

# THE DEBATES

OF THE

## LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL OF BRITISH GUIANA.

### OFFICIAL REPORT

OF

*PROCEEDINGS AT THE SEVENTH SESSION OF THE THIRD  
LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.*

## LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

*WEDNESDAY, 3RD DECEMBER, 1941.*

The Seventh Session of the Third Legislative Council of British Guiana was opened in the Council Chamber, Guiana Public Buildings, Georgetown, at 11 a.m. on Wednesday, 3rd December, 1941, with customary formalities but void of ceremonials, the Empire being at war.

#### PRESENT:

The President, His Excellency the Governor, SIR GORDON LETHEM, K.C.M.G.

The Honourable the Colonial Secretary, Mr. G. D. OWEN, C.M.G.

- „ the Attorney-General, Mr. E. O. PRETHEROE, M.C., K.C.
- „ F. DIAS, O.B.E., (Nominated Unofficial Member).
- „ J. S. DASH, Director of Agriculture.
- „ E. A. LUCKHOO, O.B.E., (Eastern Berbice).
- „ E. G. WOOLFORD, K.C., (New Amsterdam).
- „ E. F. McDAVID, M.B.E., Colonial Treasurer.
- „ M. B. G. AUSTIN, O.B.E., (Nominated Unofficial Member).
- „ W. A. D'ANDRADE, Comptroller of Customs.
- „ N. M. MACLENNAN, Director of Medical Services.
- „ M. B. LAING, O.B.E., Commissioner of Labour and Local Government.
- „ G. O. CASE, Consulting Engineer.
- „ B. R. WOOD, Conservator of Forests.
- „ J. ELEAZAR, (Berbice River).
- „ J. GONSALVES, O.B.E., (Georgetown South).
- „ J. I. DE AGUIAR (Central Demerara).

The Honourable JUNG BAHADUR SINGH (Demerara-Essequibo).

- „ PEER BACCHUS (Western Berbice).  
 „ E. M. WALCOTT (Nominated Unofficial Member).  
 „ H. C. HUMPHREYS, K.C., (Eastern Demerara).  
 „ C. R. JACOB (North-Western District).  
 A. G. KING, (Demerara River).  
 J. W. JACKSON (Nominated Unofficial Member).  
 F. A. MACKEY (Nominated Unofficial Member).  
 „ T. LEE (Essequibo River).  
 „ C. V. WIGHT (Western Essequibo).

Clerk of Council—Mr. J. J. Rodrigues.

Official Reporters—Messrs. H. A. Grimshaw and

F. A. Leubin.

The Dean of Georgetown read prayers.

#### OATH OF ALLEGIANCE.

THE PRESIDENT administered the Oath of Allegiance to Mr. F. OGLE, (Director of Education, Acting) who then took his seat.

#### ✓ THE PRESIDENT'S SPEECH.

##### MEMBERS OF THIS HONOURABLE COUNCIL,—

The opening of the Legislative Council to-day comes so close upon my assumption of duty that I feel that my address to you and the public on that occasion might almost be taken as a prologue to what I would say to-day. On that occasion I was happy to have an opportunity of expressing my appreciation and pleasure on taking up my new duties and on my forthcoming residence in this Colony for some period of time.

I speak this morning as President of the Legislative Council. A Governor of a colony such as this, who is also the president of the legislative body, occupies a curiously multisided position. For he is not only His Majesty's personal representative on formal and ceremonial occasions of state but also the chief of the executive, charged with immediate executive responsibilities, and is further the president of the legislative body which carries the responsibility for passing the laws and for the provision of finances.

And not only so but he must frequently act as leader of the Government side. It is sometimes a delicate matter for the Governor to adjust his actions in accord with the one or the other of the functions which he may be discharging in any particular duty.

On my arrival in this part of the world almost six years ago in a West Indian Colony I found myself in the astonishing position of being the President of no less than five Legislative Councils as well as six Executive Councils. Each of these legislative units was fortunate or unfortunate in maintaining each its own separate set of laws, its own separate budget, separate Government Departments, and a great deal of the business of Government was in fact quintuplicated. At such a prospect I was almost tempted to seek for permanent residence some small neutral island not blessed with such an elaboration of Government machinery.

Constitutional changes, however, such as are envisaged here, with the reduction of the Government membership to three officers only, and put through in the year after my arrival, carried with it a provision excluding me from four of these Legislative Councils. So that I was left with the presidency of the federal body.

Even in this body, at the last meeting

over which I presided in April of the present year, I was able to announce that after prolonged correspondence with the Secretary of State over three years I had succeeded in securing the assent of His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom to a similar constitutional reform of that federal legislature. And I foreshadowed my own disappearance from the duties of president. That announcement was made, as it was in fact received in some quarters, with mixed feelings. As far as I was concerned myself, while welcoming in principle such a change and the devolution of the duties of president on a Government officer other than the Governor or on to an Unofficial Member, I would have regretted the severance from a duty which I had found most interesting and instructive, and I think not without its value to the community.

The ceremonial procedure of our colonial legislatures has some time been the object of criticism and even ridicule, and yet there is another side to that matter. An American observer keenly interested in the affairs of all the colonies of the Caribbean area and very well informed on them commented to me in the United States last July, on the notable absence of graft or even accusations of graft and dishonesty in public affairs on the part of responsible Government officers or on the part of Unofficial Members of the legislative and other bodies in the British Colonies as he had observed it. I answered that I believed that he was correct in his appreciation, and I went on to say that I felt myself that our methods of procedure, old fashioned and sometimes stuffy as they might be described and an inheritance from the constitutional history of the seventeenth century, altered and changed in kaleidoscopic fashion as they might have been in the intervening two hundred and fifty years, had nevertheless I thought had this advantage: in that they had maintained the sentiment of honourable conduct and of "noblesse oblige" in the persons who had grown up under their practice.

I would express my sincere hope that my own relations with this Council in so far as they may continue with me as President, will be distinguished by mutual respect and regard for each other's actions and motives, and have that dignity and etiquette which is, or should be, the inheritance of our colonial legislature.

I speak at date scarcely more than three weeks from my assumption of duty, and quite a portion of that time has been spent in attempts to get at first hand a visual knowledge of all parts of the Colony within reach of a day's journey. Seven days have, in fact, been spent on that occupation and these have not been entirely days of joy-riding I can assure you. So that, with time so taken up and taken up on other public occasions of a more or less formal character at which I felt it my duty to be present, I have had far less time to spend on obtaining that accurate and exact knowledge of the Colony's affairs which can be gained from the papers in the offices at headquarters. I have had in fact to discriminate between such matters as have appeared to me immediate and necessary objects of attention and those which I can reasonably take up at a later date. I feel myself therefore quite unable to make an address to this Council attempting to summarize the events of the past year or to go into detail on the departmental or financial records. I feel, however, that these things are, or should be, so fully set out either in the departmental reports which are in due course laid before this Council or in the budget statement which will be made by the Colonial Secretary and the Colonial Treasurer that I may reasonably confine myself to-day to observations of a more general character. In following this procedure I may say that I am following that excellent example of a very distinguished son of this Colony, in Sir Donald Cameron, a Colonial Governor of the greatest distinction, under whom I have had the honour to serve.

On my assumption of duty and on other occasions I have already said that I did not feel myself charged with the obligations of attempting to form or evolve new policies or schemes for the rehabilitation of the somewhat depressed condition of this Colony, but that rather I am an executive officer whose first business is to put into effect with the greatest possible despatch some of the recommendations which have emerged over a long period of discussion and consideration by persons much more qualified than myself. I should interpolate that I have, owing to the incidence of war time, certain very special duties laid upon me in the way of maintenance of security in time of war,

duties which have so far taken no little toll of my time. X

In this connection I feel I should comment on that very notable feature of our war time life in the existence of the U.S.A. Naval and Military Bases in our midst. In addressing the Council three weeks ago I had commented on this matter and expressed the hope that our relationship should be that of good host and welcome guest. At that time I had not had the opportunity of knowing, as I have since learnt in Georgetown and on my visits to both the American bases, how excellent our relationship is. I believe the American officers feel that we have been good hosts and I have had the opportunity of learning the very great courtesy and consideration and good feeling which characterizes the dealings with us of the Senior American Naval and Military Officers and the civil representative of the U.S.A. Government in the Consul. I feel we can regard this as a most excellent augury of Anglo-American co-operation in the western hemisphere.

I had referred also in my address three weeks ago to the wider implications of such co-operation which the Heads of our respective States had so much at heart. I have every reason to believe that progress continues in that matter and that very soon, perhaps within the lifetime of this session of the Council, we may hear announcements of a more public character. Again I would comment on this most excellent augury of the "New Order" in the western hemisphere under the sponsorship of the English speaking democracies, and into which all peoples are welcome. ✓

I think it would be fitting here to record, before I pass to purely administrative matters, something indicative of British Guiana's war contribution.

Enlistment in His Majesty's forces number 25 of whom 22 have enlisted in the Royal Air Force and 42 in the Navy, the rest being craftsmen recruited for specialised work. This does not include seamen engaged on merchantmen, of whom we regret to know some have already lost their lives in that service in the Merchant Navy. Contributions to war service funds now total \$424,398 of which \$335,000 is to the British Guiana bomber fund.

This seems to me a very fine total from this Colony. There have been in addition many gifts in kind. I understand that there are three bombers now in service bearing the name of this Colony. In addition there are two mobile canteens, one welfare van and one utility van. I understand further that the Y.M.C.A., working on its own, has contributed \$1,744 and that with this sum three canteens have been put into service in Britain, but as to whether they are credited there to this Colony I am not aware. The Local Forces have expanded from three companies to seven, including one Artillery Company, and a Volunteer Force is under training as a Machine Gun unit. Questions touching the expansion and status of the force and conditions of full time service await the sanction of the War Office: and the Brigadier Inspector-General of Forces in this area, visits me shortly in this connection.

