

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

Thursday, 28th February, 1946.

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

PRESENT:

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

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary, Mr. W. L. Heape, C.M.G.

The Hon. the Attorney-General (Acting), Mr. F. W. Holder.

The Hon. the Colonial Treasurer, Mr. E. F. Mc David, C.B.E.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The Hon. Peer Bacchus (Western Berbice),

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

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

The Hon. A. M. Edun (Nominated).

The Hon. T. T. Thompson (Nominated).

The Clerk read prayers.

The minutes of the meeting of the Council held on Wednesday, 27th February, 1946, as printed and circulated, were taken as read and confirmed.

ORDER OF THE DAY.

CIVIL SERVANTS' LEAVE.

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

Q.—1. Will Government state whether Civil Servants on the "Fixed" or "Other than Fixed" Establishment are eligible or entitled to leave if they resign from the Service prior to their reaching the retiring age.

A.—1. Prior to the 17th of May, 1945, the established practice laid down formally in this Colony was not to grant leave to an officer who resigned from Government service before reaching pensionable status. From that date, however, this rule has been modified to the extent that leave for which an officer may be eligible by service may now be granted prior to the date of resignation taking effect, provided there have been fulfilled the normal conditions of prior application and of reasonable notice of intention to resign in order that the necessary arrangements can be made for his duties to be carried on. If, however, the officer resigns at short notice on personal grounds and to accord with his own wishes and without prior advice to Government, his service ends with effect from the date of his resignation.

Q.—2. If the answer to question 1 is either in the affirmative or the negative, will Government also state:—

- (A) (i) The names of those civil servants who have resigned from the Service since 1st January, 1945.
- (ii) The date of their appointment to the Service and the date of their resignation from the Service.
- (iii) The period of leave granted to them.
- (iv) The grounds on which they were granted leave prior to their resignation from the Service.
- (B) Whether any of them were granted leave prior to their resignation from the Service with permission to accept paid employment during such leave.
- (C) Whether any of them were in paid employment at the time they were granted leave prior to resignation from the Service.
- (D) Whether they were in paid employment during the period of such leave granted to them by Government.
- (E) The names of those civil servants regarding (B), (C) & (D).
- (F) The names of those officers who applied for leave prior to resignation and whose applications were refused.
- (G) What were the grounds for treating those officers regarding (F) differently from the others granted prior to resignation.
- (H) The date of appointment and the length of service of the officers regarding (F).

A—2. As the information desired is in respect of civil servants whether on the Fixed Establishment or not a great deal of research would be involved in obtaining it, and it is possible that the case of some particular officer may be overlooked. It will be convenient, therefore, if the Honourable Member will name the officer about whom information is desired in which case it will be provided immediately. It will be provided immediately.

DUAL CONTROL OF SCHOOLS.

Motion:—

That, with reference to Governor's Message No. 14 dated the 7th of January, 1946, this Council approves of the recommendations of the Sub-Committee's Report on Dual Control of Schools, and ratifies the policy of Government as outlined in paragraphs 5 and 6 of the Message.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY:

have invited the Director of Education to attend this afternoon, and with your permission, sir, I hope he will be permitted to take part in the debate. With Mr. Crease present it will not be necessary for me to speak at any length on this motion. The principal recommendation, as contained in paragraph 5 of Your Excellency's Message, provides that the denominational school system shall continue, but that Government can erect Government-owned and Government-controlled schools where and when the occasion demands. Thus the Churches, which have been the pioneers in education in the West Indies, will continue to have a share with the State in the control of education in this Colony to the mutual benefit of each.

Hon. members will see from the Message that Government has undertaken the full liability of improving, reconstructing, maintaining and equipping schools, many of which are in a state of disrepair far beyond the resources of the Governing Bodies concerned. As regards the appointment of teachers which, under the present system, particularly in regard to head teachers, has not always proved satisfactory, there are new proposals about which I feel there will be no complaint. It will also be seen from the Committee's recommendations that arrangements are made to improve the disciplinary procedure. Religious instruction will continue to have a definite status and must form part of the curriculum of all schools.

Paragraph 4 of Your Excellency's Message states that these proposals have been accepted unanimously by the Education Committee, by the Legislative Council Advisory Committee on Education, and by the Executive Council, and I am confident that they will receive the unanimous support of this Council to-day.

There is one other point which will be new to Members. We have information that these proposals are being studied and viewed with favour by every British Guianese in the Caribbean, and if they go through this Council this afternoon I think it would be safe to say that British Guiana would be setting a very good example on this question of dual control of schools.

Finally, I take this opportunity to offer the most sincere and the warmest congratulations to our Director of Education who has managed, after a long and difficult time, to put forward to this Council a unanimous report on a very controversial question indeed. I now formally move the motion standing in my name.

Dr. SINGH: In seconding the motion I wish to say that there are many young people of a large section of the non-Christian inhabitants of this country who would have been qualified as primary school teachers if they had received encouragement and had no apprehension as to their appointment as teachers after they had qualified. This section of the community feels that since non-Christians contribute largely to the revenue of the Colony, and since Government pays the teachers of the Colony—head teachers, assistant teachers and pupil teachers—the control of the schools of the Colony should be directly under Government. It is for that reason that Mr. Hammond's memorandum is regarded by that section of the com-

munity as the means to that end. There was, however, divergence of opinion on the subject, and Government rightly appointed a large Committee with representatives of every religious denomination and every organization in the Colony. The work of the Committee extended over a protracted period, but it finally arrived at the decision to recommend that Government should continue to pay the salaries of all teachers; that the denominations should continue to manage the schools under a Trust composed of two members nominated by the Heads of the denominations, a member of the Legislative Council appointed by the Governor, a senior member of the staff of the Education Department, and a Chairman appointed by the Heads of the denominations with the approval of Government.

On the question of the ownership of school buildings the Committee's recommendation is that in the case of a school built entirely from the funds of a denomination, that school should continue to be owned by the denomination concerned. On the other hand, if a school is built entirely from Government or Imperial Government funds that school should be the property of the Government. In the case of a school built from Government and denominational funds on the basis of 50-50, which is no longer required as a primary school, it should be put up for sale and the proceeds divided equally between Government and the denomination concerned.

The question still remains that although the denominational schools will be providing primary education for every child of school age, when a young man becomes qualified as a teacher it will be difficult for him, if he is a non-Christian, to obtain employment in a denominational school. We are hoping that under the agreement Government will build schools wherever possible, and in that way many of the non-Christian teachers may be absorbed.

I agree with the Colonial Secretary that the denominational bodies have been the pioneers in primary education and have done good work. I therefore think it is only fair that they should continue the work, but that Government will carry out its undertaking to build Government schools wherever possible so that non-Christian teachers may be considered.

Mr. EDUN: I have been perusing Your Excellency's Message very carefully, and I find therein a misstatement of fact. When the hon. Mover said that the report of the Committee was unanimous I considered the statement to be incorrect. It is not a unanimous report because I do not see the name of Pundit Ojha on the document. I know that the Pundit has since died, but the fact should have been mentioned that he had signed the report. Without his signature the report cannot be considered a unanimous one. In the circumstances both the statements made by the hon. Mover and in paragraph 7 of the Message are incorrect.

