

## LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

The Hon. V. Roth (Nominated).

The Clerk read prayers.

*Thursday, 9th August, 1945.*

The Council met at 2 p.m., the Hon. E. G. Woolford, O.B.E., K.C., Deputy President, in the Chair.

The minutes of the meeting of the Council held on Wednesday, 8th August, 1945, were taken as read and confirmed.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

## PRESENT

The Deputy President, the Hon. E. G. Woolford, O.B.E., K.C. (New Amsterdam).

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The Hon. Peer Bacchus (Western Berbice).

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

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

## AIR TRANSPORTATION DIFFICULTIES.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: His Excellency has asked me to make an announcement with respect to the difficulties that have arisen with regard to air transportation to and from the Colony. I am to inform Members that His Excellency is proceeding to Mackenzie on Saturday morning where he hopes to meet the General Manager of the British West Indies Airways who is expected to arrive there on a survey flight from Trinidad. He understands that this arrangement has been made with a view to endeavouring to bring the Mackenzie service much earlier into operation than had been anticipated. This will enable persons who are trying to leave the Colony but cannot be accommodated through Atkinson Field, to travel without any great delay. His Excellency has asked me to add that it is premature to say with certainty that this can be done, but he thought that Members would be interested in knowing exactly what the present position is.

## UNOFFICIAL NOTICES.

## WEST INDIAN FEDERATION.

Mr. CRITCHLOW gave notice of the following motion:—

WHEREAS the inhabitants of the Colony of British Guiana in their resolution to His Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for the Colonies dated 7th February, 1938, and signed by (a) The Heads of the Religious Denominations with a single exception, by the Local Authorities, viz., The Mayor and Town Council of (i) Georgetown, (ii) New Amsterdam, (iii) The Village Chairman's Conference, as well as by the Trade Unions and the principal Social Organisations, asked for a Royal Commission to the West Indies and British Guiana to investigate and report upon the social and economic conditions in all of these Colonies, and for the Commission's Recommendations of an Imperial Policy and settled plan of development of British Guiana to bring about its prosperity and ability to provide for settlements therein of the surplus populations of Jamaica, Barbados and other British West Indies, sorely in need of relief;

AND WHEREAS the development of British Guiana in the past has been hindered because of the paucity of its population;

AND WHEREAS the Rice, Timber and Cattle Industries of the Colony now in course of development, will need more markets abroad and much larger population within for production;

AND WHEREAS the inhabitants of the British West Indies and British Guiana are of the same source and/or sources, and free movement among them will be beneficial to all of them alike;

AND WHEREAS Federation of British Guiana with the British West Indies will provide more and greater facilities for exchange of their products among them;

AND WHEREAS experience has proved the great advantage of the West Indian Court of Appeal to be followed by a West Indian Civil Service, University and General Education;

BE IT RESOLVED that this Honourable Legislative Council express its appreciation of the far-sighted recommendations of the Rt. Honourable Secretary of State for the Colonies in his Memorandum on Federation of these Colonies, and declare its approval of the said recommendations to be pursued and given effect.

## ORDER OF THE DAY.

### DISTRICT LANDS PARTITION AND RE-ALLOTMENT (SPECIAL PROCEDURE) BILL

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: I beg to move that the following Bill be read a second time:—

A Bill intituled "An Ordinance to provide for the partition of certain areas of land, for the re-allotment of holdings therein for the issue of titles thereto, and to render the occupation thereof more beneficial."

This Bill is in precisely the same terms as two other Bills which have been passed by this Council during the last 18 months. It is unnecessary for me, therefore, to explain the need for introducing it. It relates to the three lots of land named in the Schedule. The first is the village of Sheet Anchor. I do not know how it got that name; it seems a most amazing name for a village to have. The position is that the area was surveyed in 1879 and again in 1899, and those plants are still in existence, but by some mischance hardly anybody is living on a plot as shown on those plans. The mistake is so bad that on the plan buildings are shown parallel to the road whereas now they are at right angles. The result is that the Central Board of Health cannot grant people permission to build houses, and no building has been allowed there during the last two or three years. An endeavour was made by both the Central Board of Health and the Local Government Board to induce the proprietors in the village — 61 per cent. or more of them — to present a petition under the Ordinance in the usual way, but that was unsuccessful. They have not got 61 per cent. of the proprietors to present a petition, nor would they come forward and produce their titles. The position there is an absolute stalemate, and nothing can be done in the village unless and until this Bill is passed.