To revert to my view of what should be my first and special duties in the civil sphere of administration, it has seemed to me that these are to advance as quickly as possible the schemes for the financing of which we know we may hope for assistance under the Colonial Development and Welfare Act; further the immediate prosecution of putting on the Statute Book the labour legislation already too long delayed; further the corollary of the formation of a specific and whole time Labour Department under special officers: and further the carrying through of such degree of constitutional reform as may be possible by straight action now.

As regards the Colonial Development and Welfare schemes, I have had prepared for me in the Secretariat a résumé of the position up to date which I propose to read to you in a few minutes.

I should like to interpolate, however, my comments on the method of procedure I should like to follow in future in matters of this importance. I am very well aware that in all Colonies there is a proper demand for an increasing degree of publicity and that there is the common criticism of the so-called "hush hush" policy of the executive. That is a common complaint, sometimes justified, often enough not, because it is not unusual for the public not to take the trouble to read public docu.

ments, nor uncommon for individuals almost to prefer to follow the line of easy criticism without informing themselves of the exact position as they could do at no great trouble. However that may be, I desire to follow the policy of maximum publicity and to take the public into the confidence of Government to the utmost degree possible.

That to my mind means to use the machinery of the Legislative Council particularly, as the accredited representatives of the public.

As to means, I would propose—and I have already consulted as many Members as I could informally—to establish a procedure through a standing or permanent committee of this Council which should meet regularly, say monthly or as required, without undue formality, paper work or red tape, and which should be an easy avenue for communication of matter of all kinds and for the round-table discussion of it between Government and the Unofficial Members. I should propose to preside myself if possible and so to have the fullest opportunity of communicating what is happening or under consideration. I would propose that such a committee consist of all the the Unofficial Members with the Colonial Secretary, and if and when necessary, the Colonial Treasurer and Attorney-General attending though no formal composition need be laid down. It might be convenient to style such a “General Purposes Committee” but without any narrow connotation of such a term: again financial considerations must nearly always come into any Government activity and would justify the title of “Finance Committee.” I should have a completely open mind as to the composition or title of such a body.

In the immediate present it would form precisely the channel through which I can keep Members informed month by month and week by week of progress being made with the major schemes of development as to which there is a constant correspondence with His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom and the Comptroller and his staff.

It would be convenient also to refer to such a body in advance some financial matter which may require sooner or later

a decision in the Legislative Council. I may here add that I have been in these last few weeks somewhat embarrassed by the necessity of signing quite a number of Special Warrants. This I have had no hesitation in doing as they have appeared to be entirely in order, to cover quite necessary expenditure and frequently to be met by savings, and they have in every case been submitted to the Executive Council. I should nevertheless feel happier were there some standing machinery through which the Members of Legislative Council were kept *au fait* with such things rather than await the formal meetings of Council, between which there may be substantial gaps of time.

Again, I should feel it convenient and profitable to all of us to discuss together freely and without prejudice or binding commitment of opinion general questions of policy, on which I should desire the advice not only of Executive Council (which is primarily charged with certain specific and statutory duties) but of the broader forum of the Unofficial Members who can speak for the whole Colony.

If there is a better method than that I have suggested I should be by all means ready to try it. I shall seek further and immediate opportunities of discussing this matter with those Members of Council with whom I have not yet had an opportunity of personal discussion.

The following is a résumé of the schemes for which financial assistance under the Imperial Parliament's Colonial Development and Welfare Act is being sought.

Before proceeding to read the résumé I should like to comment on a minor matter. It is that I frequently see in the papers a reference to the West Indies “Fund” or the Colonial Development and Welfare “Fund.” That expression is not strictly speaking, correct. There is no “Fund.” There was a fund known as the Colonial Development Fund, which was a sum of money voted by the Imperial Parliament each year and administered by a special statutory committee. This sum could be reduced or varied and in fact it was so reduced in the slump years of 1930 and 1931. What exists now is that under

the Imperial Act, Parliament has authorized the Government of the United Kingdom to expend up to a very large total over a period of ten years. The difference is rather more than a quibble because the present arrangement is much more generous and elastic than the provision of a specific "fund" only would be.

I should like to refer initially to three despatches addressed by the Comptroller to my predecessor which set out the views of himself and his advisers on three very important sets of proposals touching respectively drainage and irrigation, agricultural development and public health. These despatches are of the first importance and, I trust, have been widely read. From my conversations with numerous persons I doubt if these despatches have yet received the attention which they deserve, and the people interested would, I think, find many of their questions answered or dealt with in some form or other in these comprehensive papers.

In regard to drainage and irrigation there are two main schemes the subject of discussion,

- (a) the improvement of irrigation facilities in West Demerara at an estimated cost of \$380,000 (now \$460,000) and
- (b) the provision of an effective drainage and irrigation system for areas lying between the Mahaicony and Berbice Rivers at a total estimated cost of \$1,625,745.

As regards scheme (a), the object is to assure a constant source of irrigation water at all times from the Bonasika River. At present the inadequacy or uncertainty of supplies from the Boeraserie and Canals Polder Conservancies frequently results in loss of ground crops and danger to sugar cane cultivation. The scheme is expected to expedite the agricultural and economic development of all coastland properties from Greenwich Park eastwards up to and including the Canals Polder area. Estimates for this scheme were formulated in 1938, at \$360,000, but owing to the enhanced cost of equipment, materials and labour due to the war, expenditure on the scheme is now estimated at \$460,000 or £95,834; an application for assist-

ance to this extent under the Colonial Development and Welfare Act, 1940, has been transmitted to the Secretary of State for approval, and I greatly hope to receive this at an early date.

Scheme (b) involves a much greater outlay, and while necessary from an engineering point of view, needs to be carefully examined from other angles as well before a final decision is reached. It would clearly be uneconomic to embark on an undertaking of this magnitude unless a considerable number of persons are to benefit by it. We have to take into account, also, the related question of maintenance charges and the provision of educational, medical and other amenities which might eventually be necessary in the area. It is to be noted, too, that the scheme does not include a system of internal drainage, in respect of which capital and maintenance charges would have to be borne by proprietors themselves.

In the circumstances, the Government is awaiting the completion of additional data bearing on all phases of the matter before putting forward an application for financial aid under the Colonial Development and Welfare Act for this large scheme.

Touching agricultural development a number of important recommendations relating to major development problems of agriculture have been made by Sir Frank Stockdale's Agricultural Adviser; I will refer to these in greater detail later. Up to the present two applications for assistance under the Colonial Development and Welfare Act have been forwarded to the Secretary of State, the first is for the appointment of a Livestock Officer and the second for the engagement of a Marketing Officer. The appointment of these specialist officers involves grants of £5,700 and £5,297 respectively, to provide for their services for an initial period of five years in each case.

The engagement of the Livestock Officer is considered by the Comptroller and his Agricultural Adviser to be essential to livestock development—the most important feature of agricultural expansion in this Colony. In collaboration with the Government Veterinary Surgeon he will

be responsible for the Botanic Gardens Stock Farm as well as the extension of animal husbandry throughout the Colony.

The Marketing Officer's task will be to co-ordinate and systematize the production and marketing of farm and animal produce in the Colony, and his appointment envisages local as well as inter-colonial possibilities in this direction. I regard the proper organisation of marketing of local produce as of sovereign importance and from observation already within the Colony I am impressed with its further needs.

Further recommendations put forward by Sir Frank Stockdale's Agricultural Adviser include:—

- (1) The extension of the Stock Farm to be financed under the Colonial Development and Welfare Act.
- (2) The development of the livestock stations at Ebini Downs, Berbice River, and at La Belle Alliance, Essequibo.
- (3) The introduction of zebu blood and grading up with Friesians and the elimination of scrub bulls.
- (4) Development of a poultry industry.
- (5) The establishment of demonstration of what are called soiled units on the coastal belt, that is to say of stock-keeping on a system of stall feeding as opposed to grazing.
- (6) Establishment of demonstration holdings or homesteads at Anna Regina in accordance with his recommendations for land settlement.
- (7) The establishment of country marketing depôts beginning with the outlying districts.

To implement these proposals, the Adviser recommended the appointment of the Livestock and Marketing Officers to whom I have already referred, and also additions to the existing staff of the Department of Agriculture.

Up to the present, the action taken in connection with the Agricultural Adviser's recommendation may be summed up as follows:—

- (1) A scheme is being drawn up for the extension of the livestock farm and an application has been made for the secondment for five years of

- a Livestock Officer experienced in animal husbandry, as already stated.
- (2) A committee has been set up to make recommendations regarding the establishment of demonstration holdings or homesteads at Anna Regina, Essequibo.
- (3) Zebu bulls have been imported from Trinidad and a further order has been placed for grade Zebu—Friesian heifers.
- (4) An incubator-hatcher has been ordered from Canada.
- (5) An application has been submitted for the services, for five years, of a Marketing Officer, with funds provided under the Colonial Development and Welfare Act, as already stated.
- (6) Eight additional instructors have been placed on the draft estimates for 1942.
- (7) The post of Botanist-Plant Pathologist has been eliminated, and one of Curator, Botanic Gardens, substituted.

As regards public health, conditions in the Colony have been studied by the Medical Adviser to the Comptroller in collaboration with the local authorities, and applications for assistance totalling £38,810 have already been transmitted to the Secretary of States and the Comptroller. The general objectives of the schemes referred to in these applications are:—

- (1) the extension and improvement of medical facilities,
- (2) the control, prophylaxis and treatment of certain diseases,
- (3) health education, and improved methods of training subordinate health personnel,
- (4) institutional re-organisation,
- (5) ante-natal, maternity and child welfare.

