

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

Friday, 16th December, 1932.

The Council met pursuant to adjournment, His Excellency the Governor, SIR EDWARD DENHAM, K.C.M.G., K.B.E., President, in the Chair.

PRESENT.

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary, Mr. C. Douglas-Jones, C.M.G.

The Hon. the Attorney-General, Mr. Hector Josephs, K.C., B.A., LL.M. (Cantab.), LL.B. (Lond.).

The Hon. T. T. Smellie (Nominated Unofficial Member).

The Hon. F. Dias, O.B.E. (Nominated Unofficial Member).

The Hon. T. Millard, C.M.G., Colonial Treasurer.

Major the Hon. W. Bain Gray, M.A., Ph.D. (Edin.), B. Litt. (Oxon), Director of Education.

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

The Hon. R. E. Brassington (Western Essequibo).

The Hon. E. F. Fredericks, LL.B. (Essequibo River).

Major the Hon. J. C. Craig, D.S.O., M.E.I.C., Director of Public Works.

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

The Hon. Q. B. De Freitas, M.R.C.S. (Eng.), L.R.C.P. (Lond.), Surgeon-General (Acting).

The Hon. J. Mullin, M.I.M.M., F.S.I., Commissioner of Lands and Mines.

The Hon. F. Birkitt, Postmaster-General.

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

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

The Hon. J. Eleazar (Berbice River).

The Hon. A. E. Seeram (Eastern Demerara).

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

The Hon. G. E. Anderson (Nominated Unofficial Member).

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

The Hon. F. J. Seaford (Nominated Unofficial Member).

The Hon. Peer Bacchus (Western Berbice).

MINUTES.

The minutes of the meeting of the Council held on the 15th December, as printed and circulated, were confirmed.

GOVERNMENT NOTICE.

GEORGETOWN IMPROVEMENT WORKS (FINANCE) BILL.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Mr. Hector Josephs) gave notice that he would move the suspension of Standing Order No. 11 (1) to enable him to move the third reading of "A Bill to make provision for the payment to Government by the Georgetown Town Council of the amount for which the Council is liable in respect of loan charges for moneys expended in construction of improvement works."

PETITION.

Mr. FREDERICKS, on behalf of Mr. PIRES, laid on the table a petition from Richard Thompson praying for financial relief in respect of his services as a cartman in the Public Works Department.

ORDER OF THE DAY.

GEORGETOWN IMPROVEMENT WORKS (FINANCE) BILL.

The Council resumed consideration in Committee of "A Bill to make provision for the payment to Government by the Georgetown Town Council of the amount

for which the Council is liable in respect of loan charges for moneys expended in construction of improvement works."

Clause 4—Payment of cost of sewerage works.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL: We were dealing with clause 4 and consequentially with clause 5. A question was raised about the dates of payment of the annual amounts provided for in this clause. At a conference this morning it was agreed that instead of the payments standing as they are in the Bill the words "three payments on the first day of February, May and August of one-quarter, one-half and one-quarter of the said sum respectively" be deleted and the words "equal payments of one moiety on the first day of April and the other moiety on the first day of June" be substituted. The effect of that will be that if the Council makes the payment of the stated amounts on those dates the Council will not have to pay interest to Government. A similar amendment is made in clause 5 (1). It was pointed out that unforeseen reasons might occasion delay in making payment on the due dates, so it is proposed that a new clause 6 be inserted to provide that if the Council shall omit to make any payment on any of the days fixed the Council shall pay interest thereon at the rate of five per centum per annum until payment. There are two consequential amendments, one in clause 4 (2) and the other in clause 5 (2), the word "June" being substituted for "August." I move the amendments indicated in sub-clauses (1) and (2).

Question put, and agreed to.

Clause 5—Payment by Council of cost of water works.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL: I move a similar amendment in sub-clauses (1) and (2), substituting the words "equal payments of one moiety on the first day of April and the other moiety on the first day of June" for the words appearing in sub-clause (1) and "June" for "August" in sub-clause (2).