Dr. SINGH: Pundit Ojha died before the report was signed.

Mr. EDUN: Therefore my statement that the report was not unanimous is correct. It is perhaps a majority report. In any case I heard the hon. Member for Demerara-Essequibo (Dr. Singh) say that the Committee comprised representatives of all organizations. That may be so, but if we take the two principal factors, Christians and non-Christians, it will be found that the Committee was comprised of 15 Christians, one Hindu and one Moslem. East Indians comprise more than 43 per cent. of the population of British Guiana, and it can be safely stated that about 5 per cent. of the East Indians are Christians. Deducting 5 per cent. it means that 38 per cent. of the total population of the Colony are non-Christians—

Hindus and Muslims, but in the composition of the Committee we find 15 Christians and two non-Christians. Therefore, in the true sense of the word the Committee cannot be regarded as representative. In other words the interests of the non-Christians were not fully aired.

I recall the reaction on the minds of the non-Christian element when the Hammond report was published. That report gave them some hope; they thought the time had come when Government would take over all the denominational schools, convert them into secular Government schools, and no question of religion would be involved. After all, as the hon. Member for Demerara-Essequibo has said, the non-Christians comprise a large section of the taxpayers of the Colony, and so far as education is concerned their interests ought to be considered in proportion to their number.

Reading the report of the Committee in conjunction with Your Excellency's Message I am perforce to query whether this is what was meant when the dilution policy on education was mooted in the Colony, because, as I see it, there will be no possibility of the non-Christian section of the community being able to build a school or to manage a school. On this point I will read paragraph (ix) of the Committee's report which states:—

(ix) The Committee also wish to record that while it is not the intention of Government to dispense with denominational schools and to replace them by Government schools as it is clearly indicated above, yet Government must obviously reserve the right to erect new Government schools when and where occasion demands.

In other words, if a denomination cannot possibly erect a school where one is needed then Government would erect one and no non-Christian section of the community would have the right to erect a school and manage it.

For instance, if the B.G. Sanatana Dharma Maha Sabha wishes to erect its own school and to manage it, or for that matter the B.G. Islamic Association or the Sada Anjuman E Islam wishes to erect and manage its own school, those organizations will not be able to carry on any education of their own, and I consider that is not in the interest of the non-Christians at all. Apart from this phase of the argument, on the question of appointments it will be found in this report of the Committee that the process of elimination of the other communities is very definite. That is, even if a non-Christian community wishes to erect its own primary school, Government will not give a grant-in-aid to that school. As a matter of fact Government will not recognize that school in its operation at all and, therefore, in the whole process of years the disadvantage which the non-Christians suffer will still be there, because even if a non-Christian wants to be appointed as a teacher—Head Teacher or Assistant—the Committee which comprises a combination of Christians—two members nominated by the Heads of the Denominations concerned, a Senior Officer of the Education Department, a Member of the Legislative Council and a Chairman selected by the Denomination—will have to appoint him. In every case he will have to get his appointment through this Committee or through the Denominational Manager of a school or through the Department of Education. So wherever I turn in this document I find this process of elimination very strongly indeed against the non-Christian community. The Hammond Report did give us some hope, but it appears to me now that if this motion is passed in this Council that hope will be dashed to pieces and there will be no chance for the non-Christian community to do anything if they want to accelerate Primary Education in this Colony.

I consider this policy a one-sided one, and I am of the considered opin-

ion that Government did not give the non-Christian communities the representation they deserve, simply because it was found, perhaps, that they owned but one school. The time will come when the non-Christian communities will organize and will be able to have schools for their own communities in order to help this Government. Instead of elasticity in policy I find we still have only Christian Denominational and Government Schools, and we will go along with them in a dual control which is a danger altogether to the educational progress of this country. I regret that I have to make this observation. As a Muslim and a non-Christian myself, it has occurred to me more forcibly than it will to a Christian because somehow I happened to have passed through the same machinery of Pupil Teachership and eventually might have been a teacher myself, but I found this strangling of the non-Christian and the Denominations endeavouring to make every non-Christian a Christian if possible. But I think this Government has a greater duty than trying to convert people to religion. I do not say it is doing so directly, but on going through this document I see the whole tendency therein is an endeavour to bring the non-Christian to learn the teachings of the Christian religion. My hon. friend on my left (Mr. Jackson) says it is a good thing, but I have studied comparative religions and I know this much that it will be a danger to convert a Hindu to Christianity. Make him a better Hindu by his learning something of his own religion, culture and traditional ideal; it will be better for him than converting him to Christianity.

But I think this is beside the point. I think that Government ought not to commit itself to this policy. There is no immediate hurry. Something may happen. Why commit ourselves to a policy now? Why do so in this transition stage between a war and stability? Anything might happen.

I am perforced to admit that in this matter of education the question of cost is involved. How much will it cost us? I have seen the Education Vote jumping up so high; it is now \$1,000,000 odd. It makes my heart grieve as to where the money will be found to pay the teachers. I think the time has come when we should examine the question of the money we are paying to the teachers and whether we are obtaining value for that money. That is a question, I know, the hon. Member on my left (Mr. Jackson) does not like to hear—the examination of teachers' salaries. I think that was a hasty decision we made in that respect. I regret to say that I, perhaps, may be the only dissentient against this Message of yours, because I think we need not to be hurry. Let us wait until next year to see how the situation is by practical experience, and then this Council can commit itself. I regret I cannot support the Message and I will oppose the motion.

(After the lapse of a few minutes).

Mr. C. V. WIGHT: I beg to move that the question be now put.

Mr. JACOB: My hon. friend will have his chance when the other motion is being debated even to attempt to prevent Members from speaking. I can see the reluctance of several Members to speak on a question of this kind. It is a very controversial one indeed. At the outset I must say, I am against the motion and will vote against it. I have given this matter very careful consideration, and I do agree in the main with the remarks of the hon. the Fifth Nominated Member. I see no reason why this Council at this stage should be asked to ratify the policy of Government as outlined in His Excellency's Message, paragraphs 5 and 6. I would like to read those two paragraphs or portions of them at

least, so that I can give adequate reasons for not agreeing with this motion. Paragraph 5 says:

“Members will note that the principal recommendation is that the denominational school system should continue, but that Government may erect new Government-owned and Government-controlled schools when and where occasion demands.”

