

# THE DEBATES

OF THE

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL OF BRITISH GUIANA.

## OFFICIAL REPORT

OF

PROCEEDINGS AT THE THIRD SESSION OF THE THIRD  
LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

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## LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

FRIDAY, 15TH OCTOBER, 1937.

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The Third Session of the Third Legislative Council of British Guiana was opened in the Council Chamber, Guiana Public Buildings, on Friday, 15th October, 1937, at 11 a.m. with customary formalities and ceremonials.

### PRESENT :

The President, His Excellency the Officer Administering the Government, Mr. E. J. WADDINGTON, C.M.G., O.B.E.

The Honourable The Colonial Secretary, (Acting) (Major W. BAIN GRAY, C.B.E.).

„ The Attorney-General, (Mr. J. H. B. NICHILL, K.C., M.C.).

„ F. DIAS, O.B.E. (Nominated Unofficial Member).

„ J. S. DASH, Director of Agriculture.

„ E. A. LUCKHOO, O.B.E. (Eastern Berbice).

„ E. G. WOOLFORD, K.C. (New Amsterdam).

„ E. F. McDAVID, M.B.E., Colonial Treasurer.

„ F. J. SEAFORD, O.B.E. (Georgetown North).

„ W. A. D'ANDRADE, Comptroller of Customs.

„ J. I. DE AGUIAR, (Central Demerara).

„ M. B. LAING, District Commissioner, Eastern Demerara.

„ G. O. CASE, Director of Public Works and Sea Defences.

„ B. N. V. WASE-BAILEY, Surgeon-General (Acting).

„ L. G. CREASE, Director of Education (Acting).

„ PERCY C. WIGHT, O.B.E. (Georgetown Central).

„ J. ELEAZAR, (Berbice River).

„ J. GONSALVES, O.B.E. (Georgetown South).

- „ JUNG BAHADUR SINGH, (Demerara-Essequibo).  
 „ PEER BACCHUS, (Western Berbice).  
 „ E. M. WALCOTT, (Nominated Unofficial Member).  
 „ C. R. JACOB, (North Western District).  
 „ A. G. KING, (Demerara River).  
 „ S. H. SEYMOUR, (Western Essequibo).  
 „ J. W. JACKSON, (Nominated Unofficial Member).  
 „ H. G. SEAFORD, O.B.E. (Nominated Unofficial Member).  
 „ W. S. JONES (Nominated Unofficial Member).

The Archdeacon of Demerara (Ven. W. L. Kissack, M.A., O.B.E.) read prayers.

#### OATH OF ALLEGIANCE.

Mr. H. P. Christiani, M.B.E., Commissioner of Lands and Mines, took and subscribed to the Oath.

#### PRESENTATIONS.

THE PRESIDENT made the following presentations and said:—

Mr. Frederick Jacob Seaford—I have it in command from His Majesty the King to present to you the Insignia of an Officer of the Civil Division of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire.

This honour has been conferred on you in recognition of your public services over a period of years. As an elected member of the Legislature and as a member of the Executive Council you have displayed a conspicuous devotion to the public welfare which has gained the appreciation of the Colony as a whole. Your zeal and wide knowledge of Colonial affairs have made you, at all times, an able and willing counsellor.

It is with much pleasure that I carry out His Majesty's commands.

Mr. Joseph Gonsalves—I have it in command from His Majesty the King to present to you the Insignia of an Officer of the Civil Division of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire.

You have gained this honour by virtue of your long and meritorious public service in a number of capacities. Your labours as a member of the Legislative Council have been characterized by your desire to see the best possible done for the Colony as a whole and your clear

appreciation of the responsibilities of an elected member of this House. You have held with distinction the office of Mayor of Georgetown and your efforts to improve the conditions of living within this City are widely recognised.

It is with much pleasure that I carry out His Majesty's commands.

Mr. George Hamilton Westmaas—I have it in command from His Majesty the King to present to you the Insignia of a Companion of the Imperial Service Order.

You have served this Government faithfully for a period of 36 years and in recognition His Majesty has been graciously pleased to confer on you this honour. Your work has brought you into contact with the public over a period of years and you have shown, by care and attention to your official duties, the qualities necessary for an efficient Civil Servant.

It is with much pleasure that I make this presentation.

Band Sergeant Major Edward Arden Carter—I have it in command from His Majesty the King to present to you the Medal of the Civil Division of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire for meritorious service.

You have served in the Militia Band for a period of over forty years and have

risen from the ranks to your present position. You have acted as Bandmaster on two occasions with a marked degree of success and during those periods the high standard of efficiency of the Band was well maintained. Throughout your long and meritorious service you have borne a record of good conduct and have discharged all your duties to the entire satisfaction of your superior officers.

It gives me much pleasure to make this presentation.

### THE PRESIDENT'S SPEECH.

The President addressed the Council as follows:—

HONOURABLE MEMBERS,

At the last meeting of Council in August I gave a short statement of the financial position in which I expressed the hope that the working for the year 1937 would make no call on the surplus balance carried forward from 1936. Data is now available for a closer estimation of the revenue and expenditure figures for the year and I have no reason to alter the opinion formed two months ago.

#### REVENUE.

The total revenue to 31st August was \$3,685,386 an increase of \$354,770 over the amount collected at the same date last year. Customs duties are mainly responsible for this improvement, the increase under this head amounting to just over \$250,000. There are, however, increases on all the other main heads of revenue with the exception of the head Internal Revenue where, notwithstanding an unexpected receipt in August of some \$50,000 from one large estate, abnormal receipts of death duties during 1936 exceeded the total of this year's increases under all sub-heads of this head. The total of the revised estimates is \$5,760,961 being an increase of \$610,143 over the original figures. In compiling the revised Revenue estimates it has been necessary to exercise caution in assessing at its proper value the increases so far shown in Customs revenue. It will probably be agreed that importations early in the year, due to the Coronation celebrations and to a desire to lay in stocks in anticipation

of a general rise in prices, resulted in an abnormal addition to Customs revenue during the first half of the year, and it may be expected that existing stocks in the Colony stand at a figure which will make large importations during the second half of the year unlikely. It may appear, therefore, that the expected increase of \$610,143 over the original estimates is too large; but it must be remembered that the original estimates were prepared before the full effect of the improvement in trade was apparent, and that a more accurate picture can be obtained by comparison with actual receipts in 1936. Such a comparison shows that the revised revenue estimates for 1937 represent an increase of \$277,868 over the actual receipts for 1936 whereas, as stated above, actual receipts to 31st August show an increase of \$354,770 over the figures for the same period last year. It is apparent, therefore, that the expected increase has already been secured, and should be maintained unless there is a considerable fall in revenue collections during the later months of the year.