In the case of the other two villages—Sisters and Dartmouth—the position is very similar. In both cases plans have been filed in the Department of Lands and Mines and the Deeds Registry, but the buildings in the villages do not compare with those shown on the plans. The result again is that nobody knows who owns the land, or whether they can build a house with safety or not. There again 61 per cent. of the proprietors will not apply to have the land partitioned and re-allotted. I rather think the reason is that they know that maintenance rates on recent works there are due to be paid, and I suppose the longer they waited the longer they avoided payment. Money was advanced under the Development and Welfare Scheme and the works are now completed and maintenance rates should be collected, but they cannot be assessed, levied or collected until the area has been partitioned and re-allotted. I move that the Bill be read a second time.

Mr. CRITCHLOW seconded.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

The Council resolved itself into Committee, and considered the Bill clause by clause without discussion.

The Council resumed.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: I move that the Bill be read a third time and passed.

Mr. CRITCHLOW seconded.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a third time and passed.

#### RE-EMPLOYMENT OF PENSIONERS.

Mr. EDUN: I beg to move:—

BE IT RESOLVED THAT this Honourable Council strongly recommends to Government the urgent desirability for acceptance of an appreciable change of the said policy by way of:—

- (a) dispensing with the services of all pensioners therewith employed,
- (b) transferring of all such capable officers as are now employed in the several Government Departments to such posts as are now occupied by the said re-employed pensioners,
- (c) filling the posts of all such transferred officers by employment of qualified probationers, resulting in the rational absorption of a fair proportion of the qualified youths of the Colony, thus eliminating the spirit of frustration and maladjustment of their minds.

The motion is a very simple one indeed; harmless but important. It was tabled some time last year but lapsed, and during the interval I have taken the opportunity to discuss the subject with the principal officers of Government who agreed with the principle of the non-employment of pensioners, but I find that pensioners are being re-employed regularly even now. I am thinking whether this Government is giving any serious attention to the question of post-war policy. During the war in Europe very much was said about post-war policy and how to solve the problems of unemployment which crop up now and again, but I see absolutely no tendency on the part of this Government to make an endeavour to meet the situation by the adoption of practical methods. For that reason I thought it in the interest of the youths of this Colony to bring this motion before the Council in order to have the subject fully discussed and some policy adumbrated for the future. I considered it in this light: that we ought now to map out a post-war policy of rational absorption of the youths of the Colony into the Civil Service. Gone are the days when a civil servant was regarded as an alien; today we consider him as part and parcel of the country, and generally speaking I find that more and more we are filling the gaps in the Service by promoting our own people from the ranks.

For that reason, if Government continues the re-employment of pensioners I must regard that policy as one of frustration of those youths who have spent years in acquiring the necessary qualifications for entry into the Civil Service of this country, and to help in its administration. I think that no Member of this Council should support such a policy. Soon after I was nominated a Member of this Council I was overwhelmed by dozens of youths of good parentage and with the necessary qualifications, who sought my help to get them jobs in the Civil Service. How can I be expected to answer those youths when I find that pensioners are still being re-employed? I consider the re-employment of pensioners to be not in the interest of the Colony or even of the Service.

I can remember the last Press conference we had with His Excellency the Governor, at which he said he was sorry to have to admit that the whole mass of the Clerical Service was nothing but a combination of mediocrities. I was surprised to hear such a statement, but it shows conclusively that the Service cannot throw up its geniuses. There is no kind of educational policy in the Service at all.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: I hesitate to interrupt the hon. Member, but His Excellency is not here today. I take it that the hon. Member is quite sure about the remark he says his Excellency made. There is no limitation of the range of the indictment of the Service which he says was made by His Excellency. Would he like to modify it and make a less general remark? His Excellency may have referred to individuals in the Service, because mediocrity exists everywhere. I must ask the hon. Member to refrain from making use of references of that kind unless he is tolerably certain of them, or he has licence to make them. A Press conference is, after all, not a matter for general publicity, and I have my own idea of certain limita-

tions of statements made at those conferences. I know that from experience.

Mr. EDUN: I have prepared myself to make that statement even if His Excellency was in the chair, because if I attend Press conferences and I am told certain things must not be divulged I would not attend those Press conferences. The Press is the guardian of the public conscience and I attend Press conferences to listen to what is being said and to divulge what I think is in the interest of the Colony and its people. I do not think His Excellency would take any objection to my statement, because it is admitted that pensioners are being re-employed because the Service has not been able to throw up a certain type of officers who could fill certain posts.