Clause as amended agreed to.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL: I move the insertion of the new clause 6:—

6. If the Council shall omit to make any payment on any of the days fixed by this Ordinance the Council shall pay interest thereon at the rate of five per centum per annum until payment.

Clause agreed to.

Clause 6 was renumbered 7.

Pursuant to notice Standing Order No. 11 (1) was suspended to enable the Bill to be read the third time.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL: I move that the Bill be read the third time.

Mr. DIAS seconded.

Question "That this Bill be now read a third time and passed" put, and agreed to.

Bill read the third time.

PUBLIC SERVICE ECONOMY BILL.

MR. MILLARD: I move that "A Bill to authorise the making of Orders in Council for the purpose of effecting economies in expenditure with respect to the remuneration of persons in the Public Service" be read the third time.

Professor DASH seconded.

Question "That this Bill be now read a third time and passed" put, and agreed to.

Bill read the third time.

FEMALE SELLING CLERKS.

Consideration was deferred of the following motion which stood in the name of the hon. Member for Demerara River (*Mr. Crane*):—

THAT this Council is of opinion that the conditions under which female selling clerks in business places in the Colony are required to work ought to be investigated and that such legislation as the said conditions warrant be introduced forthwith.

HINTERLAND RAILWAY.

MR. ELEAZAR: I beg to move the motion of which I have given notice:—

WHEREAS it is generally admitted that the Colony possesses in her vast hinterland almost unlimited resources of undeveloped wealth; and

Whereas an increase in the population is absolutely necessary for the successful exploitation of these resources; and

Whereas the Wilson-Snell Commission of 1926 has recommended *inter alia* the construction of a Railway into the hinterland as a means of developing the Colony as a whole; and

Whereas it is agreed that the preparation for and the commencement of the construction of a Railway into the hinterland will attract population to the Colony as well as relieve unemployment; and

Whereas the finances of the Colony stand in great need of re-organisation and adjustment owing principally to the failure of the Colony's major industries:

Be it Resolved.—(a) That immediate steps be taken to secure from the Colonial Development Fund or otherwise a loan of not less than £5,000,000 with or without interest for a period of ten years for the purpose of constructing a Railway into the hinterland as a sure means towards the expansion of the Colony's productions and equipment of her industries; or.

(b) That immediate steps be taken to invite private capitalists to undertake the construction of such Railway by offering as consideration and inducement a liberal concession of lands for the purpose:

Be it further Resolved.—That His Excellency be respectfully requested to forward a copy of this motion and the debates thereon to the Secretary of State for his information.

The whole community is in favour of this motion as the surest means of progress and development in the Colony. In some quarters, however, we find that the descendants of Sir Henry Herbert are still amongst us. They say it is a good idea but they will never get a railway. Others consider it "Joseph's Dream." Well, Joseph's dream came true (Laughter). It is the prerogative of old men to dream dreams and of young men to see visions and these visions make it necessary for us to-day to be debating this question. Dreamers have been found in every age. In 1900 Mr. Balfour in the House of Commons said he sometimes dreamed that in addition to railways and tramways he would see great highways constructed for motor traffic. The people of that day asked him if he seriously thought that dream would ever come true. Such a question to-day would only provoke a smile of contempt. I therefore make no apology for bringing this motion before the Council this morning in a slightly amended form to that in which I presented it to the Council two years ago. Since then the Government of Great Britain has changed from Labour to National Government, and although it is the same old question I am going to pro-

pound the jury and the Judge are different. For the purpose of the case I intend to call as my first set of witnesses no other than Mr. Roy Wilson and Mr. H. Snell, the British Guiana Commissioners, and I am inclined to include in their company Mr. B. R. Wood, Conservator of Forests. I intend to take full advantage of the Report of these gentlemen in support of the motion. Beginning with the axiom that there is in this country untold wealth, Messrs. Wilson and Snell state:—

"Added to this there is also the old idea that an Eldorado exists in the interior if only it could be reached; that somewhere in the hinterland there is untold wealth which a railway would make accessible. Hence a general demand for a railway from anywhere to anywhere. . ."