#### EXPENDITURE.

The revised estimates of expenditure total \$5,820,352—an increase over the original figures of \$269,089, which consists mainly of the following items:—

Sea Defences—Reconstruction works	...	\$ 84,653
Sea Defences—Unrecoverable loan charges	...	67,571
Post Office Savings Bank—Interest to depositors	...	80,000
Road reconstruction	...	25,000
		<u>\$257,224</u>

all of which have already been approved by Council on Supplementary Estimates.

#### EXPECTED OUTTURN—1937.

As I have already stated the revised Expenditure estimates stand at ... \$ 5,820,352 and the revised Revenue at... 5,760,961

with a resultant deficit on the year's working of ...\$ 59,391 But we have received a loan grant in aid in respect of the financial year 1936-37 of ...\$ 170,400

which converts the deficit for 1937 into a surplus of	...\$	111,009
If we add to this figure the carry over from 1936 amounting to	...\$	556,506

it will be seen that the expected surplus at the end of 1937 amounts to	...\$	667,515
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#### REVENUE ESTIMATES 1938.

The Colony revenue estimated to be collected in 1938 is higher by \$399,087 than the original estimate for 1937 and less by \$211,056 than the revised estimate. Comparison of the figures for 1937 and 1938 is complicated by two changes in accounting procedure which will be introduced from 1st January, 1938. The first variation is the exclusion from the Colony's accounts of the operating accounts of the Post Office Savings Bank, the effect being to reduce both revenue and expenditure by some \$60,000 (I shall refer to this matter later). The second is the change by which any item of revenue refunded in the same year in which it is collected will not be charged to revenue as at present, but to an expenditure head, the effect being to increase both revenue and expenditure by some \$40,000. The net result of these accounting changes is therefore a decrease of approximately \$20,000 in the revenue estimate. A further decrease of \$20,000 compared with the revised estimate for 1937 is due to the receipt this year of the cash balances of the Sea Defence Board which were transferred to general revenue on the enactment of the Sea Defence (Rate Removal) Ordinance, 1937 making the cost of sea defences a colonial liability.

Apart from the special decreases to which I have referred major reductions compared with the revised estimate for 1937 have been allowed for in the 1938 estimates under the following items:—

Customs, \$50,000—owing to the possibility of reduced importations to which I have already referred.

Estate Duty, \$55,000—to exclude the extraordinary receipt already mentioned.

Post Office (sale of stamps), \$21,000—due to the heavy sales this year of Coronation issues.

The only major increase appears under the head Forests, Lands and Mines, which allows for an anticipated increase of \$11,600 mainly under the Mining receipts.

I invite Honourable Members to study the Explanatory Memorandum which will be laid with the estimates setting out in detail the basis on which the revenue estimates have been prepared. It will, I think, be agreed that although the estimates have been drawn up on conservative lines, they nevertheless represent a reasonably accurate forecast of the probable collection in 1938.

#### EXPENDITURE ESTIMATES 1938.

As was the case last year, the printing of the estimates earlier in the year than was formerly the case has made it necessary to include certain items which have not yet been approved by the Secretary of State and all such items will be indicated by the Colonial Secretary in introducing the Estimates. As is customary a memorandum giving a full explanation of all important changes will be laid with the Estimates.

A first glance at the Estimates will show considerable increases under many heads, some of which are however due to the alterations in accounting procedure to which I have already referred in dealing with the revenue estimates. Disregarding such items, it will be found that the additional expenditure is devoted mainly to the social services—Education and Medical—to a small increase in the Police Force and to an enlarged programme of construction of public works. Education estimates show an increase of \$18,096 of which \$11,450 is under grants to primary schools and \$5,843 for the Carnegie Trade Centre, the provision for which in 1937 was for a period of six months only. I am expecting very shortly the report of a Committee which was appointed by Sir Geoffrey Northcote to advise on the future of this Centre, and it is possible that the details of expenditure on the Centre in 1938 may be modified in the light of the Committee's recommendations.

The increases in the Medical estimates are due mainly to the provision of an adequate staff for the new Tuberculosis hospital, which is to be erected at Best, and to provision for additional nurses in

several of the hospitals throughout the Colony.

I think that all Honourable Members will agree with the proposal to make a small increase in the Police Force. The strength was reduced very considerably a few years ago, and since that time additional stations have been opened at Issano, Den Amstel and Parika, and it is proposed now to have a small station at Kitty. The proposal to appoint a Warrant Officer for the Mounted Police does not mean that Inspector Billyeald will cease to carry on his valuable work with this branch of the Force.

Honourable Members will observe that a much larger provision has been made this year in Public Works Extraordinary for both buildings and roads. Financial considerations have precluded, in recent years, the inclusion in estimates of substantial sums for public works, and it is important that the building and road programme should not fall too much into arrear if future loans for construction are to be avoided. The main provision for roads is \$48,000, with which it is intended to construct a further four miles of concrete strip road between Georgetown and Buxton. There are several important building items which will be explained when the estimates are being considered.

The large reduction in the vote necessary for the Transport and Harbours Department is mainly due to the fact that under the replacement programme a new steamer will not be required in 1938.

In regard to the estimates of this Department I should inform Honourable Members that a large item of expenditure which will probably be required in 1938, has not been included in estimates. The Fort Groyne has been in a very bad state of repair for some time, and I am advised that rebuilding should be undertaken as soon as possible. Furthermore, I have received a report that the average depth of water in Georgetown harbour has decreased in recent years: the facts of the matter are at present under investigation and data is being collected by the staff of the Transport and Harbours Department acting under the advice of Mr. Case. As soon as the information is complete a report will be prepared and

submitted to Legislative Council for consideration.

There is one further addition to the estimates of an important nature. I refer to the two new posts—Commissioner of Labour and Assistant Colonial Secretary for Local Affairs and Inspector of Labour. Honourable Members are already aware of the intention to form such a department, which will be in reality a branch of the Secretariat and will concern itself with labour matters and with local Government affairs. It is the intention that these two officers, should, by frequent travelling, familiarize themselves with conditions of employment, and so be able to advise Government on any measures that may be desirable to ensure that the obligations of employer and employee are being carried out.