I consider that to be detrimental because, if I am to accept the view that these very pensioners had been carrying on the Administration for a period of years, and that there has not been much indication of progress within that period, I cannot see how in these days they can be expected to show much more progress. Therefore there must be something else involved in the re-employment of pensioners, or something is wrong in the Promotions Board. Perhaps favouritism is being practised there. I refuse to accept the statement that the Service cannot produce an officer to take charge of the censorship of letters, or to perform the duties of Secretary of the Local Government Board. I cannot accept Government's view in this matter with any degree of finality, because Government ought not to be the sole judge in a matter of this kind. The professions are crammed from top to bottom, and all that an educated boy can do is to get a cheap profession as a lawyer, or a little dearer one as a medical practitioner.

I think the time has come when there should be introduced some proper sys-

tem with regard to recruitment for the Civil Service. New entrants should be trained for service in the various Departments and given a chance to learn the work of several Departments by actual practice. Perhaps such a system would not be in the interest of certain Heads of Departments who, for obvious reasons, may not care to give a budding officer a chance. Human nature plays a big part in the question of promotion in the Civil Service. There may be a brilliant young man doing his best but there is no scope for him to show his capacity for work. The result is that he remains in the drab routine of the Clerical Service with no future at all. I will refer to my own case. When my son secured his School Certificate I asked Government to give him a job but they refused; there was no chance for him. If I had ten more sons I would not ask Government for jobs for them because the world owes them a living somehow.

I detest the system of re-employing pensioners—derelict men who have spent years in the Service and can do nothing more than waste time, but receive sometimes even higher salaries than they drew when they were originally employed. I feel that Government ought to make a declaration now of its intention to dispense with the service of every pensioner and endeavour to find suitable young men who could be trained to do their jobs within two or three months. When the necessity for the establishment of Commodity Control arose during the war it was felt that there was no one in this Colony capable of handling such a big job, but an officer was taken from the Colonial Secretariat and made a good job of it. Although I cannot say that he succeeded 100 per cent., we are all pleased with the progress he made, and he merited the promotion he has got.

I think that if Government adopts a policy of selecting officers — not pensioners — for certain specific posts

and give them an opportunity to reach the top, there would be no room for recrimination at all. I am looking forward to a progressive era in this Colony and yesterday I raised the question of a balanced economy for its inhabitants, but these shareholders with their so-called expert knowledge insist on carrying out this policy of enslaving people on the sugar plantations. The leaders of the people can only advise and co-operate with Government, doing everything possible to bring to their attention the crying needs of the people, but the actual administrative work rests with the officers themselves. I find it difficult to believe, however, that we will make much progress with the kind of officers we have at the moment. I understand that Government has a policy at present to train a certain number of officers—send them abroad, spend some money on them, let them get some expert knowledge of certain specialised subjects and come back to the Colony to take up their jobs in earnest, with good salaries. I notice, however, that the tendency of late is to get the men trained and then promote them elsewhere.

I have been told that you cannot block a man's promotion, but I am inclined to think that so long as we pay for an officer's training, we ought to make provision that he should return to the Colony and work for this Government for a certain period at least. I think that if we select officers from the clerical service for training along those lines—after having been recommended by a Selection Board—we will soon have the best type of officers — as good as those from any other country. There is no doubt that the necessity still exists for the importation of new blood, but I think we should take a leaf out of the book of other countries in our efforts to solve our problems. Take the Chinese and the Indians for instance; they are trekking in hundreds and thousands to the United States and the United King-

dom particularly, in order to obtain specialised knowledge of certain subjects and then they go back to their respective countries. We should be looking forward to similar progress in British Guiana, but if we begin to employ pensioners how could we reach that stage. I do not want to take up this question of pensioners at all, but I want to deal with the principle because certain persons concerned cannot escape attention. They are mere derelicts who cannot do any work at all and are only receiving money for doing nothing. What strikes me is that somebody wanted to be charitable to these pensioners at the expense of the inhabitants of the Colony, probably because some of them after having drawn salaries for over 20 years cannot make two ends meet at present.

I think the time has come when this chicanery must cease. We must get out of this Crown Colony psychology altogether; that is the system that has bred this kind of thing. Now, we are beginning to realise that every officer of the Government is part and parcel of this Colony. Every officer should accept the principle that his own children and his children's children would have to pay for the administration of this Colony in years to come. All we have to do is to train them and that is why I see the advisability now of letting the pensioners go—let them fish for themselves—and if they are on their bottoms then all we have to do is to be charitable to them in another form. I have been reading recently about euthenesia — perhaps you, sir, know something about it—being given to old and sick people abroad, and if you look through the arrangements governing the Whitley Council, you will find no mention whatever about pensioners. What then would happen if pensioners employed by Government claim that they have a grievance—how will it be dealt with by the Council? I submit that the grievance will be ignored, and that is conclusive proof that this form of employment of pensioners is an

anomaly, and a grave one at that. Somebody is definitely wrong, and any Government which perpetuates such a thing is guilty of maladministration.

