

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

Friday, 4th December, 1942.

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

PRESENT:

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

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

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

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

The Hon. E. F. McDavid, C.B.E., Colonial Treasurer.

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

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

The Hon. W. A. D'Andrade, O.B.E., Comptroller of Customs.

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

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

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

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

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

The Hon. J. Eleazar (Berbice River).

The Hon. J. I. deAguiar (Central Demerara).

The Hon. Jung Bahadur Singh (Demerara-Essequibo).

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

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

The Hon. Peer Bacchus (Western Berbice).

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

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

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

The Hon. T. Lee (Essequibo River).

The Clerk read prayers.

MINUTES.

The minutes of the meeting of the Council held on Thursday, 3rd December, 1942, were taken as read and confirmed.

ANNOUNCEMENTS.

SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATE.

The PRESIDENT: I wish to refer hon. Members to a note circulated by the Treasurer with a number of items requiring supplementary financial provision which he would like to take at an early meeting of the Council. If before the adjournment Members feel that we can consider those items I would ask the Treasurer to put them forward.

MILITARY REORGANIZATION.

In my address to the Council I said that I was unable to give any details of the military reorganization that was going on in British Guiana, but that the Commandant would welcome at any time an opportunity to show Members of the Council what was being done. I have a note here which says that Thursday, December 17, would be a very convenient and useful time if Members would like to go to Kitty when certain operations are under way that morning, and when Col. Hooker thinks he could very usefully show Members what is being done as the Militia are coming to the end of their very intensive training programme on that day. No doubt a formal note will be issued to Members if they care to avail themselves of the opportunity, and if I can go myself I shall do so.

INACCURATE NEWSPAPER REPORT.

Members will have noticed that our good friend the *Daily Chronicle* has projected us a good many months hence, and in its anxiety to get rid of the Official Members has declared their abolition as from yesterday, not only in the heading but in the text of its report. (laughter). The other newspaper had the matter correctly reported, but the *Daily Chronicle* reported me as saying:—

“I have to announce to hon. Members that we are sitting under the new constitution. The very useful official *bloc* will no longer continue.”

I said yesterday that the official *bloc* was serving a very useful purpose in enabling us to proceed with the business instead of adjourning on account of no quorum. However, the correct interpretation is in the other newspaper.

PETITION.

Mr. GONSALVES laid on the table a petition from T. Christiani, retired

letter-carrier, praying for a lump sum gratuity or compassionate allowance.

ORDER OF THE DAY.

ESTIMATES, 1943.

The Council resolved itself into Committee and resumed consideration of the estimates of expenditure to be defrayed from revenue for the year ending 31st December, 1943.

LAW OFFICERS.

Mr. ELEAZAR: This is a very difficult head to tackle in this Council. For one thing the Attorney-General is always in good form and always ready for the fray, and another thing is that he is not the only maker of laws in these days. I suppose he supplies the verbiage, but he has nothing to do with the material that he puts into words whenever he makes these laws, otherwise I should be very much inclined to ask him what has prompted him to order flogging for a man who steals an egg? I observe the hon. Member for New Amsterdam (Mr. Woolford) shaking his head. I know what I am saying.

Mr. WOOLFORD: I rise to a point of order. The Attorney-General, who is sitting here—I suppose he is anxious to hear what the hon. Member is saying—has asked me what he said and I replied that I did not know. I wish the hon. Member will not make remarks of that kind.

The CHAIRMAN: The incident has escaped me. I therefore ask the hon. Member to proceed.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I was saying that I know there is emergency legislation in these days, but this legislation has been coming very fast and furious since the war, and I was wondering whether the legislation now in operation, whereby a person might be flogged for stealing poultry or eggs, emanated from the

Attorney-General. I would also ask on what principle of law has that been introduced? Even emergency legislation must come under some principle of law. I know that in the 12th Century people were hanged for sheep stealing, and I know that in the olden days there were the thumbscrew and other forms of torture. Therefore, I was wondering whether poultry stealing in this country has become so rampant as to warrant the infliction of the greatest torture known to the British law.

I submit that flogging is the most demoralizing and painful punishment known to British law to-day, and one which should not even in time of war be put into operation unless something very grave was in the atmosphere. I live in the country and I know of no such gravity in poultry stealing as to warrant flogging. It almost amounts to violence upon civilization to flog a man for stealing a duck, a fowl or an egg. I go further and say that I believe Your Excellency has been misinformed. The position must have been grossly exaggerated if anybody informed you that there was such a menace to poultry rearing at this time to warrant a person being tortured in that way. People who make laws very seldom find themselves amongst the people.

I observe an item of \$48 for travelling and I wonder if that is the reason why the Attorney-General is so seldom in Berbice. I have no recollection of having seen him there, but I heard he was there once. I do not think he has very much time for joyrides in these days, but I think if a sufficient sum were provided for travelling the Attorney-General would certainly take a run up to Berbice some time or other to see what is going on there. I am inclined to the belief that if one has an idea of the locality in which a crime has been committed it helps considerably in deciding how that crime should be treated. Some time ago the vote for travelling was a

large one, but I do not know if it has been reduced to \$48 by request.

I think the Attorney-General should visit New Amsterdam twice or even once a year. I am sure that if he went there two or three months ago he would not have found sitting accommodation in the Court-room unless the Sgt. Major was kind enough to fetch a chair for him from his private quarters. The seats were in such a derelict condition that one had to be extremely careful with his pants, but that was not all he had to provide against. I think if the Attorney-General had seen the condition of things there it would not have reached that state. The Attorney-General should be provided with an adequate travelling allowance.

I know he is very busy now and that this is not the time to suggest that some of our long overdue Regulation should be made. For instance, there are Regulations to be made under the Public Health Ordinance which was enacted in 1934, but they have not yet been made, and great hardship exists until now. We have to fall back upon the Local Government Board Regulations, but they do not always meet the case. I make these remarks more or less to keep those matters alive.

Mr. LEE: Under this head I would like Government to consider the proposal I made last year which I make again to-day. In my opinion, if a legally trained officer were added to this Department most of the work which is overlapping in the Magistrates' Courts and the Police Department would be reduced. As far as my knowledge goes, statements are taken in indictable cases by policemen through the County Superintendent and then forwarded to the Attorney-General's Office for his information and advice. I can assure Your Excellency that on several occasions the prosecuting Police Officers are seen fumbling with prosecutions and wast-

ing the precious time of the Magistrate. I am suggesting that a legally trained officer might be attached to the Attorney-General's Office to take those statements, and he might also prosecute in all indictable cases in Georgetown and other districts. That would save the time of the Magistrates, the County Superintendent of Police, and the public. Such an officer could also give legal opinions on village matters.

Mr. PEER BACCHUS: I did not intend to take part in this debate, but owing to the remarks of the hon. Member for Berbice River (Mr. Eleazar) that Government was ill-advised to declare every district in the Colony with reference to poultry and eggs I would like to say that the hon. Member knows as well as anyone else that it is the poor people in the country districts who deny themselves of a good many necessities to rear a few poultry, and they actually buy the eggs in the shops. If those people are to be deprived of their eggs and poultry by a set of young people who adopt that line of trade I think the time is long overdue when steps should be taken to protect them. The hon. Member also knows that the poor people in the country rear poultry for the purpose of meeting unforeseen expenditure, such as doctors' bills. I think the hon. Member has come out a little bit too early. He should make his plea at the Magistrate's Court when defending one of those people.

Mr. JACOB: I was wondering whether the two previous speakers were not speaking on the question of poultry stealing under the wrong head. I think they might very well have done so under Agriculture. I was wondering whether the Director of Agriculture was not the culprit who suggested that flogging should be imposed in order to encourage poultry rearing and so on, but I have not a legal mind. Maybe, the hon. Member for Berbice River (Mr. Eleazar) is correct. I am very doubtful whether flogging for poultry or plan-

tain stealing would help to give us all the eggs, poultry and plantains we require at the present time.

Mr. C. V. WIGHT: I know that this Department is under severe pressure and I am suggesting that an officer be appointed, even if temporarily, for the duration of the war. I am not doing so on the grounds mentioned by the hon. Member for Essequibo River (Mr. Lee), but we heard only yesterday from one of the Heads of Departments that the Law Officers are filled up with work. There are Regulations concerning the Department of Lands and Mines and other Departments which need revision, tightening up and modernizing, and it is absolutely necessary that someone should be attached to the Attorney-General's Office who would be able to devote his attention entirely to bringing up to date all this necessary legislation. I therefore move that item (e)—Clerical Establishment, \$1,170—be increased by \$2,400.

The CHAIRMAN: I think the Treasurer has an amendment to move which he will indicate now.

Mr. McDAVID: I was about to speak before the hon. Member for Berbice River (Mr. Eleazar) rose to inform the Council that this head was discussed in Committee, and Members will remember that the question of providing some extra money to enable the Attorney-General to secure some assistance in his office to relieve some of the burden of work on him was raised and left over for decision pending a discussion with the Attorney-General. That discussion has now taken place and I am instructed to ask leave to move in a new item—1 f—Additional legal assistance, \$2,000. This lump sum will be used at the Attorney-General's discretion in securing such necessary assistance in his office as he thinks fit next year.

Mr. C. V. WIGHT: Why \$2,000? Wouldn't that preclude the Attorney-

General from obtaining the necessary assistance over a longer period? Why not \$2,400? The Crown Counsel commenced at that salary and I think the appointment should be made on that basis. Even the Attorney-General's clerk gets \$2,004.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: The difficulty is this: that in this building the accommodation is extremely strained, and as we are situated at present, even if the money is provided it is impossible to provide office accommodation for an additional lawyer. It is true he could share chambers with one of the Law Officers, but at present that is impossible because each officer has at least eight interviews each day and it is quite impossible to interview people when there is another person in the same room doing the same thing. Whoever is appointed to act as a Law Officer must have reference to the Law Officers' Library. In these days we are making a completely new International Law, at least that which applies to belligerents. The law relating to shipping is completely different from what it was three years ago, and you have to make vast notes from certain books published in England and make still more use of certain documents which come from the Admiralty Court in England through the Admiralty itself and from the Colonial Office. Anybody who comes to the Law Officers' chambers would have to answer at a moment's notice by telephone questions which in peacetime are put in writing. You get a telephone message from a Port Officer: "Is he an enemy alien or not?" You have to answer that then and there, and with due respect to practitioners I say that nobody coming in there at present could answer that question in many cases until he has had a chance to read all those documents on the subject. Therefore, to bring an extra man in we must put him in the existing chambers or very near. The

present chambers are already congested and so much so that I will have next year to borrow library space elsewhere.

As regards office accommodation outside those chambers, Members are aware that we are overcrowded and congested now, and I think, sir, you mentioned in this Council two days ago the fact that you intend to bring the Local Government Department down to this block of buildings. Therefore, great changes will have to be made, and when these changes are made I hope one small room may be provided for the Law Officers. In that case I should welcome an additional Law Officer here; but at present, although the money is provided, we cannot provide the accommodation. The amount I have asked for is the round figure of \$2,000. What I had in view is this: that there are three chambers which are at present occupied, but the Crown Counsel only spent six weeks in chambers last year. During the rest of the year he was in Essequibo. The Assistant Attorney-General spent just six months in Court in Georgetown, Berbice, and chambers, and during the other half of the year he was also in Court. It is obvious that if one of those two officers — the Assistant Attorney-General would be the one—could be relieved of Court duties and he would be in chambers the full year it would be of very material assistance. I asked for this \$2,000 in order to be able to brief counsel who could appear at the Berbice and Essequibo sessions and afford much desired relief to the other Law Officers.