No one can object to that at this stage, but here again there is absolutely no policy, no plan as to how long this thing will continue. The present system has continued for over a century. If this Government is really going to put Primary Education on a permanent and satisfactory basis, then Government ought to say that it proposes to allow the present system to continue for a number of years but at some given period the whole system will be changed. That will be something statesmanlike, something practical, something that will appeal to the ordinary practical man. But it suits Government not to lay down a plan, something that this Council can be guided by and our future Governors may be guided by. Oh, no; leave the matter as it is without any definite policy and definite plan, and the result will be as it has been during the last century. We have something here which is not at all satisfactory and I will be sorry to think, as stated by the hon. Mover of the motion, that the Caribbean area is going to copy what we do here. I do not think it is the best thing. That may be good for Barbados, may be good for Jamaica or the Windward Islands, but certainly not good enough for British Guiana and not for Trinidad in respect of Primary Education.—Colonies with mixed communities of various races. I do not want to be misunderstood. I am not going to raise a racial issue at all. Whenever I speak in this Council I attempt to deal with matters of this kind on the basis of population whether Hindu, Muslim or Christian. I endeavour to speak on such matters on a basis purely not racial. So I say, before I agree to ratify paragraph 5 of

Your Excellency's Message some definite plan must be put forward as to when this dual control system will be abolished completely. Paragraph 6 states:

"The question of Government taking over all primary schools in the Colony and conducting them as purely Government-controlled schools has been fully explored by the various bodies referred to above, and it is the consensus of opinion that such a step would be impracticable;....."

Surely it is impracticable at the present time. I do not agree with the Committee that investigated this matter and reported and that it was a competent one fully representative of this community. I challenge that statement. It may be representative of the Christian people—those people who are controlling the schools—but that Committee was not a fully representative one competent to arrive at the decision which it has arrived at. Then again, I notice that the whole stress is on Christianity. I happen to be a Christian myself, but I cannot agree as a Member of this Council that only Christianity should be fostered in this Colony or in any British Colony. The Magna Charta made it perfectly clear that you must allow the people of any Colony in any part of the British Empire to practise their own religion or to carry on their own religious beliefs. Here in our primary schools we are debarring these people from doing so. I do not think it is the best thing. Paragraph 2 of His Excellency's Message states that this question of "Dual Control of Schools" involves particularly:— (i) the ownership of school buildings; (ii) the appointment and discipline of teachers; (iii) the teaching of religious knowledge in schools.

It is all right to have school buildings controlled, to have discipline of teachers, to have religious knowledge in the schools, but the question is the kind of religious knowledge. I presume it is the Christian teaching. Is Govern-

ment blind to the fact that there are at least 40 per cent. of the people who are not Christians? You have to consider those people; they are taxpayers too. I do not think it will be disputed that the population of this Colony is 60 per cent. Christians and 40 per cent. non-Christians, and you are debarring those 40 per cent. from doing anything in the schools. I think it will be far better to have no religious teaching in the schools at all. Let the various Denominations teach their religion outside the schools. I think the Primary Schools should run on lines similar to the Secondary Schools. If you have certain pupils who want religious knowledge, let them take that as a study but they need not be compelled to do it. So I think the curriculum of the Primary Schools should be changed and several other matters, if we want a satisfactory educational system in this Colony. The whole system boils down to this: You have to face a problem that has continued for a century, where 40 per cent. of the people are not Christians and 40 per cent. of the children are not attending school. What percentage of the children not attending school belongs to the 40 per cent. non-Christians? I think if the matter is investigated you would find that a large number of those non-Christians are not sending their children to school for various reasons, and religious teaching is one of those reasons. As I say, it suits Government as presently constituted, it suits this Legislature as it is presently constituted, not to face the problem, not to spend as much money as possible or as is necessary to have Primary Education on a satisfactory basis.

We have the Compulsory Education Ordinance and we find that on an average three out of every ten children are not in the schools, and a large percentage of them belonging to the non-Christian group. Are we going to blind our eyes to that fact? I suggest that if

we have a large number of Government Schools and have them erected at places where schools are required, necessary and desirable, you would reduce the non-attendance to a very low percentage. Your Excellency has been travelling in the Berbice Districts and must be aware of the fact that we want schools in various places in the Corentyne area. Is the ratification of Government's policy now going to minimize this state of affairs? I think not. I know that in certain places there are no schools at all; the children cannot go to school and the Denominations cannot afford to erect schools there. But the Government says: "If this Legislature approves of this Message"—that is the thin edge of the wedge—"Government's responsibility will be greatly minimized." I shall not minimize Government's responsibility towards the education of the people of this Colony between the ages of six and twelve, Government must assume its responsibility, and its shifting and putting off this question is most unwise. I urge on hon. Members of this Council who know the facts not to vote in favour of this motion. I am sure the hon. the Fifth Nominated Member (Mr. Edun) disagrees with this motion and I am totally against it, too. If Government puts up a proper plan and gets this Council to approve of it, we would then begin to solve the problem.

I have been reading through this report of the Educational Development Committee, and I find that the Committee thought it best to protect the interests of the several bodies represented on it. I do not think the members of that Committee thought of the welfare of the children of the whole Colony. Naturally those people were there on that Committee to look after themselves. Unfortunately in this Colony most members of Committees believe that they are there to look after themselves. It is unfortunate that is so. Unfortunately in this Council, too, most of us believe we are here to look after

ourselves. That is the curse of these Constitutions in the Caribbean area. I say we have to look after the welfare of the community as a whole when we happen to be representatives in this Council or to be on any Committee. So I do not think this sub-committee's report is a good one and is in the interests of the entire Colony.

The hon. the Fifth Nominated member referred to two sections of the community being not adequately represented on that Committee. One member died and no steps were taken to replace that member although he was supposed to represent a large section of the non-Christian element. Why were no steps taken to replace him? Yet we have a document presented to this Council and the statement made by the hon. Mover that it is a unanimous report. It is unanimous on the face of it, but the Committee was not a representative one I submit, and that cannot be disputed. I think that the other person who signed this report as representing the non-Christian community signed it with reluctance (laughter). I know what I am talking about. The other person signed it with great reluctance, and I believe he actually signed it in his own office. I do not think that statement will be disputed. And so we have a document emphasized by the Governor's Message and by the hon. Mover of this motion as being unanimous, while in truth and in fact it is not what may be called a unanimous report in the strict sense of the word. Had the members of that Committee been better selected, I am sure we would have had a different report.

Apart from that, the question is: What is to be done for the welfare of the community as a whole, not only the Christian community? And there Government cannot escape its responsibility. You have to do something for the entire peoples of British Guiana and not only the Christian people. I think Government's responsibility is great.

Government should not press this Council to ratify a policy that is not in the interests of the entire community and, therefore, I beg to dissociate myself from the motion. I will vote against it.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: To a point of elucidation! May I ask the hon. Member this? I have before me a memorandum saying:

“I desire to report for the information of His Excellency the Governor that this report received the unanimous approval of the Members of the Legislative Council Advisory Committee on Education at its meeting held on Monday, 19th November, when the following Members of the Legislative Council were present — the Hon. J. B. Singh, the Hon. M. B. G. Austin, the Hon. C. R. Jacob, the Hon. A. G. King.”

(Laughter).

Mr. JACOB: I am not going to dispute that statement. I may have attended that meeting late.

Mr. JACKSON: I am a little bit surprised at the attitude adopted by my very good friend on my left, the hon. Member for North-Western District (Mr. Jacob). I had wanted to remark before the hon. the Colonial Secretary read that memorandum, that the hon. Member had signed that report without reservation. However, he had accepted the report without reservation. I should, however, like to question the remarks made by the hon. the Fifth Nominated Member (Mr. Edun) and sanctioned by the hon. Member for North-Western District that the Committee that discussed this matter and decided upon it was not a representative one.