In England, there was a hullabaloo over this same question and steps were suggested to halve the number of re-employed pensioners, when the British Government had to cow-tow and state that it was only a war emergency measure. We in this Council have reached a stage when we ought to direct Government in its post-war policy. I do not want to take up much time in this matter, but a while ago I said something about a balanced economy and someone might ask why I should bring in a question like that now. I was trying to show, however, that the Administration would be responsible for the policy outlined by Government and fully endorsed by this Council, but unless you have capable officers you will not be able to carry out that policy properly. I do not want to go back to the question, but would point out that you can train an officer with a little bit of incentive and some hope of his future, but you cannot train a pensioner. I am sure that if this training policy is extended, the apathy—I would not say stigma—with which the Clerical Service is being viewed, would in due course be eliminated. I have relatives in the Service and I do not want to say much more than that.

It has been whispered into my ear that some officers can do nothing more than remain as clerks carrying out the drab routine of their offices and therefore they are not happy as to their future. Some people think—and I myself thought so for many years—that the Civil Service is something to aspire to, but I have found from my own observation that it is nothing more than a dumping ground where a young man cannot exercise his own initiative, for everywhere he turns he finds restrictions hitting him in the forehead and leaving little hope of his future. Therefore, I think the Service should be made as elastic as possible, in order to save

the young men in it from drab routine and give them some hope as to their future. As I have outlined in the resolution, the way to begin to do this is to dis-pense with the services of pensioners immediately. If you do not want to do that, then give them a month's notice and get a secret committee comprising one or two officers of Government and one or two Hon. Members of this Council to go into the matter and make a selection of new officers to succeed them. Government should be able to say whether there is any promise in certain officers and so give them an opportunity to make or mar their own career. Officers have not been given such opportunities in the past and that is why it has been said—perhaps rightly—that the Civil Service of British Guiana has not been able to throw up its geniuses and that all the officers are mediocrities.

I think all the officers should come under the attention of a proper Promotion Board from the time of their entry into the Service. There is a Board existing at present, but whether it is functioning along impartial lines I do not know. I am not going to say anything more about that, but if it was considered necessary to employ pensioners—and in essential services at that—I am sure they had to pass through a trial period until they became perfect. My own view is that there should be a rational basis for the entire Service with a system of transfer from one Department to another. I find under the present system that unless the head of a Department goes on leave there would be no opportunity for another officer to step in his shoes and show his mettle. It even happens, sometimes, that when the head of the Department is on leave an officer from another Department is called in to act for him. I think the procedure should be that if an officer—the Colonial Secretary for instance—is going on leave, the officer who is next to him should act in his place and thus be given an

opportunity to show his mettle. Then, there are other means which I think could be explored in order to meet the situation and to give more opportunities to the educated youths of British Guiana. I feel very strongly on this point, especially because this motion has lapsed from last year. I now bring it forward but I thought Government would have acted before in the interest of the youths of this Colony, bearing in mind the fact that hon. Members of this Council are not feeling nice about the matter.

It might have suited the exigencies of the Service to employ pensioners in the past, but I notice that a couple of them were employed just recently and I think it would lead to dissatisfaction in the Service. Government officers have spoken to me with tears in their eyes, as to the way in which they are being treated in their Department—pointing out that opportunities for promotion have been denied them. As I have already stated, I would be the last person to say that they have been victimised. Perhaps, there are many things they did not tell me and I fully realise that it would be wrong for me, as a Member of this Council, to be voicing the grievances of officers, but I think it is within the province of every Member to take up the principle contained in this motion against the employment of pensioners. If any officer makes a serious mistake—granted that some of them do—he ought to be told that he is not worthy of promotion, but those who show promise should be given every opportunity to advance themselves.

Let us take the post of Secretary to the Local Government Board — an important and a senior post relating to something with which every individual in this Colony is concerned—Local Government: Don't you think, sir, that the time is ripe for Government to have a young man trained for this post instead of having to employ a pensioner to fill

it? I would not go any further than that at the moment: I have referred to the matter because the Department is a unique one. His Excellency the Governor stated that we have a unique Chairman of Local Government—an officer second to none in these parts—but is it to be understood that a new Secretary is to come in from abroad without a chance being given to the youths of this Colony to fill the post? I have now given an indication of what is passing through my mind in this particular matter and I think the time has come when we must have a proper, rational system to deal with the question of promotion in the Civil Service.