Mr. WIGHT: I take it that the Attorney-General does not propose to put an assistant in the Department itself, but that this money will be used for assistance in the Courts.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: I do not wish to be bound hand and foot by the wording of the item. Before the war all the big Colonies had legal draftsmen, but during the war, owing

to the vast amount of legal drafting to be done, a great number of Colonies, including our neighbours in the West Indies, have appointed draughtsmen. If during the coming year it is found necessary we might have a temporary draughtsman, in which case the wording of this item would, I hope, cover that.

Mr. LEE: I would suggest that if one of the officers in the Magisterial Department is appointed who has already had training in drafting, it would be necessary to appoint a temporary Magistrate, and it would certainly require more than \$2,000. Such an arrangement would be more efficient from the point of view of the office as well as parties concerned. I suggest that the sum be increased to \$2,400 in case my suggestion is adopted.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I think the Attorney-General has amply met the situation. If counsel can be found to do the outside work, which has been done on previous occasions, then the officer holding the substantive office would be able to remain in chambers to do drafting work.

Mr. C. V. WIGHT: I would leave the figure at \$2,000 as suggested by the Attorney-General.

Item put, and agreed to.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT.

Mr. McDAVID: There are a number of amendments which are set out in detail on page 3 of the Finance Committee's report, totalling \$11,440. Members know, of course, that the reason for these amendments is the introduction of a new District centred at Bartica, and the proposal to station a District Officer at Leguan. The matter was fully discussed in Finance Committee. I move that the Head be approved at the figures printed, plus \$11,400.

THE CHAIRMAN: Members of the Council who attended the meetings of the Finance Committee are fairly well aware of the details of this proposal.

Mr. ELEAZAR: My friend on my right (Mr. deAguiar) has almost frightened me into saying nothing under this Head, but I have so much to say about it. I am wondering whether Your Excellency will not leave out the additional Commissioner. These Commissioners are not doing all that is expected of them. What we expected when the system of District Administration was introduced by Sir Cecil Rodwell and left half-way by Sir Gordon Guggisberg has not inspired us with any great confidence in what they are doing. We know what District Commissioners are in other places, and I suppose Your Excellency has in mind the same functions for those here. A District Commissioner here is simply an officer of the Local Government Board. He has to send to headquarters for nearly everything. He is supposed to be the man on the spot, but if the man on the spot cannot settle a matter but has to refer it to headquarters, what is the advantage? It leads to a tremendous amount of red tape. The system is unsuited to this Colony.

I am told that Your Excellency has in mind the placing of a new Commissioner at Bartica. I am not sure whether that should not be allowed to pass, because it is not easy for a man at Bartica to communicate with headquarters, but if the Commissioner is not given the power to act on his own what advantage would be gained by placing him there? Speaking generally, I do not think these Commissioners are giving all that is required of them. First of all, they have not the power, and their duties overlap those of other officers. They have no control over the Village Councils, which need not take their advice if they do not wish to. There is no justification for a Commissioner on the East Coast and much less for one in Georgetown. The District Commissioners in this Colony

are a joke as compared with what we know them to be in other countries. It seems to me that when we blunder in this Colony we do not retract but seek to perpetuate the wrong by resorting to all sorts of dodges. When the scheme was inaugurated it was said by Government that a great saving would be effected, but Your Excellency will be astounded to see what the cost is now.

THE CHAIRMAN: As I am primarily responsible for the proposal to put a Commissioner at Bartica I will take this opportunity to reply to the hon. Member's remarks now.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I said there was some justification for that because Bartica is far from Georgetown.

THE CHAIRMAN: I would like to take this opportunity to put on record the reason why the proposal was put forward. We discussed it fully in Executive Council and in Finance Committee but we can also record our views in the proceedings of the Council. I went up to this district of the Colony last March, I think. I have heard a great deal in this Colony about mal-administration being the root of all our troubles. I am not going to say anything about the rest of the Colony, but I have never in 31 years' colonial administration seen such a lack of administration as I found in that part of the Colony. When I got to Bartica I found a 3rd class clerk in charge of the office there. His jurisdiction extended over a distance of two or three miles, and beyond that right up to the Venezuelan frontier, which must be 15,000 square miles, there is simply no administration at all. There is some administration in respect of mining and forestry, and a Magistrate goes up at extraordinary inconvenience and waste of time to hold Court every other month, but administration generally is non-existent. At every place I stopped—at 112 Miles, 108 Miles, Potaro, Tumatumari, and Bartica—people collected and wanted to

see the Governor. They said they would like to have this and that done for them and a little bit of advice from the Department of Agriculture. There was no machinery whatsoever, and my only reply to them could be "Come to Georgetown or write a letter to Georgetown."

On the other side of the picture found the District Commissioner of West Demerara whose district extends from Wismar and Christianburg on the Demerara river right across to the Essequibo river and including Bartica itself. What I am proposing, therefore, is that we have a separate administration of the Bartica area with the maximum degree of decentralization and co-ordination with the Department of Lands and Mines and the Forestry Departments, so that the functions of those Departments might be carried on as much as possible on the spot. The proposal goes much further than the mere posting of a District Commissioner at Bartica. He will be an officer who has had experience of the district and of Lands and Mines work, and the Land Officer in Essequibo will go to Bartica and work in the closest co-operation with him. In short, the Department of Lands and Mines and the Local Government Department will work in the closest possible co-operation.

I think the proposal has met with the general acceptance of those Members who have had the opportunity of discussing it in Finance Committee. It is not tremendously expensive because we take a bit of it from the Department of Lands and Mines itself. It is going to help to some extent the Magisterial work, saving a good deal of time without interfering with the actual work of the Magistrate. I thought it useful to explain it here and now. Here again is this settlement on the Bartica road almost without any decent guidance at all. I have not seen such a bad example of the abuse of land and such hopeless work being done as there —work which might have been directed

much more usefully. We are trying to do that now, and this new machinery will help us to do that too.

Mr. JACOB: I do not share the view expressed by the hon. Member for Berbice (Mr. Eleazar). In so far as my district is concerned I have received very few, if any, complaints as regards the District Administration there. On the contrary I think the district is very well administered by the Commissioner there, but I have received complaints from other parts of the Colony, and the remarks I made under Lands and Mines and the Secretariat regarding co-operation and so on, particularly in regard to the granting of applications for Crown lands and co-operation between the people and the District Administration, apply particularly to the Demerara and Berbice districts. I do not think there is much complaint about Essequibo, but there are certainly definite and genuine complaints and grievances in Demerara and Berbice.

If there was a better understanding between the District Commissioners and the public, particularly the farming public, this Colony would make progress more rapidly. I know that people have to go to the District Administration Office several days, travelling many miles, and return to their homes without having anything done. That happens on the East and West Coasts of Demerara, and on the Corentyne Coast and New Amsterdam. I do urge that the needs of the people be more carefully considered by the several Commissioners in Demerara and Berbice.

I would like to take this opportunity to refer to item (7) on page 27. I thought there might have been some proposal in connection with that item but I have not heard any. I think the Finance Committee suggested certain things.

Mr. McDAVID: Is the hon. Member referring to the proposal with respect to a personal allowance?

Mr. JACOB: Yes.

Mr. McDAVID: That is in the report of the Finance Committee and is being adopted.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I wish to thank you, sir, for the explanation you have given with regard to Bartica. The conditions you have seen there call for a Commissioner, but you did not find one there. In Georgetown there is a Commissioner where there is no need for one.

Mr. LAING (Commissioner of Local Government): There is very little I have to say, because there has not been a great deal of criticism of the work of the Department. The hon. Member for Berbice River (Mr. Eleazar) has frequently in this Council expressed his views on the system of District Administration. The system was introduced for the purpose of co-ordinating all the efforts of the various Government Departments in the districts, and I think it has been very successful. With regard to the District Commissioner in Georgetown, whom my friend does not consider necessary I must point out that the District Commissioner for Georgetown is a misnomer, because Georgetown is administered by a Municipality. His district, however, embraces the East Bank, and his work in Georgetown is more that of a revenue officer. He collects a very considerable amount of inland revenue in the City.

The hon. Member for Berbice River (Mr. Eleazar) and the hon. Member for North-Western District (Mr. Jacob) made reference to delays in dealing with applications for Crown lands. I am ready to admit that delays do occur, but it is very difficult to proceed more speedily with those applications. They as a rule cover areas very remote from public roads, and they are usually applications for grants of Crown lands many miles up river, and places very difficult of access. Unless the applicants can give the District Commissioner a complete description of the land he wishes to occupy it means inspection of that land.

Another point is that the work of the Department of Lands and Mines has not been completely decentralized. While the District Commissioner has a record of all the names of lessees of Crown land in his district so as to enable him to collect Crown lands revenue, he has not in his district the stock sheets which show the unoccupied Crown lands available. Therefore, before an application can be granted it has to be sent down to the Department of Lands and Mines in Georgetown to ascertain from the records there whether the land is available or not. In many cases the land has then to be inspected. Therefore there must be a certain amount of delay in that respect. It may be possible later on to improve the system, but of course that will mean additional expense.

The hon. Member for North-Western District made a remark yesterday in connection with applications for Crown lands made to the District Commissioner for East Demerara. I understood him to say that those applications were referred to a certain person whom he would not name. I was not clear as to the hon. Member's meaning and I communicated with the District Commissioner concerned who assured me that the applications for Crown lands made to him were sent to no other person than myself or the Commissioner of Lands and Mines. If the hon. Member desires any further information I would be glad to supply him with what information I have. Your Excellency has already explained in detail the need for stationing an officer at Bartica to control the Potaro-Mazaruni-Cuyuni District.

Mr. C. V. WIGHT: Arising out of the remarks of the hon. Commissioner of Local Government in reply to the hon. Member for Berbice River in connection with the abolition of the post of District Commissioner for Georgetown, could not the revenue-collecting duties of the District Commissioner for Georgetown be handed

over to the proper authorities who now administer the City, as stated by the Commissioner of Local Government? (laughter).

Mr. JACOBS: I am glad for this opportunity to advise my hon. friend, the Commissioner of Local Government, that if he would kindly consult the Beterverwagting—Triumph Ratepayers' League he would get certain valuable information concerning the matter I referred to yesterday. I see the hon. Member for Central Demerara (Mr. de Aguiar) is laughing. I know as a matter of fact that certain correspondence has passed between those people and the District Commissioner for East Demerara, and the whole thing has been very unsatisfactorily dealt with. Yesterday I was glad to hear from the Commissioner of Lands and Mines that applications for Crown Lands have not only to go to him but to three or four other bodies or parties. Today the hon. Commissioner of Local Government says they are only sent to the District Commissioner and to the Commissioner of Lands and Mines. There is a conflict. I am sure those applications have to go to several other places. I think the hon. Commissioner of Local Government has not given the exact information to-day. I know as a matter of fact there are necessary details to be seen after, not only by the Officer of the Lands and Mines Department. An Officer of the District Commissioner's Office has to inspect the land and satisfy himself that everything is there. But there are certain other red tape formalities to be observed. There must be a certain amount of red tape, but there is far too much of it and that has resulted in decreasing production, especially food production, all these years. This Department must shake off all the shackles it has. It has several shackles. The District Commissioners must do their job. The Commissioner of Lands and Mines must do his job, and the Secretariat will thereby not be burdened as well as

other people. Let each Department do its job and you will have a smoother local government.