#### EFFECT OF 1938 DRAFT ESTIMATES.

With expenditure estimated		
at ... ..	...\$	5,658,637
and revenue at ... ..	...\$	5,549,905

the deficit for the year 1938 is estimated at ... ..	...\$	108,732
But it is expected that there will be a balance in hand at the end of 1937 of ... ..	...\$	667,515

So that it is estimated that there will be a surplus balance at the end of 1938 of...\$	558,783
before taking into account the loan grant in aid which has been promised in respect of the working of the first quarter of 1938 amounting to...\$	48,000

which increases the estimated balance to ... ..	...\$	606,783
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#### TRADE.

The aggregate net trade of the Colony to the 31st August this year showed a considerable increase over that for the corresponding period in 1936 as can be seen from the following figures:—

	Jan.—Aug. 1937.	Jan.—Aug. 1936.	Increase.
Imports	... \$7,563,142	\$5,773,760	\$1,789,382
Exports (Domestic)	... 8,095,261	6,703,009	1,393,162
Aggregate Trade	\$15,659,403	\$12,476,859	\$3,182,544

The commodities which were mainly responsible for this increase in exports were:—

Sugar	...	...	\$923,044
Bauxite	...	...	\$475,159
Gold	...	...	\$ 90,305
Timber	...	...	\$ 81,055
Copra	...	...	\$ 51,496

The increase in sugar exports is due to the carrying over of large stocks from 1936 and to the fact that unusually large consignments were sent in July and August. As an indication of an increase in trade the figures for sugar are deceptive as the total for the whole period of twelve months will be approximately the same as last year. The figures shown for other commodities, however, are a true index of an increase in trade. Among other products which showed an improvement it is interesting to note that the value of coffee exports rose from \$9,243 in 1936 to \$19,055 in 1937.

With regard to imports the largest increases were in respect of:—

Machinery	...	...	\$408,791
Apparel	...	...	\$ 92,158
Silk and Artificial Silk Goods...	...	...	\$ 91,941
Motor Cars	...	...	\$ 61,973
Malt Liquors	...	...	\$ 51,044

I shall now deal with a few points of interest concerning departmental activities.

#### PUBLIC HEALTH.

The health of the Colony has been well maintained during the year 1936. The death rate of 20.4 per thousand of the population was the lowest recorded in the history of the Colony since 1869 when records were first kept, as was also the infantile mortality rate, which stood at 120 per thousand births. The average annual figures for these rates for the past ten years were 23.4 and 148 respectively.

The report and recommendations of the Nutrition Committee have received the general approval of the Secretary of State, and a sum of \$4,200 has been placed for consideration on the estimates for 1938. The recommendations embody proposals which include stages of investigation and experimentation, spread over a period of three years, in order to determine, along scientific lines, the nutritional state of the people of the Colony.

The Committee have emphasised *inter alia*, the importance of an early enquiry into the health of school children from the nutritional standpoint, and a scheme of milk distribution to selected groups at varying age periods for the purpose of testing dietetic shortcomings is being prepared. It is proposed to undertake this experimental distribution during 1938.

I regret that there has been some delay in commencing the building of the new Tuberculosis Hospital. It has been a matter of considerable difficulty to devise plans for buildings which will adequately serve the needs of a 90 bed hospital, with convalescent wards, the cost of which can be estimated not to exceed the amount of the free grant from the Colonial Development Advisory Committee—\$73,584. Even after careful amendment of the original plans it has not been found possible to achieve this result, and Honourable Members will see that it has been found necessary to include an item on the estimates of \$5,500 for initial equipment. It is also proposed, if the Secretary of State approves, to include in 1937 Supplementary Estimates an amount of \$4,500 for bonification of the site. Any further reduction in capital cost of building would have entailed a decrease in the bed accommodation, and I trust that Honourable Members will agree that the contribution from revenue for the items mentioned is justified in order to ensure that the accommodation is sufficient for our needs.

Careful consideration has been given to the staffing requirements of this hospital and Honourable Members will find that the estimates contain an increase of \$10,092 for this purpose, apart from the salary of the Medical Officer.

#### DRAINAGE AND RECLAMATION.

Honourable Members will remember that amounts were voted during the year for a survey of levels in and around Georgetown, and for the extension of the Public Works stelling to enable dried mud to be made available for filling low lying areas. This survey has now been completed, and as a result the Director of Public Works has submitted two schemes for the improvement of the Government lands in the Eve Leary and Thomas lands area. The first deals with the drainage problem as such, and proposes greatly improved facilities, in-

cluding the substitution of concrete for earth drains in certain portions of the area. The total estimated cost is about \$80,000. The other scheme provides for the utilisation of dried mud for raising the level of the low lying sections of these lands and is estimated to cost about \$10,000. It is proposed, if the Secretary of State and Legislative Council approve, to expend \$10,000 and \$5,000, respectively, on these two schemes in 1938 as a first instalment, and to continue the improvement work in subsequent years.

The work in connection with the level survey between the Demerara and Berbice rivers, to which Sir Geoffrey Northcote referred in his address a few months ago, has progressed faster than was expected, and I propose to ask Legislative Council to vote an additional sum of \$2,000 this year and to approve expenditure of \$3,000 in 1938. With such expenditure it is expected that the work will be completed at the original estimated cost of \$6,500, at the end of 1938 instead of 1939.

I have in mind that this type of survey work should be extended gradually to embrace the whole of the coastal belt, and in this connection I have received an estimate from the Director of Public Works of \$1,000 for such work in Essequibo where drainage conditions in many places are particularly bad; it will not be possible to give consideration to proposals for improvement until complete data are available.

Information has been received that the Colonial Development Advisory Committee does not consider the New Amsterdam drainage scheme to fall within the category of works for which assistance from the Development Fund is intended. A report by Mr. Case showing the necessity for these works estimated to cost \$69,000 will be laid on the table, and an amount of \$30,000 as a first instalment of this expenditure is included in estimates for the consideration of Council.