Details of the assistance applied for are as follows:—

	£	Period of Scheme.
(a) A medical service for the Aboriginal Indians	10,150	5 years.
(b) Extension of campaign against the vector of yellow fever	8,025	3 years.
(c) Engagement of a Malaria-ologist	5,900	5 years.
(d) Purchase of fluoroscope for treatment, etc., of tuberculosis	250	
(e) Purchase of material for health education lectures	100	

(f) Engagement of Hospital Secretary for internal reorganisation of hospitals	1,345	2 years (plus 3 months leave).
(g) Purchase of equipment for diagnosis, etc., of venereal diseases at hospitals	300	
(h) Appointment of Lady Health Officer to direct ante-natal maternity and child welfare work	4,900	5 years.
(i) Provision for better facilities for training Sanitary Inspectors	1,290	2 years
(j) Erection of model demonstration houses at Anna Regina, Essequibo	800	
(k) Appointment of a School Medical Officer	3,900	5 years.
(l) Engagement of a Sister-Tutor to improve the training of nurses, midwives and health visitors	1,600	5 years.
(m) Construction of scale models for use in lectures on rural sanitation ...	50	
(n) The encouragement of better types of rural habitations by the grant of prizes, etc.	200	

Schemes (m) and (n) were sent direct to the Comptroller for Development and Welfare in the West Indies under an arrangement whereby Sir Frank Stockdale is empowered to make grants not exceeding £200 in any one case under the Colonial Development and Welfare Act, 1940, for the provision of certain specified minor amenities.

The applications at (a), (b) and (c) have already been approved by the Secretary of State, and Sir Frank Stockdale has granted the application in respect of the minor scheme at (m).

With regard to the all important question of housing, a principal essential in the view of the Comptroller and his Adviser is the securing of first class advice on town planning and architecture, and Sir Frank Stockdale has therefore been in communication with all Governments with a view to the appointing of an advisory officer to his staff and I understand from a communication just received that his definite recommendation to the Colonial Office has now been made. I feel that is a substantial point of advance.

Touching Education, in a memorandum on education in British Guiana the Educational Adviser to Sir Frank Stockdale has dealt exhaustively with the many and varied aspects of the question. It is

essential, however, that educational development here should be integrated with a general policy to be formulated for the entire British West Indian area.

The Comptroller is further discussing with the Secretary of State the extremely difficult and onerous financial implications of educational reform, which are entirely beyond the resources of this Colony now or at any future date which can be foreseen, and a decision on policy on this cannot be immediately expected.

Nevertheless the Comptroller has already made definite recommendations. Specific plans are being framed for the improvement of vocational training, involving the appointment of two specialised teachers from abroad for five years to the Kingston Trade Centre, with the erection of separate buildings: similar appointments to the Carnegie Trade School, with the provision of quarters: and further the creation of a community centre at Beterverwagting, involving capital expenditure of \$2,495 to cover the necessary provision for domestic science, agricultural work, woodwork, etc.

Sir Frank Stockdale considers that the most important need is for adequate school accommodation, playground space and sanitation and has proposed an expenditure of the order of \$100,000 per annum for five years to rehabilitate existing schools. He is also prepared to recommend a grant of \$16,000 for the renovation and extension of the Men's Hostel of the Teachers' Training Centre, Georgetown.

In a second visit expected about March, future educational advance will be prepared, while in the meantime the Educational Adviser's report has been discussed by all educational organisations concerned and preliminary programmes of proposed expenditure are being worked out where possible.

The urgency of more primary school accommodation overshadows other needs, but there are under review the questions of the issue of free books for school children and grants for meals in urban centres, while the establishment of Junior Secondary Schools and community centres in the post-primary and adult educational field is considered no less necessary. The very important question of the housing of teachers is also



receiving attention. Schemes for all of these will no doubt be discussed during the second visit of the Comptroller to British Guiana, by which time I hope that he will have received the approval of the Secretary of State in principle at least to all his proposals.

Miscellaneous applications total £6,850 and have for their object the improvement of local broadcasting, the provision of communal wireless receivers in villages, the establishment of certain social amenities and the promotion of apiculture in the Colony. The schemes drawn up are:—

(a) Local broadcasting ..	£2,600	
(b) Communal wireless receivers	3,700	£6,300
(c) Establishment of two Boys' Clubs ..	200	
(d) Establishment of Community Centre at Den Amstel, West Coast Demerara	200	
(e) Grants to Beekeepers' Association — £50 per annum for 3 years	150	£ 550

As regards schemes (a) and (b) above in respect of local broadcasting and communal wireless receivers, half the sum of £2,600 for the improvement of transmissions would be a free grant and the other half advanced to the British Guiana Broadcasting Company, Limited, on loan repayable with interest at a rate, and within a period, to be agreed on later. In addition to the free grant of £3,600 for the provision of communal wireless receivers, a recurrent grant of £375 per annum over a period of five years to cover maintenance charges is proposed: this amount to be supplemented by similar provision from local funds. The application has been forwarded to the Secretary of States.

The application in respect of scheme (c) above is in course of preparation and will shortly be sent forward.

With the exception of the loan to the local broadcasting company previously mentioned, all the applications are for free grants, but if the appointments of the Hospital Secretary, the School Medical Officer, the Marketing Officer, and the proposals for providing communal wireless receivers are approved, certain expenditure from the Colony's resources will need to be incurred.

In the case of the Hospital Secretary, it is considered that the anticipated improvement in methods of internal administration in public hospitals should result in financial benefit to the Colony, and that in consequence half the total cost of the Secretary's appointment should be borne from local resources, i.e. £1,345 must be provided from revenue.

The Marketing Officer's appointment will involve provision from colonial funds for the salaries of subordinate personnel as well as expenditure on the establishment of country depôts and the purchase of grading equipment, cold storage plant and so on; estimates of cost in this connection must, however, await the Marketing Officer's arrival in the Colony.

The School Medical Officer will be chosen from the local Medical Service for one year's training abroad to fit him for his duties. The consequential appointment of six Health Visitors to be paid from funds provided by the local Government will not be made until the School Medical Officer has returned from his preparatory training outside the Colony, but expenditure on Health Visitors' salaries travelling etc, in the first year of appointment is tentatively estimated at \$3,600.

The provision of communal wireless receivers will entail provision for maintenance estimates at £750 per annum. As already indicated above, half this sum of £375 will be provided annually for five years by a free grant under the Colonial Development and Welfare Act, 1940, and the other half from Colonial funds.

The next matter to which I have referred in the earlier part of my address as requiring immediate attention is that of the labour legislation. I was somewhat concerned to find that this Colony is not yet armed with that legislation. On enquiry, I have seen that, for one reason or another, constant reference to and from and the desire for amendment here and there of the original drafts have been responsible for this delay and I do not criticize it, but I feel an immediate obligation to see this legislation through at the earliest possible moment. I regard it as essential that there be statutory powers for action by Government on its own initiative or on invitation, and it is quite

definitely the Government's belief that the existence of such legislation is necessary in the interests of all parties and not only to what we call labour. The Bills will be submitted to this Council immediately for the first reading and I would propose to go forward with the subsequent stages immediately we have tackled the first necessity, which is the Budget for 1942.

I have the further corollary duty of establishing a regular Labour Department under special officers. This matter, too, has been the subject of considerable correspondence and discussion. It was in fact referred to me in London when I could not, of course, express a personal opinion. But a final decision was indicated by the Home Government by telegram to me subject to the concurrence of this administration and, after reference to my advisers, in particular to the Executive Council, and to such other Members of the Legislature as I was able to consult, I have been able to telegraph that concurrence. I have therefore pressed for the appointment at the earliest possible date of an officer to be in charge of the Department with specialised experience in conciliation of trade disputes in the United Kingdom, and of a second in command who shall have had extensive personal experience as a Trade Union Officer. I have not yet received confirmation of the appointments which, I hope, may be made as from 1st January, but the records supplied to me give me a considerable belief that we should be able to make a good start.

The other question to which I referred as an immediate duty in the earlier part of my address was that of constitutional reform. Again I regard myself as an Executive Officer with the duty of putting through the first stage of constitutional advance such as can be secured now and without further delay. The question has been put to me as to whether we should await the conclusion on the all-important matter of the reduction of the franchise or whether we should go forward with the initial stage of reform of this Council, that is primarily characterized by the withdrawal of the greater part of the Government bloc on the Council now, in view of the fact that not only the final conclusion but still more the working out of details and putting into effect of the

conclusions on the franchise must demand a considerable amount of time. My inclination on arrival, and I find it confirmed by individual discussion with Members, has been to go forward with the first step of constitutional change.

I may say, if I may speak for myself, that my personal sympathies are entirely in favour of this constitutional advance, not only, in regard to that part of it which can be simply brought into effect now, but also to those further stages which are foreshadowed, toward the ultimate end of self government, the lowering of the franchise as soon and as fully as possible, the committee system with the object of bringing Unofficial Members into direct touch with executive responsibility.

But, as I have said, I regard myself at the moment as an Executive Officer concerned as a matter of good tactics with getting on with specific performance as soon as we can. I would therefore propose, unless after discussion with this Council some other procedure is desired, to have a resolution submitted to a vote which would enable me to ask His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom to proceed immediately with a new Order in Council, on the understanding, as I believe is established, that future changes should be made by statutory enactment within the Colony by the Colony's own Legislature.

There is a further point which, I observe, has been much discussed, that is, the relationship of the Legislative Council to the Executive Council, and the composition of the latter body. That is a matter which is governed, I think I am correct in saying, in a different manner, as the Executive Council is a creation in effect, through the Letters Patent and the Royal Instructions, of an enactment by the Imperial Parliament, and any action taken in that regard would require a separate method of procedure.

I merely take this opportunity of stating from my personal experience that I hold no brief for divorcement between the two Councils. I made in fact in my two last Colonies, if I remember correctly, only one new appointment of a Member of Executive Council who was not a member of the corresponding Legislature, and I have found that the system of connection

between the two to be perfectly workable in practice. I should therefore be prepared to give the most open consideration to and to forward to His Majesty's Government at home any expressions or views which this Council as a whole or Members of it may care to have made clear in London.

A substantially altered constitutional system may in due course make necessary adjustments in regard to the financing of large capital schemes to be financed from the Treasurer of the United Kingdom, which we hope will be launched in the next few years. That is a matter which should engage our reflection in due course and must, I am sure, be very carefully considered by His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom in due course, but it would be premature and unnecessary to embark on that at this point.