I comment upon those words "anywhere to anywhere." I propounded to these Commissioners a railway from nowhere to nowhere. They said "nowhere" was "somewhere" and changed it from "nowhere to nowhere" to "anywhere to anywhere." Never mind that a railway would not pay as a commercial concern. The economic value which would be derived from the building of a railway would compensate for anything which we have to pay for it. The question is not "Will it pay?" but "Is it worth it?" The question of the wealth of the hinterland is no longer a matter of theory. It has been demonstrated and no one can doubt it now. From 1925 to October last diamonds yielded \$8,086,467, bauxite \$5,893,961 and gold \$1,154,179. In computing the amount received from the gold industry one cannot blind his eyes to the fact that the lure of diamonds was responsible for the low sum obtained from that source. That is so far as minerals are concerned. The evidence I wish to adduce in regard to woods is Mr. Wood's report. The Commissioners made capital of that report. They say that exclusive of greenheart there are 335 square miles covered with different woods, and they value this area as being worth in revenue not less than \$16,000 per square mile, which works out at \$5,360,000. The Bartica-Kaburi area is 10,000 square miles and is valued at \$160,000 per square mile, which works out at \$160,000,000 as the value of that single area of timber. I do not think any further evidence is needed to demonstrate that in the hinterland there is untold wealth.

Leaving that as a proposition which is accepted, I propose to deal with the question from the point of view of labour advantages. It is admitted on all hands that the needs of the Colony are population and capital. I envisage that the only single concern which one could conceive is capable at one stroke of producing both these *sine qua non* indispensably necessary is a railway. Unemployment throughout the world is rife. If a railway were built it stands to reason that more people than we require will come to the Colony without cost to the Government. Where then is the justification for the conclusion that a railway will not pay and therefore we cannot embark upon it? The fact that we will have all the population which we sorely need is worthy of consideration, and it overbalances any question of whether the railway *qua* railway will pay or not. People who say that a railway will not pay go further and say develop the country by means of roads. I do not despise roads, but a railway has always been the pioneer in the development of a country, and not roads. Roads as feeders will do very well, but for the purpose of development of any country up to the present time a railway has been the pioneer. Here, again, I call to my assistance the evidence of Messrs. Wilson and Snell :—

“Taking first the question whether a railway is the best and only way of opening up the interior, the suggestion was made to us that some of the more modern forms of motor traffic would be sufficient for the present needs of the Colony and that it would be cheaper to build roads than railways for this purpose. This is a question upon which the opinion of experts might be obtained after an examination of the area through which such a road will pass, and after a proper estimate of the availability of suitable material for road-making.”

They proceed :—

“Our own opinion is that roads into the interior would be but temporary expedients even were they successful, and that it would be both cheaper and wiser to aim at a system which would be permanent and the utility of which has been proved in every civilised land. The greenheart and other heavy timbers, which would for some considerable time be the main commodity to be carried, would require a system capable of bearing heavy traffic, and for this roads appear less suitable than railways. Roads, too, would require vast quantities of hard material and heavy and constant expenditure to maintain them against the ravages of the heavy tropical rains.”

They go further and say that a railway will bring an influx of population, for which there is likely to be an ever-increasing demand. It was a lack of vision on the part of the sugar planters that makes this motion necessary to-day. The cry then was that millions of dollars were invested in the sugar estates and the building of a railway would take away the population from the estates. The sugar planters lacked the vision that people would come to the Colony from elsewhere and they need not be afraid of losing the labour that was available to the estates. I think the question of population need not worry us. Granted that there is wealth in the country and granted that population will follow the construction of a railway, the next question that arises is the question of capital. We cannot build a railway without money, and the Colony at the present time is without any. British Guiana is an undeveloped and by no means a bankrupt country, and if we are given the means to exploit and develop its resources progress will be assured and the country will take its place in the world. We say let the British Government advance £5,000,000 and we will expend it and get out of our troubles. The workmen who are now idling and living on doles will then do the work in the factories there and we will do the work here. We are only living up to our motto *Damus Petimusque Vicissim*. In this connection again I cite Messrs. Wilson and Snell :—

“Finally, if it should prove that the great potential timber resources of the Colony disclosed by the recent report of the Conservator of Forests require for their economic exploitation the construction of a railway, we recommend that the Imperial Government should assume over a period of years the interest and sinking fund obligations which a railway development loan would involve.”