#### AGRICULTURE.

*Rice.*—I regret that the Committee which was appointed to make recommendations for assisting the rice industry has found its task such a complex one that I have not yet received the report, though I

understand that it will be completed within a very short time. I cannot but think that the difficulties that beset an investigation into the rice industry arise largely from the fact that so many persons interested in the industry hold the most uncompromising opinions as to its organisation and regard the matter entirely from an individual point of view. I would urge such persons to realise that the Colony's point of view deserves first consideration; and that while there may be several ways of achieving the same end—namely the stability and prosperity of the industry—none of them will have a full measure of success unless it has the unqualified support of all interested parties.

*Bananas.*—The experimental plots which were planted by the Department were both very promising until a short time ago, when the plot at Middlesex was attacked by a leaf fungus which caused much damage. Since then Panama disease has made its appearance and has caused the complete loss of a number of the plants both at Middlesex and Supply. Such measures as are possible are being taken by the Department, but it is too early to say what will be the future of these experimental plots.

*Plantains.*—Although the demand for plantains is not such as to make it possible that plantains should ever be a major industry, much assistance could be given to peasant farmers if a stable export trade with Trinidad could be established. Proper organisation for marketing is necessary for success and preliminary proposals have been put forward by the Board of Agriculture, but I am still awaiting the submission of a completed scheme. I am prepared to support some degree of Government assistance to any scheme which gives reasonable promise of success, and I hope to be in a position to place the matter before Legislative Council at an early date.

#### EDUCATION.

As Honourable Members are aware the draft Education Code has now been published. A copy will be laid on the table, and an opportunity will thus be given during this session for a discussion of its terms by Legislative Council.

Although no provision has been made in the draft Estimates for the purpose, I desire to inform Honourable Members that proposals have been made to increase the output of teachers from the Teachers' Training Centre. At present 30 teachers are trained every two years, and 132 in all have so far passed through the Centre. These trained teachers have proved themselves very efficient, but their number is not large enough to meet present needs, and it is proposed to give further help to the schools by increasing the number to 20 teachers every year. The proposals, which have been submitted to the Secretary of State for consideration, include the appointment of a full-time Superintendent of the Centre. This will enable the Second Inspector of Schools, to whom it has previously been necessary to allot the duties of Superintendent, to devote his whole time to the normal duties of the inspectorate. If approved by the Secretary of State, the proposals will be placed before Legislative Council later in the Session.

The desirability of making a start on the construction of a new Queen's College has not been overlooked, but the project is not yet sufficiently advanced to justify inclusion in Estimates. Preliminary plans have been prepared and the matter will receive final consideration during the year.

#### Mining.

The production of gold during the year has shown a very satisfactory increase which I feel confident will be maintained. The monthly output of gold from small workers has steadily increased, and the new dredge of the British Guiana Consolidated Goldfields has been installed in Mahdia and is now in operation.

Furthermore, important gold companies both in England and Canada are showing an increasing interest in British Guiana, and it is hoped that the next few years will see further development of our resources.

Bauxite will probably show an export for the year of 300,000 tons which is considerably in excess of the figures for any previous year. The installation of additional plant by the Demerara Bauxite Company and the expansion of the Company's operations are encouraging signs of

an important contribution to the Colony's trade.

#### FORESTRY.

The trade returns show a greatly increased export of timber during the current year, and the nature of the orders indicates that the improvement is not haphazard but due to a *bona fide* increase in the general demand for British Guiana timbers. It is particularly satisfactory that the exports of sawn timber are likely to exceed last year's figure, which was a record. Honourable Members had an opportunity of discussing forest policy with the Conservator and Major Oliphant during the latter's visit this year, and I have no reason to think that the increases which have been included in estimates in furtherance of those discussions will prove unacceptable to the majority. In future the headquarters of the Department will be in Georgetown, where the Conservator and the Utilisation Officer will be posted, one of whom will be available from time to time to undertake forest survey work, whilst the other two trained officers will be stationed at Mazaruni.

#### POST OFFICE SAVINGS BANK.

Consideration has been given during the year to the position of the Post Office Savings Bank and the relationship of its accounts to those of the Government. It has been decided to adopt the recommendations of a Departmental Committee which was appointed by the Secretary of State to report on the savings bank systems in the Colonies, with a view to the institution of a uniform procedure and practice. From and after 1938 the income and expenditure accounts of the bank will be excluded from the revenue and expenditure accounts of the Government, and the bank will be established as an independent financial organization, although its investments will continue to appear as an item in the balance sheet of the Colonial Treasurer. All expenses incurred by Government on savings bank business (including an assessment to cover indirect expenses) will be charged against savings bank funds.

The Secretary of State's Committee has also drawn up a model Savings Bank Ordinance and a Bill based on this model will be introduced in Council for your consideration at this Session.



Unfortunately, the estimate of the bank's income and expenditure for 1938 which appears as Appendix E of the Colony's Estimates indicates that it will not be wholly self-supporting. It will be noted that the estimated income derivable from interest on investments and miscellaneous receipts totals \$87,205. There is chargeable against this income a total expenditure estimated at \$101,236 including interest to depositors and miscellaneous expenses and reimbursements to general revenue for direct and indirect charges to be incurred in respect of the savings bank. There is thus an estimated deficiency of \$14,031 on the operation of the bank for 1938, provision for which has been made by an appropriation appearing in the Expenditure estimates under Head XXIII.—Miscellaneous. The position is still under investigation, but no change is at present contemplated in the rate of interest payable to depositors, which remains at 2.4% per annum. I may add that Government is glad to note that the amount of deposits and the number of depositors continue to increase, and that the facilities for thrift which the bank offers are evidently fully appreciated by those classes in the community whose interest it is primarily intended to serve.

#### NEW CURRENCY NOTES.

As Honourable Members are aware, the Government Currency Notes Ordinance, 1937, (No. 14) was enacted on 30th April, 1937, to provide for the introduction of legal tender notes on a sterling exchange basis. In consequence, the Commissioners of Currency have been able to dispose of the whole of the reserve hitherto maintained by them in the Colony in silver coin and to invest the proceeds in interest bearing securities thereby securing an increased income from the Note Guarantee Fund.

The existing notes in circulation will be completely replaced by a new issue early in 1938.

I now commend the business of the session to your careful consideration.

Mr. LUCKHOO: Sir, I have much pleasure, on behalf of the Elected Members, in expressing our grateful thanks to you for the very lucid review you have given of the Colony's affairs. The many

announcements you have made of Government's intentions and its policy for the future will certainly receive the anxious and careful attention of members of this Council. I ask that Your Excellency will direct that your Address be printed and circulated among the members of the Council.