I am, however, concerned with the immediate financial position. I do not propose to go into an analysis of the present Budget but rather to express certain feelings of my own in regard to the financial policy. In this initial period of my residence here, I confess I feel very considerable concern, possibly at the moment on inadequate knowledge, and I should be happy to retract, if I could obtain a better impression on such further knowledge, as to certain features of the position, not the whole general position which is fairly good. I do incline to believe that we are attempting far too much on our own resources and therefore doing some of it very far from well. I have had the miserable experience over a period of eight years of the Colonies in financial difficulties, where it has constantly been a matter of most painful and difficult discrimination to decide as to when funds should be used and when they must be refused even for some most admirable object. I see myself again in that unhappy position. But—happily—there has been a reorientation of policy on the part of the Home Government which does affect the matter, and for the better.

If I may digress for a moment, I spent nearly two years in a Colony which appeared to be, and on paper certainly was, financially completely down the drain. The administration of that Colony was in fact on my arrival being carried on by

means of a large overdraft from a bank in another country at eight and a half per cent. of interest, while the assets of the Colony were "frozen" in loans to persons of the Colony, some of whom had even left and gone to live in Paris. That position was restored by the unpalatable process of drastic retrenchment of Government services and—unpalatable to me and still more unpalatable to a number of persons in the Colony who owed large sums to Government—by the calling in of debts under drastic pressure. As a result the Budget was balanced in eighteen months. On my return to London I felt compelled to report that while the necessary action had been taken and in fact there was a financial future that was fairly bright at that moment, the result, by and large, was something that could not be described as flattering to the British Commonwealth, as "development" must just come to a standstill. I should nevertheless observe that the Colonial Development Fund as that then was, and favourably influenced according to then policy by the picture of a balanced budget, most generously accepted some fifteen out of sixteen recommendations made by me for development expenditure in the Colony.

This episode of my Colonial experience dates back to a time several years before the announcement of the new orientation of Colonial Policy which we all know now, and the position has substantially changed. Nevertheless we cannot expect even now that all those desirable objects, which everyone of us here can glibly put up and make out a very good case for them, are going to be met by these funds made out available under the Development and Welfare Act. The criterion which the Home Government are bound to apply, in common honesty to the hard hit British taxpayer, is that the schemes they finance should be of the long view and give substantial reason to anticipate constructive benefit to the Colony, which makes the financing either economic in itself or of far reaching effect. We cannot expect to take money from the Home Country under the Act for expenditure which must by its very nature be for ordinary recurrent services for some unsatisfactory service in the Colony. For that in my opinion we cannot look to the Imperial Act, and we must look first to our funds and thereafter, if necessary, to direct grant-in-aid.

I would just say a word as to Revenue before touching on the Expenditure side of our position. I have read enough and seen enough to realise that the taxation in this Colony is already comparatively high and, with one single exception, I am inclined to declare myself against increase, even in these very hard and difficult times. The one exception is Income Tax or similar direct taxation upon profits or individual revenue; firstly, for these are the fairest of all taxes and if properly organized hit only those who can best pay; secondly, we cannot in common decency accept funds from the British taxpayers without showing our readiness to shoulder a comparable degree of high direct taxation, such as Income Tax, as that now imposed in the United Kingdom, a degree which we may anticipate may go on forever—if I cannot say forever, at least for all the period of time with which we personally need be concerned. If there are some things in this Colony that can better bear taxation than others, I should say let them be taxed, but then let there be some reduction on some other objective that we will be glad to relieve. There is always the dream that revenue from mining, which is in a sense “found” money, might at some happy day relieve all our troubles, but expansion of mining operations of a big scale are not started overnight and we should be fools to rely on some happy strike of oil, metaphorically speaking, to relieve us in the period of years in which we are now living. Incidentally, I have the strongest reasons to believe that there is no oil in British Guiana. I am, however, not depressed about revenue as I shall remark later.

Touching the uses of our revenue, my impression of British Guiana at the moment is that we are attempting to do too much with the normal recurrent revenue on which we can depend. In the result we endeavour to spread these funds over too much and we starve certain services in order to squeeze out money for something new, or we accept some representation for expenditure which may be very well founded indeed and then get ourselves into difficulties over some other existing service that gets starved.

I have had this impression confirmed to some considerable degree by my visits to parts of the Colony outside headquarters. Government services in many ways indeed seem to me good and some even excellent.

I have been in some directions surprised at what I have seen. On the other hand I have been greatly concerned to see the degree of dilapidation of services or of institutions which have been started in a past day and have not been properly maintained. In one instance, to mention one only, I have been myself utterly unable to write a comment, so taken aback had I been to see evidence of past neglect. I am not blaming the Public Works or officers concerned for I know what their difficulties have been. But it is my business to state what I see. I am in fact only repeating the kind of observation made by my predecessors.

My view is that we shall have to decide touching the services we at present maintain, either that we must scrap some of them altogether and make drastic economies in that way to enable us to meet the new demands, or that if we must decide to keep them up we maintain them to a proper and decent standard. Whether we aim at too expensive a standard, is of course another matter. I have felt myself sometimes, that Georgetown and the standard of services achieved in it locally and its high standards, the high rate of public, and be it said private, expenditure is greatly misleading to a stranger as to conditions in this Colony as a whole. In fact Georgetown somewhat makes me think of a restaurant which endeavours to maintain a “champagne standard” in the front room and a “gingerbeer standard” on a gingerbeer income in the rest of the establishment. That is by way of incidental comment only.

To be practical, I do doubt very much whether, in this present budget for example, we have made adequate provision for the essential services we must maintain. I have been immensely struck with the great burden of essential and expensive services that this Colony, by very reason of its physical characteristics, has to shoulder. The burden seems to be out of all proportion to that carried by most Colonies in my own acquaintance. I might refer merely to such things as the Sea Defence, the drainage and irrigation maintenance where that falls on the public purse, the communications by steamer as well as by road, and even so we have about nine-tenths of the Colony unsupplied with the communications such as in far less advanced communities are in my experi-

ence regarded as commonplace. The aspect of this Colony from the air, the contrast between Georgetown and the trim sugar plantations in its neighbourhood and the empty areas elsewhere, enhance this impression. I have in my mind's eye such a long stretch of desolation as from Morawhanna down to the Pomeroun, almost one hundred miles of it, with but one single Indian hut to be seen.

Now we cannot regard the supply of money for maintenance purposes as a fair claim against Development and Welfare financing under the Imperial Act. We have got in the first place to use our own funds, our revenue and our surpluses in existence. Exhaustion of surpluses would force us in due course to envisage grants in aid, but I am not particularly alarmed as to that as, firstly, we have quite a way to go yet and I have some reason to hope that revenue will keep up fairly well in the next few years, and secondly, we have a clear indication of policy from the United Kingdom that services should be maintained to standard, and that policy is behind us. I could scarcely have made suggestions of this kind in say, 1939 before this reorientation of policy. As things now are I feel it my responsibility as Governor of this Colony to press for the maintaining somehow or other of essential services at a standard at which we need not be ashamed, as I have been ashamed of certain things I have seen in my short residence.

In considering the financial and economic position of the Colony I have been greatly impressed with the truth of certain remarks made by my predecessor in addressing this Council in 1938. The particular phrases that caught my eye were these "The economic organization of the Colony has become inadequate to support a vigorous and healthy life for all its people..... Let us clearly realise that the remedy must be sought in internal adjustment of our economy..... A considerable alteration in the distribution of effort and of production may be called for." I regret I cannot form myself any brighter impression of the fundamental position even though I have myself said that there should be a new era beginning for the Colony.

I have had many pleasing welcomes and

flattering hopes expressed that my period of service here would see the rehabilitation of British Guiana. Perhaps, however, the one that particularly touched me was from a simple soul who stood up in the village hall at Bartica and after airing his grievances about transport and the Road—with which I had myself reason to sympathise later that day when my own taxi broke down in Bartica street—went on to wish me health and happiness—and then added—and cheerfulness.

I do think that a kind and well said wish and I have thought myself since when reading despondently papers and files in Georgetown, far from happy in their import, how much I should need that good wish.

I said that there was perhaps a new era opening for British Guiana, and I believe that, meaning that help free and adequate for the first time may be forthcoming to us from outside, capital assistance we have not been able to supply ourselves and cannot now supply. But the new world will not spring into being complete in a week, or a month, or a year, or even in five years, which is my term of service here. There may well be a period of dislocation and, even in some ways, things worse before they are better—before we reach that broader basis of happiness in an agricultural tropical country on a foundation of land-owning peasants, self reliant and self supporting in part at least. I said I had had many good wishes expressed to me that my term of service here would see quick and happy results, but a Governor's limit of service, according to my letter of appointment, is but five years and I am under no illusion that that period can see more than limited achievement. Perhaps I speak from somewhat bitter experience of frustration and delays elsewhere. Yet in any of the major schemes it must be three years before we can expect fruits and begin to see results though in minor schemes we may see earlier results.

I said there might be dislocation creating changes in the economics of one industry or another, shall we say in the rice industry, an uncomfortable "shake up" in those conditions and relations as between grower and miller and merchant so much deplored in public utterances by my predecessors

Sir Geoffrey Northcote, Sir John Waddington and Sir Wilfrid Jackson. There may be a considerable redistribution of population, shall we say of labour off the sugar estates. The difficult reform of housing requires not only money and materials but other things as well, and there is the question, where slum property has grown up and become only fit to be condemned, of what the position of the landlords may be: and then that may not be popular with them. There will be new ways of living to be learnt, new and trying habits in the way of life and industry to acquire—shall we say the method of stall feeding of stock instead of the lazier practice of grazing carelessly on poor pasture.

Much of our reform may well be uncomfortable. It is all going to mean really hard work, with the will to adjust one's ways to new circumstances. Success will not depend on the Government or the Governor, as I am often told, entirely or even much—nor entirely on liberal financing from outside, nor on the new constitution; but on the right spirit of the people here.

I fear I often wonder to myself—can they stick it? Can they stick it and carry through their part in the creating of new ways of economic life? I wish I could feel happier than I do.