I would like to be advised whether in approaching the question of education and dual control we were asked to do so from the point of view of religion. Were we told that we were to deal with the matter from the point of view of Christians and non-Christians? A good deal has been said about non-

Christians not being properly represented on the Committee, and that of the 17 members 15 were Christians and two non-Christians. In dealing with the question we have to consider the system of education that obtained at the time and obtains at present. It was a denominational system of education. In the early days the missionaries looked after the education of the people. Then Government assisted, and as a process of evolution a system of dual control of the schools between the Churches and Government came into operation. Therefore, in considering a change in the system of education those who were responsible should be given an opportunity to express their views.

Having regard to the composition of the Committee it is not proper to regard the matter in the light of Christians against non-Christians. On the Committee we had the Education Department represented; we had the Hon. E. G. Woolford, a member of the Board of Governors of Queen's College, and we had representatives of the Governing Bodies of the Church of England, the Roman Catholic Church, the Church of Scotland, the B.G. Congregational Union; the Methodists, the Canadian Mission, the Moravian Church, the Providence Church Group of Congregational Schools, and the Education Committee. There was also a representative of the B.G. Trades Union Council. I do not know whether that Council represents Christians and not non-Christians. There was also a representative of the British Guiana East Indian Association, and I do not know whether he did not represent the majority of the East Indians of the Colony. I want to urge that this is not a matter of Christians v. non-Christians. We are asked to adopt a system of education which was in the main carried on by the missionaries with the assistance of Government, and I think the Committee was thoroughly representative.

The hon. the Fifth Nominated Member (Mr. Edun) said that no provision is made for the erection of schools by non-Christian people who, he also said, were not properly organised, and that if they became organised, and the necessity arose for them to have their own schools, the existence of the Committee's report would be a bar to them. What I feel is that when the necessity does arise for the non-Christian people to erect their own schools opportunity would be given them to do so if they desired to come under this system. I do not think it is necessary to introduce in this system a provision that if those people who have not embraced Christianity desire to erect schools they should be given the opportunity. The need does not arise.

The hon. Member for North-Western District (Mr. Jacob) said that no policy had been outlined by Government because it is not stated when the present system will go out and another take its place. I am amazed at his statement. He is as a rule logical in his utterances, even though I very often do not agree with all he says, but I am amazed at his saying that because it is not stated that this system will go on for a definite period it shows that there is no policy. I do not think that is any reason why he should not support the motion, and I think he is going to support it.

The hon. Member always says that he speaks facts and that he speaks with authority. If he has even indulged in what in parliamentary language is termed a terminological inexactitude; he has done so on this occasion when he says that non-Christian children will not be found in the schools. That is absolutely incorrect. At the present time large numbers of such children are running into the schools. I know of schools in which 75 or 80 per cent. of the children are non-Christians. We know that in times past Indian girls were kept away from school on reli-

gious and other grounds, but the position is quite different today. Traveling on the trains one sees large numbers of East Indian children coming to Georgetown to attend secondary schools. It is therefore grossly incorrect to say that the non-Christian group of children are not going to school.

I will now deal with the main question—how will the Colony benefit by the adoption of this system of dual control of schools? The hon. Member for North-Western District remarked that the schools were insufficient, and that some of them were not worthy to be called schools. In asking the Council to approve of the continuation of the system of dual control Government accepts the responsibility for the maintenance of the schools, and I will say that in time we will have no dilapidated school buildings. The present system is to spend a certain sum of money each year, for 5 or 10 years, on the reconditioning of the worst schools, and if the present proposals are accepted by the Council we shall see an improved condition of things.

In presenting these proposals the Committee has done very good work. That its report is a unanimous one none can dare deny. It is ridiculous to suggest that because one member of the Committee died before the report was signed it is not a unanimous report. It is a mere quibble. I wanted to say "stupid," but I will not use that word. I say that the report should have the approval of this Council, and I say without fear of contradiction that it is one of the very few instances in which the leaders of the Churches have been able to agree. I think it is a feather in the cap of our Director of Education that he was able to achieve agreement on the very sore point of the government of schools, and I join the Colonial Secretary in congratulating Mr. Crease on the patience and skill he displayed in getting the members of the cloth to agree.

I hope the motion will receive the unanimous approval of this Council, and I should not be surprised if the hon. Member on my left (Mr. Jacob) and the hon. Nominated Member on my right (Mr. Edun) withdraw their opposition. I do not know whether it is fortunate or unfortunate that I am sandwiched between them, but I believe that they will withdraw their opposition, and that the Council's support of the motion will be as unanimous as was the Committee's report.

Mr. THOMPSON: I rise to support the motion before the Council. The speaker has answered the opponents of the measure so satisfactorily that I need not follow along that line. If I had to award marks I would certainly give him 100 per cent. It is very unfortunate that the personal element should be brought into any matter before this Council. I have had talks with several teachers who have all accepted the principle of the report.

On the question of religious instruction in schools I wonder whether the hon. Member for North-Western District and the Fifth Nominated Member are aware of what takes place in the schools. It is clearly laid down that there is no obligation on any pupil to accept the religious instruction given by any denomination. I have been head teacher of schools in which there were non-Christians who were given the opportunity of forming their own religious classes. At the Mahai-cony Wesleyan school I had an East Indian catechist who was a great help to me, because I had an average of over 40 non-Christian children attending school. I cannot see why there should be any objection to the report so far as the question of religious instruction is concerned.

On every occasion when the subject of education comes up in this Council reference is made to the recent increases

in teachers' salaries. Because this Council has granted increases of salary to teachers who were admittedly poorly paid it is constantly being harped upon that they are being paid in excess of what they deserve. Whilst on the subject of teachers I would like to know what will be the position of those teachers who have been promoted in other directions after many years' service as teachers. I think those years of service as teachers should be put to their credit, but I am told they will not be taken into account. I would like to have that point clarified.

Mr. PEER BACCHUS: I am not prepared to support the motion as it stands, not because of any personal element or from a religious point of view, but it appears to me that if the motion is accepted as it stands it would mean that this Council agrees to perpetuate the existing system of dual control of schools because it is impracticable to change the denominational system to one of State control. I feel certain that the majority of teachers would support Government-controlled schools throughout the Colony, but I agree that at the present time it is impracticable because of lack of finance. We may, however, at some future date find ourselves in a position to surmount the difficulty of finance. I would therefore suggest an amendment of Your Excellency's Message, if I may, by the insertion of the words "where existing" after the word "continue" in paragraph 5. In other words, that the present system of dual control should not be extended, and that wherever new schools are required they should be Government schools.

As regards paragraph 6 of the Message I would have liked it to end at "impracticable" with the addition of the words "at present" and the deletion of the remainder of the paragraph which, in my opinion, gives one the impression that the Council is satisfied that the existing system should continue indefinitely, whereas I think I can safely say that

the feeling of the Council is that it accepts the proposal for reasons of finance. Dual control in every sphere of life is a difficult arrangement.