Every trade would be represented in the construction of a railway—and in Great Britain as well as in British Guiana. The motion, as I remarked, is slightly different to what it was when I moved it on the last occasion, an addition being made that in the absence of the Imperial Government coming to our rescue capitalists be invited to undertake the construction of the railway on a liberal concession of lands for the purpose. I invite the House to consent to that most reluctantly because I know what railway monopolists do all over the world. We have fought shy of monopolists, but if nothing better can be done

we have to give up that policy. The lands are of very little value to us, because we cannot exploit the resources which we know are there, and also because we will not allow those who can to come in and do so. The construction of a railway will solve all our difficulties because we will get population and be able to develop the country. On the previous occasion an hon. Member complained that I had not supplied figures, and for his benefit I supply the figures to-day. The railway in Nigeria cost £11,000 per mile. The motion asks for a modest sum in comparison with the resources of the Colony, and we want the British Government to understand that we have something to give and all we ask for is proper assistance.

Mr. FREDERICKS: I second the motion, which is one that the whole country regards very seriously. It is regarded seriously because, as everybody in the country knows, we are in need of opportunities for the employment of our people, and the motion is calculated to change the depressed condition of the country into one, if not of immediate prosperity, of general activity out of which will come the prosperity that is so much needed. When one considers the illimitable vastness of British Guiana, untouched in many ways, in an age like this, it does seem that the country should get into it the means of development. Sometimes one wonders why it is that British Guiana has so long remained unnoticed and untouched by capital. There is a reason for it, but I am not prepared to give that reason as I have no desire to bring about any sort of discussion that will lead to no useful end. The expansiveness of the country alone should be an attraction. We have Venezuela, Brazil and Colombia as our neighbours, but British Guiana has no connection with those countries. It seems to me that there should be a connecting highway, either by rail or road, with the two great Republics of Brazil or Venezuela. If there was this connection there would not only be a cry for improvement of the Georgetown harbour but the harbour would be improved, and until British Guiana is connected with these progressive countries I see no hope for real prosperity. That is sufficient reason for considering this motion a worthy one. No country in the world has been

developed on correctness. Some of the grandest schemes in the world have resulted from adventure. The possibilities of this country are illimitable and there is no man who can conscientiously say that there is no possibility for the employment of capital here. There is something that only a prophetic eye can discern that keeps this Colony as it is; but it cannot be eternally kept so.

British Guiana can be made a great country. A man whose opinion is of value has said "Here is a country capable of supporting 98,000,000 people, the climate is as good as any, and population must come in the course of years." Are there no Englishmen ready to do something that has not yet been done? British Guiana may yet be the gem in the Crown of the British Empire. It is incumbent upon the Imperial Government to develop British Guiana. When the Constitution was to be changed I said if it meant bringing money to the Colony let it be changed. That statement excited no small amount of displeasure amongst my countrymen, but I meant it and I still expect British capital to come in and develop the country. It is Britain's duty to put money into the country and to make the country. The country at the present time has no voice of its own and will not for some time get a voice of its own, and if it moves at the voice of somebody who protects it why not make it a place worthy for mankind to live in. I am of opinion that British Guiana will never go forward without a greater population than it has to-day. I do not believe that a railway will bring all the population it needs but it will bring population. Those who are in charge of this country's affairs should spend sleepless nights devising some means of bringing population here. The time is long past when people should remain here without any vision. We are getting doles, but those doles are not sufficient. The time has come when British Guiana should be known Imperially and be given a chance, and that chance can come from nowhere but financial England.