Mr. LAING: I am grateful for the information and may say that I spoke to an Executive Officer of the Triumph-Beterverwagting Ratepayers' League only yesterday, but he gave me none of the information I wanted. However, I will speak to him again and, I hope, get what the hon. Member has described as "valuable information."

Mr. JACOB: For record sake I may state that if the hon. Commissioner would ask the District Commissioner for East Demerara (Mr. Nevin) for the letters he received from the Beterverwagting-Triumph Ratepayers' League in regard to the applications for Crown Lands, the matter would be taken a stage further.

The CHAIRMAN: It is recorded.

Head passed as amended.

MAGISTRATES.

Mr. McDAVID (Colonial Treasurer): Under this Head there is a minor amendment recommended by the Finance Committee resulting in a reduction of the total vote by \$456. That is the result of the deletion of the sub-item "Bailliff, Mazaruni". The total of the Head is \$76,892.

Mr. C. V. WIGHT: There are just one or two points I would like to raise under this Head. The first is the salary or salaries of each Magistrate or the Magistrates. I attended the meetings of the Finance Committee throughout and we have seen in the Estimates that there are quite a few offices in which increases have taken place. There is no need to mention each and everyone, but as an example there was one in the Colonial Secretary's Office. The professional man, as was stated by the hon. Nominated Member, Mr. Jackson, has to acquire his profession at some considerable expense. He then sits on the

Magisterial Bench and has certain responsibilities, but he is only paid at the rate of \$200 per month rising eventually to \$3,720 per annum. It is considered that comparisons are odious, but can you say that in respect of a professional man of that standing, when increases all around are being sought and handed out, when there is increased expenditure of living and otherwise, when in certain cases that Officer is stationed in an outlying district and is really the head of the whole administrative structure in that district and has to bear certain burdens and to bear them cheerfully whether he desires to do so or not? There is a question I would like to ask and it is whether it is proposed by Government to increase or strengthen the Magisterial Department, and if so when is it going to take effect.

The other point is somewhat similar though, perhaps, in another direction. It touches generally and not specifically the particular Officer to whom I refer in the sense that there are tremendous anomalies which, I think, can be obviated and should be obviated by the Promotions Board. I am not going to concern myself, even if the answer is given, with such an answer as a particular Officer is too old for promotion or a particular Officer has not got the necessary academical qualification for promotion. There is an Officer in this Department in Georgetown about whom certain hon. Members here can speak, who has for years—I think I am correct in saying it is a matter of eight or nine years, but I speak subject to correction—served as a most efficient clerk in that Department though he was only categorized as a Bailliff. He was, however, never promoted though as a matter of fact his case was placed by certain Members on the Executive Council before Government. He still remains a Bailliff doing the duties of a Clerk. I observe, as was explained in Finance Committee, there is to be a Class II. Officer appointed to the Georgetown Magistrates' Office. Does that mean that the Officer I have

referred to will return to his substantive post as a Bailiff? If that is so, I say it is an injustice to the particular Officer who has not only served in the last War but has given Government service in a capacity the benefits of which he does not enjoy in his substantive post as a Bailiff. I think the hon. Member for New Amsterdam (Mr. Woolford) can support that, also the hon. Member for Essequibo River (Mr. Lee), and the hon. Member for Georgetown South (Mr. Gensalves). I do not see any other hon. Member present who is a legal practitioner, except the hon. Member for Berbice River (Mr. Eleazar) who confines his practice to Berbice. It seems, Sir, that of all the cases placed on the Estimates at this Session this Officer's case deserves the earnest and most serious consideration of Government. As I have said, I do not feel it is the duty of hon. Members here to plead the cause of any particular Officer unless it comes within the general scope of his observation.

MR. LEE: I would like to support the plea of the hon. Member.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Mr. Pretheroe): There is one point I desire to refer to, and that is the question of the salaries of Magistrates. Hon. Members will remember that at the meeting of the Council in 1939 and towards the end of 1940 the same question was brought up, and last year five hon. Members of this Council got up here and spoke in support of the fact that the Magistrates are underpaid compared with certain other Officers of the Government. The hon. Member for New Amsterdam stressed the point, and in answering I said that I would look into the matter. In that very month—December—I wrote to Jamaica, Trinidad and the Windward Islands asking for the conditions of service of the Magistrates there and if there were any proposed changes in those conditions of service, and also for anything that might be useful to assist us in arriving at a

conclusion in regard to the salaries of Magistrates in this Colony. Owing to difficulty of communication due to the War I did not receive a reply until March this year, and in April I put up certain recommendations to the Secretary of State through Your Excellency advocating that the Magistrates should receive a higher rate of salary scales which were mentioned, and I also recommended that one additional Senior Magistrate should be appointed. As the salaries of the Assistant Attorney-General and the Crown Counsel are in a manner related to the salaries of the Magistrates, I also recommended that their salaries should be increased.

Those recommendations went to His Excellency the Governor who put them to the Executive Council and they were supported unanimously. They were sent to the Secretary of State by Air Mail in the month of May, but we received no reply for weeks after and I assumed that, for reasons I will mention later but not affecting this matter, they were taking certain action. That is important in view of my answer to any question which I know is going to be raised. In a month a reply came from the Secretary of State regarding the salaries of Magistrates. The Secretary of State said what was in effect said in the House of Lords in June this year, and that was that he proposed to introduce a scheme for all these Colonial Departments unifying their salaries, so that those Officers in wealthy Colonies will receive the same salaries as those in the less wealthy Colonies. Consequently there will be no transfer from one Colony to another for the purpose of obtaining an increased salary. In view of that he (Secretary of State) preferred that the recommendations regarding the salaries of Magistrates in this Colony be not pressed now but left until after the War. Hon. Members will realize the effect of what that means "After the War". It will take some time after the War to work out some unified scheme and some

further time to get all the Colonies concerned to agree to it. That despatch puts off the proposal to increase the Magistrates' salaries for some years. This Government has in fact put forward new recommendations, backed by the Executive Council and by Your Excellency with your full power, for this increase in salary which have not yet been considered.

Mr. C. V. WIGHT: I am glad for the explanation given by the hon. and learned Attorney-General. It seems that this request has the full support not only of Your Excellency but also of the Executive Council, the Head of the Department (the hon. and learned Attorney-General), and this Council, but there is one point I would like to make in reply to the point made by the hon. and learned Attorney-General about the statement made in the House of Lords. There are several details to be worked out in relation to the scheme as proposed. In certain of the Islands these posts are not entirely confined to legal requirements. In certain places, I believe and I speak subject to correction, the Attorney-General is a sort of Colonial Secretary, Administrator, and all kinds of things. Then one has to take into consideration the question of the cost of living in the various Colonies and the fact that the duties are less in some of the smaller Islands. The cost of living, house rent, and the cost of various other items are much below that of this Colony. There is also the question of promotion. At the moment we have had very little promotion abroad from this particular Department. I think we have only had one within the last fifteen years. I speak subject to correction. I think the Officer is now in Jamaica; he got promotion and increased salary. The question of promotion will naturally have some bearing on the question of salary, and if the question of salary is now to be unified then our local men will have a much better opportunity of getting greater promotion. In other words a man drawing £500 a year here can be

transferred to one of the small Islands at the same salary. It will be promotion in the sense that he will be able to save more, but if he is drawing a much greater salary here then he will not be promoted there but to some bigger Colony and to some bigger post. The Magisterial Bench in this Colony is comprised of local men, and a much greater opportunity will be afforded them for promotion to bigger posts if their salaries are increased.

Mr. ELEAZAR: Sir, I am almost astounded at the reply we have got from the Secretary of State in respect of this matter. I suggest to Government and to this Council that we request Your Excellency to inform the Secretary of State for the Colonies that these men's increase of salary is too long overdue, war or no-war and whether there is to be a unified scheme or not. A Magistrate who goes to a University and qualifies as a Barrister should sit on the Bench and receive a salary of \$200 a month, while a Labour Inspector who is having a lazy job gets the same salary. The thing is astounding to see Junior Solicitors in the Magistrates' Courts with five or six or seven briefs twice or three times a week earning an income per month far greater than the monthly salary of the Magistrate before whom they plead. \$200 a month is absolutely inadequate. It is so inadequate that one can hardly conceive how Government can tolerate it. I am so pleased to learn that the Executive Council, the hon. and learned Attorney-General, and Your Excellency have represented this matter to the Secretary of State for the Colonies who, I think, does not know the exact position. That is how I view the reply, as coming from one who is not *au fait* with conditions in the Colony.

Take for instance the Magistrate in Berbice. He has to travel at times 47 miles before he can commence work in the morning and 47 miles when he is finished in the afternoon. On Monday he has to travel 28 miles—14 miles

to the Court and 14 miles back from the Court; on Wednesday he travels 34 miles—17 miles to Whim and 17 miles back; on Thursday he travels 47 miles to Springlands and 47 miles back. That man at the end of the day has done all that travelling apart from the duties he has to perform on the Bench, and all for \$200 a month. In the old days \$200 a month was attractive to those men, as \$1 could have given as much goods as can be had to-day for \$3. There is no question about that. When it has become necessary to-day to appoint an Officer who has no special qualification at \$200 a month, you can at once see how inadequate that salary is for a man who has to go and qualify for his post. I am asking Your Excellency to get an expression of opinion from this Council to the Secretary of State for the Colonies and to say that with all due deference to his reply under local conditions—cost of living and everything else—a man must become disgruntled in his job if he is told to wait 2 or 3 years. If the Secretary of State is too busy now to go into the conditions in the different Islands, Your Excellency is placed here as Representative of His Majesty the King and when you have made a survey of the whole local situation your word backed by the word of the Members of the Executive Council, your advisers, and of the Members of this Council, should be stronger than that of any Clerk in the Colonial Office or of the Secretary of State himself. We have had three Secretaries of State for the Colonies in the last three years—Lord Moyne, Lord Cranborne, and Mr. Stanley.

The position is serious. It is grave. Those of us who practise before the Magistrates' Courts know it. I sometimes feel ashamed when I see certain Counsel appearing before the Magistrate once or twice and think what it means to the Magistrate. When addressing His Worship and His Worship does not go along with him Counsel looks at him with contempt as much as to say "This pettifogging

fellow wants to put himself against me." That is how it looks. He does not say it but does so in his heart. You cannot put a man in a position where he can be looked upon with contempt by others. The Magistrates are amongst the worst paid Government Officials in the Colony. What is \$200 a month to those men when they have to pay Income Tax and other bills? There are very few Junior Barristers or very few Junior Solicitors in the Colony to-day who do not earn that amount. The Magistrates get next to nothing as salary and it is not commensurate with the work they have to do. The workman is worthy of his hire. I believe that with the sanction of this Council and of your advisers Your Excellency can see your way to again write and remind the Secretary of State that this matter is of a pressing nature and cannot stand waiting. It is urgent and should be looked after at once.