I observe that a register will be kept of all teachers employed, and I presume that from that register appointments will be made. May I inquire whether each denomination will keep its own register of teachers employed by that denomination? I have had an answer in the affirmative from the hon. Nominated Member, Mr. Jackson. If that is so I say that such a system would be grossly unfair. I think a single register should be kept of all teachers employed, and their qualifications. We may find a denomination with a head teacher whose qualifications entitle him to a first class school, but his school might only have 150 children, whereas another with an average of over 150 has a head teacher drawing less salary, but if a vacancy occurs that head teacher cannot be transferred to a more important school because he does not belong to the particular denomination.

Mr. THOMPSON: I rise to a point of correction. Teachers will be given an opportunity to state in what denominational schools they would be willing to serve.

Mr. PEER BACCHUS: Having once made that intimation I presume that a teacher, after 8 to 10 months in the employ of one denomination, cannot intimate that he would like to serve in another. Each denomination will keep its own register, and it is from that register a Manager will recommend candidates to fill vacancies in schools of his denomination. I say it is not fair to the teaching profession as a whole that teachers should be divided into denominations. There will again be the same clashing of authority as exists today. The Director of Education has the right to

veto a recommendation by any denomination. If the Director refuses to confirm an appointment, and the denomination says it has no other recommendation to make, the result would be a deadlock. I think the Director should be given full power to make his own appointment in such an event.

It is not my intention to enter into any religious controversy so far as education is concerned. I think we should consider education from the point of view of the community as a whole. I am very grateful for the education I have received under the denominational system. The Churches have done a good deal for the Colony in the matter of education, but that is no reason why a bar should be placed against State-controlled schools.

If the maintenance of these buildings is taken into consideration, we would find that the Repairs Fund would far exceed the Construction Fund in respect of each and every school building in this Colony. As I said, I find I am unable to support the motion as it reads. As a compromise to the motion, if an amendment is made as I have suggested, I would support it in that form.

Mr. deAGUIAR: It has been stated already that the hon. Nominated Member, Mr. Jackson, has fully covered the ground, and I wish personally to thank him for sparing me the task of refuting some of the points raised by the Members who have opposed the motion. I have risen to say that I support the motion in principle and reserve the right to deal with the details when the legislation which will give effect to the proposals of this Committee reaches this Council. The last hon. Member who has taken his seat said he will oppose the motion and gave two reasons. I must admit that he has cleverly put forward to this Council those reasons in a form which, perhaps, meets some of his hearers. He made the suggestion that certain words should be deleted at the

end of the sixth paragraph and claimed that if it were done he would support the motion. I suggest, that if he reads the entire paragraph he will find exactly the ground for his complaint. The hon. Member states that the ultimate aim—at least that is how I understood him—of this country should be all State-aided schools; and if this Council today should accept the motion in its present form, it would be a commitment for all times. In the first place surely he must agree that his reasoning is unsound. This Council cannot commit the people of this Colony for all times.

Mr. PEER BACCHUS: May I correct the hon. Member? I did not use the word "commit." What I said was "It will give the impression that the present Council as constituted has decided that such a system can be perpetual.

Mr deAGUIAR: There is only a little change of the wording. If this Council gives the impression that such a system should be perpetuated, then it would be in effect that this Council has committed the people for all times. I will not worry the Council with what he does mean or does not mean. My reason for referring to his remarks is that I wish to invite his attention to the words he wishes deleted from Your Excellency's Message. He states that these words should be deleted:—

"It is further felt that it would not be equitable, having regard to the pioneer work carried out by religious denominations and to their continued exertions in the field of primary education in British Guiana: and it is considered that there is good value to the country in the continuation of the system though not as an exclusive form of organisation where and when other developments are practical and desirable."

I submit, if the hon. Member deletes those words it would in effect destroy his own argument. I interpret that to mean very differently: They

have considered the matter and the present system seems to them to be the best and most practicable for some time and, therefore, they say "Let us continue or perpetuate the system until such time as we find something more practicable". If we delete those words, I submit, the hon. Member's argument would be destroyed. He will agree that is so. Much has been said about the question of a register but, as I said, I do not wish to discuss details. However, I do wish to make this observation so far as the registration of teachers is concerned. If I understood the hon. Member correctly, he seems to have in mind something of a Colony Register instead of a Denominational Register. It is not for me to say whether that is going to be practicable. At the moment I cannot see how it will be so, but at the same time it seems to me that with the introduction of this register by the various Denominations in respect of the various schools in existence in this country, the Director of Education will be able to remedy the fault to which the hon. Member refers. It must be remembered that the appointment of the Head Teachers, in fact all teachers, is subject to the veto of the Director of Education, and I am doubtful whether the hon. Member's fear is justified, even assuming a teacher is registered to serve in one Denomination, that the progress of that teacher in his profession as Head Teacher or otherwise will be hampered. The hon. Member probably knows more about that than I do, but it does seem to me very doubtful that with the existence of this register and with the Director of Education acting as it were as a Judge or an impartial jury any teacher will suffer as the result of this division of the Register.

We talk glibly about State-aided schools. It is a very ambitious programme. Lots of us would like to see that, but the question as to whether the Colony will be able to foot the bill is another matter. The question as

to whether entirely State - aided schools throughout this country will be successful is another matter. I speak as a Christian, as I do not happen to belong to the non-Christian faith. I belong to the Christian Religion, but I am very doubtful whether should religion be removed from our schools it would be the best thing for the Colony, not only for the people of British Guiana but of any part of this hemisphere. I go further and say it would be a very sorry day for this community if the teaching of religion in whatever form it may be, whether it be that of the Catholics, or Anglicans or the Church of Scotland, is debarred from the schools in British Guiana. I do not think it can be denied that the work done by these Denominations during past years has been one that cannot be measured in dollars and cents. It is work that entailed a great deal of sacrifice. Certain hon. Members who spoke of these denominational schools today think of them in terms of the grant that is given to them by Government. But, sir, their memory is short or their knowledge of the subject is limited. They seem to have forgotten the origin of those schools in the various country districts of the Colony. I know today of certain denominational schools existing in this country without a penny from Government, and that has been a condition that has existed in this country for a very long time.

There are certain conditions, as Your Excellency is aware and hon. Members should be also aware, in connection with Government's grant-in-aid to these schools. Until and unless those conditions are complied with it is absolutely impossible to obtain a grant from Government. Hence, sir, I say that we must not think of the denominational schools in this country in terms of the financial aid they are at present receiving from Government. We must reflect and think of the

sacrifices that the men who have gone before have made, the work they have done and the labour they have given without pay in establishing those schools and building them up to the point where it became necessary and Government saw the wisdom of contributing towards the expenditure for the continuation of those schools. If the non-Christians wish to find themselves in that position, I go further and say that if they envy the position in which the denominational schools find themselves, it is their duty to do the same thing that those denominational men did in the past and bring their schools to the standard complying with the Government Regulations. If they do so and fulfil those requirements, I have no doubt that Government would find a solution for their problem.