I said that success in our new world does not depend on Government entirely or much, nor on financing, nor on a new constitution but on the spirit of the people, and that means that much depends on leadership. There was a time, much the happiest in my own Colonial service, happy years as a District Commissioner, that I could be in the closest contact with the people on the land, for example, sitting under the village tree and talking: and my colleagues and I felt that we could persuade and influence these people and secure the response which is the best of all rewards. That is beyond my possible sphere of action now and I can only deal through the leaders. What I ask is—are the leaders of the people of Guiana able and ready to lead in the not too easy ways that I think we must follow if we want to bring our dreams true?

Will Elected Members of Council pay first heed only to demands and grievances, or are they able, while retaining the trust

of their electors, to lead and act and influence from their superior knowledge? Will Trade Union leaders in riding their restive horse be only bucked on from behind: or are they able to guide their mount and even—I am using the proper words of one of them to me—to protect labour from itself? Are the Press able to square their interests in supplying attractive news and views flattering to their readers, with the duty, on greater knowledge, of informing opinion to accept and give fair trial to some reform, novel in character and not palatable?

If these things can be, and with such spirit and good leadership, it seems to me that not a little can be done even in the brief spell of my five years' service here, and that I shall be able to look back on that period not only with some satisfaction to myself but as profitable to the Colony which I have the honour to serve.

I would repeat that I have no illusion that that period will see more, at the best, than a beginning of achievement towards a better British Guiana. Even that will demand patience and tolerance and continuous hard work and will not be obtained without discomfort felt, yes, and dislike aroused. I can only hope that the influence of responsible opinion through this Council and others will be able to hold this Colony to a practical realization that the need for effort and adjustment to new ways lies on all persons and all sections of the community.

Gentlemen, I have detained you long enough with what must be chiefly a personal review—and no doubt incomplete—of my own difficulties as I see them.

I should therefore now rather complete my immediate duty, which is to declare this session of the honourable Council open, and to commend to your attention the business before you in these anxious days. (applause).

Mr. LUCKHOO: Sir, on behalf of the Elected Members of the Council I desire to thank you for the very able speech you have just delivered. It is customary to ask that the President's speech be printed and circulated among Members of the Council for their information, but I do not know whether on this occasion I should make a similar request. I, however,

feel that there are points in Your Excellency's address which deserve the serious consideration of Members of the Council and I would therefore ask Your Excellency to have it printed and circulated. Some very important pronouncements have been made by Your Excellency and some very important investigations will have to take place in order to see how far we agree with the views expressed by Your Excellency on those questions. In order that we should have a thorough grasp of the views you have expressed it is very necessary that we should be furnished with copies of Your Excellency's speech.

I wish to say further that your speech has been a very interesting one and was delivered in such a forceful manner that even the drowsiest Member was kept at alert attention. (laughter). I feel, sir, that you have the necessary driving force and I know that Members of the Council appreciate the very able manner in which you have been able, within such a short space of time, to look into the problems of this Colony. It is not for me to tender Your Excellency a formal welcome at this stage, but I can assure you, speaking for Members of the Council, that we wish for you every happiness in order to enable you to carry out the difficult task you have taken upon yourself. We trust that Your Excellency will visit the other distant parts of the Colony. I do not wish to suggest what portions of the Colony you should visit when you find it convenient to do so, but I think you would have a very interesting time on the Corentyne Coast, no doubt encouraged by the salubrious atmosphere in that particular locality.

I trust that you will go into the question of drainage and irrigation which has engaged our attention here from time to time. We feel that there has not been that development in that direction which would allow the agricultural products of the Colony to be exported throughout the West Indies. In fact British Guiana should be the granary of the West Indies, but on the contrary, at times we are left without the necessary foodstuffs to exist. That should not be so. I trust Your Excellency will pay us a visit on the Corentyne Coast. Other Members will make similar requests but I feel sure you will honour us with your presence at no distant date.

I have tried to make some notes of Your Excellency's remarks as you went along, but I found it very difficult to keep pace with your speech: I trust that Your Excellency will make the Colony's welfare in all its various aspects, moral, material and spiritual, a very important page in your administration and marked by the best statesmanship.

THE PRESIDENT: I thank the hon. Member for his very kind words and I feel sorry if I have upset hon. Members of the Council by not following the routine by providing you with a typescript of my speech but I promise hon. Members that copies of my speech will be given to them in the shortest possible time.

In answer to the further question raised by the hon. Member, I will say that I do not intend to act as a drainage and irrigation engineer, but I am prepared to go forward with the utmost despatch with those proposals which will meet with the backing of responsible opinion in the Colony.

Lastly, I am invited to visit still another part of the Colony, and I warn the hon. Member that he will find me at some early hour one morning at his doorstep prepared to be taken by him to enjoy the salubrious atmosphere of Corentyne Coast. (laughter).

THE PRESIDENT then adjourned the Council until 2 p.m.

2 p.m.—

The Council resumed.

#### MINUTES.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: (Mr. G. D. Owen). I beg to move that the minutes of the meeting of the Council held on the 22nd October, 1941, as printed and circulated, be taken as read and confirmed.

Mr. DIAS: seconded.

Mr. JACOB: I rise to object.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: To a point of order! The hon. Member is not in his seat.

THE PRESIDENT: A point of order! The hon. Member is not sitting in his right seat. The hon. Member is unable to speak from that seat.

Mr. JACOB: Mr. Lee and I have exchanged seats.

At this stage Mr. Jacob who was occupying Mr. Lee's seat on the left of Mr. Jackson's moved over to his right seat between Mr. Jackson's and Mr. Walcott's and Mr. Lee did likewise.

Question put.

Mr. JACOB: I am objecting to these minutes. The minutes of that date were circulated to me. I am sorry I have not got them here. Then I received these amended minutes with a note from the Clerk of this Council—"Please substitute these minutes for those bearing the same date which have been circulated." I do not wish to go into details. I have consulted the Standing Rules and Orders and have seen no Rule there that amended minutes can be confirmed like that. I would draw Your Excellency's attention to page 1 of the minutes—"Mr. C. R. Jacob gave notice of the following questions—"The questions were read in this Council and printed in the newspaper reports. No objection was taken to them, but somebody got a little wiser after this Council was adjourned—very many days after—and these concocted minutes have been substituted. I object to these minutes being confirmed. If the questions were out of order, objection should have been raised then and not on the 20th November, 1941. If the minutes are to be corrected there is a different way to correct them. I think that is very well known. I therefore object to the confirmation of the minutes as printed and circulated on the 20th November.

THE PRESIDENT: Objection has been made, and I ask the hon. Colonial Secretary for an explanation as to the change.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I was presiding at the time and I permitted the hon. Member to read the questions, but it is laid down in May's "Parliamentary Practice"—page 238—that in respect of questions by Members: "The custom formerly in vogue, of giving notice of questions by reading the question aloud is no longer allowed unless the consent of the speaker in the case of any particular question has been previously allowed."

I should not have allowed the questions

to be read. The ordinary procedure is to give notice of questions and then they are examined after the meeting, and if it is decided that any should not be allowed—as has been decided in this case—it is then shown in the minutes of the meeting as set out in the amended minutes now before the Council. Hon. Members will see on page 1 at the bottom—"Mr. C. R. Jacob gave notice of the following questions:—" and opposite Questions 1, 2, 3 and a part of 4 the word "disallowed" has been inserted. Those questions asked were out of order.

THE PRESIDENT: The explanation by the hon. Colonial Secretary has been heard by hon. Members present at the meeting. I must put the question, that the minutes as circulated finally are a proper and faithful record of the proceedings. I would propose to record the objection raised by the hon. Member, and meanwhile to put the question that the minutes—

Mr. JACOB (interposing): Before you put the question—

THE PRESIDENT: I am speaking! That is what I propose to do. If the hon. Member has an amendment to move he may do so.

Mr. JACOB: This Council is governed—

THE PRESIDENT: I must ask the hon. Member if he has a motion to move.

Mr. JACOB: Sir,—

THE PRESIDENT: Have you an amendment to move?

Mr. JACOB: I just want to reply.

THE PRESIDENT: I would only allow you to speak if you have an amendment to move.

Mr. JACOB: My idea is—

THE PRESIDENT: I must ask the hon. Member to move an amendment or not speak.

Mr. JACOB: I beg to move that the original minutes as circulated before the 20th November be confirmed, and in doing so I should like to reply to the remarks of the hon. Colonial Secretary by stating that this Council is governed by certain



Standing Rules and Orders. While some other authority may make certain rules, they were never adopted in this Council. During the last session of this Council one hon. Member, the Member for Georgetown South (Mr. Gonsalves), got up in this Council and read questions and they were accepted. My point is, my questions were read out and were accepted. No objection was raised to them. It was the duty of the Chair then and the duty of those concerned to have objected to the notice then. I repeat and maintain that the minutes should bear a correct record of what transpired on that date. No concoction, no deletion should appear as a record of this Legislative Council.

**THE PRESIDENT:** An amendment has been moved. Is that amendment seconded? The amendment not being seconded I therefore put the original question "That the minutes as circulated finally be confirmed as a true and faithful record of the proceedings of the 22nd October."

The Council divided and the voting was as follows:—

*For*—Messrs. C. V. Wight, Jackson, Walcott, Peer Bacchus, de Aguiar, Gonsalves, Eleazar, Ozle, Wood, Case, Laing, D'Andrade, Austin, McDavid, Woolford, Luckhoo and Dias, Dr. MacLennan, Professor Dash, the Attorney-General, the Colonial Secretary,—21.

*Against*—Mr. Jacob—1

*Did not vote*—Mr. Lee—1.

Motion passed.

Minutes taken as read and confirmed.

### ANNOUNCEMENTS.

**THE PRESIDENT:** I have to announce appointment has been made to the office of Chief Justice and I shall be able to publish that very shortly.

My second announcement is as regards my address this morning. In case it entails trouble to the Press I will endeavour to have a transcript done of my address by my own typist after this meeting and be able to circulate copies to the Press and some hon. Members of Council. That would obviate any difficulty of the Press in endeavouring to produce a verbatim report of my address.