Mr. SEAFORD: My views on this hardy annual are already well known, but I cannot help referring to two remarks of the mover of the motion. The first one is his reference to the motion as Joseph's dream. I am afraid that Joseph is still dreaming, that Joseph is still even asleep,

and that when he wakes up he will find railways no longer being constructed in this world but instead motor roads and airways. I hope it will not be long before he awakes from his slumber. I am delighted to be still in this Council to hear the hon. Member rely entirely on the great railway experts, Messrs. Wilson and Snell. His whole argument has been based on their report. I am sorry the hon. Member did not refer to the practical railway expert, Mr. Leggate, and his report. Perhaps he did not read his report. Had he done so perhaps this motion might never have been brought before this House. I am not in favour of (a) of the motion and as regards (b) I do not think anyone can object to it. I am sure everyone would be delighted to see capitalists come into the country to develop everything. I was under the impression that Government were doing their best to induce capitalists to come here and had done everything they could and are still quite prepared to offer them every inducement. But, unfortunately, capitalists are not dreamers; they are hard-thinking, practical men, who will not invest their money unless they can see some prospect of getting a return. It is for that reason that I tremble at the suggestion that Government should borrow capital for the repayment of which we shall have to increase our expenditure by 25 per cent. when we can see no return on that money. It is, I fear, a case of fools rushing in where angels fear to tread. We all want to see the country developed; the only question is the best way of doing it so as to get a return on the money. The Colony has not got the money. The only way I see of doing it is by the capitalist, but I am afraid in the present state of world conditions that is not likely to come about. I suggest to the hon. Member to amend the motion by cutting out (a) because I do not think anyone would accept that part of it except those who are still dreaming.

Mr. BRASSINGTON: I yield to no Member of this Council or the public in the desire to see this Colony go forward. The subject of a railway is a very old one. I have always been against a Government railway and strongly in favour of a railway equipped and run by private capital, and if it can be achieved by that means I think Government and everybody would grant most liberal concessions. As the last

speaker said, capitalists do not throw away their money wildly, but first satisfy themselves that they will get some return for their money. I do not agree with the mover and seconder of the motion that there is great need for a railway here. This is an agricultural country and if we can get the sum of money this motion asks for it can be spent to better advantage on the coastlands and rivers where the real wealth of the country lies. We have no real irrigation schemes here. Our lands in the hinterland have been spied out by competent men and if we had wealth to justify the running of a private railway it would long ere this have been started. We have vast areas lying idle for want of proper irrigation schemes for the development of our agricultural resources. Any loan can be far more remuneratively applied in that direction than in starting any wild cat scheme of a railway.

Mr. SEERAM: The motion has been characterised as Joseph's dream but I hope it will materialise some day into a reality. I support the motion wholeheartedly and admire the hon. Member for his persistence in bringing it before the House. Mr. Leggate is against the construction of a railway from a financial point of view and he favours the construction of roads. The construction of a railway might not be a financial success for the first ten years, but the innumerable benefits that would accrue to people and Government eventually will more than compensate for the expenditure. A railway in the interior is capable of great development of known industries, as well as of tobacco which now practically grows wild there. I also think that a railway would attract population that is so much needed.

THE PRESIDENT: I am sure the Council has listened with great interest to the speeches made, and I do not think anyone can doubt the sincerity and patriotism displayed in the speeches we have listened to by the mover and seconder of the motion. I always welcome an opportunity for Members to express their feelings and belief in the future of this Colony and their deep conviction that it has a future and that future is not going to be long delayed. I welcome those remarks and I am sure the Secretary of State will be glad to read them too, but

it is quite obvious in a debate of this kind that generalisations on a motion such as this are apt to obscure specific recommendations. It will not be possible for Government to accept the suggestion in (a) because there is not the slightest hope of our getting any such loan on any such terms at the present time. What I would like the Council to realise is that a similar motion was moved two years ago, and if they consider what has occurred in those two years they will recognise that British Guiana is very much more in the eyes of the world now than she was then.

The Council adjourned for the luncheon recess.