I have said to men who have asked me for recommendations as Trade Union members: "No; I can give you a recommendation but that would surely prevent you from getting a job, because the officer you approach will say that Mr. Edun is a trouble shooter and I do not want to have anything to do with anybody he recommends." All I want to ask Government to do is to accept the great human principle whereby every officer would be given an opportunity for promotion. The Civil Service is looked upon as a kind of reservoir for the youths of the Colony, especially as we have no industries here to absorb them. In a year or so from now our boys—the soldiers—will be coming back and will need a lot of jobs, many of them having qualified as technical men. It would be difficult to find these jobs unless there is more industrialisation and progress in the Colony. This problem is one in which Government should adopt a little more statesmanship and make provision for the youths of the country—not only the soldiers who are returning, but the boys who are coming out of Queen's College and other secondary schools—so that they may become happy citizens here.

Dr. SINGH: I rise to second the motion. The hon. Member who has

moved it has fully developed all the salient points. All I wish to say is that there is dissatisfaction inside and outside the Civil Service in relation to the employment of pensioners. Some time last year, I approached Government on the same question, but somehow, I was in sympathy with Government at the time. The war was on and a lot of extra work was put on the Service, and there were occasions when important matters had to be carried through by experienced and efficient officers. In order to do this expeditiously, outside help became necessary and therefore some pensioners were brought in. Now that the war is over and a good deal of the extra work no longer exists, I do hope that Government will look into the matter, because there are many Civil Servants who are anxious for promotion. Then again, we have to consider the secondary schools which are putting out every year students qualified for the Service. Some of them would like to come in, so I think it is time that Government should consider this motion and try to do away with the employment of pensioners in the Service.

Mr. AUSTIN: I should like to make a few remarks and agree to a certain extent with the views of the two previous speakers. I think everyone would have been more in sympathy with the motion, however, if the mover had been less vitriolic in his remarks. The war is not yet over and there is quite a lot of work which will have to be performed by local pensioners who are not being paid by the local Government, but by the Imperial Government. His Excellency has told us before that the Imperial Government is bearing the cost of these war services and I think we would be rather impertinent to suggest to that Government that although they are paying for the services they require they would not be allowed to select those whom they want to employ. We would not be so impertinent around this table to suggest that if the hon. mover wants to go to India, for instance, at his own



expense, he should not do so, if he is fortunate enough to collect a nice sum of money to send him abroad.

There was a time when Government gave an undertaking in this Council to reconsider the question of the employment of pensioners who were being paid by the local Treasury, but conditions are different at the present time. I take it that they will go into the matter and employ those young men and women of the Colony who seek employment, but I think we should give Government a chance. We should be considerate and allow Government an opportunity to select those applicants of all races who are entitled to employment in the place of pensioners when the time comes. I do not think we should assume that Government will not carry out the undertaking given us some six months ago.

Mr. ROTH: The hon. mover of the motion has reminded the Council that Government did give an assurance that the re-employment of pensioners was a temporary measure and would cease when conditions became normal again, but there are two points which I would like to discuss with regard to what the hon. Member has said. He appears to be under two misconceptions. One is that Government employs pensioners from motives of charity, but I think I am right in saying that that is not so. A pensioner is re-employed because of his experience, reliability, and because he has been tried and proved. Many of the positions at present filled by pensioners are positions of responsibility, although they may not carry very high salaries. They are positions of trust into which it would not be quite in order to put a person whose background was not known.

The other misconception which struck me forcibly after reading the resolution and hearing the hon. Member's remarks is that he does not seem to understand the primary function of the Civil Service. It is not a labour

bureau to find employment for people. As I see it, the primary function of the Service is to get its work done by the best available people, and that is what Government has been doing for the last 4 or 5 years.

As regards the re-employment of pensioners, I think the real trouble is the system of arbitrary retirement at a fixed age. I never could see the justice or economy in that. In theory all men are said to be born equal, but by the time they get on in life they are certainly not equal physically, mentally, or in staying power. Had that been so we would not have elder statesmen like Mr. Churchill running the affairs of the Empire, or men like your honourable self in the chair, or the hon. Member for Georgetown Central (Mr. Percy C. Wight). According to the mover's ideas those hon. Members would vacate their seats and make room for younger men. The hon. Member has forgotten your very pungent remarks during the debate about a fortnight ago when you pointed out the necessity for experience in matters of this nature. I would like to see Government abolish the arbitrary retiring age for those very reasons. Some men ought to be retired at 30 or 40; others are at their prime at 60, mentally at any rate. I regret I cannot support the motion.