### 1937 BRITISH GUIANA SCHOLARSHIP.

**THE COLONIAL SECRETARY** communicated the following Message:—

#### MESSAGE No. 1

Honourable Members of the Legislative Council.

I have the honour to inform the Council that representations have been made by the Director of Colonial Scholars with regard to the holder of the 1937 British Guiana Scholarship. The Director has reported that this Scholar has had to meet additional expenses as the result of his having had to transfer his studies from one place to another during 1940 and of the difficulty in obtaining lodgings at a reasonable cost. The Director has recommended that a sum of £165 over and above the present value of the Scholarship (£900) be granted to this scholar to enable him to complete his course of studies. The Council is accordingly invited to approve of effect being given to the Director's recommendation.

2. The Council is further invited to approve of the value of the Scholarship being increased from £900 to £1,000 for the time being owing to the considerable rise in the cost of living in the United Kingdom since the outbreak of War. The alternative to an increase in the value of the Scholarship would be curtailment of the period of study, a course which is considered undesirable as it would probably result in the student's failure to pass qualifying examinations and thus defeat the intention of the scholarship awards.

GORDON LETHEM,

Governor.

29th November, 1941.

### PAPERS LAID.

**THE COLONIAL SECRETARY** laid on the table the following reports and documents:—

Draft Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure for the year 1942.

Explanatory Memorandum for use when considering the estimates of expenditure for the year 1942.

Report of the Committee of the Trotman Trust Fund for the year 1940.

Report of the Administrators of the Patoir Trust Fund for the year 1940.

Report of the Trustees of the Mitchell Trust Fund for the year 1940.

Colonial Agricultural Scholarship Fund Account for the year ended 31st March, 1941.

List of articles, not ordinarily exempt from duty, which have been specially exempted by the Governor in Council under item 2 of the Fourth Schedule of the Customs Duties Ordinance, 1935, during 1941.

Report on the Fort Groyne by Mr. G. O. Case Director of Public Works and Sea Defences,—May 1941. Sessional Paper No.10/1941.

The Defence (Local Forces) Regulations 1941.

The Defence (Amendment No. 2, Regulations 1941.

The Defence (Rice Control) (Amendment) Regulations, 1941.

The Defence (Control of Travellers) (Amendment) Regulations, 1941.

## GOVERNMENT NOTICES.

### INTRODUCTION OF BILLS.

Notice was given of the introduction and first reading of the following Bills :—

A Bill intituled an Ordinance to continue certain expiring Laws.

A Bill intituled an Ordinance to make provision for granting pensions to Marjory Aileen Dias and Richard Frederick Francis Dias, widow and child respectively, of Frederick Francis Dias, deceased.

A Bill intituled an Ordinance to amend the Music and Dancing Licences Ordinance, Chapter 106—(*The Colonial Secretary*).

A Bill intituled an Ordinance to implement the agreement, signed on the Twenty-seventh day of March, Nineteen Hundred and Forty-one, between the Government of the United Kingdom and the Government of the United States of America, relating to the Bases leased to the United States in certain territories including the Colony of British Guiana.

A Bill intituled an Ordinance to prescribe the method to be adopted in computing the Taxes and Rates to be levied and collected by the Mayor and Town Council of Georgetown in respect of the Year Nineteen Hundred and Forty-two—(*The Attorney General, Mr. E. O. Pretheroe*).

A Bill intituled an Ordinance to make further provision for the raising of loans for Public purposes.

A Bill intituled an Ordinance to declare the terms and conditions applicable to local loans authorised by any ordinance to be raised by the Governor; and to provide for matters connected therewith.

A Bill intituled an Ordinance to confer power to raise a loan of Eight Hundred and Twenty Thousand Pounds and the costs of issue; to provide for the payment of the aforesaid sum in the redemption of the amount outstanding of the loan raised under section thirteen of the Public Loan and Colonial Treasury Bills Ordinance; and for matters connected therewith—(*Mr. McDavid, Colonial Treasurer*).

A Bill intituled an Ordinance to restrict the hours of work and of night work in the Baking Industry and for purposes connected therewith.

A Bill intituled an Ordinance to provide for the appointment of a Commissioner of Labour, for the regulation of the relationship between Employers and Employees and for the settlement of differences between them.—(*Mr. Lainy, Commissioner of Labour and Local Government*).

### 1942 ESTIMATES.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY gave notice of the following motions :—

THAT, this Council approves the estimates of expenditure to be defrayed from Revenue during the year ending 31st December, 1942, which have been laid on the table.

### 1937 BRITISH GUIANA SCHOLARSHIP

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

### UNOFFICIAL NOTICE.

#### VOCATIONAL & FARM SCHOOLS.

Mr. ELEAZAR gave notice of the following motion :—

(a) That with a view to impart vocational training to the youth of the Colony, Government be requested to establish a number of Vocational and Farm Schools in different parts of the Colony for the benefit of all children leaving school.

(b) That the curriculum of the Teachers' Certificate Examination be amended to include Tropical Agriculture and Carpentry for Males and Domestic Economy and Nursing for Females.

### ORDER OF THE DAY.

#### SEATING OF MEMBERS OF COUNCIL.

Mr. JACOB : Before the Order of the day is proceeded with I desire to say that objection was taken to my sitting in this Council at a certain place—

THE PRESIDENT : I do not know that I can accept a speech from the hon. Member at this stage. We can take it later on. I think we should proceed immediately with the Order of the Day as on the Order Paper.

Mr. JACOB : In the past when any Member had any question to raise he had to do so before the Order of the Day was taken. I, however, bow to Your Excellency's ruling.

THE PRESIDENT: There is no Standing Rule to that effect. Let us get on with the business before us at this moment.

Mr. DE AGUIAR: May I be permitted to point out that such privilege, as the hon. Member seeks, is only permitted in a matter of public importance. I am not aware whether the point the hon. Member wishes to raise is one of public importance. I merely mention that so as to remind hon. Members of the practice in this Council.

The Order of the Day was proceeded with.

#### 1942, ESTIMATES.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I beg to move the suspension of the Standing Rules and Orders to enable me to move the first motion of which I have just given notice with respect to the Estimates of Expenditure for the year 1942.

It is proposed to deal only with the Budget Statement and following the practice, after that is read this Council should adjourn to enable hon. Members to familiarize themselves with the Estimates. Therefore if the motion is passed I would merely read the Statement and there would be no debate on the motion this afternoon.

Mr. DIAS seconded.

Motion agreed to.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I move—

THAT, this Council approves the estimates of expenditure to be defrayed from Revenue during the year ending 31st December, 1942, which have been laid on the table.

In moving this motion I wish to inform hon. Members of the financial position of the Colony for 1941, and then deal with the Estimates of Expenditure for next year.

#### FINANCIAL POSITION, 1941.

The Estimates for the current year, as finally approved by this Council, provided for an expenditure of \$7,193,553, against revenue of \$6,974,275 with a resultant deficit of \$219,278.

Additional expenditure has had to be incurred on Emergency War Measures and

on a number of unavoidable services not foreseen when the original estimates for the year were framed.

The revised Estimate of Expenditure for 1941 is shown in the printed Estimates for 1942 as \$7,323,648—being an increase of \$130,095 over the original total.

On the other hand, however, revenue collections for 1941 have been well maintained, substantial increases over the original estimate being recorded under certain heads. The total revised Estimate of Revenue for the year is \$7,619,562, being an increase of \$645,287 on the original total.

The result of the transactions of 1941 is accordingly now estimated to be a surplus of \$295,914 after meeting all expenditure to be borne by the Colony. The surplus for the year will be further increased by the transfer of the Colonization Reserve of \$400,000 in accordance with the provisions of the Colonization Fund (Reserve Appropriation) Ordinance, 1940 (No. 29 of 1940).

As the surplus balance carried forward from 1940 was \$382,083 the estimated surplus at the close of 1941 is \$1,677,997.

For the present, therefore, the financial position may be regarded as satisfactory. Several factors have been responsible for this result. In the first place, the revenue from Income Tax, Export Duty and Harbour Dues has increased considerably, mainly owing to the substantial contributions from an important industry. Moreover, the restrictions on the import of non-essential commodities which have had to be imposed in the national interest have as yet had no material effect on the yield of Customs Import Duties, the revenue under this head in 1941 being only a little less than in the previous year. At the same time collections from excise duty on rum have increased. It has accordingly been possible to provide in 1941 for the whole of the Colony's normal expenditure together with the additional expenditure incurred on war services and on extraordinary works originally intended to be financed by grant-in-aid from the United Kingdom, and still leave a surplus.

However, it must be emphasized that it is essential to maintain a substantial surplus in reserve, if the Colony's financial position is to be properly safeguarded. A

fall in revenue as the result of the restrictions already referred to is inevitable while, at any moment, exceptionally heavy expenditure on emergency and other services may have to be incurred. Furthermore, apart from immediate needs the Colony must build up an adequate reserve in accordance with the financial and economic policy outlined in Lord Moyne's circular despatch of 5th June, 1941, which was published as Sessional Paper No. 3 of 1941.

#### BUDGET, 1942.

The draft Estimates for 1942 as presented to Council call for an expenditure of \$7,727,140 against revenue of \$7,324,375 on the basis of existing taxation with an estimated deficit on the year's working of \$402,765.

Since the draft Expenditure Estimates were prepared it has developed that provision must be made for certain considerable items of expenditure not included therein which will add about \$100,000 to the total. The principal item is Sea Defences concerning which the Consulting Engineer has submitted to Government reports indicating the possibility that very heavy expenditure may become necessary on both the East and West Coasts of Demerara and that certain protective works are urgently necessary. The draft estimates, when approved by the Legislative Council, may accordingly involve a deficit of over \$500,000.

The draft Revenue Estimates for 1942 include the revenue to be derived from continuing the Bill of Entry Tax, the Excise Duty on Sugar, and the Surtax on Harbour Dues, and Council will be asked to authorize the collection of these imports during the year.