THE CHAIRMAN: I am always hearing about the rising cost of administration. That is in general, but I have come to particular Heads and the hon. Member tries to get somebody's salary raised or some special appointment made in Barbice. Yesterday he was rightly against retrenchment in the Education Department. It is true that I supported the Attorney-General's recommendation on the Magistrates' pay, but you know there is such a thing as supply and demand. During the last eight years that I have been Governor in the Colonies I have found that there are Barristers to be picked up like "black-birds" for such position in one case at a salary of £250 a year. I can guarantee to get six qualified Barristers to-morrow for the post of Magistrate at the existing pay. Just think of supply and demand. It is the easiest qualification to get in the world and the lowest in standard. I speak as a Barrister. You must remember that if you want these men of special qualification they are fairly easy to get. It is quite a different thing to if you want engineers. You will have

to pay the engineers double the salary because they are not so easily to be had. However, I willingly accepted the advice of the Executive Council and supported and despatched the recommendation.

Mr. ELIAZAR: I did not think the Government would descend so low as to commercialize the Service because there are many men to be got for the job. I think the workman is worthy of his hire.

The CHAIRMAN: Perhaps that is why I agree to the Attorney-General's recommendation.

Mr. LEE: I would like it to be recorded that first of all I certainly protest against the Secretary of State for the Colonies directing against what is a unanimous vote of this Council.

The CHAIRMAN: I should correct that altogether. He has not directed. The Secretary of State returned a very reasonable reply which I shall take this opportunity to explain. It is intended to get away from this extreme difficulty that the small Colonies particularly are experiencing in getting fully qualified or the best people for the difficult jobs. In this Unified Service this question of salary will no longer be an obstacle in getting the best man. That is to say, the poor Colony will be able to get as good men as the rich Colony, because the pay will be the same. How that is to be done I do not know, but it was said in the House of Lords that it will be at the expense of the Imperial Government. The Imperial Treasury may have a better scheme in mind than we have recommended, but it is quite open to us to continue discussing the matter. I must point out that we are under the Treasury's control and, it does not matter what vote you put through, it is subject to their scrutiny.

Mr. LEE: May I enquire whether any indication has been given with reference to the scale of salaries to be given?

The CHAIRMAN: Yes, but the hon. Member is wrong in saying that it is a vote of this Council. It was not a vote

of this Council. It was only a discussion. No vote of this Council is valid unless it is supported by me or has my sanction.

Mr. LEE: It was not a vote! It was a suggestion made by certain Elected Members of this Council. May I be informed as to the scale of salaries of the Unified Service?

The CHAIRMAN: We can get them and let you know.

Mr. LEE: What I would like to point out is that you have Members of this Council accepting the view that the Magistrates in this Colony are doing a lot of work and their salaries are not sufficient to meet their requirements with the increased cost of living. If that is so and Government has accepted that view, then the Magistrates should be given more salary. I feel certain that Government can find a way out whereby their salaries can be increased; if not in the substantive pay, I would suggest and sincerely hope—although I do not agree with the principle and always reject it—Government will see its way to relieve them of their house rent by giving them a House Allowance. In that way, although it will not be an increase of their substantive salary, they will still be getting an increase which will not be pensionable and which, I think, this Council can vote subject to the sanction of the Treasury in England. I suggest that an item be placed on the Estimates — “House Allowance for Magistrates throughout the duration of the War.” I have no figures showing the amount which will be required, but that can be given by the hon. Colonial Treasurer, as he knows how much each and everyone is being paid as House Allowance. In that way, Your Excellency, we will be increasing their emoluments.

I would also like to support the hon. Member for Western Essequibo (Mr. C. V. Wight) with respect to that Bailiff in Georgetown. I know personally that he is a very efficient Officer and very obliging to the public, and that he

remains sometimes long after hours in order to get through his work as a Clerk in the Magistrates' Office in Georgetown. I can assure Your Excellency that the work there has increased tremendously, and the only drawback to his promotion is that he has not got the scholastic certificate which is required of Clerks in this branch of the Service. I say, Sir, that from his experience there of over eight or nine years he is better qualified for the post of Clerk to the Magistrate than any new Class II Officer who may be taken from another Department and put there, because things that he will be able to do in five minutes that Class II Officer will take practically a half day to do as the result of not having an intimate knowledge of the work. I suggest that this Bailiff be promoted to a Clerkship in the Magisterial Department, although he has not complied with the educational requirements of a certificate.

Mr. JACOB: I am not going to plead for an increase of salaries for the Magistrates. I think a very strong case has been made out for them, and I agree that a Magistrate should not be expected to live on \$200 a month at this time. But I am going to plead a case which, I think, is far stronger than that. It is the case of the Bailiff stationed in the North-Western District who gets \$15 a month (laughter). I think that is a stronger case than the Magistrates' and it is the only one, I think, which cannot be ignored. It is not going to be considered too much if I suggest that he be given a similar pay as the other Bailiffs. I am not going to suggest the scale \$288 by \$24 to \$480, but that the amount of \$180 be increased to \$288. I think that is an extremely reasonable request for an extremely hard case. I trust that no Member of this Council will object to that and further that the amount will be placed on the Estimates to-day.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member will remember the discussion in Finance Committee. We agreed that the amount

seems to be low, but we did not know whether he has other income as well. The amount is small and does look low. The hon. Colonial Treasurer will endeavour to find out that before putting up a specific proposal.

Mr. JACOB: I can say that he gets nothing else. He has no other source of income and does this work alone. I know it will take some time to find out, but in the meanwhile the amount may be placed on the Estimates so that if nothing is learnt by the hon. Colonial Treasurer as to his doing other work and getting other pay he will not be penalised. I am afraid that if it is not put on the Estimates now he will not get it as from January. I must confess that the matter had escaped me last year. When it is considered that he does not even get as salary sixty cents (60c.) per day which is the Subsistence Allowance paid other Officers, I think that on the whole it is an extremely hard case and an extremely strong case to press for the immediate consideration of Government.

Mr. McDAVID (Colonial Treasurer): I give the assurance that, if after enquiry I find that the Officer has no other source of income than this, I shall make a strong recommendation—and I have no doubt Government will accept it — that his pay be at the minimum rate as from the 1st January. I cannot understand myself why the Officer is not paid at the minimum rate of salary, \$288 rising by \$24 to \$480. There must be some explanation for it.

Mr. De AGUIAR: I am a layman and at no time attempt to join in a debate with lawyers, but I do think this is one of the matters I must support, although I must say at once that lawyers are people I keep very far away from in the course of my daily life. It seems to me that the question we have to consider in the light of the information given us by the hon. Attorney-General—the reply received from the Secretary of State for the Colonies—is whether or not we should go back to the Secretary of State now and make further recom-

mendations in this matter. I may say at the very beginning, though I am one of those Members who probably feel tempted to do a little more than that at the moment, that I do appreciate the point mentioned by Your Excellency that this Council is unable to initiate any money vote unless with the sanction of the Chair, but I may take this opportunity to point out that the Section of the Law which gives that power is not happily worded. Very often Members are tempted to exceed what they consider the privilege of this Council, which is the one controlling the initiation of money votes. It states very clearly:

“The Council shall not pass, nor shall the Governor assent to, any law, vote, or resolution the object or effect of which may be to impose any tax or dispose of or charge any part of the public revenue, or to revoke, alter or vary any such disposition or charge, unless such law, vote, or resolution shall have been proposed by, or by the direction of, or shall have the express approval of the Governor. But subject to the foregoing exceptions it shall be competent for any Member of the Council to propose any question for debate therein, and such question, if seconded by any other Member, shall be debated and disposed of according to the Standing Rules and Orders.”

I am not a legal man but if hon. Members reading that Section feel they are privileged in a discussion of this kind to move an amendment and that amendment is properly seconded, it seems to me that the amendment will be in the form of a resolution and will carry the same weight.

The CHAIRMAN: Oh, yes. I have never opposed that, as you know.

Mr. De AGUIAR: In view of the remarks made by the various hon. Members who have spoken, it appears to me that though the matter so far has been fully represented to the Secretary of State for the Colonies he seems not to have understood the position as well as we do here. How are we going to get him to understand it? Of course

that is not a matter for me, but I can hardly conceive that there is any comparison in the main between the grades of salaries paid to Magistrates and those paid to unlettered men in the other branches of the Service. You have only to look at the salary grades of Chief Clerks and Senior Clerks and quite recently, Principal Clerks and place them alongside the salary grades of the Magistrates under this Head to see the inequality of the salaries. I have every regard for the suggestion put forward to wait until the Unified Scheme is prepared, but, as the hon. Attorney-General has rightly pointed out and we accept that, at least I personally do, it will take some time to bring that scheme into being. This matter has been discussed in this Council for the last three or four years, that is my recollection, and yet we have to stand by and wait until some scheme is put up which will take five or ten or possibly fifteen years to come into being. The point I wish to make is this. Is there any justification for the present scales of salaries paid to the Magistrates? If the answer is in the negative then it seems that some immediate action should be taken.

The CHAIRMAN: I would just like to answer one or two points. I would like to inform hon. Members that for some months I tried to get the Imperial Treasury control removed from this Colony, even before we knew that we would balance our Budget this year. I got a reply, which was quite sympathetic, to leave it until the present Budget. I am not without hope of getting rid of this incubus. I am perfectly prepared to put this particular thing up again. I remember I was asked for the actual figures in respect of the proposal, and in the despatch that I put up the proposal was to make the maximum £700 instead of £600 which it is now, and also to create a third post of Senior Magistrate with pay up to £800 which is the rate now for a Resident Magistrate in Jamaica.

Mr. GONSALVES: I wish to join my legal confreres in this Council in ex-

pressing disappointment at the decision of the Secretary of State in connection with this matter, and I wish to condole with the hon. Attorney-General in the disappointment which I am sure he has in not getting support on the other side in regard to the recommendations which he has put up. I think those of us who are legal Members of this Council owe it to him to extend him some kind of sympathy, because we have always outside this Council attributed delay or any drawback in connection with this Department to lack of interest on the part of the Attorney-General in putting up recommendations to Government for the improvement of the Department and of the entire Judicial Departments. I understood Your Excellency to say that the poor pay in the Colonies is responsible for the appointment of poor men. I presume Your Excellency refers to qualified men in regard to this particular branch of the Service. I was sorry to hear that, but at the same time it made me wonder whether there was any truth in that, having regard to the criticism you just made in regard to appointments to posts of that nature.

The CHAIRMAN: I was not referring particularly to this Colony. I made a general remark. That is one of the weaknesses under which the poor Colonies labour. They are unable to offer attractive salaries to men suitable for the jobs.

Mr. GONSALVES: I understand from Your Excellency that the smaller Colonies are suffering as a better paying Colony cannot send on to a poorer paying Colony anything it has got. It has been a criticism of this Colony that appointments up to a few years back have not been of the best. The thought occurred to me when Your Excellency made the remark in regard to the question of the Magistrates, why that particular point is to be held over until some decision is arrived at in regard to salaries?