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#### MINUTES.

The minutes of the meeting of the Council held on the 27th August, as printed and circulated, were confirmed.

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#### ANNOUNCEMENTS.

##### GRATUITY TO MRS. M. A. FARLEY.

Mr. CREASE (Director of Education): I am the bearer of the following Message from His Excellency the Officer Administering the Government to the Council:—

##### MESSAGE NO. 1.

Honourable Members of the Legislative Council,

I have the honour to invite the Council to approve of the grant of a compassionate gratuity of \$68 (the equivalent of half a month's salary for each completed year of service) to Mrs. M. A. Farley, late Uncertificated Assistant Teacher, who retired on 30th September, 1936, on attaining the age of sixty years, after having completed seventeen years and five months continuous service in primary schools in the Colony.

2. No authority exists for granting an uncertificated assistant teacher with less than thirty years service either a pension or a gratuity. In view of this it is not usual to engage as uncertificated assistant teachers persons who are over thirty years of age on first appointment. In this case, however, the appointment was made at a time when it was not possible to obtain any other suitable person for service in the outlying districts in which the school was situated.

3. Mrs. Farley's service, which has been entirely in remote areas, has been satisfactory throughout, and with the advice of my Executive Council I recommend the payment of the proposed gratuity.

E. J. WADDINGTON,  
Officer Administering the Government.

Government House,  
British Guiana,  
9th September, 1937.

### IMPROVING BREED OF CATTLE.

Professor DASH: (Director of Agriculture): I am the bearer of the following Message from His Excellency the Officer Administering the Government to the Council:—

#### MESSAGE No. 2.

Honourable Members of the Legislative Council,

I have the honour to invite the Council to approve of the acceptance of a free grant of £3,000 (\$14,400) from the Colonial Development Advisory Fund to provide for the improvement of the breed of cattle in the Colony.

2. Assistance to the beef cattle industry in this Colony has been under consideration for some time, and it is now proposed to extend the existing livestock unit at the Georgetown Station in order to supply improved breeding stock for the Colony. This will involve the importation of pure bred bulls and heifers, purchase of creole heifers, extra fencing, bridges, gates, labour, etc. In addition it is also proposed to establish an agistment area for cattle belonging to residents in Essequibo at La Belle Alliance. Attached to the agistment area a breeding station will be established, consisting of three dual purpose bulls. The agistment area and breeding stations will be under Government control. By this introduction of pure bred animals into the local herds an improvement in breed should take place and it is hoped that as a result the beef cattle trade with the neighbouring West Indian Islands will be stimulated.

3. The annual requirements for financing the scheme will be shown in the Estimates as is done in the case of other expenditure from grants from the Colonial Development Fund.

4. I recommend to Council the acceptance of the grant on the terms indicated.

E. J. WADDINGTON,  
Officer Administering the Government.

Government House,  
British Guiana,  
10th September, 1937.

#### REPORT ON SALARIES OF UNCLASSIFIED OFFICERS.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Major Bain Gray): I am the bearer of the following Message from His Excellency the Officer Administering the Government to the Council:—

#### MESSAGE NO. 3.

Honourable Members of the Legislative Council,

I desire to invite your attention to the report by Major the Honourable W. Bain Gray, C.B.E., (Sessional Paper No. 14 of 1936), on certain questions relating to the Public Service of the colony, the most important of which were the salaries of unclassified officers,

the placing of posts on the pensionable establishment, and the granting of superannuation benefits to Government employees.

2. On the question of the salaries of unclassified officers, Major Bain Gray recommended the adoption of new salary scales which should be applied to all posts included in Appendix A to his report. His recommendations have been carefully considered, and they have been accepted by Government subject variations noted in the Appendix hereto. An officer will enter his new scale at the incremental step next above the aggregate salary which he would have drawn in 1937 on his existing scale, and will receive the new salary with effect as from 1st January, 1937, which date will thereafter be his incremental date. The Secretary of State has signified his approval and I now invite this Council to sanction the adoption of the new salary scales for unclassified officers with retrospective effect as from 1st January, 1937.

3. A sum of \$4,500 has already been voted on the annual estimates for the current year (Head XXIII.—Miscellaneous' sub-head 30) to cover the estimated cost of introducing the new scales. Now that the details of the scheme have been fully worked out it has been found that the cost will be approximately \$7,500. I therefore invite the Council to approve of an additional sum of \$3,000 being placed on the next schedule of additional provision to cover the expenditure involved to 31st December, 1937.

To enable these payments to be made and in anticipation of the approval of members, I have signed a Special Warrant for this expenditure.

4. The proposals in Section I and Appendix A, of which acceptance has been deferred, and the other sections of the report are receiving my attention.

E. J. WADDINGTON,  
Officer Administering the Government.

Government House,  
British Guiana,  
7th October, 1937.

#### APPENDIX.

*Variations to the recommendations contained in Section II and Appendix A of Major Bain Gray's report on the salaries of unclassified officers as approved by the Secretary of State.*

#### I—Departmental Lists—Appendix A.—

(a) Colonial Secretary's Office (Archives and Stationery Store)—page 30.

The salary of the senior stores clerk to be on the scale \$450x\$30—\$600 per annum.

(b) District Administration—page 32.

One post of Ranger to be on the scale \$450x\$30—\$600 per annum.

(c) Industrial School—page 35.

Proposals deferred for further consideration.

(d) Post Office.

(i) Postal Branch.

Note (ii)—page 45—The grade with a maximum salary of \$180 per annum to be confined, as far as possible, to boys and youths up to 18 years of age.

Note (iii)—page 45—proposals deferred for further consideration.

## (ii) Telecommunications Branch—

The salary of the storekeeper to be on the scale \$570 x \$30—\$720 per annum.

## Telephone Operators—Note (ii)—page 48 —

Departmental telephone operators to be paid at a fixed rate of \$180 per annum; the posts to be filled by senior 'learners' trained at the Central Exchange, who will be eligible for transfer back to the Central Exchange as opportunities for transfer occur.

## (e)—Prisons—page 49.

Proposals deferred for further consideration.

## (f)—Queen's College—page 52.

The salary of the Laboratory Assistant to be on the scale \$288 x \$24—\$480 per annum.