An allowance of \$300,000 has been made in the Revenue Estimates under the head, Customs Duties, in view of the expected shortfall as the result of import restrictions. But it is quite impossible to forecast at this stage what the full effect of these restrictions is likely to be.

It is proposed to levy additional taxation in the form of an increase in the Income Tax and a Bill for this purpose will be introduced into Council after the examination of the Estimates has been concluded. The proposed new rates of Income Tax will be as follows:—

First \$1,200 of chargeable income ...	6%
Next \$1,200 do.	9%
„ \$1,200 do.	12%
„ \$2,400 do.	15%
„ \$2,400 do.	25%
„ \$4,800 do.	40%
„ \$9,600 do.	50%
Remainder	60%
Tax on Companies	25%

The new scale of rate represents an increase of 50% on existing rates in respect of chargeable income up to \$6,000. On the excess of chargeable income over \$6,000 up to \$8,400 the increase is 66⅔%, and on the excess of chargeable income over \$8,400 the increase is 100%. It will also be seen that in the new scale the excess of chargeable income over \$6,000 up to \$8,400 is taxed at 25%, the excess over \$8,400 up to \$13,200 at 40%, the excess over \$13,200 up to \$22,800 at 50% and any further excess at 60%. The new scale for individuals is estimated to produce an increase of \$100,000 on the present yield of the tax.

The present rate of tax on company profits is 20%. The new tax on companies at 25% (or 5/- in the £) is the equivalent of one-half of the current United Kingdom rate. For the reason I have already stated, the yield from the company tax is substantial at the present time and the additional revenue estimated to be derived from this source is \$300,000.

The total additional revenue from the increased rates as proposed will thus be \$400,000, and the total yield of the income tax at the proposed new rates in 1942 will be \$1,800,000.

The deficit for the year will thus be substantially met. The balance of the deficit together with any shortfall in revenue not allowed for the Revenue Estimates will be met by drawing to the extent necessary on the surplus balance.

A number of proposals, some of which have already been approved by the Secretary of State and the Comptroller for Development and Welfare in the West Indies, have been put forward for assistance by way of grant under the Colonial Development and Welfare Act, 1940. Provision in respect of approved schemes under this Act will be included in a special Supplementary Estimate for 1942 which will shortly be placed before the Council.

## EXPENDITURE 1942.

I shall now deal with some of the more important details of the Expenditure Estimates for 1942 as presented to Council.

The estimate of \$7,727,140 is \$403,492 more than the revised estimate for 1941. The following are the heads under which the largest increases and decreases will be found when a comparison is made between the revised estimate for 1941 (shown in the abstract on page xi.) and the draft estimate for 1942:—

	INCREASE.	DECREASE.
Agriculture	...\$ 16,000	
Customs		\$36,000
Education	47,000	
Labour	23,000	
Local Government		
Medical—Hospitals and Dispensaries...	40,000	
Miscellaneous—Subventions (Municipal)		11,000
Pensions and Gratuities		38,000
Poor	13,000	
Post Office	25,000	
Public Works— Annually Recur- rent	69,000	
Sea Defences	53,000	
Transport and Harbours	11,000	
Income Tax	21,000	
Post Office—Extra- ordinary	2,000	
Public Works—Ex- traordinary	155,000	
Colonial Emergency Measures		10,000

## HEAD III.—AGRICULTURE

Increased provision is made for loans to Co-operative Credit Banks; and the cost of operating the Government Produce Depot—provision for which was made in Supplementary Estimates in 1941—is included. Provision is also made for the salaries of twelve additional Agricultural Instructors whom the Inspector of Agriculture for the West Indies (Mr. Wakefield) recommended should be appointed—details are given in the explanatory memorandum on the Estimates.

## HEAD VII.—CUSTOMS.

The decrease is due to the fact that it will be necessary to provide on Supplementary Estimates, before the close of

1941, \$55,000 in addition to the sum of \$36,500 provided in the current year's estimates from which to pay refunds of revenue in respect of "drawback and over-entries." \$50,000 has been included for 1942.

## HEAD VIII.—EDUCATION.

The increase is accounted for by provision for normal increments to teachers, funds for employment of additional teachers to cope with the steadily increasing school population, and expenditure to be incurred under the Education Code.

## HEAD XII.—LABOUR DEPARTMENT.—

## HEAD XV.—LOCAL GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENT.

Since 1939 there has been one department for Labour and Local Government. Following on the visit of the Comptroller for Development and Welfare in the West Indies and Mr. F. A. Norman, his Labour Adviser, it has been decided that a separate Labour Department under a Commissioner and an Assistant from the United Kingdom should be set up. The Council will be asked to approve of the necessary provision being made in the Estimates to give effect to this change.

Under the Head "Labour Department," provision is made for the salary of a new Commissioner of Labour, his passage to the Colony and travelling expenses in the Colony. Under Local Government provision is made for loans to Local Authorities and for repayment of outstanding short-term advances made to Village and Local Authorities from the Districts' Guarantee Fund of the Local Government Board. Government has been advised that the practice of making such advances from the Fund should cease.

HEAD XX.—MEDICAL—HOSPITALS  
AND DISPENSARIES.

Increases under this head are due mainly to increased cost of items of dietary, clothing and bedding, drugs and medical appliances; and expenditure in connection with sanitation, purchase of fuel and provision for lighting the institutions.

HEAD XXIV.—MISCELLANEOUS—(A)  
SUBVENTIONS, ETC., MUNICIPAL.

The decrease is explained by the fact that in 1941 provision had to be made for

payment of arrears of operating and maintenance costs in respect of the sewerage service provided for Government properties outside the northern boundaries of Georgetown over the period 1929 to 1940.

#### HEAD XXVII.—PENSIONS AND GRATUITIES.

A large sum had to be provided on Supplementary Estimates for 1941 to cover payments of lump sums and pensions to officers whose retirement was not anticipated when the annual estimates for the year were being prepared.

#### HEAD XXIX.—POOR.

The rise in prices of foodstuffs is responsible for the increased provision required under this head.

#### HEAD XXX.—POST OFFICE.

There will be considerable savings during 1941 on the vote for conveyance of mails owing to the reduction in the air mail service from twice a week to once a week, and a smaller sum is accordingly provided for 1942. Provision is made for obtaining two years' supplies of stamps next year and to meet the increased cost of materials for making uniforms.

#### HEAD XXXVI.—PUBLIC WORKS—ANNUALLY RECURRENT.

It is intended to incur greater expenditure on the roads in the County of Berbice, the East Coast of Demerara and in West Demerara, and an additional sum of \$50,000 has been provided. The provision for clearing rivers and creeks in the North West District has been increased by \$3,500 on the advice of the Consulting Engineer of Public Works to improve communications with mining areas in the district.

#### HEAD XXXIX.—SEA DEFENCES.

A report by the Consulting Engineer has revealed that serious erosion is occurring on the coastline between Le Ressonvenir and Success in East Demerara which will necessitate the expenditure of a considerable sum of money on protective measures.

#### HEAD XLI.—TRANSPORT AND HARBOURS DEPARTMENT.

The Council is being asked to vote \$169,121 under this head which is \$11,000 more than the revised estimated expenditure for 1941. The net deficiency is put

down at \$102,121, and it is proposed to spend \$67,000 on Capital Account which includes an item of \$35,000 to be revoted for the purchase of a new locomotive approved in the annual Estimates for 1941, and \$26,000 for the extension of the Fort Groyne, details of which are furnished in the explanatory memorandum on the Estimates.

The revenue estimates of the Transport and Harbours Department are approximately \$56,000 more than the revised estimates for 1941, the greater part of this increase being shown under the Department's revenue head "Harbour and Pilotage."

#### HEAD XLIII.—TREASURY.—INCOME TAX OFFICE.

It has been necessary to make provision for the refund of larger amounts in respect of Income Tax and Excess Profits Tax.

#### HEAD XLV.—POST OFFICE.—EXTRA-ORDINARY.

The increase under this head is mainly due to the provision for additional trunk lines between Georgetown and New Amsterdam, including a submarine cable across the Berbice River.

#### HEAD XLVI.—PUBLIC WORKS.—EXTRA-ORDINARY.

The greater part of the provision under this head is required for expenditure on buildings and works for the undermentioned departments:—

Education—Teachers' Training Centre and Hostel ...	\$ 30,000
Industrial School—Reconditioning of buildings	6,000
Lands and Mines Department—New Offices for the Geological Department ...	10,000

#### Medical—

(i) Leprosy Hospital—Reconditioning of buildings and re-erection of hall ...	15,000
(ii) Tuberculosis Hospital...	20,000
(iii) 4 Additional Health Centres	12,000

#### Police—

(i) New Police Station at Leguan, Ruimveldt, Kurupung and Soesdyke	44,000
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(ii) Quarters for Police Officers and Warrant Officers at Eve Leary	20,000
Postal—	
New Post Office at Providence, East Bank, Demerara.	5,000
Prisons—	
Reconditioning present buildings at Mazaruni	12,000
Public Works Department—	
Reconstructing office and stores building, Pure Water Supply Scheme	5,000
General—	
(i) Artesian wells and pure water supply distribution	62,000
(ii) Houston and Craig River defences	30,000
(iii) Reconditioning Government Estates, West Coast, Demerara	16,000
(iv) Draining and filling Government lands, Georgetown	10,000

Included in the provision under the sub-head for Roads and Bridges (Extra ordinary) is the sum of \$87,500 for repairing and reconditioning the East Bank road between Providence and Craig, which is subject to exceptionally heavy traffic due to the establishment of the United States air base on the Demerara River.

#### GENERAL.

The existing scheme of inter-departmental promotions, with transfer of posts instead of individuals when it is in the public interest to do so, has been open to the objection that it varies the establishment of Departments as approved by the Legislative Council. To overcome the objection a general clerical establishment is shown as an appendix to the Estimates for 1942, but the estimated cost of the clerical staff of each Department is still shown under each departmental Head. This change is more fully explained in the Memorandum which has been laid before Honourable Members with the draft Estimates.

Mr. DIAS seconded.