The CHAIRMAN: I had intended when I spoke yesterday to quote relative paragraphs of the reply of the Secretary of State. I will do so now:

"The difficulties with which you are at present faced in this matter in British Guiana are not likely to be solved until after the War...

"I have in mind certain measures for the post-war reorganization of the Colonial Service and, if those should eventually be adopted, they would assist the solution of your present difficulties. I suggest that the present matter should be deferred for the time being."

That does not stop us in any way raising it again.

Mr. GONSALVES: I am glad to hear that. In view of what Your Excellency has said as regards the salary of a Senior Magistrate in Jamaica, it would be well if the suggestion is accepted so that it may be possible to have it raised at the consideration of the matter later. As regards the question of an inadequate number of Magistrates, I may state that to a question recently asked by me as to whether any complaint had been made by the Magistrates in Georgetown in regard to excess work I received the astounding answer "No". It surprised me to hear that the Magistrates did not complain nor was any complaint received, when the complaint is being made by the Magistrates to practitioners appearing before them of their inability to hear cases any more urgently than they have been able to do. Those of us who practise in Georgetown—I think all of us do with the exception of the hon. Member for Berbice River (Mr. Eleazar) who restricts his practice to that part of the Colony—know that cases are fixed one month or two months ahead. If the Magistrates are able to get through their work as they should, there should be no necessity to postpone cases for so long a time. The answer given to my question on that score was that measures to liquidate the arrears of work of the Courts had been the subject of discussion between the Magistrates and the Attorney-General on several occasions. I would like to appeal to the hon. Attorney-General that, if those discussions have borne any fruit at all

and they have worked out on the side that an additional Magistrate or some assistance is necessary, the decision be put into effect as early as possible. I suppose it has passed the stage of discussion now. I would not like to think the hon. Attorney-General is one of those who like to go on discussing without arriving at some decision. If he has had such discussions and he is in favour of the suggestion that some assistance is required, I hope an early decision would be arrived at with the view of getting the congestion of work in the Courts relieved.

I observed in one of the newspapers quite recently that the Attorney-General paid a visit to the Court-room at Vreed-en-Hoop. It was rather significant that it was made a little after the Magistrate was attacked by a man who had been convicted. I hope the Attorney-General is not going to wait until one of the Magistrates in Georgetown is attacked before he pays a visit to the Magistrates' Court in Georgetown and sees what goes on there. I appeal to him to pay a personal visit both to the Criminal and Civil sides of the Court, and I would suggest to him to do so on days like Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, when the Court is most congested and there is difficulty in regard to the work. He would then see for himself and be convinced as to the necessity for that help.

With regard to the remark of the hon. Member for North-Western District (Mr. Jacob), I have to agree that if that man discharges the duties of Bailiff there and has no other source of income \$15 a month is a very inadequate salary to pay especially to one living in that part of the Colony. It is said the revenue of the country is well off. No one disputes that. I think then that the Bailiff in the North-West District is entitled to better treatment. His is a very strong case, as strong as that of any other in the Colony,

Mr. HUMPHRYS: I am glad that I am in time for this debate to-day, although I did not know it was on until when I arrived. Your Excellency rather got me on my legs with the remark that one has to consider supply and demand in respect of the appointment of Magistrates. With that I entirely agree. Of course one has to consider supply and demand in respect of all appointments in the Government Service. While I am not for one moment saying, nor am I prepared to say, that the qualification of a Barrister, which Your Excellency terms the easiest in the world to obtain, is the most difficult or the easiest, you must bear in mind that it is not only the passing of examinations that makes him a useful professional man or otherwise, but it depends on the practice he has and the experience he gains. It must be borne in mind that the laws and regulations of the Councils of to-day cannot be passed until the same have been examined by qualified Barristers here. It is not fair to say that a man only passes an examination which is of easy qualification and, therefore, the salary he should get should be of a very moderate amount. I do not think Your Excellency went as far as that. When it comes to the question of the salaries of professional men in this Colony, I think the medical men are disgracefully paid. There is no doubt in my mind about that. As regards the Magistrates, apart from their qualification these men have an enormous amount of work to perform. During the past few weeks I had the necessity to visit the Courts frequently, and I was astounded to see on two different occasions the congestion. They have what is called "Call Over Day." One Magistrate had 192 fresh cases called in one day. I spoke to him and found out that the week before he had 300 fresh cases. Those cases are called and the pleas taken, and the not-guilty ones are heard at length and determined. All that involves a considerable amount of work. I do feel that while the Magistrates are doing all they can for a day's

work, a little more salary will give them an incentive to start work earlier. They will do a bit more than they are doing, if they feel they are to be compensated for the work they perform.

I would like with Your Excellency's permission to refer to the Civil List Ordinance, Chapter 52. There I find that the amount provided for Magistrates is \$33,000, but here the utmost of our commitments, including the amounts paid to acting Magistrates, is \$24,000, a difference of about \$9,000. I am not contending that it must necessarily be that amount, but I submit that the Magistrates should be better paid than they are. I join in asking Your Excellency to make representations not only on account of the Magistrates but on account of the general public and litigants as a whole. Not only do the Magistrates need more salary but we need more Magistrates. They simply cannot get through the amount of work. There should definitely be another Magistrate in Georgetown, and the scale of salary which Your Excellency says you will be inclined to recommend should be put forward to the Secretary of State.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL: Most of the points raised were connected with the salaries of Magistrates, and I need say no more about that. The hon. Members for Western Essequibo (Mr. C. V. Wight) and Essequibo River (Mr. Lee) referred to the case of the acting clerk at the Georgetown Magistrate's Court. He has been acting as a clerk for some time and it is a rather difficult case. The Magistrate concerned is of the opinion that he is one of the best clerks he has got, and has recommended that he be appointed a clerk. He has said that he is better than many lawyers, but the fact remains that he is not qualified for entry into the Clerical Service, and if any exception is made in his case dozens of other exceptions will have to be made. I may say his case was put forward, and it was found that

no exception could be made. Therefore we are placed in a difficult position. He is admittedly a good clerk but not qualified for the position. It is not quite as one hon. Member said, that we are sending a 2nd class clerk there who will not be able to do the work. In fact the additional 2nd-class clerk is required as cashier and will relieve the present cashier to do the clerk's duties. The clerk who will be sent there will be one who knows something about accounting. The acting clerk has been retained as a bailiff and I am afraid the only thing I can say is that it is admittedly a hard case.

I do not see the estimates before hon. Members do. The Treasurer has undertaken to look into that matter. The hon. Member for Georgetown South (Mr. Gonsalves) referred to the question of an extra Magistrate for Georgetown. Everybody admits that in the Georgetown Court and the Berbice Courts there is a tremendous amount of work. We will remedy the situation in Berbice in the very near future, but in the case of Georgetown it is rather difficult. One of the reasons, of course, for creating a new Magisterial district is that we would get additional assistance in Georgetown, but that is proving more difficult than at first imagined. The large number of labourers employed at the Air Base has caused a great deal more work at the Magistrate's Court on the East Bank this year than before, so that our original figures have been thrown badly out of gear, but how temporary that may be I do not know. Work is easing down at the Base and undoubtedly a large number of labourers will leave that area and return to Georgetown and the East and West Coasts. However, it is expected that there will be an expansion of the population along the East Bank road, and it has been agreed in principle that a new Court must be built somewhere between Providence and Hyde Park. It may not be an additional Court. We may remove the Providence Court to

a new site, but it is useless to fix on a site at the moment. The population is moving and we must first ascertain where it is going to settle and then build the Court. So that the whole question of the Georgetown district at the moment is difficult. It is admitted in principle that there is too much work for the Magistrates in the City, and it is difficult for the Magistrate on the West Coast to go to Providence. With all those things in mind it is not easy to make a permanent appointment of a Magistrate for Georgetown. However, the matter has been under consideration the whole year and we are watching events carefully in order that any appointment that is made may prove to be made in the right place and at the right time.

I went to the Abary and Mahaicony area to ascertain whether we could move the boundary of the Berbice district in this direction in order to include as much of the East Demerara district as possible. I wanted to transfer a population of 4,000 from the East Coast to the Berbice district by removing the boundary, but when I got there on Monday night I found it extremely difficult. I either had to transfer about 3,000 people or move the boundary right down to Cove and John, which is much too far. When Members express regret that things are moving slowly I say that moving a boundary is a very intricate and slow process unless we are going to make a mess of it.

I do realize that there is too much work in Georgetown for two Magistrates. I agree that some form of relief either by a permanent or a temporary appointment has to be undertaken, and if the hon. Member looks at the estimate he will see that I have made a temporary appointment which will relieve the congestion as was done two years ago. Hon. Members are of the opinion that the numbers of Magistrates are too small. I would be the last to oppose that point of view. It would greatly assist me to get as many Magistrates as possible.

If I only had to consult my own convictions I would say "Let us have three more." The fact remains that we have to live on what we have in hand. Each year the estimate for Magistrates is going up and up, and those Members who care to compare the figures of the expenditure on Magistrates in this Colony with the population and work it out in comparison with other Colonies would be surprised to find that we come very near the top of the list now. Increases of salaries, if approved, will take us still further up the list, and I hope hon. Members realize that we cannot afford too many luxuries. I am trying to keep the cost of the Department as low as possible, and that is the reason why I have not submitted any item for an additional Magistrate this year.

Mr. C. V. WIGHT: I regret that I cannot accept the statement that because this man is not qualified to enter the Clerical Service he cannot be appointed to a post in which he has been acting for over eight years.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL: I have merely passed on to the hon. Member the reason given to me. I am not saying that is my opinion.

Mr. WIGHT: The information which the Attorney-General has so kindly passed on to me seems to me to have absolutely no foundation whatever. When this Government desires to do something it always finds a way. We have the bland statement that this officer is not qualified to enter the Clerical Service, therefore Government cannot promote him, and he must return to his post as a bailiff. There is no mention that he is to be compensated in any way. This officer served his country, and when he was doing so he was precluded from attaining some scholastic degree or some educational certificate. He has acted as a clerk for 8 or 9 years, yet he is not qualified to enter the very Service as a clerk. It is illogical. It happened in one case here that a Magis-

trate acted for 15 years before he was appointed. He was not qualified and there was some reason why he should not be appointed. I can see no argument for it in this case but only ground for discontent not only by this officer but in the whole Service, and I think it is a matter which should be taken up by the Service generally. I am not pleading only for this officer. There are other cases, and if they are as hard as this one, which is admitted by the hon. Attorney-General, I think there should be some compensation of officers of this kind.

Your Excellency referred to the payment of £250 to a barrister in some other Colony. I do not know if you referred to a small island, but I know that Judges in England give up large and remunerative practice to go to the High Court Bench, perhaps because they do not want such hard work as the Bar demands. I am asking you, sir, to go into cases of this nature, and especially the one under consideration.

Mr. GONSALVES: I would like to ask whether the proposal to engage a temporary Magistrate will be put into effect as from the 1st January next, because I gathered that no permanent appointment will be made, although I did think at one time that it might have been possible to see an additional Magistrate sitting some days in Georgetown, now that Government has spent money in providing a new Court-room where there is a dock in which nobody has yet been put. An additional Magistrate might sit there once a week instead of once a month.