The COL. TREASURER: I should like to say a few words. The hon. mover has been making very heavy weather of what is a very simple subject. I heard him say in the course of his remarks that he did not intend to go in for personalities, nevertheless he used some very strong language. He talked about "those derelicts" who were re-employed by Government—"derelict pensioners"—and even suggested that we should gather those pensioners and a few others and put them in some sort of concentration camp. What is the hon. Member fighting against? From the very long speech he has made one would imagine that there are vast

numbers of pensioners being employed in the public service, and that the engagement of those people is preventing the employment of a number of qualified and capable young men. That is what anyone would gather from his remarks, but what are the facts?

I have just been looking through the list of pensioners who have been re-employed. At the present time, apart from a few rural constables, special messengers and people of that sort, there are 16 pensioners employed. I am going to be very personal; I am going to call their names. I want the public to know who are these "derelicts." First of all there are three officers who voluntarily retired from the Service in 1932. That was a year of retrenchment. Some officers were forcibly detached from their jobs while a few others were given the opportunity to retire voluntarily. Those three officers retired voluntarily but were afterwards re-employed when things became better. One of them is Mr. Parsley, Assistant District Engineer, Public Works Department, a very highly qualified officer and a first class surveyor. He retired voluntarily at a very early age, went abroad and subsequently returned to the Colony. Then there is Miss Veacock who was also retired, and has been re-employed for the last 10 years as clerk of the Stationery Store. The third is Mr. Belmonte, of the District Administration Service, a young man. I do not call these re-employed pensioners at all; they are people who were retrenched and were given an opportunity of re-employment. In one case Government was very glad indeed to have the officer back. I refer to Mr. Parsley.

Then there is Mr. Christiani who was retired in somewhat unfortunate circumstances two or three years ago before he had reached the retiring age. Everyone recognises his worth; he is an officer of very great merit, and the time came when a certain very special job had to be done. I think it was the

investigation by the Commissioner of Local Government into the Drainage and Irrigation Schemes, and it was felt that it would be very good indeed to get Mr. Christiani back to do that work as it had relation to the drainage rates, a matter in which he possessed better knowledge than most people in the Service. Mr. Christiani was therefore re-employed, and he has continued to serve with the Local Government Department as Secretary, a post which had been abolished. It was re-introduced because it was felt that with the additional functions thrown on the Commissioner of Local Government in the way of social welfare, housing, &c., it would be well to re-employ Mr. Christiani until he reached the retiring age. He is not yet 60, and when he has reached that age it is proposed that he should retire finally. I cannot see that that particular re-employment should be criticised in the way the hon. Member has done.

The fifth person is the Archivist whose qualifications include age and experience. Mr. Cruickshank, who eminently filled that post, died about a year ago. Government advertised for a successor but found no one with the necessary qualifications outside the public service. The person eventually appointed was Mr. Muss who has some distinct qualities for the functions of an archivist. I think he is suitably employed.

There are also three pensioners employed in the Treasury—Currency Commissioners' Office. I have spoken about that matter in this Council two or three times before. I have explained that the Currency Commissioners issue notes in this Colony, and the authentication of those notes by printing the signatures is done at the Treasury. It is work of a very responsible nature indeed. The notes arrive from the Crown Agents in bundles sealed and certified, but they are not authenticated. Each bundle

has to be untied, put on a printing machine in the Treasury, re-sealed and certified, so that when they are issued to the Banks we can be quite sure they are correct in numerical order and quantity. Then they have to be withdrawn from circulation when they become old and are destroyed by being cut and burnt. It is light work but it is work of a very responsible nature. Hon. Members will recall that similar work improperly done cost the Trinidad Government \$240,000. In this Colony and in a number of other Colonies the practice is to re-employ responsible pensioners to do this work as it is required from time to time. They are not required throughout the year; they are only partially employed. We have three responsible pensioners employed in the Treasury on this particular work.

I have now dealt with eight re-employed pensioners. The other eight are employed purely on war emergency measures. There is a gentleman who has the dignified title of King's messenger. He runs up and down between Georgetown and Atkinson Field with correspondence in a locked box—responsible work; not the kind of work one would put a youth on.

There are two Censors, Mr. McCowan, Chief Censor, and Mr. Norton, Assistant Censor. I do not know how Mr. McCowan would like being called a derelect. I can assure the hon. Member that he is not by any means. The Censors are employed and paid by H.M. Government.