THE PRESIDENT: I understand that

we will adjourn consideration of the Estimates until later.

Debate on the motion adjourned.

THE PRESIDENT: It is proposed to adjourn the Council. Has any Member any matter of public importance or touching conduct in this Council which he cares to move? I shall be prepared to listen to him.

#### SEATING OF MEMBERS OF COUNCIL.

Mr. JACOB: My presence in this Council is in the public interest. I begin by saying that, because one hon. Member had the temerity to state that the matter I had intended to raise did not fall within the province of public interest and, therefore, it could not be raised. When I rise to speak in this Chamber I speak as the accredited representative of the North-Western District, whether it has one or a thousand voters, whether its population is one or a million, I speak on behalf of the public of the North-Western District. The work of this Council would proceed very smoothly if Members, including myself, would appreciate that point of view. When I got up just now to raise an objection to the confirmation of the Minutes, objection was raised to the fact that I was not standing where I am now, and in order that there should be no misunderstanding and that we should proceed expeditiously with the business I have removed. Looking at the Standing Rules and Orders I see no reference to the fact that a Member must stand at a particular place, at a particular time, to speak. I can make reference to several Councils, but if I refer to the Mother Parliament I think everyone around this table would agree and no one dares to contradict when I say that a Member of the House of Commons can stand and speak wherever he pleases.

I take very strong and serious objection to be sitting or standing next to the hon. Member on my right (Mr. Walcott). I think my personal feelings should be respected by Government and this Council. I speak feelingly because if Government would not listen and respect the feelings of Members something serious might happen.

Mr. C. V. WIGHT: To a point of order! I do not know it is a matter of

public interest whether the hon. Member for North-Western District desires to sit alongside the hon. Nominated Member, Mr. Walcott. I do not think it is, and most certainly it is not a matter of interest to me, whether it be a matter of public interest or not.

THE PRESIDENT: It is a matter affecting the conduct of the business, and the hon. Member should be able to address the Council on it.

Mr. JACOB: I take strong objection to be sitting or standing near to the hon. Member on my right. Several things have happened in this Council. At the last Session the then President of this Council refused to allow me to reply to a personal attack that was made here on me. I propose to question the ruling of the Chair on that occasion. I feel it is Your Excellency's intention that the business of the Council should proceed with harmony and dispatch. If I sit or stand here and my hon. friend attempts—not only he but any other Member—from this moment onwards to attack me personally very serious consequences may arise. I make that statement, and I am prepared to stand by it. Every statement I have made in this Council I am going to stand by. I am making reference to attacks made on me during the last Session—they are in the debates—and the then President allowed those attacks to be made.

I say again there is no precedent to compel me to sit or stand where I am now. If there is a Standing Rule I am prepared to abide by it. If there is a written rule that I must stand or sit here I am bound to obey it, but without neither I am solemnly protesting against the methods adopted by Government in the past. I say Government has adopted very arbitrary methods in the past. I am prepared to have these things rectified. If it means taking steps which will be detrimental to myself even, I am prepared to do it. I will not sit here to be abused or to be insulted by Members, who call themselves "honourable" and are placed here by the Governor. If they were placed here by the public I would take another step, but as it is I am hopeless. The public is hopeless. This Government must be guided by public opinion. Your Excellency, this morning you were good enough to indicate that. The remarks I make cast

no reflection on the Government as it is to-day but on that which stood a few days ago.

THE PRESIDENT: The hon. Member has gone a little beyond the point on which I have allowed him to address the Council. It was on his precise sitting place in the Council, and I must ask him to confine himself to the particular point at issue.

Mr. JACOB: There is no Standing Rule here whatever, no written rule, to compel me to sit here against my personal wish. I have written to Government and I have spoken to the hon. Colonial Secretary on the matter. It is well known to the Government and, therefore, it is not necessary for me to repeat it here. I should be allowed to sit where I choose. I gave you the reference of the House of Commons where there is no special place for a Member to be in order to speak.

THE PRESIDENT: The hon. Member has raised a point which is novel to me. I have been advised that his place in the Council is where he now sits. If he questions that, I am perfectly prepared to refer that for further advice. In the meantime his representation is recorded. Does any other Member desire to address the Council?

Mr. WOOLFORD: I have considerable experience of the procedure in the House of Commons not as a Member, but as a close observer and constant attendant of that House for many years, and I had the benefit of the acquaintance, private and intimate, of several Members who were daily visitors of mine from time to time. I desire to correct the statement of the hon. Member that Members of the House of Commons sit where they like. If the Council desires to hear me and the hon. Member is an interested listener, I would like to tell him something of the system which I know existed for very many years and still exists. I hope that when I am finished something of the pattern and conduct of Members of that House would be introduced here.

The system in England is that of a Party System. The Party in power sit on the right of the speaker, Members of the Cabinet occupying the front bench. There is no procedure for that, but it is an honour-



able custom and usage which no Member of the House of Commons would ever usurp. On the opposite side of the Party in power sit the Opposition with the Leader of the House occupying a permanent seat immediately opposite the Premier with the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Marshal on either side of him. The Members of the Opposition sit in order of seniority. Below is the gangway both sides of the House. It is an intervening space and no one crosses it. It is an accepted custom. If the hon. Member will believe me, I am stating what I know to be absolutely true. When the House assembles for the first time—

Mr. JACOB: To a point of order! The hon. Member said "If the hon. Member believes me." Does that mean I have spoken of something I have not seen?

Mr. WOOLFORD: If the hon. Member would believe what I am stating, there is this space between the divisions of the Party on both sides that is known as the gangway, and there again you would find it is the practice that the Member who wishes to occupy a seat there because of its close proximity to the Speaker (those sitting there coming within the notice of the Speaker), tries to be among the earliest arrival in that House, as it is the accepted custom that the first man who arrives marks his seat by leaving his coat or hat there and leaves the place. That seat is allocated by custom to that Member during the Session and no other Member would think of usurping his right to it. But there is no procedure whereby A, B and C, sit in different seats.

So far as this Council is concerned, the Members of the Executive Council sit in order of seniority on the right or left as the case may be. I have no desire to sit here where I am. It is definitely a matter of disappointment when it comes to the seats of the Elected Members. They are usually put at the end. I think Georgetown is always awarded the nearest seats. I do not know what special provision there is for that. There was a time when we had two bodies, the Members of the Court of Policy sat immediately next to the Members of the Executive Council. Since we have had the Legislative Council I have never heard any Member complain about any particular seat. Many of us would rather not sit in the

seat allocated to us. We would all like to be near the President and some prefer to sit on the east and some to face the east.

There may be no doubt that on this occasion the hon. Member is claiming a right which neither custom nor privilege gives him to sit where he likes. I am not aware that the hon. Member has made exception to sitting in Your Excellency's chair. I do not know if he is so desirous. He is built that way. He is a determined man. I do not admire his discretion or attempt to speak on my behalf. I strongly object to that. I do not mind his language, but I do not wish him to arrogate the right to speak on my behalf. I suggest that if the hon. Member thinks it distasteful to sit next to the hon. Nominated Member, anything like an insistent request—and that is his habit—that he should sit in another seat, I am quite sure, would result in his being accorded the privilege.

Mr. C. V. WIGHT: The hon. Member for New Amsterdam has much more experience than I, but because two Elected Members should act as rudders to the ship I do not know if anything can be done. I suppose the hon. Member for Essequibo River has no objection to sitting there.

Mr. LEE: I have no objection to sitting anywhere.

THE PRESIDENT: The hon. Member has raised a matter of personal wish in the conduct of business. It is novel to me. I have been guided by advice given me. I prefer to refer what has been said by the hon. Member for further advice.

Mr. JACOB: I should like to correct one or two of the statements made by the hon. Member for New Amsterdam. I do not know whether I have seen exactly things as they stood in the House of Commons. I know that while there may be certain precedents for certain Parties the ordinary Members sit wherever they like and go in and out as they please, and when there is an overflow the Members go into the Visitors' Gallery. I have seen that within the last few years. The hon. Member's speech has been most unconvincing, when he said that a Member of the House of Commons can go and mark his seat.

Mr. WOOLFORD: I never said that.

THE PRESIDENT: The hon. Member has already ventilated what he wished to point out at considerable length, and I am not aware that he must speak numerous times on the same point unless there is something new to be raised. I am quite prepared to consider the point and to take advice on it.

Mr. JACOB: The hon. Member said I attempt to usurp his right—

THE PRESIDENT: If the hon. Member wishes to pursue the matter he must move a motion of some sort, otherwise he cannot go on with it.

Mr. JACOB: I bow to your ruling and leave the matter to you to give me justice.

THE PRESIDENT: I understand the hon. Attorney-General wishes to move the first reading of Bills before the Council adjourns, and I propose to take them.

#### BILLS—FIRST READING.

The following Bills were read the first time:—

A Bill intituled an Ordinance to implement the agreement signed on the twenty-seventh day of March, nineteen hundred and forty-one

between the Government of the United Kingdom and the Government of the United States of America, relating to the bases leased to the United States in certain territories including the Colony of British Guiana.—(*The Attorney-General*).

A Bill intituled an Ordinance to make further provision for the raising of loans for public purposes.

A Bill intituled an Ordinance to declare the terms and conditions applicable to local loans authorised by any ordinance to be raised by the Governor: and to provide for matters connected therewith.

A Bill intituled an Ordinance to confer power to raise a loan of eight hundred and twenty thousand pounds and the costs of issue; to provide for the payment of the aforesaid sum in the redemption of the amount outstanding of the loan raised under section thirteen of the Public Loan and Colonial Treasury Bills Ordinance; and for matters connected therewith—*Mr. Mc Davil, Colonial Treasurer*.

Notice was given that at the next or a subsequent meeting of the Council it would be moved that the Bills be read the second time.

THE PRESIDENT: This concludes the business for the day. I have a number of persons coming from the country to me at 10 o'clock tomorrow morning and I cannot put them off. The Council will therefore meet at 11 o'clock.

The Council adjourned to the following day at 11 a.m.