With regard to the case of the acting clerk I think that in view of the fact that Government knew that the Regulations do not permit an unqualified man to fit himself for a post in the Clerical Service it was unfair to put him to act as a clerk for a number of years and when he has done so he is told he cannot get a perman-

ent appointment because he is not qualified. That policy is wrong and should not be continued. Since that officer is not eligible for appointment as a clerk I hope he will be borne in mind for appointment as a Marshal, to which the Regulations do not strictly apply.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I do not know who the officer is. I have only heard of him or of his case, but the excuse for not appointing him is not supported generally by Government's conduct. I know of my own knowledge that there was an age-limit for doctors, and I know also of three doctors who were appointed over the age-limit. One of them gave such valuable service that he was retained until his death. The other two are still alive. What, therefore, is there to prevent this young man from being employed as a clerk after acting for so many years as one? If Government cannot appoint him to the Clerical Service because he has not the necessary qualifications then let him remain as a bailiff and give him a personal allowance. I cannot think that Government has not sufficient ingenuity to meet a case of this kind.

THE CHAIRMAN: I will make a note of it.

Mr. SEAFORD: It seems to me that Government can easily get over the difficulty by adopting what was attempted by the Town Council the other day when, in making Regulations for Public Health, they inserted a clause giving Government power to break any of the clauses when they saw fit. (laughter).

MEDICAL.

THE CHAIRMAN: I shall have to leave the Council for half-an-hour at half-past two and the Colonial Secretary will carry on. I shall be back at about 3 o'clock. There is one question I would like to raise and that is touching the Medical Officer at Leguan.

Mr. McDAVID: There are two minor amendments under this Head recommended by the Finance Committee, involving a sum of \$384 and making the grand total \$320,157.

Dr. SINGH: Under "Medical" I would like to make a suggestion. A large sum of money is being allocated to the operation of this Department to equip and staff the hospitals and dispensaries and to make the Medical Service a useful and helpful unit in the community. The question is often asked: Is the Medical Service a useful and helpful Department where the masses are concerned? I would say "Yes," but in certain areas its usefulness and help is not evenly distributed. For that reason I am suggesting that Government might appoint an Advisory Committee to assist the Director of Medical Services with advice on several matters. The Medical Department is not only a Department in which medicines and surgery are involved, but there are sub-Departments, and for that reason it needs some form of assistance. For instance, at the Georgetown Hospital there are 400 beds at the present time, numerous floor beds and about 100 patients attending the Out-Patients Department. The Hospital is staffed with about 12 Medical Officers, of whom seven are specialists. It means that the work is carried on in a mechanical way. I am very hopeful that if an Advisory Committee were appointed it would assist a great deal in improving conditions at the Hospital. The Department is so well equipped that it would entail no extra expenditure. It would only be a question of re-adjusting matters and making recommendations for improvement.

Mr. LEE: I would like it to be put on record that in my experience it would be beneficial to the public if District Medical Officers were paid adequate salaries and the fees for private practice were regulated and paid into Government revenue. When the temporary arrangement for the medical

service in Leguan and Wakenaam was being inaugurated I discussed it fully with the Director of Medical Services and pointed out to him that when vacancies occurred in districts where private medical practice was known to be remunerative, doctors who have had the opportunity of serving in hospitals and who have taken post-graduate courses abroad generally apply for those posts, and by their seniority they were appointed. From their private practice they sometimes get more than their substantive pay, and I feel that the hospitals are deprived of the services of those specially qualified doctors who have had years of experience.

Apart from that I find that many of the Medical Officers in the outlying districts, if called out at night or during their rounds they are summoned to a patient who cannot pay the fee charged, either attend to the patient through sympathy or refuse to attend unless the fee is paid. If a Medical Officer was paid a sufficient salary by Government he would know that he has to attend to the public, and that the public is paying his salary. I respectfully submit that he would be more careful in attending to the public than if he had the privilege of refusing to attend to a poor person who could not pay his fee. It has been proved conclusively in Leguan and Wakenaam that for attendance at the Dispensary a person is charged a fee of one shilling, but if the Medical Officer is called to attend a person he charges up to \$1 for attendance, and that money goes into Government revenue. I have found that in many cases in which injections were given they cost more than \$1, so that the patients gained the benefit of the services of the Medical Officer. I contend that if Medical Officers were paid adequate salaries they would be more attentive to the public. I respectfully submit that the trial made at Leguan and Wakenaam has proved successful and that it should be extended to the other districts of the Colony.

At this stage the President left the Chamber and the Colonial Secretary took the chair.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I just want to say a few words under this Head. What I want to complain about is something which has been going on in recent years and seems to be becoming a practice. It is a good thing that the newly appointed Director of Medical Services is not here yet, therefore I can say what I want to say. For some years the post of Director of Medical Services has been given to some senior Medical Officer in the local Medical Service. I remember Dr. Greeves and Sir Joseph Godfrey, but within recent times whenever this senior post becomes vacant somebody sends somebody from Abyssinia, Nigeria, or the Gold Coast to fill it, and now we are getting somebody from the Solomon Islands, thanks to the Japanese. It is very good for the officer and perhaps for the Colonial Office to find a place for an officer who has managed to escape the Japanese, but it is not a good thing for this Medical Service at all. In this case it seems to be an emergency, but certainly men who have served this country well and for a long time and looking forward to promotion must be disappointed. The appointment of officers from abroad blocks the way of local men. I am just making a mild protest against the appointment of men from abroad over the heads of men who have the right and the qualifications to entitle them to look forward to promotion.

I have been looking for the particular item but I do not see it. I am referring to the Tutor-Sister who is coming. I have a distinct recollection that when this post was created originally by Sir Joseph Godfrey his argument was that he was bringing out a Tutor-Nurse, or Matron, as she was then called, for the purpose of training nurses locally to fill those very posts which are being filled by the Sisters who come from time

to time. A number of appointments have since been made, but I am not aware up to the present time that one local person has been appointed a Sister. It is true that we have very short memories for these things in this Colony, and possibly the Members who were here then are not here today, and it has been forgotten. I know that some persons have gone to England on their own to qualify, and if after a number of years we are getting another Tutor-Sister to train nurses who will never get the posts for which they were being trained, I do not think it is good enough. We have educated and intelligent young women in this Colony in every walk of life, and if Government is going to train people all I am asking for is a fair field and no favour. One is tempted to ask whether it is not camouflage. We do not get the full benefit from such appointments because, through no fault of her own, a Sister comes to this Colony and does not get all the sympathy she should expect, and she cannot tell why.

As regards item 26—Training of Medical Officer in Bacteriology and Pathology, \$4,548—I am going to move its deletion. I wish to utter my deep and sincere protest against this attempt by Government to pay for somebody's education to come and get a job. When Government wants to give Mr. "A" or Mr. "B" largess Government asks the taxpayers of the country to pay for him to qualify as a Bacteriologist. I would like to know who put this item here. Who is this favoured person? I cannot believe it has been done by mere accident. I do not think the taxpayers should be called upon to pay for a man's education. These things only happen in Committee. Government is blamed for lots of things but sometimes the blame is certainly undeserved. I am going to move the deletion of this item whether I get support or not, because it will come up again in some other instance.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member has just stated something which makes me wonder whether he thinks that an application has been received by Government from somebody. This is a recommendation which was submitted by the recent holder of the office of Director of Medical Services and has nothing to do with any application from any individual.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I am glad to hear that because it would be easier for Government to strike it out.

Mr. AUSTIN: Why do we send Guiana scholars away? For the benefit of the Colony as a whole and in the hope that when they come back they will be able to assist the Colony in various ways. In this particular instance we have a very bright young man who may be extremely helpful to the people of the Colony if he can go abroad at this particular time to get the training which is necessary to enable him to succeed an officer who has given him a certain amount of local training. I cannot think that the hon. Member realizes what assistance this young man's training may mean to the people of this Colony.

Mr. JACOB: I agree with the principle of training men for specialized posts. It has been done in the past and should be done in the future, but I certainly do not like this item as it appears on the estimate. I think the position is that someone in the Service is going abroad to become qualified. The officer concerned has a flair for this particular kind of work and he is being assisted by Government, but his salary has been included in this amount. I think his salary should be paid from the substantive vote and the extra amount provided in this item. If the officer's salary is \$250 per month let that be paid from the substantive vote and the fees for his training in England be provided by this item. I raised the question in Finance Committee and the explanation was that this item is inclusive of his salary. I urge that the item be changed.

THE CHAIRMAN: I think the point is that the Department will want to fill this officer's post while he is undergoing training, and provision has been made for that under item (13).

Mr. JACOB: I see that this officer is going on leave and retains his position in the Service. He should therefore be paid through the ordinary channel. That is my point.

Mr. McDAVID: I think the hon. Member's point would have been a good one if the officer concerned was on the Fixed Establishment, but I am informed that he is one of four Assistant Medical Officers under item (22) on page 33, his salary being \$1,680. In that case a fairly substantial sum would have to be included under item 26.

Mr. JACOB: I see no objection to putting it in two places. It does look peculiar here.

The point made by the hon. Member for Essequibo River (Mr. Lee) that the Government Medical Officer in the Leguan district should receive an inclusive salary, that is salary plus private practice, is an excellent one. The district is not a very rich one; in fact it is very poor, and Government should consider that aspect of the matter and pay the officer an inclusive salary. In other words he should be rated in the same way as Government Medical Officers attending to patients on sugar estates in the Counties of Demerara and Berbice. It is true that those officers receive fees from village patients but they receive no fees from the estate authorities nor from the patients on the sugar estates. I have always had it in my mind that the system in force whereby Government Medical Officers attend to patients on sugar estates free of charge should be extended to the villages. I really cannot see why there is this difference. Why is this favoured treatment as regards one set of employees? I raised the point on the first day I entered this Council. The taxpayers in the villages should be in

the same position as those on sugar, rice and coconut estates, but those on sugar estates have a distinct advantage, why, I do not know. Why should sugar estates have the services of Medical Officers free? Nothing is paid to Government Medical Officers residing in the villages for attending residents on sugar estates. I am not asking for a curtailment of the privileges enjoyed by sugar estates, but I am contending that the general taxpayers should pay for medical services for everybody and not for persons on sugar estates.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I really cannot understand the logic of my friend. He has worked for years on a sugar estate and he knows that sugar estates pay for their medical service.

Mr. JACOB: My friend does not know. The sugar estates do not pay the Government Medical Officer residing say at Buxton, but he visits Lusignan. The estate pays the Government Medical Officer at Buxton for attending to the staff, but the Government pays him to go to the Lusignan hospital.

Mr. SEAFORD: With reference to this discussion I do not know what it has to do with the matter. The hon. Member says he does not know how it came about. He knows better than anyone in this Council how it came about. He has always professed that he knows everything about it. That is the effect of indentured immigration in this Colony. Does he honestly say that he does not know how it came about?

Mr. JACOB: I did not exactly say that. I said I did not know why it was not withdrawn. From the very first day I came in this Legislative Council I have suggested that it should be stopped.