There are three gentlemen of the Commodity Control—Mr. Smith, who was formerly Chief Accountant of the Post Office; Mr. Thompson, a retired District Commissioner, and Mr. Farnum, formerly Chief Clerk of the Medical Department. These three men are in charge of a very responsible section of the Commodity Control organization.

There are two others employed by the Rice Marketing Board. One is Capt. Douglas who is the wharfinger. I am not quite sure of the name of the other

who is some sort of supervisor on the wharf.

Those are the gentlemen who are re-employed. If I understand the hon. Member's contention it is that we should have transferred men from the public service proper into these specialist jobs, and in that way provided more scope for the employment of youths. My answer to that is very simple. The public service has already spared a very large number of people for war emergency duties. If the hon. Member looks at Appendix K in the Estimates he will see that no fewer than 43 public service clerks have been seconded for war emergency work. Of those 43 there are 27 actually engaged on military service. Those 43 represent the cream of the middle ranks of the public service, and it is the loss of those 43 that has caused the strain on the Clerical Service today.

I have mentioned in Council before that we are having great difficulty in filling the senior clerical jobs and getting the work well done. It is because so many of those clerks are either on military service or seconded to special jobs. We cannot go any further. We could not find men in the public service today to do the jobs now being performed by Messrs. Smith, Thompson, and Farnum, and if we removed them the Department would suffer. In my own Department I know that the bulk of the responsible work is being undertaken by three officers. I have fifteen juniors, young men not older than 23 years of age, responsible to those three officers, and if the latter were removed the whole arrangement would collapse. We cannot remove any more officers from the Departmental Service for these special jobs.

Sixteen pensioners are re-employed in these administrative and clerical posts. How can that have this wonderful effect on the "rational absorption of the youths of the

Colony in the public service?" Those are the heavy words the hon. Member used. He went on to talk about the "policy of frustration." Does he really wish us to believe that those 16 pensioners frustrate the employment of youths in the public service? I would just like to give the Council the number of clerks who have actually been taken on in the public service within the last three years. Between 1943 and 1945 the number of new candidates in the public service was 177 in those three years. Yet we are told that these 16 re-employed pensioners are frustrating the absorption of the youths of the Colony into the public service. I am sure that the hon. Member did not get his facts. He should have been satisfied with the assurance given not only to him but to his colleagues, that the policy of Government is not to re-employ pensioners. That is the general principle, but if it is in the public interest that a pensioner should be re-employed for a particular service or job then of course that pensioner would be re-employed. I entirely agree with the point made by the hon. Nominated Member, Mr. Roth. There are some jobs in which we have to re-employ pensioners because of their experience and training.

As regards the war emergency measures it is obvious that as soon as they are abolished those pensioners employed on that work will go. I am unable to make any promise as regards those pensioners employed by the Currency Commissioners because I think it is desirable that they should be employed in view of the nature of the work. We might employ women, but they get married and we have to change them. I think the employment of pensioners on that work is the proper thing.

I want to end by emphasizing what the hon. Nominated Member himself said. We were told by him that the employment of pensioners was an act of charity by their friends at the expense of the public funds of this Colony. I hope the hon. Member will

have the grace to withdraw that remark.

I hate the use of the word "chicanery." It has been used two or three times in this Council and it should not be used in respect of any act by the Government. Now that the hon. Member knows the facts of the case I do hope he will be charitable enough to withdraw some of his remarks.

Mr. EDUN: I think the hon. the Colonial Treasurer has made out a very good case for the Government, but I can answer him in a few words. What would have been the position if those 16 pensioners had died? Would it have meant that there would have been no officers in the whole Service to do these jobs? The Treasurer has actually supported the point I have raised that the employment of these 16 pensioners creates the feeling that something is wrong in the Service. I thought the policy of Government was not to re-employ pensioners. I know that new candidates have joined the Service recently. I am still of the opinion that not one of these 16 pensioners should have been employed, because if they had died officers in the Service would have had to do the jobs. To say that pensioners must be employed to do work in the Treasury is tantamount to saying that Government does not trust anyone. If 43 officers have gone abroad why were 117 appointed? It appears that there is a tendency on the part of Government to employ pensioners whether anybody likes it or not, and I feel that in several cases the question of charity was involved.

My motion is a simple one and has nothing to do with India or Indians. The hon. Nominated Member has referred to India. I do not know what was in his mind; perhaps he was following your example, sir. I would like to know what actuates the minds of Members whenever I raise something. It has been suggested that I want to go to India.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: The hon. Member said in effect that if funds were provided from India to enable him to visit that country it would be impertinent on our part to object to it, because the funds were not our own. He was illustrating the position of the Imperial Government with respect to certain pensioners here.