## (g)—Magistrates—page 52.

One of the posts of Bailiff to be on the scale \$672 x \$48—\$960.

## II—Paragraphs 17 and 18 of the Report—Page 8.

Proposals deferred for further consideration.

## III—Paragraphs 19 of the Report—Page 8.

The scale \$180 x \$12—\$240 x \$24—\$360 per annum to apply to messengers, revenue runners and janitors; the number of messengers in this grade to be limited to 24; the remainder to be graded as assistant messengers on the scale \$180 x \$12—\$240.

## PAPERS LAID.

The following documents were laid on the table:—

Draft Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure for the year 1938.

Explanatory Memorandum for use when considering the Estimates for 1938.

Comparative Statement of Expenditure 1927-1936.

Comparative Statement of Revenue, 1927-1936.

Schedule of Petitions addressed to the Legislative Council which have been dealt with by the Governor in Council showing the decision in each case.

Workmen's Compensation Regulations, 1937.

Report of the Director of Agriculture, 1936.

Report on the Accounts of the Walter Mitchell Fund and the Mitchell Foundation Scheme for 1936.

Report of the Committee of the Trotman Trust Fund, 1936.

Report of the Directors of the Widows and Orphan's Fund, 1936.

Report on the working of the Joint Colonial Fund for the year ended 31st March 1937.

Report under the Food and Drugs Ordinance for the half year ended 31st December, 1936.

Report of the Co-operative Credit Banks Board, 1936.

Amendment of the Air Mail postage rates. (*The Colonial Secretary*).

Report of the Select Committee on the Walter Mitchell Trust Bill. (*The Attorney-General*).

## GOVERNMENT NOTICES.

## INTRODUCTION OF BILLS.

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

The Expiring Laws Continuance Bill. (*The Colonial Secretary*).

The Sugar Experiment Stations Bill. (*Professor Dash*).

The Importation of Textiles (Quotas) (Amendment) Bill.

The Spirits (Amendment) Bill. (*Mr. D' Andrade*)

## ESTIMATES, 1938.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY gave notice of the following motions:—

THAT, this Council approves the Estimates of Expenditure to be defrayed from Revenue during the year 31st December, 1938, which have been laid on the Table.

## SALARIES OF UNCLASSIFIED OFFICERS.

THAT, with reference to the Officer Administering the Government's Message No. 3 of the 7th of October, 1937, this Council approves the adoption of the proposed new salary scales for unclassified officers of the Public Service of the Colony, with retrospective effect as from the 1st January, 1937; and further approves of increased provision being made under Head XXIII.—Miscellaneous, sub-head 30 of the 1937 estimates to meet the expenditure to 31st December, 1937, which their adoption will involve.

## GRATUITY TO MRS. M. A. FARLEY.

Mr. CREASE gave notice of the following motion:—

THAT, with reference to Officer Administering the Government's Message No 1 dated 9th September, 1937, this Council approves of the grant of a compassionate gratuity of \$68 to Mrs. M. A. Farley, Uncertificated Assistant Teacher.

## IMPROVING BREED OF CATTLE.

Professor DASH gave notice of the following motion:—

THAT, with reference to the Officer Administering the Government's Message No. 2 of the 10th of September, 1937, this Council approves the acceptance of a free grant of £3,000 (\$ 4,400) from the Colonial Development Advisory Fund to provide for the improvement of the breed of cattle in the Colony.

## UNOFFICIAL NOTICES.

## B. G. RICE MARKETING BOARD.

Mr. JACOB, on behalf of Mr. LEE, gave notice of the following motions:—

WHEREAS the working of the British Guiana Rice Marketing Board as constituted by Ordinance No. 17 of 1935 (which repealed Ordinance No. 2 of 1933) has caused general discontent and has raised unfavourable comments from those engaged in the Rice Industry;

AND WHEREAS the quantity of Rice exported during the last four years has been considerably decreased owing partly to the activities of the Board, the figures of exports being as follows:—

1933 ... ..	29,092 tons
1934 ... ..	14,382 tons
1935 ... ..	10,527 tons
1936 ... ..	20,521 tons
1937 ... ..	15,000 tons (estimated).

with a possibility of the figures being further reduced in 1938 due to general dissatisfaction and disorganisation caused by the said Board;

AND WHEREAS the personnel of the Committee of Enquiry into the Rice Industry is not favourable to those interested in the cultivation and milling of Rice;

AND WHEREAS the public has lost confidence in the said Committee:

*Be it Resolved*,—That Government cause to be appointed a Judicial Commission with full powers to enquire, *in camera* or otherwise, into the activities, working, and expenditure of the said British Guiana Rice Marketing Board and that all communications, correspondence and minutes, etc., held as confidential, be the subject of the enquiry.

#### COURT OF CRIMINAL APPEAL.

WHEREAS on the 19th November, 1929, this Council accepted a motion that a Court of Criminal Appeal be established;

AND WHEREAS it is expedient that a resolution of this Council to establish a Court of Criminal Appeal should now be implemented;

AND WHEREAS the delay to do so has been occasioned by the reduction of the judicial strength in the Supreme Court between the years 1932-1937:

*Be it Resolved*,—That this Council requests His Excellency the Officer Administering the Government to cause to be introduced a Bill to provide a Court of Criminal Appeal in principles analogous to those contained in the Criminal Act 1907 (7 Edw. vii. c. 25) giving a right to appeal in favour of every prisoner convicted of crime before the Supreme Court of this Colony to the Court of Criminal Appeal thereby to be established, the provisions of such Bill conferring on every convicted person—

- (a) An absolute right to appeal on any question involving a principle of law;
- (b) A right, in case of his obtaining leave either from the Judge who tried him or from the Court of Criminal Appeal itself, on question of fact or of mixed law and fact or on any ground which appears to the Court to be a sufficient ground of appeal;
- (c) A right of his obtaining leave from the Court of Criminal Appeal to appeal to the Court of Criminal Appeal against the sentence passed on him unless the sentence is one definitely fixed by law.

