect that class of tenants. \$720 per annum is \$60 per month, and I ask Government if it is serious in its intention to protect that type of tenant. There was a previous Ordinance dealing with this matter in 1919, and I do not know what was the maximum rental fixed.

THE PRESIDENT: \$720 per annum.

Mr. DE AGUIAR: Then I do not know how it escaped this Council when it was passed. Be that as it may, I repeat I cannot help thinking that this Government is not serious in its intention to do that, unless the representation I referred to came from some source other than the class of tenants I have in mind. I repeat that I am in sympathy with the man who pays his \$4 or \$5 or \$10 per month rent, but definitely I am not in sympathy with the man who pays \$60 per month, and I am not prepared to support the Bill on that score. I believe it is very desirable that this Bill should receive early passage in this Council, but at all events I hope it is not going through this afternoon. I am going to ask when we reach the Committee stage that the amendments put forward by hon. Members receive the favourable consideration of Government. I do not know what Government's policy is in the matter. I can hardly visualize that it is the intention every time a man wants to increase his rent by reason of certain conditions he must apply to a Court of Law for permission. Surely that is a cumbersome thing to do. If a man carries out certain works on his property, under this Bill before he can increase the rent beyond the standard rent he has to apply to a Magistrate under Clause 6 (1) which reads:

The amount by which the increased rent of a dwelling-house or land to which this Ordinance applies may, with the sanction of the Court, exceed the standard rent shall, subject to the provisions of this Ordinance, be as follows, that is to say—

(a) where the landlord has since the third day of September, nineteen hundred and thirty nine, incurred or hereafter incurs expenditure on the improvement or structural alteration of the dwelling-house (not including expenditure on decoration or repairs) an amount calculated at a rate per annum not exceeding eight *per centum* of the amount so expended:

Provided that the Court may decline to sanction such increase, or may sanction a reduced amount of increase, if the expenditure is or was unnecessary in whole or in part, as the case may be;

(b) an amount not exceeding any increase in the amount for the time being payable by the landlord in respect of rates and taxes over the corresponding amount paid in respect of the yearly period which included the third day of September, nineteen hundred and thirty-nine, or in case of a dwelling-house for which no rates or taxes were payable in respect of any period which included that date, the period which included the date on which the rates and taxes first became payable thereon.

I interpret that to mean that before a man can increase his rent after fulfilling all the conditions for increase he must apply to the Court. The whole thing seems to be ridiculous. It is not only cumbersome but ridiculous. Why a landlord should be put to all that expense and trouble to apply to the Magistrate's Court before he can increase his rent, when it may occur, as it often does, as the result of certain works undertaken at the request of the Court? It seems to me that is a matter which may quite easily be settled between the parties concerned. If a person is an aggrieved party by reason of his increased rent then the parties may appear before the Court to settle their differences. That is one clause that has occurred to me at the moment that should be altered or amended.

I do not know whether Clause 13 (2) was copied from the old Ordinance, but there again if a person is aggrieved and applies to the Magistrate, the latter's decision is final. If I have a tenant in my house paying \$60 per month and I have reason to take him before the Magistrate and the Magistrate decides against me, I should have the right to appeal against that decision. I do not see why in such a case the decision of the Magistrate should be final. There is a lot of merit in the point raised by the hon. Member for New

Amsterdam (Mr. Woolford) in respect of clause 13 (5), and there again I hope it will receive consideration. I see no provision here whereby the rent can be increased in the event of a house being enlarged. I think provision should be made to meet that case, because it seems quite clear that the standard rent should not apply in that case. I would like to see some provision made to give effect to that situation. I am afraid I can go on speaking longer but I will not as I hope to return to the matter when the Bill reaches the Committee stage.

Mr. LEE: I would like to make a few remarks. I do agree with the hon. Member for New Amsterdam that this Bill is going to afford protection to certain classes of tenants up to a certain rental. If \$60 per month rental is too high for those people who can afford to pay it, an amendment can be made in the Committee stage. In my opinion if the hon. Attorney-General looks around he would see that the amount was previously \$480 per annum, and the people who suffer the most in respect of increased rent are the poor and humble classes—those paying a small rental of \$3, \$4 and \$5 for tenement rooms and from \$15 to \$30 per month for cottages. Landlords increased their rents in the event of an increase in taxation and in the event of carrying out little repairs. These people can ill-afford to pay any more increase of rent. I do not agree with the hon. Member for Central Demerara (Mr. de Aguiar) that if a landlord feels he should increase his rent and has the bills to show in respect of repairs or improvement made he should not apply to the Court, but the tenant who is already poor should make application to the Court in respect of the standard rent.

I do appeal whether this Government cannot see its way to extend this Bill to rental other than that in respect of dwelling-houses. In my constituency people are renting land as tenants. They have to pay increased rent and cannot do otherwise except they go and work on a sugar estate. Unless some protection is given them I am afraid that cultivation may be decreased to the detriment of revenue. Similarly where they rent from the proprietor rooms on the land they pay between \$2 and \$5 per month and no repairs are done to those buildings. I do appeal to Government that protection be given to those people.

With respect to application for levy of distress I think it should be left entirely to the discretion of the Magistrate. After all he is the dispenser of justice and will hear both sides, the case of the landlord and that of the tenant. With respect to the right of appeal, the hon. Member for Central Demerara thinks the decision of the Magistrate should be only final when the amount of rent does not exceed \$240. Why should a tenant be encouraged to take the matter to the Supreme Court involving great expense? I think the Magistrate is competent and in such cases his decision should be final. I appeal for the protection of the sub-tenants. There is a large

number of them who are paying their rent to the principal tenants who somewhat do not pay the rent to the landlord.

THE PRESIDENT: I propose to adjourn the Council until Wednesday, next week. I hope that will be suitable to hon. Members. We shall then continue with this Bill which will be the first item for consideration on the agenda. If it meets with the approval of hon. Members I adjourn the Council to Wednesday, 22nd instant at 11 a.m.

The Council adjourned accordingly.