Mr. EDUN: If the Imperial Government wished to employ any person here I am sure they would ask the advice of this Government. There is no doubt about that, and this Government would have to suggest who should be employed. In this case two men were recommended by the Government in the same way as my own nomination was made. Some people say glibly that I ought to be grateful to Government. I was nominated on my own merit. If I had not shown the Governor that I could do the job he would not have nominated me. He had to nominate me and nobody else. (laughter). Members may grin as much as they like; they know it is the truth and nothing but the truth. Let them grin. If I reach India I am sure I shall be accepted at the top. Whether the hon. Mr. Austin will be able to achieve the same thing in England is another matter. Perhaps the Seventh Nominated Member (Mr. Roth) is in the same position. Another Member might like to go to Liberia or perhaps to Haile Selassie's kingdom. Why should the hon. Mr. Austin bring in the question of India? I want to warn him to make this the last time. If he wants a fight here I am prepared to run him to earth. I want you, sir, to be tolerant in this case because you have allowed the hon. Nominated Member to bring in something extraneous. I have not said anything about any Indian aspiration to employment. To drag that in here gives one the impression that there is something in the minds of certain Members here, and I will have to knock it out of their minds one of these days.

If I go to India it will be on business of my own and who can challenge it. In all my life I have never been the servant of another man. I work as an artisan—independently—and have never been in the employ of any other man. If hon. Members feel that they could take this Council and turn it into a cockpit for their political battles, I am quite fit and in good form to challenge them.

The hon. the Colonial Treasurer thinks that I should withdraw my statement that these pensioners were employed as an act of charity. Well, from a more humanitarian point of view — and especially as he has given very good reasons for the re-employment of these pensioners in a time of stress—I am going to accept his word for it. I want to see, however, a gradual elimination of the 16 pensioners referred to. If there were only three it would not have mattered. Having accepted the statement about the principle involved I am going to withdraw the suggestion about charity, but I do not want to see another pensioner employed.

The COL. TREASURER: I think I should say that that also is not quite fair. The hon. Member for North Western District accepted the principle in 1940 and asked a question on the subject. I have the answer here in Hansard and it gives every name and salary concerned.

Mr. EDUN: I want to know whether those names are up to date.

The COL. TREASURER: There have been some changes since 1940. but if the hon. Member insists in getting a complete list I can get one for him quite easily, with the names of all pensioners employed.

Mr. EDUN: I asked whether there were any names in addition to that list and the Colonial Treasurer cleverly said "No."

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: The hon. Member can make a note and find it in Hansard of August 27, 1940; Column 895.

Mr. EDUN: I shall do that, but this is August, 1945—5 years from then.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Some of them are still there.

Mr. EDUN: This is 1945 and there is hope that the war with Japan will soon end. I wanted to know whether there was any addition to the list since 1938 and the hon. the Colonial Treasurer could not but admit that 16 men were re-employed. Those figures are somewhat misleading, and in any case I feel I ought to say that it was an act of charity. I have one particular case in mind and I think we ought to remedy it because of the principle involved, by sending away some of our officers for training. This is a time for policy and a time when we expect planned administrative work. I would like to have the names of all the pensioners employed at the present time and I hope the hon. the Colonial Treasurer would let me have them in due course. I am prone to accept his viewpoint that it was a case of emergency and also that the Imperial Government has been paying for the services of these pensioners, but I would like to know what are the conditions of employment. How logical those conditions are, hon. Members of this Council ought to examine for themselves. Having reached the stage where I have learnt from His Excellency that

there is no reason to divert the principle involved and having got that in public from the hon. the Colonial Treasurer. I feel that a useful purpose has been served by this motion and I am now asking permission to withdraw it. I do not want it put to this Council and my reason for that is so obvious that I think you ought to know it, sir,

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: This has been quite a lively debate and I am sure the hon. mover of the motion would realise on reflection that there is sympathy with his contention that pensionable officers should not be re-employed. I am also inclined to support the comparison and the statements he made with respect to visiting India. I would like to say that I am quite satisfied in my own mind that there are men in this community—and I include the hon. Member who knows the East Indian community so well—that would probably have been more successful in a mission to India, than Sir Stafford Cripps. I do not know what experience he has had, but I know there are Hon. members of the East Indian community here who would have been more successful had they undertaken the mission. The question is that the motion before the Council be withdrawn; is the seconder agreeable to that?

Dr. SINGH: I am, sir.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT. There being no further business, the Council will stand adjourned until tomorrow, at 2 p.m.