#### TRIAL OF CIVIL CASES.

WHEREAS the system of the administration of civil justice in this Colony has not kept

pace during the last 50 years with the system of other Colonies in smaller circumstances;

AND WHEREAS it is desirable that the civil matters now despatched in the Supreme Court should be so rearranged that the Supreme Court would find time for the hearing of Criminal Appeals and that certain cases of moderate value now cognizable only by the Supreme Court should be despatched more expeditiously and with less expense to litigants:

*Be it Resolved*,—That the Council respectfully requests His Excellency the Officer Administering the Government to appoint a small committee of qualified persons to enquire into and make recommendations upon the following matters:—

- (1) Whether certain civil cases now recognizable exclusively in the Supreme Court cannot with advantage to the public be disposed of by the Magistrate's Court or by the establishment within the framework of the machinery of the Magistrate's Court, one County Court at Georgetown and one at New Amsterdam and if so, what is the nature of the causes which may be so disposed of and to what limit the new jurisdiction should extend?
- (2) If such new jurisdiction is established what financial commitment would be necessary to give effect to it?

Some of the matters which may be tried in the institution of such a Court—

- (1) Claims for recovery of debt or damages in contract to the value of \$250.
- (2) Claims in tort to the value of \$250.
- (3) Suits involving recovery of land the value of which does not exceed \$250.
- (4) Limited equitable jurisdiction including—
  - (a) Specific performance;
  - (b) Small partnerships and other accounts in gold and diamond mining;
  - (c) Injunctions;
  - (d) Receivership.

All the above limited to matters involving \$250.

(5) Possession of premises by landlord up to the annual rental value of \$720 (now limited to \$240 although property values have risen since 1906 when Landlord and Tenant first passed).

(6) Third party insurance limited to \$500.

#### ACTIVITIES OF B.G. RICE MARKETING BOARD.

Mr. JACOB on behalf of Mr. LEE gave notice of the following questions:—

1. Will Government state, in connection with the Balance Sheets of the British Guiana Rice Marketing Board as at 29th February, 1936, to 31st August, 1936, and from 1st September, 1936 to 28 February, 1936:—
  - (a) the names of the Sundry Debtors,
  - (b) the amount due by each debtor,
  - (c) what constituted the debt,
  - (d) when were the debts contracted, and
  - (e) when were they paid or to be paid?
2. Will Government give details, item by item, of the General Expenses as mentioned in the Report of the activities of the British

Guiana Rice Marketing Board for the periods ended 29th February, 1936, to 31st August, 1936, and for the period 1st September, 1936, to 28th February, 1937, and the details of the Travelling Expenses and Agency Expenses for the same periods?

- (a) For what purpose were these travelling expenses and agency expenses incurred?  
 (b) by whom and when?

3. Has the British Guiana Rice Marketing Board an Exporter's Licence as required by Section 14 of Ordinance 17 of 1935?

4. If not, will Government state by what enabling authority was the Board empowered to sell or make contracts for selling rice for export?

5. Is it a fact that Government was requested by the Colonial Office to separate the posts of Secretary to the British Guiana Rice Marketing Board and of Rice Grading Inspector?

- (a) If the answer is in the affirmative, will Government say when was this request communicated to this Government, and why was it not carried out?  
 (b) If the answer is in the negative, will Government immediately consider the advisability of separating these two posts as the duties of these posts sometimes conflict?

#### PRIVATE TUITION AT QUEEN'S COLLEGE.

1. What is the total amount of free periods of each Master during a week at Queen's College? State names and periods.

2. How many masters have obtained permission to teach private students after College hours?

If the answer is in the negative will Government insist that all masters obtain permission before taking any private students? If the answer is in the affirmative will Government insist that no master shall teach any student for the British Guiana Scholarship?

3. Will Government consider the advisability of holding evening classes at very reasonable charges both for the ordinary examinations and commercial courses?

4. How many students are in the preparatory class at Queen's College? What provision is being made or considered should there be a further increase of the number of students for the year 1938? Is Government aware that the number of students in the said preparatory class is already too large for one master to teach properly and efficiently?

#### ILLEGITIMATES AT THE BISHOP'S HIGH SCHOOL.

1. Is Government aware that illegitimate children are not permitted to enter Bishop's High School as students? How many such students were refused admission during the years 1933, 1934, 1935 and 1936?

2. What was the cost to the Colony of each student at Bishop's High School for the years 1935 and 1936?

In view of the cost to the Colony of each student taking a secondary education—will Government accept the principle that any student other than students from Queen's College and Bishop's High School satisfying the examiners and obtaining three credits in the

Cambridge Junior and School Certificate examinations and the Oxford and Cambridge Joint Board Examinations be presented with his or her cost of entrance fees or such sum as may be deemed reasonable?

3. In view of the success obtained by non-denominational schools will Government extend and commend that policy to other districts, gradually beginning with the principal villages in the several counties, selecting proper places in order to meet the need for recreation and for agricultural pursuits.

4. Will Government state what is the greatest number of students taught by one teacher in any school in Georgetown, New Amsterdam, East Demerara, West Demerara and Essequebo, each separately, stating name of school and how many classes are there with the average number of 50 to 80 students in the several districts aforementioned? Also stating names of Masters?

#### TEACHERS' FINE FUND.

1. What is the amount on hand with respect to the Fine Fund of Teachers? Has any money been spent out of this fund for the years 1935 and 1936, and if so, will Government give details of such expenditure showing for what purpose it was spent?

#### CIVIL SERVICE APPOINTMENTS.

1. Is Government aware of the discontent and dissatisfaction that exists in respect of the appointments in the Civil Service of the Colony? Will Government cause to be held every year an examination for the purpose of awarding a certain number of students the privilege of preference in obtaining employment in the Civil Service? Fees to be charged for such examination and a regular syllabus published in the *Official Gazette* for such examination?

#### TRAVELING FACILITIES FOR STUDENTS.

1. In view of His Excellency Sir Geoffry Northcote's advice on travelling by students will Government cause the Transport and Harbours Department to accept a half one-way fare in any class as a return fare in the same class for all students travelling to any part of this Colony on vouchers produced from their headmasters at any time during holidays.

#### ROADS TO KAIETEUR.

1. How much was collected on royalty on gold by (a) dredging (b) by mining for (1) the year ending December, 1936, and (2) up to the 30th June, 1937?

2. How much was collected for the lease of concessions from (a) Minerals except bauxite (b) timbers for (1) the year ending December, 1936 (2) up to the 30th June, 1937?