The whole discussion, as I sat here and listened to it this afternoon, seemed to be one either of envy, grudge or desire to obtain assistance from Government for non-Christian schools wherever they may be. I do not know how many there are and if there are any at all. Their system of education I do not understand and I know nothing about. If the purpose of this debate is to invoke the sympathy of this Government to grant financial assistance to such schools as are in existence, then the answer is "Let them put their house in order and make application". Members should not come here and draw a red herring across the trail and try to destroy a structure to which much time and patience had been given by those who sat on the Committee merely on the ground that no provision has been made for them. On the other hand I have to emphasize that if they think that by so doing probably they would obtain assistance from Government, by all means let them try, but I cannot sit here and allow any Member to oppose the principle underlying this motion on that ground. As far as I am concerned,

I am going to support the motion.

There is one other point I wish to make before I take my seat. Certain Members are very fond of saying things and more often than not what they say is not true. Although it was referred to by the hon. Nominated Member, Mr. Jackson, I feel that I must add my quota. I would like to ask the hon. Member for the North-Western District where he obtained the figures he has quoted on this occasion—40 per cent. of the children of this Colony are non-Christians and do not attend the Christian Schools. He made that statement, and I challenge it. I would like to know where he got that information from. He is making it appear to this Government and to whoever reads the debate, that here you have a Colony in which 60 per cent. of the children belong to denominational schools and those schools are going to receive State-aid under this scheme while the 40 per cent. non-Christian children are entirely debarred from such treatment.

Mr. JACOB: May I rise to a point of correction? My hon. friend, as is usual with him, has misrepresented the facts altogether. I think it would be best for him to read the debate when the notes are transcribed by the Official Reporters and see what I have stated.

Mr. deAGUIAR: Your Excellency, I accept the hon. Member's correction, if that is what he refers to as a correction. Anyway, sir, the next remark made by the hon. Member—I am sorry he keeps on repeating it and I am very sorry that every time he does say it in this Council I have to challenge it—is that most of us feel that we are in this Council to look after ourselves. Once before when the same hon. Member made the statement, I had to ask him whether he was looking at his reflection in the mirror. I repeat that to him today. But, sir, I do not know in what way any Member of this Council who may support this measure will be

looking after himself. I do not know whether the hon. Member refers to it in a religious sense or not. If he refers to it in a religious sense, I would like to assure him that at any time, any day that he wishes to have a discussion with me on my own religion, I am quite willing to take up that challenge and, if he is the person I think he is, I hope to be able to convert him.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I would be very grateful if the Director of Education can be asked to intervene.

Mr. CREASE (Director of Education): Sir, I am very pleased to be given the opportunity this afternoon to take part in this debate, and before giving my comments I would like to thank the hon. the Colonial Secretary and the hon. Nominated Member, Mr. Jackson, for their appreciative remarks with regard to my work on that Committee. But I would like to assure them that it was not by any means a one-man show. Had it not been for the very careful work and time and thought spent by every member of that Committee on that thorny question that arose during this deliberation, I do not think we would have reported as we have done. I would like to record my thanks, as I said in the report, to all members of the Committee for the tremendous help they gave.

This question of dual control, I understand, has been one of concern not only for the past three or four years, not only since I have been in the Colony but, I gather, for something like over thirty years. One hon. Member in his observations said we ought not to hurry and we ought to postpone it for another twelve months. I am afraid that if we postpone it we would never get any further. We have, if I may say so, a basis on which we can work that dual control of schools to the better satisfaction of all concerned, and in particular I will refer to the question of the appointment of teachers. What I would like, if the proposals of the Committee are accepted, is for the

Schools Control Committee to get busy when the necessary legislation has been enacted and get down to the task in front of them. No doubt we shall find difficulties as we go along. No one can foresee what is going to crop up in the future. We have covered such a tremendous lot of ground that I feel, once the Committee gets working any difficulty we will be able to overcome, but until we are given that opportunity we can do nothing.

The question of dual control of schools is a very important one, apart from the reasons put forward in the report and discussed this afternoon and emphasized by those Members who have supported it. On the question of accepting this matter of dual control depends to a very large extent the huge grant for the rebuilding of schools. It is one of the conditions under which that grant has been approved by the Comptroller. When he was here about twelve months ago he was pressing me—Your Excellency knows that—for our report because he said that once we have settled this question of dual control he would be in a position to recommend very strongly the necessary grant for school buildings.

May I just go through some of the points which have been raised by hon. Members, but before doing so I would like to thank the hon. Nominated Member, Mr. Jackson, for his remarks in support of this motion. Needless to say he has stolen a lot of my thunder and, perhaps, saved me a considerable amount of time in explaining to this Council. I would like to make one or two observations on the remarks made by certain Members.

The hon. Nominated Member Mr. Edun, commented on the fact that the report was not unanimous and referred to the death of the late Pundit Sookdeo Ojha. Before he died a very lengthy memorandum was submitted by him on behalf of the British Guiana East

Indian Association for the consideration of the sub-committee. That memorandum, was very carefully considered paragraph by paragraph. The whole view of the East Indian Association was contained in that memorandum. Furthermore the East Indian Association nominated their members on the Committee, approved by Your Excellency. In addition to that, this report has been studied by other members of the East Indian Association in connection with the Legislative Council Advisory Committee and the Education Committee. They included the hon. Dr. Singh, the hon. Mr. C. R. Jacob and the hon. Mr. Veerasawmy.

The hon. Nominated Member, Mr. Edun, also referred to the question of no possibility of non-Christians building any schools. Under the Code Regulations of 1942, there is nothing to prevent anybody from building any school. Anybody can build a school and can equip it, but it does not follow that everybody will get a grant for a school.

Another point also referred to by the hon. Member for Demerara-Essequibo, Dr. Singh, is the question of appointment of non-Christian teachers to schools especially in regard to the appointment of Head Teachers. To be quite frank I do not think that the establishment of any number of fully Government controlled schools will in any way relieve the situation in regard to the appointment of non-Christians to Primary Schools as teachers. Naturally, Government Schools are Christian schools, but I will say this: There are large numbers of non-Christians already in our Primary Schools as teachers, but the question of the appointment of a non-Christian as a Head Teacher is not an easy matter to be settled. I do not propose to dwell on that point this afternoon, but I can assure the hon. Member that when the Schools Control Committee starts to function such matters will have to be very carefully gone into by that Committee.

With regards to the remarks of the hon. Member for North-Western District (Mr. Jacob) about the Committee's report, I would like to repeat that the hon. Member was actually present, as the hon. the Colonial Secretary pointed out in a minute that he read, when the motion was put to the Committee as to whether they approve of the report. He did not arrive late but was actually present before that report was approved.

If I may be permitted to say so, I was expecting a lengthy dissertation from him on the subject, but he said nothing against the report.

The hon. Member referred to Dr. Khan as having signed the report under compulsion. He did sign the report in his office, and I will state the reason why. I sent him several reminders to come and sign the report but he did not come. As Your Excellency was pressing for the report I took a car and went after him. He said he had not time to come but would certainly sign it. There was no compulsion whatsoever. I cannot imagine any Chairman holding up a member of a Committee and saying "You have to sign this report whether you want to or not."