THE PRESIDENT: When the Council adjourned I was referring to the fact that this motion is on similar lines to one introduced two years ago. During those two years there has been considerable development on the lines of the proposals made by the hon. Member, except, of course, as regards the laying down of a railway line. In regard to the bringing of capitalists into the Colony, I think the best way of inducing them to come here is to make the Colony better known, to explore its resources as far as possible, and to make it easier for visitors to penetrate into the hinterland and see things for themselves. I think that has been the great disadvantage of British Guiana in the past. What British Guiana needs more than anything else is that people should come and see it. It is no use to say it is the most precious gem of the British Crown in South America. Our business is to get people to come here and be convinced that there are great potentialities, and I do not think you are going to get people to come in and spend a large sum of money except on first-hand information and until you have all the data available. The data with regard to transport has varied enormously in all countries of the world over the last five years. As pointed out by the Hon. Mr. Seaford, the whole question of railway versus motor transport has completely changed. In many countries instead of constructing railways they are closing down railways and replacing them by motor transport. That is an important consideration which one has to take into account. Further, to raise a sum of this amount when we are obtaining money in other directions in the shape of grants

and so on is extremely difficult. I do not know how the Colony could undertake when it is receiving assistance for the relief of unemployment to pay interest on £5,000,000 in ten years. That is not a suggestion which is likely to encourage people at Home to give us very much more assistance. At the same time I agree that steps should be taken to encourage private capitalists to come in. We have a great deal to give away and receive in return, and I think we could give more and seek more. If any proposals are put forward—and I hope such proposals will come forward—Government will have no hesitation in asking this Council to approve of very liberal concessions being granted to capitalists. This Colony is willing to give the most liberal concessions to any capital coming into the Colony. I suggest to the hon. Member to allow the second portion of his motion to stand, and I am quite willing to send a report of the debate to the Secretary of State and use it as a further stalking horse for securing money for British Guiana, though I think the country realises, or it should, the measure of assistance we are now receiving. I am, of course, prepared to encourage private capitalists to come in.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I crave the House's indulgence to reply to statements made by two Members who essayed to speak against the motion or to damage it with faint praise. I was very much surprised at the Nominated Member, Mr. Seaford, attempting to contrast the advantages of motor traffic over a railway for the transportation of heavy timber such as is known to exist in this Colony and over tropical forests such as we have. Such an individual should be sent to Bedlam. The hon. Member referred to Mr. Leggate's Report. I have read it. In it he says:

"It is true that the industry and development of a country cannot, or at least does not, wait for a full investigation of its transport problems in the light of its potentialities. In so far as British Guiana is concerned, the amount already spent on inland communication is so small that, practically, it is possible to start from the beginning; whilst the time required for an adequate enquiry is comparatively so short that neither progress nor development can be sensibly hindered thereby. On the other hand the possible economic benefits are obvious."

Elsewhere he states:—

"In other words it will be in all probability

not a question of "Will it pay?" but of "Is it worth it?"

He discussed the possibility of the railway not paying and said it may take years to pay as a commercial concern. I do not understand how the hon. Member for Western Essequibo can get up and open his mouth and put his foot in it (Laughter.) I refuse to reckon him among the hair-brained visionaries who can see nothing but ruin to the coastlands if the hinterland is developed. He says "get the money but spend it on the coastlands."

Mr. BRASSINGTON: I said such large sums could be better expended on the coastlands and rivers but did not say that schemes in the interior should not be proceeded with as they are being proceeded with now.

Mr. ELEAZAR: Very well. I shall not pursue that point any further and will leave it at that. With respect with what Your Excellency has said, I am certainly going to accept the advice you have proffered and ask you to permit me to withdraw (a) of the motion, but before doing so I would like to say that your immediate successor (Sir Cecil Rodwell), in discussing proposals by the Electives for the building of roads in the interior to take tourists to Kaieteur, distinctly stated that roads would do very well but would never be the means of development and that it was impossible to expect businessmen to undertake such an expense on the mere prospect of taking tourists to Kaieteur. Even the Financial Commissioners say a railway should be built by Government. In conclusion, I hope the day is not distant when a railway will be attained. From my experience and what I have read, I can come to no other conclusion than that if Government build a railway the railway will build British Guiana.