3. Will Government levy a further sum of 10 cents per oz. royalty on gold, 10 cents per carat in diamonds, and 10 cents on every acre of leased concession for minerals for the first 5,000 acres, the next 5,000 acres 2 cents, the next 5,000 acres, 4 cents, for the next 5,000 acres 6 cents and every other acre 8 cents, allocating the said revenue separately for the purpose of making permanent and proper roads

to the Kaieteur and extending other roads further into the interior of the Colony?

#### ROYALTY ON BAUXITE.

1. How much was collected as (1) royalty on bauxite (a) the year ending 1936 and (b) up to the 30th June, 1937, and (2), for lease of concession for bauxite?

2. Will Government levy a further tax of 5 cents per ton on bauxite and 2 cents per acre of leased lands for concessions; and for exclusive permission an increase of 1 cent for the first 5,000 acres, the next 5,000 acres, 2 cents, the next 5,000 acres, 3 cents, and every other acre 4 cents?

3. Will Government allocate the further levy on bauxite in extending the road on the East Bank, Demerara River?

4. Is Government aware that several of the aforesaid concessions are larger than those applied for and will Government cause them to be immediately surveyed and the boundaries definitely marked and kept in such condition at all times?

5. Is Government aware that on account of the lines being badly kept many prospectors have wasted their time and money in locating claims within concessions already applied for?

#### REGISTRATION OF LABOURERS.

1. Is Government aware that there was discontent among the registered labourers who were contracted by certain local and foreign companies which eventually went into liquidation and that the labourers did not get their wages? Will Government make it incumbent on companies to register contracted labourers in their chairman's or manager's name and not in the name of the Company in order that they may be liable for such wages?

#### BALATA CONCESSIONS.

1. Has any application for balata concessions been refused by Government for (a) the year ending December 1936, and (b) up to the 30th September, 1937? If the answer is in the affirmative for either period, will Government give reasons for such refusal?

2. Is Government aware that it is unjust and immoral to refuse applications from British subjects when such lands are open for location? Is it because certain capitalists have made an error in permitting the said concessions to be abandoned? Will Government remedy the wrong created by such refusal?

#### ROYALTY ON TIMBERS.

1. Is Government aware that royalty should be paid on the timbers as cut in the forest and not as reduced and made up for shipment or for sale? Is Government aware that royalty collected on sawn boards per 100 cubic feet is much smaller than the royalty collected on timber per 100 cubic feet?

2. Will Government state whether royalty was collected from persons who sold timber to the Forest Station at Mazaruni? If the answer is in the negative, will Government state what amount should have been collected for the years 1935, 1936 and up to 30th June, 1937?

3. Is Government aware that each of these persons is liable to be prosecuted for a breach

of the Crown Lands Regulations? What are the prices paid per foot for boards—Greenheart, crabwood, or silverballi and other woods at the Forest Station at Mazaruni?

4. Will Government cause royalty to be charged on all timber sold to the Forest Station and will Government use the boards so sawn in the erection of their buildings and for the use of the Public Works Department?

#### PLN. TAYMOUTH MANOR.

Mr. SEYMOUR gave notice of the following questions:—

1. What was the total amount of the mortgage held by Government on Pln. Taymouth Manor to the end of 1936.

2. What was the total arrears in irrigation and drainage rates to the end of 1936.

3. What was the total arrears for Sea Defence Rates to the end of 1936.

4. What was the price realised from the public sale of this estate which included all arrears of irrigation, drainage and sea defence rates.

5. How will Government reconcile the arrears of rates due to the Drainage Board also the Sea Defence Board.

6. Are Government aware that prior to this sale all arrears of taxation had to be paid by the new purchaser before a transfer of ownership was permitted.

7. In view of the apparent writing off of such general revenue indebtedness, will Government seriously consider that the present estate proprietors be treated in such a preferential manner by similarly writing off all such arrears.

#### RADIO LICENCE.

1. What is the total amount received for radio licence during the years 1935, 1936 and 1937 (to date) each separately?

2. What is the estimated number of radio sets at present in use in the Colony?

3. If as I have gathered the majority of radio set owners have not paid such licences, what steps are Government taking to collect same?

4. Will Government consider setting aside such revenue for the better control and improvement of broadcasting in the Colony, under one organisation?

#### SENIOR MAGISTRATES.

Mr. JACOB gave notice of the following questions:—

1. Who are the two Senior Magistrates? and how are they classified?

2. Is it not the policy of Government that one Senior Magistrate should reside in Georgetown and the other at New Amsterdam?

3. Is Government aware that dissatisfaction exists over the trial of cases in the Magistrates' Courts? and that this dissatisfaction is due to the non-transference of Magistrates at regular intervals?

4. Will Government accept the principle to cause Magistrates to be removed from place to place every four or five years?

5. Is Government aware that dissatisfaction exists in regard to decisions given by unqualified Magistrates?

6. Whether the reply to No. 5 is in the affirmative or negative, will Government appoint, in the future, persons who are qualified in Law to the several districts where there are Courts dispensing justice?

#### RICE EXPORT LICENCE.

1. In view of the undertaking given by Government on the 4th November, 1936, *vide* pages 196—200 of Hansard, that the item, Rice Grading Inspector, should be passed until the question of the further functioning of the B. G. Rice Marketing Board is considered, will Government state how long the Board will continue to function after all parties have agreed that the Board cannot function satisfactorily?

2. Is Government aware that the B. G. Rice Marketing Board intends to collect Licence duty for the year beginning 1st September, 1937, to 31st August, 1938, on 1st September, 1937?

3. In view of question No. 1, is it not desirable for Government to arrive at an early decision?

4. Will Government request the Board not to collect Licence duty until a decision is arrived at by Government?

#### PURE WATER PIPES AT UITVLUGT.

Dr. SINGH gave notice of the following question:—

1. Now that pipes are available, will Government execute the works promised the residents, through the Commissioners for West Demerara

and the Ex-Director of Public Works, to instal pipes for the conveyance of pure water at Uitvlugt.

#### PETITION.

Dr. SINGH presented a petition from ex-private Charles Henry Cyrus, of Bagotville, West Bank, Demerara, praying for a compassionate allowance.

#### ORDER OF THE DAY.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: It is proposed to adjourn the Council until Tuesday when two important matters will be placed before Council, one dealing with the Estimates and the other with the salaries of unclassified officers. After that it is hoped to proceed with the consideration of the Estimates in Select Committee following the usual Budget statement which will be made on the same day.

The Council adjourned until Tuesday, 19th October, at 11 o'clock.