The hon. Member for North-Western District also made the astounding suggestion that religious instruction in the schools should be abolished. I do not know what reply to make to that, but I agree with the hon. Member for Central Demerara (Mr. deAguiar) that that would be a very deplorable day. What we really want is a little more of it, and I agree with the suggestion in the report that the matter should receive far more attention than it has.

With regard to the register of teachers referred to by the hon. Member for Western Berbice (Mr. Peer Bacchus) I do not think the hon. Member is quite clear as to what is intended. Naturally, in order to make a start and compile

that register we have to begin first of all with the teachers employed by the various Governing Bodies, but there is nothing to prevent any teacher from intimating that he would be willing to serve under two or three, or even under any Governing Body. I know that the teachers welcome the suggestion, and I am quite sure that when the scheme we have in mind starts to function quite a lot of the dissatisfaction which crops up from time to time in regard to the appointment of head teachers and first assistants will be removed. In the register will be recorded very important facts. It is proposed that it will record the names of head teachers, first assistant teachers, assistant teachers, some idea of their character, efficiency, seniority, service, and other information which is considered to be of use. Naturally, as time goes on we may have to change the type of register, but we feel that when once that register is made up many of the complaints we receive will be removed.

Those are the main comments I wish to make. I do not think I can add to them, and I do not think I have omitted any important point, but I would like to say, if I am permitted to do so, that if we adopt the recommendations of the Committee it would be a move in the right direction and a step forward to remove a number of difficulties which have existed in the past.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I would like to thank those Members who have supported the motion, particularly the hon. Mr. Jackson who has covered the ground rather adequately. There is one question I would like to ask the Director of Education. Is it possible for non-Christian children at school to have their own religion taught them in a Government school?

Mr. CREASE: Yes, sir, I think it is our intention, if any denomination or any religious body wishes to take its children out for religious instruction,

to permit that to be done. There will be ample provision for that.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I rather thought that might be the answer. When I was a schoolboy myself I remember very vividly that we had some very distinguished Tibetan students in our class who carried on their own religion. We had many Jews there too, and special provision was made for them to carry on their religion. We live in a community which is mainly non-Christian, and if parents wish special religious instruction to be given to their children attending school it does not seem to me to be very difficult to arrange for that to be done.

Mr. JACOB: May I say a word on that point. It would be interesting to know if that is done at present. If it is not but it is going to be done in future it would be a step in the right direction.

The PRESIDENT: I have one amendment proposed by the Member for Western Berbice (Mr. Peer Bacchus), but not having a seconder I am unable to put that amendment. Before I put the question I would just like to read one or two extracts from the papers to indicate how very much in mind has been this very question of Government schools as against denominational schools. I quote from a minute of my own dated June 10, 1945, when I was pressing the Director of Education for some results from his Committee. I wrote:—

"I note paragraph 7 of the letter. I do not suppose this is intended to rule out any development of Government schools but is rather only intended to declare the impracticability of the speedy introduction of Government schools throughout the colony. That may be so, and Mr. Crease's Committee, which is largely or solely composed of persons attached to the Christian denominations, has in effect been prepared to accept the "trustee" system. I should anticipate that in Legislative Council there will be strong pressure on Govern-

ment to declare in favour of introduction of Government schools as the immediate policy, at least as a parallel development with the denominational system."

I take it that that will be the case.

Mr. CREASE: Yes, sir.

The PRESIDENT: I will continue to quote from my own minutes. On the same day I wrote in another file:.....

"With regard to the Director of Education's Committee sitting on the question of control of schools, I have been made very much aware in going around the country, of the strength of opinion in favour of the policy of Government schools..... As I understand it, the trustee system is intended largely as a compromise to secure adequate control while still maintaining denominational interests and responsibility for the value that that has. But that acceptance of this as an arrangement between the existing governing bodies and Government, does not rule out the establishment of Government schools more and more throughout the Colony where circumstances may require it, and where finances permit. Would the Director of Education confirm this?"

"Then I suppose that serious pursuit of a policy of Government schools as a whole really means that wherever Government put up 100% of the building costs total control be taken over without any question of trusteeship and the denomination given no choice in the matter unless they were prepared to put up 50% themselves and retain control. Would the Director of Education confirm this? Is there in effect very much difference in the financial implications?"

In reply the Director of Education wrote:—

"His Excellency has asked two questions. His Excellency's observations in paragraph 1 therein are correct, in as much as it is intended that the trustee system should be a compromise to secure adequate control by Government while maintaining denominational interest. If we establish the Trust system it will in no way debar Government

from erecting Government schools where circumstances require it and finances permit it.....”

“With regard to the second point raised in paragraph 2 of the same minute, if a school is rebuilt entirely from Imperial funds, replacing an existing denominational school and built on Church lands, it is suggested that this school shall be placed under the Trust, and that the denomination concerned shall still enjoy its right to determine the form of religious instruction to be given, and to use the building for Church or community social business after school hours subject to Trust control, but shall lease the land to Government at a small rental of \$5 per annum, but the building shall be Government property. The financial implications vary very little in regard to running a Government school or giving a full grant-in-aid to a denominational school. All teachers' salaries are met from Colony funds. All grants, maintenance, equipment, stationery, etc., are paid by the same source, but maintenance grants as I said previously are inadequate and would have to be increased.”

“In view of what I have said it seems that Government will have to decide whether they are going to scrap the denominational schools entirely and establish Government schools—a rather expensive proposition and one which will undoubtedly be strongly opposed by some of the denominations, or to allow the denominational system to continue with such modifications as I have outlined, to give Government far greater control over buildings and teachers. In the light of the fact that the denominations have certainly been the foundation of education in the Colony, I am inclined to advise the latter course, provided of course we can arrive at a satisfactory solution to the problems of Dual Control.”

I think that sets out Government's intention in the matter. We are not prepared here and now to set out a definite policy as regards a system of Government schools, but it is clear that that will gradually—faster or slower according to the Government or Legislative Council of the day—particularly in regard to finance, more gradually come more and more into the picture. When that does come we can have, as they have in other countries, a kind of local

control and influence in these things, as in my own country where the religious instruction given in any school depends simply and solely on the community of the parish. Where a parish has a substantial majority of people of a certain religion that religion is taught in the schools. That is a system of local control which might very well be the final solution.

As I have no amendment to the motion I will just put the question.

The Council divided and voted:—

For — Messrs. Thompson, Jackson, Gonsalves, Austin, Critchlow, deAguiar, C. V. Wight, Dr. Singh, the Colonial Treasurer, the Attorney-General and the Colonial Secretary — 11.

Against—Messrs. Edun, Jacob and Peer Bacchus — 3.

Motion carried.

TIME-LIMIT FOR SPEAKERS.

The PRESIDENT: We now come to the next item on the Order Paper—a motion by the hon. Nominated Member, Mr. Critchlow, which has come forward rather suddenly. As Members have had very short notice of it I do not know whether they are prepared to consider it now, but I understand the hon. Member is prepared to move it. If there is no feeling that we are taking it too suddenly I would ask the hon. Member to move his motion.