Mr. SEAFORD: I may explain the position. Government Medical Officers attended the immigrants on the estates free because they were supposed to be under the control of Government. They were brought to this country under indenture and Government was sup-

posed to look after them through the Immigration Department and the Medical Department. That was the reason. The same principle went on as before, and very little change was made after the indenture system was abolished. Some years later the estates got their own Medical Advisers and Practitioners to look after their staff, but the fee that was paid to the Government Medical Officers, although they did not look after the staff at all, was continued. That had been the case until the War when for various reasons that was changed. The hon. Member is well aware of that fact. The Estates have no desire to carry on their hospitals and will willingly give them up to-morrow. They will be delighted if Government takes them over, if that is what the hon. Member is insinuating.

Mr. JACOB: I cannot understand my hon. friend's attitude in twisting what I stated. I am suggesting that those privileges should not be withdrawn but extended. It is not disputed that workers on the sugar estates, say at Pln. Lusignan, get the services of the Government Medical Officer at Buxton free of charge. The employers of those workers give them medicine free. I am admitting that. I am saying that should be continued. What my hon. friend was suggesting is that I am asking that those privileges be withdrawn. I object to my hon. friend twisting things in that manner. As regards the hon. Member for Berbice River (Mr. Eleazar), almost everytime he gets up here he speaks of things he knows very little about.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: The hon. Member may not have meant it, but he did say "I do not know why these things are still going on." He then went on to say that the Doctor visits the Estate Hospitals free. I think I am right in saying that he does not know why Medical Officers attend the people in the Estate Hospitals free, but in the villages the people have to pay a fee. That is what the hon. Member for Georgetown North (Mr. Seaford) was referring to.

Mr. JACOB: What I meant to convey was that since it is going on and cannot be stopped suddenly, it ought to be continued at Wakenaam and Leguan. From the first time I entered this Legislature I suggested that medical services be given free to everyone throughout the Colony. I have no misunderstanding about that. Let me make my position perfectly clear. I am not suggesting that medical services be withdrawn. I am suggesting the medical services be extended. I know the hon. Member for Georgetown North, shall I say, is deliberately twisting what I say. I have that impression.

The PRESIDENT re-enters and resumes his seat.

Mr. SEAFORD: It matters little to me what impression the hon. Member has. It is quite impossible to twist anything he has said, as that has already been twisted. The hon. Member made certain statements here and I challenged those statements because he is unable to stand up here and prove them. I tried to explain what the position is. If you are going to give hospitalization and free attendance in one district, I take it, it should be done everywhere. Members get up and suggest spending money here and there without the least thought as to where that money is to come from or how it is to be provided. The hon. Member is a businessman, he says, but he shows very little business acumen in these things. Has he any idea of the cost? One would like to know before granting it what it would cost. I am afraid, as I have so often heard expressed in this Council, the hon. Member is living in the clouds. I do not think there is anything more I need say as regards that. I only rise to explain the position as regards medical attendance in hospitals on Estates as referred to by the hon. Member.

Mr. LEE: I would like it to be placed on record that when this officer returns to this Colony, if he does return, he will be employed by the Government with-

out any private practice. This idea of private practice is becoming very obnoxious to the public. Charges are made and the public has to pay them. I agree with the principle of the public paying for officers' special courses of studies, but when they return here let them be paid a sufficient salary to give their services free to the public.

There is another matter I would like to draw Government's attention to. I had raised it in the Finance Committee. There are to be provided three consulting rooms for the Specialists. I desire to ask whether Government will consider the possibility of the public not necessarily having to go to a private practitioner for a letter in order to consult these Specialists. I feel that any responsible member of the community knowing the position of any person who desires to consult one of these Specialists at the Hospital should be able to give a letter of introduction to that Specialist. As it stands now, these Specialists have a consulting practice and persons either have to get a letter from a private practitioner or be patients in the Hospital before they are seen by any of them. Sometimes those persons do not want to be patients in the Hospital on account of their employment not allowing them time for that, but at the same time they would like to consult one of these Specialists as to their health. I am suggesting that that be done and, if there is to be any charge, let it be fixed and paid in to Government and the Specialists given an allowance for attendance to the public, as the public is paying his substantive salary.

Mr. C. V. WIGHT: The only remark I desire to make in regard to this item is that when the officer returns after having fully qualified, his services will be retained by this Government. In other words, the question of promotion will be naturally precluded from him. It seems obvious that when he comes back after having obtained a great deal of experience and knowledge in this particular branch of his profession at the

expense of this Colony, he should not be removed on promotion within a period of one or two, or three, or five years.

There is only one other point I want to make generally under this Head, and that is the point raised already by me in Finance Committee. It is that I trust eventually this Department and those concerned will have in view the adoption of a panel practice system. I do not say it can be done entirely as in England, but it seems to me that will eradicate all the objections and criticisms that have been raised against the particular Department and the particular system under which Government Medical Officers of this Colony operate. I would also like to add that I have always been against the question of private practice, though I realize the difficulties of the Department in the matter. I intimated this fairly forcibly in the Finance Committee. It seems that the men are well paid at the salaries offered by Government at least in the later stages. I do not say they start off in the same way. As I had referred in the case of the Magistrates, I do consider that the professional salaries paid here to a Junior at the commencement are not exactly as remunerative as they might be. If the system of appointment we are adopting here is to be that one must be educated and qualified and have special certificates, then do not let us turn round and ask that person to live on a mediocre or very poor salary. From that point of view I do think that the general tendency indicated by the debates and the discussion in the Finance Committee is running in the direction as indicated by me.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I regret very much this item is so unhappily worded as to cause all this debate here today. Had we been told that Government has seconded a Medical Officer to go and get special qualifications or to complete his education in that particular branch there would have been no question at all, because I knew that Government has had a qualified Medical Officer sent abroad to get certain ideas about cer-

tain things so as to carry on as a School Medical Officer. The item is put here as if you are going to pay a man \$75 a month and then qualify him for a job. Naturally I could not allow that to pass.

Mr. McDAVID (Colonial Treasurer): That is fully explained in the Explanatory Memorandum.

Mr. ELEAZAR: That is just as unhappily worded!

The CHAIRMAN: My idea was to try it out in those two Islands. I do not agree that what you do in one district should necessarily be done all over the Colony. This is quite a big place. I have been accustomed to Colonies where the Government Medical Officers have no private practice at all. It seems to me that the Wakenaam-Leguan conditions are favourable to a trial of the scheme, and I suggest that the Director of Medical Services direct his attention to it and see what may be done with respect to the appointment. A similar appointment is to be made for the Aboriginal Indians in the interior under the Colonial Development and Welfare Act, and, I hope, it will be without private practice, the officer working whole time for Government and no question of that kind coming into it.

Dr. A. H. B. PEARCE (Director of Medical Services, acting): The various points raised by hon. Members in this debate need very little reply. The hon. Member for Western Berbice (Mr. Peer Bacchus) raised the question of the pay of Senior Sanitary Officers. Speaking quite frankly, the pay is a bit low and I would like to see it raised, but it is a question of finance. I think the pay throughout the whole Service is low, and it is a question of funds being available to raise it. That is a matter for this Council to decide. It is a bit low compared with what men of their type get elsewhere.

As regards the question of private practice, there has been a lot of talk

about it. I listened with great interest, because it took my memory back six or seven years ago when I was in another Colony, 1,700 miles from here. The Executive Council in that Colony tried to introduce a whole-time service. The Doctors were getting £500 to £700 a year, free quarters and private practice. There were very wealthy sugar estates and some of the senior men were making £2,000 to £3,000 a year, and they naturally resented it. The men who employed them were on the Legislative Council and they too objected strongly to a whole-time service. One can quite understand what the condition of that Service was. When you have men making an enormous income in private service, it is only natural that they will serve those who pay them best. After a five years' battle I got the Service reorganized before I left. The officers start at £600 a year rising to £800, and then there is a bar and they have to go Home and get some special qualification when their salary rises to £1,000. They give full-time service and are given quarters, travelling allowance and free passages for wives and families every three years. Since I have been in this Colony I have made enquiries as to how the system is working and have been told it is working extremely well and the men in the Service are looking after the welfare of the people, public health, sanitation, etc. To my mind for the short time I have been here a similar system should be introduced in this Colony. It is, however, a very big and thorny question. As the new Director of Medical Services is arriving here shortly, next week, I think it should be deferred until he arrives. I wrote the "D.M.A." in London and explained what I did. You might, perhaps, do that here.

I am afraid I could not quite follow the argument of the hon. Member for Berbice River (Mr. Eleazar). First of all he talked about the Sister-Tutor and about local girls not getting a chance of employment as Sisters in the

Hospitals. As you know I have only been here two years. A very charming young lady came out here from England where she was trained as a Nurse at the London Hospital. She came and saw the D.M.S. and myself. She wanted a job in the Service but there was none at the time, and so she started private practice. Subsequently there was a vacancy and I sent for her and offered her the job, stating the terms of service. She wrote back saying that she was doing so well in private practice that she could not think of accepting the job.

Then the hon. Member talked about local men being appointed as D.M.S. I approve of that. They are belonging to a unified service and the Secretary of State has records of all the senior men. The new D.M.S. is perfectly known to me as an exceptionally fine man, level-headed and a good man in public health and T.B. work especially. I think this Colony is very fortunate in getting him.

As regards the training of Dr. Nehaul, I cannot understand the arguments put up by hon. Members. Here you have a local man who is going to be sent Home and trained for a job for which you have imported men from England and paid a high salary. This is a new Department and is most important both from the viewpoint of public health and the general public and, I think, the officer you have got now in that job is a very highly scientific man. He is a stranger to the country like myself. Why not train your own local men for it? Send them abroad and have them properly trained for these highly specialised jobs.

The question was raised about the Specialists at the Hospital. These Specialists are allowed by appointment to do consulting practice. I do not think hon. Members understand what consulting practice is. It means consultation with another doctor. These doctors in turn are very busy and have

to take their patients to the Hospital or send them there. When patients are sent to the Specialists the doctors send a short letter explaining the case which the patients cannot tell the Specialists. It is put in black and white. There is no reason why anybody should not be able to go to the Out-patient department of the Hospital and so get to see any Specialist that person wants. All they have to do is to ask for and consult the Doctor in charge. It is quite simple and is done every day.

Mr. LEE: I am glad to hear that.

Mr. PEARCE: To refer back to the question raised by the hon. Member for Western Barbice (Mr. Peer Bacchus), one of the Senior Sanitary Inspectors gets a pay which does not appear here. I do not think the hon. Member knows that he receives \$30 per month from the New Amsterdam Town Council for testing milk.

The CHAIRMAN: We are greatly obliged to the Director.

Head passed as amended.

MEDICAL—BACTERIOLOGICAL
DEPARTMENT

Mr. LEE: I would like to draw Government's attention to a certain matter. I understand that anyone who wants to be treated for filaria by injection has to pay 50 cents for such treatment. If that is so, I would ask Government that the practice be discontinued. Many of us know that several of the poor people in this Colony suffer from filaria and if they have to go to the Georgetown Public Hospital and pay 50 cents for treatment by Doctors who are receiving a decent salary from the public, I feel that is a great hardship.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I understand the hon. Member has addressed a letter on the subject to the Head of the Department, and it is receiving attention.

Mr. LEE: Thank you!

Head agreed to.