THE PRESIDENT: The hon. Member has withdrawn (a) and I will put the motion to the Council with respect to (b).

Motion agreed to.

ANNUAL ESTIMATES.

DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION.

The Council resolved itself into Committee and resumed consideration of the

draft Estimates of expenditure to be defrayed from revenue for the year 1933 under the head "District Administration (Berbice District)."

Mr. ELEAZAR: I move that item 2 (Travelling and Subsistence Allowances, \$2,190) be reduced to \$1,500. I asked certain questions in regard to this item. There is a number of officers travelling over the same length of road and under exactly the same conditions. One officer can travel to and from Skeldon one day in the month and draw \$30 but another officer who goes over the same distance is paid at the rate of 11 cents per mile and gets \$11. Any garage will provide any Department with a car for \$40 per month and it would be available to the various officers and they could so arrange their visits that all would not be travelling on the same day.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I gather that the point of the hon. Member is that where there are two officers in the same office they should use the same car. The hon. Member must recognise that the duties of these officers, especially in the Berbice District, are very varied and quite distinct. The District Commissioner is also Engineer of the Public Works Department and he can in the course of a journey perform the dual functions. We also have senior officers who are directly concerned with the collection of revenue and the inspection of distilleries, and at both ends of the district we have officers responsible for the collection of Customs duties. It is impossible for officers who are concerned with two different phases of District Administration to fit in their time so closely to be able to use the same car without waste of time. Instructions have been given that where possible officers should use the same car and I know that where it is possible it has been done. The other point is why should one officer receive a different allowance to another. Some officers from the nature of their duties have to do a great deal more travelling than others and a commuted travelling allowance is worked out on a scale. Other officers are only occasionally expected to use a car for duty and it would be extravagant to give them a commuted travelling allowance. It is more economical to put certain officers on a commuted travelling allowance and other officers on a mileage allowance. To reduce the vote to

the amount the hon. Member has suggested it would not be sufficient to cover the travelling to be done.

THE CHAIRMAN: I looked into this matter when I was in New Amsterdam in view of the questions raised. One point has not been made clear. The figures that show the mileage and the amount paid do not actually represent the same multiple of 11 cents or accumulated amounts. It alters the position in favour of the argument by the Colonial Secretary. Ferry charges were included. We are satisfied that in Berbice we have a hard-working District Commissioner who is untiring in his travelling in that district, and I think the hon. Member would really like to make that statement himself. I take it to be the principle that the hon. Member is referring to.

Item put, and agreed to.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: In connection with the motion passed based on Message No. 6, I move that under Head III. (b) (District Administration Headquarters) there be inserted as item 4 "Awards in connection with Fines and Seizures, \$350."

Item put, and agreed to.

CUSTOMS.

Mr. MILLARD: Under Head VII. (Customs Department) I move the insertion as item 14 "Awards in connection with Fines and Seizures, \$350."

Item put, and agreed to.

LANDS AND MINES.

Mr. MILLARD: Under Head VIII. (Department of Lands and Mines) I move

the insertion as item 8 "Awards in connection with Fines and Seizures, \$300."

Item put, and agreed to.

POLICE.

Mr. MILLARD: Under Head XVI. (Police) I move the insertion as item 39 "Awards in connection with Fines and Seizures, \$1,200."

Item put, and agreed to.

POST OFFICE.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I ask leave to raise a question under the Head of Post Office to bring to the notice of Government something which I think Government ought to know.

THE CHAIRMAN: We have already dealt with the items under that Head.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I am not asking for a reduction or an increase of any item. I wish to bring to Government's notice a grievance which Relief Clerks have. These Clerks have been employed on the strict understanding that they must serve for 20 years.

THE CHAIRMAN: I am sorry to interrupt the hon. Member, but he has been anticipated. When the votes of the Post Office came up attention was called to the fact that a promise had been made that after a certain length of service the officers would be put above the line and Government undertook to look into the matter.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I am very pleased to hear that.

The Council resumed and adjourned until Tuesday, 20th instant, at 11 o'clock.