MR. EDUN: With your permission, sir, I wish to refer the hon. Member to Standing Rule No. 26 which gives the President of the Council the right to determine the time a debate should occupy.

The PRESIDENT: It only gives me the right when a motion is brought forward to say that I will put the question at say 5 o'clock, allowing two

or three hours for the debate. It does not permit me to limit the speech of any one Member. For instance, we might start at 2 o'clock, and if a Member speaks until 4.59 p.m. I may have to put the question. I have no power under the Rules to interfere unless a Member infringes the ordinary rules of procedure which I quoted the other day. The hon. Member's motion is in general terms, so that you are quite correct in drawing attention to that Rule. What I think the hon. Member means is that individual Members should impose on themselves a self-denying limitation.

Mr. CRITCHLOW: Sir, I beg to move:

Whereas it is necessary that the business of this Honourable Council be dealt with as expeditiously as possible;

Be it resolved that a reasonable time be fixed for Movers and Seconders of motions and speakers on all matters before the Council.

In moving this motion, sir, it recalls to my memory that in the old Combined Court a Member spoke so long that he was called the "human gramophone." In the various public Assemblies all over the world there is a time-limit to speeches, but I have not suggested any time in my motion; I leave that entirely in the hands of Members. A time-limit can be decided upon, and in practice a bell could be rung five minutes before to indicate to a speaker that he must conclude his speech in five minutes. I think a time-limit would be a good thing in this Council.

Mr. C. V. WIGHT seconded.

The PRESIDENT: I think you ought to make a specific suggestion, or somebody else should do so.

Mr. CRITCHLOW: I was leaving it to somebody else to make a suggestion,—perhaps the hon. the Attorney-General who is acquainted with the

Rules and Regulations. I think the mover of a motion should be allowed 45 minutes.

The PRESIDENT: I think I read the other day that the Jamaica rule was 45 minutes for the mover and half an hour for the seconder and any other speaker. I am not aware how it has worked.

Mr. JACOB: I am not surprised that the mover has thought it fit to bring forward a motion of this kind, nor am I surprised that the Chair has permitted it to be debated today when, so far as I am aware, it only appeared on the Order Paper today. Today is not Members' Day, and the whole thing seems so grossly irregular. I am sorry to say it.

The PRESIDENT: I must point out that I gave Members an opportunity to say whether they preferred not to take this motion today. As Members offered no objection I called upon the hon. Member to move his motion.

Mr. JACOB: I have no objection at all, but I am merely pointing out the method and irregularity of the procedure. If this Council decides to limit speeches to five minutes I think I would be able to say all I wish to say within any time-limit. ("Hear, hear"). It has occurred that I was ordered out of this Council on a certain occasion. On another occasion I may be kicked out. I presume that as a result of that incident this motion has been brought forward today. I think it is only right and proper that there should be specific rules which could be easily understood by every Member of this Council. This is the Parliament of this country; I take pride in the fact that I am a Member of it, and I should like to be guided by proper rules.

Mr. C. V. WIGHT: I do not think the hon. Member has any right to say

that when we are guided by Standing Rules and Orders of the Legislative Council.

Mr. JACOB: My hon. friend never understands anything. We are asked here to approve of a motion. I do not know if he has read it. Perhaps it has been brought forward too suddenly and he has not been able to read it. The resolution of the motion reads:

"Be it resolved that a reasonable time be fixed for Movers and Seconders of motions and Speakers on all matters before the Council."

I am saying that it is proper that a time-limit should be fixed, and it should be fixed before, not while a debate is in progress, and I trust that what occurred just two weeks ago will not happen again, because the dignity of this Council has been greatly reduced, and I am wondering whether the dignity of the Chair has not been reduced.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: I do not think the hon. Member has any right to say that. The Chair expresses the view of the Council; the Chair is the Executive.

Mr. JACOB: I am not questioning the Attorney-General's interpretation at all. There are Standing Rules. I have written a letter and I hope to receive a reply. I heartily support the motion and I trust that if a time-limit is decided upon it will be included in the Standing Rules of the Council so that Members would know beforehand what they should and what they should not do.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: As no definite time-limit has been moved I formally suggest that the mover of a motion be allowed three quarters of an hour, and all other speakers half an hour.

The PRESIDENT: I have just had a suggestion that it might be desirable

to have the question considered by a Committee. The suggestion is a practical one. If the mover agrees I would have the matter referred to a Committee.

Mr. GONSALVES: I was going to support the motion as well as the amendment suggested by the hon. the Colonial Secretary. I understood the hon. Member for North-Western District to say that he could say all he wanted to say in 10 minutes. If that is correct then we would not have been here debating this motion. It does make me think, however, that if he admits that, he must on reflection realize how painful it must have been to us to listen to him for more than 10 minutes when he was able to say all he wanted in 10 minutes. (laughter).

Mr. JACOB: There is something called strategy in debate.

Mr. GONSALVES: There is something called wasting time in Council.

The PRESIDENT: I have a specific proposal amending the motion by fixing a definite time-limit. Are Members prepared to vote on that? We have what appears to me to be a good precedent in Jamaica.

Mr. deAGUIAR: I have obtained the hon. mover's permission to adopt the suggestion of the hon. the Colonial Secretary and move that the resolution of the motion be amended to read:—

"Be it resolved that a time-limit of three-quarters of an hour be fixed for Movers of motions and half an hour for Seconders and other speakers on all matters before the Council."

Mr. CRITCHLOW seconded.

Mr. C. V. WIGHT: I was going to suggest that as we have now the feeling of the Council in support of the motion it might be allowed to stand down in order that the Attorney-General might

draft a rule in the terms of the motion, and bring it before the Council for approval.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: I think it would be desirable to pass the motion and subsequently submit a Rule for approval. The motion should be passed because it embodies the resolution and decision of the Council.

The PRESIDENT: There seems to be a fairly general degree of agreement on the motion, and no need for discussion at great length. I can therefore put the motion, and if it is accepted the Attorney-General would draft the necessary Rule. I will therefore put the question in those terms.

The Council divided and voted:—

For—Messrs. Thompson, Jackson, Jacob, Peer Bacchus, Gonsalves, Austin, Critchlow, deAguiar, C. V. Wight, Dr. Singh, the Colonial Treasurer, the Attorney-General and the Colonial Secretary—13.

Against—Mr. Edun.—1.

Motion, as amended, carried.

The PRESIDENT: We have now come to the end of the Order Paper. We have another motion on the Leave Passages of Government Officers which was on yesterday's Order Paper, but as we are still having correspondence on that matter, including representations just submitted which I have seen today, I do not propose to take it immediately but at a later date. As I have no notice of immediate business I adjourn the Council *sine die*. As far as I know, we will not have a meeting for a fortnight or three weeks.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: I have the Supplementary Estimates which I hope will be ready for presentation next week.

The PRESIDENT: I do not propose to call the Council simply for that. With an accumulation of business it may well be called in the third week of March. I adjourn the Council *sine die*.