MEDICAL—HOSPITALS AND DISPENSARIES.

Mr. McDAVID (Colonial Treasurer): I move that as recommended by the Finance Committee the total Head be increased by \$30,500 making the amount \$178,023. The increase is principally on the Dietary, Butchery, and Bakery votes—Sub-heads 3, 11 and 14—of the Hospital.

Mr. LEE: Do I understand that the Finance Committee's recommendation in respect of Sub-item 1 (19)—“Nurses and Servants” has been accepted?

The CHAIRMAN: We are putting on 10 additional altogether.

Mr. McDAVID: That particular item is being increased from \$210,000 to \$212,400.

The CHAIRMAN: We have already put on an increase of five, and it now means a further increase of five.

Mr. McDAVID: That is so.

Mr. GONSALVES: As regards item 8—16 Dispensers—may I enquire whether representation has been made to Government about these men in regard to their scale of salaries, and whether the matter has been definitely decided or is subject to reconsideration?

Mr. C. V. WIGHT: That was raised by certain hon. Members in Finance Committee and, I think, the hon. Colonial Treasurer was to go into it.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I have a note, if this is the point the hon. Member is referring to, that the suggestion was made that three Dispensers be put on a higher grade.

Mr. LEE: No, sir. A petition was sent in by the Dispensers and Govern-

ment said it was receiving attention. It was with respect to a new rating of their salaries.

THE CHAIRMAN: Is it not a question of the grade being made longer instead of being divided into two?

Mr. C. V. WIGHT: That is so.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: That is included in item 15.

THE CHAIRMAN: They are going to be placed in one long grade—\$288 to \$600—without a bar, instead of waiting for a vacancy to go beyond the bar.

Mr. JACOB: I think the petition has been sent and reference has been made to it. I have raised this matter several times in this Council. I have raised it with the D.M.S. who has just retired and the previous one, and I gathered that the idea was to bracket the Sanitary Inspectors and Dispensers together. They should be equal. It is considered that the services rendered by the Sanitary Inspectors were just as important as that by the Dispensers. I have tried for years to reconcile myself with that view. Maybe I am wrong. What I would like to point out is that even if the opinion of the Medical Authorities is correct in so far as the Sanitary Inspectors and Dispensers are concerned, there is still a discrepancy in the Estimates. On page 33 we have 3 County Sanitary Inspectors drawing a salary of \$1,560 to \$1,800 (item 19), and when you look at page 38, the Dispensers are not so graded. They are graded—one only at \$1,200—while 4 Sanitary Inspectors are of that grade, 6 at \$960 and 9 at \$720. Lower down on page 33 you have 21 Sanitary Inspectors—5 at \$960, 6 at \$720 and 6 at \$600. The 29 Dispensers who are graded at \$288 to \$480 are now being brought up to \$600, so far as I understand. The Dispensers have been behind hand and are now being brought up to the level of the Sanitary Inspectors, but the Sanitary Inspectors from time immemorial were on a higher scale of salary. The County Sanitary

Inspectors are drawing a maximum of \$1,800 a year while the maximum of only one Dispenser is \$1,200 a year. I think that the Dispensers have an extremely good case for consideration, and I urge that the matter be gone into and they be put on the same footing as the Sanitary Inspectors, according to Government's way of thinking. To my mind the Dispensers in the remote parts of the Colony, who are actually left in charge of life and limb, are certainly in a better position than the Sanitary Inspectors. I value life and limb far more than ordinary preventative work as regards health. I do not think I need say anything more. I leave it to the Medical Authorities to put the Dispensers now on an equal footing, if not a better footing, with the Sanitary Inspectors.

I would also like to stress the case of the Dispenser in my own constituency. He is an extremely good man, I think. In the past I have never pleaded for these people from my seat here, though I thought their services were not being appreciated to the extent they might have been. I understand the Dispenser, I am referring to, had asked to be transferred and was transferred. He had found it better to be elsewhere. Eventually the Department found itself in difficulty to get a suitable man to work there and he volunteered to return. He is doing excellent work. He has shown merit in his job and ought to be placed on a higher scale of salary. I frankly do not agree with the principle that you must go up in the ordinary way; whether you give full-time service or not you must go up in rotation. I think the officer has shown merit and should be given promotion. I plead for the Dispenser in the North-West District, who is giving very good service and is doing additional work to that of his main qualification. I am suggesting that he should be given greater consideration.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I did not make a note of the officer's name. As regards putting three Dis-

dispensers on the higher grade as in the case of the County Sanitary Inspectors, it is not desired to have County Dispensers. If the hon. Member will turn to items 1 and 2 on the page he will see the avenue of promotion for Dispensers. They look forward to being promoted to those posts when vacancies occur.

Mr. JACOB: There is only one Steward who gets a salary above that of a County Sanitary Inspector, the salary of the others is less. I do submit that it is not a satisfactory answer.

Mr. GONSALVES: I raised the question in order to hear what has been done. As I understand the position, a petition was sent suggesting that the question of the regrading of the salaries of Dispensers should be considered by Government, and the reply given is what appears in the Estimates. I understand the petitioners asked Government to reconsider the matter in the light set out in the petition, but I see from item 15 that the Dispensers' minimum salary is \$24 per month and that it will take them 13 years before they can work for the handsome salary of \$50 a month.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: To save time, I may point out that the question of County Dispensers was dealt with by the late Director of Medical Services in a memorandum to Government and he recommended for the Dispensers and Sanitary Inspectors, who were in two grades—\$288 to \$480 and then to \$600—and had to wait for vacancies in the grade above, that there should be one long grade. This year for the first time the two grades are amalgamated. I have just received another petition from the Sanitary Inspectors and it may be that that is the petition the hon. Member is referring to. I have not had time to read it.

Mr. GONSALVES: I cut short what I have to say following the remarks of the Hon. Colonial Secretary, but I hope

this new petition which has been received will be given favourable consideration.

Mr. ELEAZAR: Your Excellency, there was a hospital in the Mara District at one time when the estate was a going concern, and there was a Doctor residing there. Subsequently the Doctor was removed and a Doctor from New Amsterdam went up there once or twice a week. That arrangement did not seem to work well. They then had a Dispenser there and a Dispensary. I think it was last year or the year before there was some falling out between the Director of Medical Services and the proprietor of the estate. The building had become very much out of repair and the Director called upon the proprietor to repair it, but the latter wanted the Government to repair it. The Director said it would cost \$6,000 and as the proprietor would not undertake the repairs the Dispensary was removed. That removal has left the people of the Mara District without any medical aid at all. The public road there is so bad that the Doctor cannot go there from New Amsterdam even if he wants to have private practice. The Dispensary has been removed further up the River and the people are left there without any means of getting medical assistance except they travel by open boat to New Amsterdam. That is very undesirable and something should be done for them. I am asking Government and the Director of Medical Services that enquiries be made as to conditions there with the view of seeing whether the Dispensary cannot be restored in the vicinity of Mara.

THE CHAIRMAN: That matter will engage the attention of the Director of Medical Services.

Dr. PEARCE: I think the hon. Member for Berbice River surely must know that the old Dispensary at Mara has been removed but one mile away to Schepmoed where there are a Dispenser and a Nurse.

Head passed as amended.

MILITIA

Mr. McDAVID: It was recorded in the Finance Committee report that the figures under this Head should stand. I have talked with the Commandant and he thought the reduction by two-thirds according to the note should be made.

Mr. C. V. WIGHT: The hon. Member for Georgetown South (Mr. Gon-salves) unavoidably had to leave the Chamber. He had raised the question also with me in the Finance Committee as to lump sum and pension for the men of this Band. The hon. Colonial Treasurer said he was going into it. I think we had Your Excellency's sympathy also in this matter. I do not know if any decision has been arrived at yet on this particular subject. I think Your Excellency expressed the view that if the Bandsmen want to fall into line with the Police Lump Sum and Pension Scheme they should be allowed to do so whether it is to their detriment or otherwise, as long as it is their desire. I do not know if the hon. Colonial Treasurer has considered it as yet.

Mr. McDAVID: I did not gather that from Your Excellency's remarks. This question has been before the Executive Council as least three times and was turned down three times. Since the Finance Committee I have written to Government pointing out the remarks made in that Committee and asking for further consideration of the matter.

Mr. C. V. WIGHT: I anticipate the Executive Council will turn it down again.

The CHAIRMAN: We will inform the hon. Member.

Mr. C. V. WIGHT: I prefer it to go to Your Excellency for your recommendation.

The CHAIRMAN: We will let you know what is best.

Head agreed to.

MINISTERS OF RELIGION.

Mr. McDAVID: This Head shows a further reduction in accordance with the Law.

Mr. JACOB: For record sake I would like in the event of the law being changed and further payments being made to submit that not only the Church of England, the Church of Scotland and the Church of Rome should get a contribution under this Vete. There should be a wider distribution among the other religious groups in this Colony.

The CHAIRMAN: That is very wide. It is a question of policy.

Mr. C. V. WIGHT: May I ask if the hon. Member is going to seek to include the Jordanites and other 'ites?

Mr. JACOB: I think my point goes to the root of what we stand for in this world. We have to respect each other's views and religion particularly, and if you have people here representing almost 40 per cent. of the population then it is time that their religion be considered too. It is not in respect of one or two persons that I make the plea it is in respect of at least 40 per cent. of the population of this Colony for whom a little more religious training will do a world of good. I know that some of my hon. friends are going to pounce down upon me as soon as I take my seat, but I feel that in doing so I am discharging a duty I owe to and for the benefit of a large section of this mixed population in this Colony.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I do not know why the hon. Member does not go among the same people and do whatever good he desires for them. I want to remind him once for all that the Laws of

British Guiana and the Laws of England are based on the Christian religion. If he can digest that he will soon see what I mean. On the other hand I would like him to emulate me. He stands on a pinnacle by himself and causes the people to go in the other direction. I certainly would not do that. I would ask the people to come and follow me. That remark is sufficient. The Laws which are being exercised in this country are based on the Christian religion.

Mr. JACOB: I would like to add for the enlightenment of my hon. friend who has just taken his seat that what I have suggested here is what is actually going on in Trinidad. Trinidad is distributing money for the propagation of religion on a wider basis that is shown here. I do not want to see the word "Rome" under this Head at all. I would like to see it deleted from this page. I wish to goodness that place can be bombed out to-morrow.

Mr. C. V. WIGHT: I would just point out to the hon. Member that is exactly what he does. He talks about freedom of religion, when it suits him. I will spare the hon. Member's feelings.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member reminds me of a Judge who asked

counsel "Is there any religion mixed up in this case between the two parties?" The counsel replied "Oh, no; they are both Presbyterians". (laughter)

Head passed.

SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES, 1942.

Statements of additional provision required to meet expenditure in excess of the provision made in the Estimates for the year 1942 were next considered.

Mr. McDAVID: These statements have been circulated to Members. They would ordinarily have been put before the Finance Committee, but as we are sitting now in a Committee of the Council I think we can take the opportunity of doing the same thing as we would have done in Finance Committee proper. The items are set out with full explanation, and we can take each item separately as we go along.

Items put and agreed to.

The Council resumed.

The Council adjourned to 12 noon on Wednesday, 9th December, 1942.